NOVEMBER 2017





BILJANA'S BOOK IN HUNGARIAN



A TIME FOR ANGER BY ANDRIJANA NIKOLIC

CHRISTI POETRY

Why Jesus? by Misha Bakid

Picture Frames

Interactive RBU Photo Art

MAGAZINE

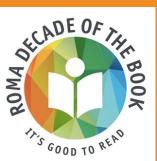
A TIME FOR TEARS by

Elvira Marginean

BY Janne Ke

The Roma Sisters Place

Interview with Gera Dzemailvski



DECADE OF
THE BOOK
"it's good to read"

UNA CLUB EXPANSION



from the us director's dipital desk

VIRTUALLY HERE & THERE

Lt was a hot, sticky summer day and it has been forever cemented in my memory. Three stories down in the archives of a library I inhaled the distinct musty smell of thousands of waiting books. This smell transported

me to the memory of a hot summer day in my childhood neighborhood library where I first fell in love with reading and the world of books. That was the beginning of a lifetime of learning.

What if I had never learned to read? My whole life would be different. I used reading to excel in education, and reading led to college to earn my degree. I used reading to learn about the many destinations in which I have traveled, and has helped to navigate life in those new cultures. Reading and books have shaped me, and the experiences of my life without a doubt.

The most profound influence reading has had on my life is through the reading of the Word, the Bible. I listened to my Mom and Dad read Bible stories in my childhood and eventually to own a personal Bible to read on my own. This has led to a lifetime of studying God's Word and having it shape my life.

The Roma Bible Union is pleased to introduce the KASKADA online magazine. We want to open up the world of the Roma with you as you walk through their experiences, hear their voice, and see their point of view together with the ministry and ministry partners of the Roma Bible Union. RBU's Decade of the Book yearly events promotes mother tongue literacy, reading, and discipleship in places that have not had evangelical or Scripture use literature written in the mother tongue. RBU wants to influence the Roma world with the gospel message and reading of the Word of God. Please enjoy this, our first KASKADA online magazine issue as it shares the story of this years Decade of the Book in Bor, Serbia.

Join us on an adventure into reading, and into the world of the Roma.

Kim Thompson

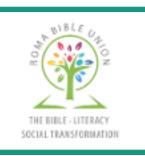
US Director

Roma Bible Union



Nina Jankocic reads to a little friend at the UNA KID'S CLUB.





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RBU USA Director's Office P.O.Box 5613 Lacey, WA 98509– 5613

> For general inquiries contact please contact us at: info@romabibleunion.org

For all RBU USA relatedfinancial questionsplease contact us at: finance@romabibleunion.org

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UNA KID'S CLUB Bor, Serbia 2017





THE ROMA DECADE OF THE BOOK

BY BOB HITCHING

There are now 22 adults who consider themselves part of the RBU family. Together the work is made up of several ministries that we call Brands. The UNA KID'S CLUB Children's ministry, the ADUNARE Bible Study program, the GREEN SHUTTERS Roma Publishing House, the KASKADA mentoring ministry, a Church Planting ministry, the Roma Sister's Place Women's Ministry plus other forms of ministry which are currently in the development phase of a Brand.

In the summer of 2016, the Roma Bible Union

launched 'The Roma
Decade of the Book'
in Serbia where a
RBU team traveled
to 15 villages and
put on special
programs which
incorporated
elements of each of
the branded
ministries together
therefore giving



them and the missionaries who serve within them an outlet for their ministry. Imagine the team going into a village. It started with a children's program, then reading stories to all the family, following on with a street theater drama, next came the Bible Studies, church meetings, and then a massive distribution of comics, one page Bible wall hangings, children's story books and coloring books, and Christian books for adults. In all 16,000 pieces of literature were distributed in different languages spoken by the Roma.

After that campaign a request to return came from a Roma Pastor who we had visited last year. He asked RBU to provide training for his church in various ministry endeavors so we decided to follow on this year in a more targeted area and bring teaching, training and resources from several of the ministry Brands for the spiritual growth of his Roma Church in Bor, Serbia. So this year 'The Roma Decade of the Book 2017' focused its program on a very difficult part of Serbia. We did the same kind



WHEN?



of program as last year but this time with an exciting new twist. The RBU team trained local believers from the Roma Bor Church through workshops and training practicums to carry on the work and expand their ministry to the Roma in and around the city of Bor, Serbia. From that one program we are in the process of establishing a long term UNA KID'S CLUB ministry with the new UNA Club leaders team of 8 members, a Roma Sisters Place Women's Ministry, and a leadership Bible Study program.

All these ministries focus on "The 'BOOK' and Reading". It would be a lot easier, and many have suggested, that we use story-telling and an orality Bible modality, and we of course we do incorporate those methods all the time but something much greater is needed.

Europe is close to exploding into a paroxysm of hatred towards Roma, Jews, and Muslims. The extreme neo-Fascist movements that I have been following for about 25 years used to have about 5% support among voters

across the continent. Today, right across Europe about 25% of the populace has voted for these political parties. Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated and Synagogues attacked, moderate Muslim girls attacked on buses and Roma in almost every country in Europe subjected to hate crimes.

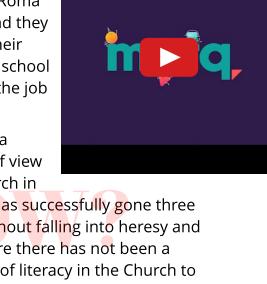
The Roma population in Europe is going to double every 25 years whilst countries in the north of Europe take 600 years to double their population. A massive Roma population in Europe on welfare will mean

only one thing......Blood flowing in the streets. The Roma *must* read and they must fight their way into the school system and the job market.

Of course from a spiritual point of view there is no Church in

the world that has successfully gone three generations without falling into heresy and extremism where there has not been a significant level of literacy in the Church to

facilitate the reading and teaching of the Scriptures.That is why 'The Roma Decade of the Book' is so critical. The alternative.... Pagan Churches and Extreme Fascist Death Squads.



IT'S GOOD TO READ!



ou look like a real Bible smuggler, Jelle!" Nina said, when he unpacked all the books out of every corner of the car. He had spread them everywhere: under the chairs and in between our food and clothes just to please the border police. We do not live in communistic times anymore, but the shipping of boxes is still frowned upon.

We feel very honored to be here and literally bring the Good News to the Roma in far-away mountain villages. This Family Picture Bible turned out beautifully, and as often with a big task, it has been a shared project. So many different people have worked on it: Todd, Elvira, Slobodan, Bob, Nancy, and many others, last but not least: all who prayed and support financially.

Last week, when I was preparing for the trip, I ended up cleaning out our house, and in the midst of that, we found old letters. Over the years, so many of you have sent encouraging

COME TRUE

cards. We could not save all of them, but this particular letter made it through all the moves. Marijke found it and said, "Mam, read this letter!"

This letter is written by Maria Hammond, also well-known as the "Wycliffe Mama". She helped me a lot with adjusting in England and was always ready for a hug, a laugh, or a prayer. She would laugh heartily when I called our three little girls: "Come on, little piglets!"

Late Summer 2010.

We moved that Summer to Toronto with the three girls. Laurens was not born yet; I was not yet pregnant.

"I had a dream," Maria writes.

Okay, let's hear it. Come on tell me more."

"I see Jelle, and I watch



your baby boy, while Jelle is going into the slums to bring the Good News to the people in the slums."

Baby boy? No way...it would be very nice, but do not get my hopes up!

And Jelle in the slums? No way! It would be nice, but he is more the thinking, studying, teaching sort of man.

"I dreamed that Jelle and you are getting a baby boy and that Jelle will go into the slums to bring the Gospel to the people. And you, Janneke, are a happy mother of your children."

Happy mother? Fine, you can dream that.

Late Summer, 2017

Here we are. We reread the old letter, relived the old dream.



Laurens

in BOR, SERIBA

Jelle is unloading the Bibles in the car and handing them out to the others. Our baby boy Laurens is a little chap of six years old now. He is watching it all.

And I? I stand there, speechless and in amazement. A dream came true, and it is my dream job. Jelle drove home with Judith and Laurens. He arrived safely back in Osijek.

Jella And, in my mind came this:

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news,

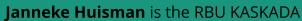
who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings,

who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion

Your God reigns."

Is: 52:7

Our God reigns, indeed



Writer's Guild Croatian Team Leader. She is a seconded missionary with the Roma Bible Union from the Netherlands. Janneke and her family, Jella three girls and a boy, live and work with the Roma in and around Osijek, Croatia. She writes a regular online Blog called in Dutch and English and here









she shares one of her entries about her experience in the ministry with RBU and the Decade of the Book 2017. Janneke is currently mentoring the RBU KASKADA Interns (shown here on the left with Elvira Marginean from Serbia) each who are writing and reporting for the KASKADA ONLINE MAGAZINE.



PICTURE FRAMES



KASKADA PHOTO FRAME features photo galleries of the life, ministry, and concepts of The Roma Bible Union. This month RBU explores: BOOK, WINDOWS & DOORS, and PLAY all in the context of the *place* we live and pray in RBU.



FOUNDERS' PHOTO MUSINGS

A photo from our past



Brings Us vision for our future

I have been a missionary for over 40 years now and have worked in and out of Central Europe for many of them so I want to tell you something loud and clear. There is no ability, no skill, no dream, hope or vision, there's nothing that a Roma person cannot be and do, or dream that any other person can. Perhaps one of the biggest and darkest lies of the last 100 years in Europe, fueled by media, the education institution, the medical community at times, and yes even the church is the belief that Roma are inferior people. I tell you this; In the next 20 years we will see Roma Christian writers, artists,

theologians, scientists, educators, and much, much more. Mark this: Literacy, reading and spirituality is the key. My prayer to God, if he lets me live so that I may see how all of this comes to be, is to see a spiritual cultural explosion that will bring shame to the prejudices that have been held up to the Roma people for so long, and that the demons in hell will shake in rebuke from the results of the transforming work of God among the Roma. La sa fi asha. Amen.

Bob Hitching

Founder and Director, Roma Bible Union

Nancy Hitching



Bob & Nancy Hitching Founders Roma Bible Union



Scroll Down







Notes & Notes

MUSIC and POETRY FROM THE FIELD

WHY JESUS? By Misha Bakic



Scroll Down

A man came to me the other day and asked: Why Jesus?

Why is Jesus,
any different,
than any other man,
that ever walked upon
the surface of the earth?

I looked at him, I smiled, I said, WHY JESUS
Written and read by
MISHA BAKIC



AUDIO VERSION



Misha Bakic is a Roma Bible Union Associate living in Leskovac, Serbia with his wife Alika and their new baby girl, Mirjum. He is a gifted writer and musician and is the

Youth Leader of a Roma Church in Leskovac where he plays violin and keyboard for the worship team as well. Misha is a member of the RBU KASKADA WRITERS GUILD in which he is working on his first historic novel based on the true story of his family during the war and the Roma Holocaust.

Misha has translated several RBU GREEN SHUTTERS books and Scripture Use Materials into his Roma Mother tongue language of ARLI which will be published and distributed in the ARLI speaking Roma Communities by the Roma Bible Union. Misha writes poetry as well and here he opens up, through a singular question, his powerful Christological Vision of Jesus, the King of the Universe, and Saviour of the World.

"I wanted to write a Poem that reflects my Christology and to be a very strong message of Christ - who is the center of in my life."

Misha-

A NEW PACK OF CRAYONS



where he lives with his

wife Helen and two small

for the RBU UNA KID'S CLUB Coloring Book Series . He works from his home in Pécs, Hungary

aylor Moineau, is a graphic artist

book which was used for 'The Roma Decade of the Book' 2017 in Bor, Serbia. Using the theme

'Lord, Teach Me To

Pray- The Lord's Prayer', Taylor's coloring book was used in 4 Roma villages

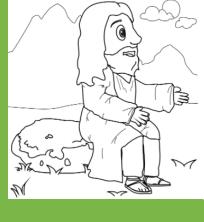
in and around Bor to teach the Roma children the importance of prayer and how to prayer the Lord's Prayer. Helen is studying Herbology and hopes in future to bring the fruit of her studies to the Roma people through Christ's message of health, healing and wholeness of the body, the heart and spirituality.



















UNA KID'S CLUB



Ten years ago while visiting a local Croatian elementary school teacher in an area in which Bob and Nancy were ministering, the teacher made a remark about the Roma students in her class that changed the direction of the Hitching's ministry to the Roma forever. "When they come to me on their first day of school they cannot even hold a crayon!". Her love for the Roma children was only matched by the frustration she felt when trying to catch up her little charges to their Croatian contemporaries; fortunate five and six year olds who had benefited so much

God is For Us...
Not Against Us!



Making a Script Change New UNA KID'S CLUBS in SERBIA

The UNA KID'S CLUB has gone through massive changes over the years and has now found its niche in Literacy, Evangelism and Discipleship. We have had various Festivals and Clubs in Montenegro, Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia are now RBU is focusing on Serbia, Croatia and Hungary.

In the North East of Serbia we are working with our friends at Scripture Union and several local Churches and have established four UNA Club





centers within Roma communities. Training workshops and practice Roma Festivals are

being conducted now to train Serbian and Roma volunteers to conduct UNA KID'S Clubs beginning in December.

Meanwhile in South East Serbia we have set up the first "Roma Only" UNA leadership team and they have one main center in which weekly UNA CLUBS are started. The team of 8 members from the Bor Roma Church in Bor, Serbia are planning to reach out to other Roma villages and neighborhoods as well.



In Croatia the RBU team have UNA Clubs in two locations with a new one starting in the early new year. As a part of the Church Planting project we will link up three villages with the

As linguistic needs grow in the ministry of Scripture Use Materials the Green Shutters Publishing House of RBU grows with it. Now the UNA KID'S CLUB Coloring Books are being published in the Cyrlillic Script for those Roma villages in which young children must learn to read using this script rather than the latin script in their early school reading books. Here is the verse, "God is Love 1 John 4:8 in the Cyrillic Script read in Bor, Serbia and other parts of the country.

Бог је љубав 1 Јован 4:8

UNA CLUB being our initial avenue of contact toward the goal of growing an existing church and planting several others. Over the border in Hungary, finally "OUR FIRST" Hungarian UNA Clubs will start after the New Year.

The third editions of UNA KID'S CLUB

Coloring Books for elementary and pre-school age children are in the development stages and the UNA Graphics team are working on a new



design to include a larger coloring book with a full color insert on which will be printed the complete Bible Story in illustrations from Free Bible Images along with the text of the story so that young Club members may return to their homes after a Club to re-read again and again the story from God's Word and continue to color each page.







THE FIRST ALL-ROMA UNA CLUB TEAM







Roma
Sisters
Place

FINDING A New Gift Inside Women's Ministry

During the Decade of the Book this year Gera Dzemailvski, wife of Pastor Ismet of the Roma Church in Bor, Serbia, hosted the first Roma Sisters Place Women's Tea. The theme was 'Grow Your Garden–Grow

Your Church' and the women enjoyed hearing a message and drama, making a floral craft, getting to know each other better and of course great cake and cups ofwell coffee. It's Serbia! Here Elvira Marginean, KASKADA MAGAZINE RBU Writer's Guild Intern interviews Gera about finding a gift and founding the new women's ministry and her dreams for its future and the women of the Roma Church in Bor and the surrounding villages

ELVIRA: Hello Gera this is Elvira, RBU KASKADA Intern calling from Novi Sad. How are you today?

GERA: Good. How are you?

ELVIRA: I'm good, thanks for asking. The reason why I'm calling you is because of a interview that I want to make with you for the November first issue of the KASKADA ONLINE magazine.

GERA Sure, I have time, go ahead ask whatever you need . I'll be happy to answer them.

ELVIRA Great! So tell us your name.

GERA: My name is Gera Dzemailovski.

ELVIRA: Where are you from Gera?

GERA: I was born in Macedonia, and I moved to Bor when I was a little girl.

ELVIRA: Where do you live now?

GERA: I live in Bor.

ELVIRA: Do you have a family – are you married and have any children and or grandchildren?

GERA:Of course! *laughing*. I have a husband his name is Ismet, and also I have 2 children. From my son I have 2 grandchildren and from my daughter I have 6 grandchildren.







ELVIRA: What languages do you speak?

Well, I speak Serbian, Roma, Albanian and Macedonian.

ELVIRA: What do you like to do? What's your gifting?

GERA: I love to cook! I just simply love to welcome guests and also to cook for them, to be a good hostess. Hmmm About my gift? Well I'm aware that I own a gift but still I can't recognize it.

ELVIRA:Can you tell me about the women in your church in Bor?

GERA: The woman here are very poor, but they do have a fire in their heart to come regularly to share the gospel. Sometimes they do have a commentary that's not appropriate but they are fighting against it. Our women are not well educated. I learned by myself to read. The women, they do like preaching from the Bible so any example you give to them you must show them were is it written in the Bible, they want proof.

ELVIRA: Have you had a women's ministry before in the church in Bor?

GERA:As far as I know we didn't have it. Now it has been three years that I have been married to Ismet and shared in the ministry as well, but I do not know if someone started a women's ministry before me.

ELVIRA: Tell me something about the Decade of the Book Roma Sisters Place Tea?

I had a wonderful time during it. It was very different to see from the Sisters from the Roma Bible Union team how we should treat one another full with love and patience. They were a blessing to us.

I,as well especially loved the drama (skit)



when they acted like some women working in the fields and how this showed us all that even when we work and have so many duties, still we can always do something for God, to serve him.

ELVIRA:Do you hope to have a women's ministry for women in your church in Bor in the future?

GERA: Of course I hope so! I'm praying about it that we may be able to grow more as sisters.

ELVIRA: What are your dreams for this ministry?

GERA:To be honest with you my dreams is to change the fact of illiteracy. I want to make some changes but I do need materials for the classes, so that we can have literacy books from which we can work on learning to read. Also we need material for the children as well.

ELVIRA: How can we pray for you and the women's ministry in the church in Bor?

GERA:Please pray for us to be more and more, as much as possible, to have love one for another, to have understanding, and also to have plays, because they do love the plays, It is much easier for the women so see a drama at this time than to read.

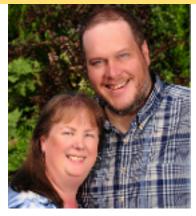
ELVIRA: Thank you so much Gera for sharing your time with me, I appreciate it.

GERA:You're very welcome.

Finding your gifts of the Spirit to build up the Body of Christ.



A WORD FROM BRUCE AND KIM



One of the key lessons we learned living in Eastern Europe was that unemployment created two basic problems. One, people lost the will to work and earn a living and became dependent on welfare. Then secondly, was that the Westerners were so often viewed by the unemployed as the only answer to peoples financial problems.



When Slobodan and Nina shared their vision for teaching young Roma men a trade in woodworking as a means of getting off welfare and supporting themselves in ministry we knew this had the Hand of God upon it. As a result, RBU now has a Matching Fund to buy a small property in a Roma Village and develop it to become a wood workshop and build a training center ministry...this really is an investment into eternity!







CLICK HERE TO SEE

"REMEMBER THAT PRAYER SUCCEEDS WHERE TECHNIQUE FAILS"



In every life cycle of small Missions you always find a person or persons behind the scenes who actually hold the whole operation together. They are usually people who have an incredible capacity to deal with the eccentricities of the visionary founder and leader. Certainly Nancy has been that person but her partner in the corporate salvation of the RBU has been Julianna.

I remember about 8 years ago, Nancy and Julianna were sitting with me in the

Budapest and I asked Julianna how she was getting on working with us.
She smiled and said, "I was just wondering if there was any way that when we

do things we did not have to wait until the very last minute, but maybe work a little bit ahead of ourselves." Nancy burst into uncontrolled

selves." Nancy burst into uncontrolled laughter and I realized that I had either a

<u>Jeanot & Julianna</u> <u>Randimbiarison</u>

years of Ministry
Partnership Together
with the Roma Bible Union

mutiny on my hands or perhaps I should be listening very carefully.

Years ago there were certain kinds of glue that were kept in separate containers and had to be mixed together to become an unbreakable bond......Nancy and Julianna have been that kind of glue in RBU.

And Jeanot? As well as being absolutely "EVERYTHING" musical within RBU, Jeanot has been at the launch of every new RBU project we have ever started since our first UNA Club in Montenegro all those years ago. Go with him into any region and you will discover he knows their language....seriously.









"It moves me so much the way the people of each village- who have almost nothing-open their homes and their hearts to us.

They seem so happy that we are here with them"





Roma Family Devotional Picture Bible



Elvira Marginean

Livra Marginean is a Roma Bible Union

Associate Member living in Novi Sad, Serbia where she is studying currently as a third year university student in the Business Faculty. She is also a member of the RBU KASKADA WRITERS GUILD in which she is being trained and mentored by RBU missionaries to produce written and live reports as well as commentary for the KASKADA MAGAZINE and other RBU ministry projects and events. Elvira uses her gift of speaking five languages in this way and by translating RBU KASKADA and GREEN SHUTTERS PUBLISHING materials into Serbian, Romanian and Bayash.

She recently worked on the Serbian language translation of the Roma Family Picture Bible which was distributed in Bor, Serbia late this summer to be used by Roma Families for family prayer and devotions and by Pastors for training in family discipleship.

Elvira's regular commentary, "A Time for Tears" will feature for KASKADA MAGAZINE short stories and perspectives of Roma life which point to the profound and deep sadness that overshadows many of the young lives of the Roma children, many of whom struggle to read

and write and who live still yet without the message of hope, peace and joy of the Saviour.







Bilijana Nikolic

RBU Missionary KASKADA Writer

SERBIAN Release The Fortune Tellers Dream Biljana Nikolic A STORY YOU WILL

December

NEVER FORGET

Coming Soon!

The Fortune **Teller's Dream**

The Cat and the custard

...On the Road Again

Biljana Nikolic's first book was published as the center piece of the 2016 Decade of the Book. It's title was 'The Cat and the Custard' and was distributed all over Serbia in the Roma communities. She and her book were featured on both local and national television.

Her new book is called The Fortune Teller's dream which is a re-write of one of Bob's books for pre-teens. Biljana has transformed the story to make it fully authentic from a Roma perspective. Her third book, original to herself, is a hybrid of illustrations and storyline for younger teenagers.

Over the Christmas season and into the new year Biljana will travel to Hungary

where her Cat and the Custard illustrated children's book has been published in Hungarian. She will visit schools and libraries and cultural centers to share her book and to tell her story of coming to Christ and being given by God the gift of writing.





The 2017 Matching Fund

There are so many ministries that are seeking support at this time of the year. It is almost like a reverse Consumerism as people are bombarded with not things to buy but things to give their money to.

There has been set up for us at RBU a wonderful \$ to \$ and £ to £ Matching Fund this year. What this means is that if you send a donation to RBU designated \$ to \$ MATCHING FUND between now and December 27 it is matched by a special Friend of RBU so that your donation is actually doubled.

As you think, pray and discuss your end of the year giving please do ask if God would have you give to The Roma Bible Union.

You can see a slide show about two big projects by clicking the button here.

2017 Matching Fund