



A famous Macedonian singer

has threatened to sue the makers of the film *Borat* for a million dollars over the unauthorized use of one of her songs in the box-office hit movie, a report said today.

"I will sue them and demand 800,000 euros (\$A1.3 million)," Esma Redzepova, pictured above, one of the most prominent Roma singers in the Balkans, told the Serbian daily *Politika*.

One of her best-known songs, *Caje Sukarije*, can be heard at the beginning of the film, while Borat, the fictional Kazakh journalist portrayed as a racist buffoon, mocks poverty in the central Asian country.

It is also played in the background during all of Borat's flashbacks to his homeland.

"I am fed up with the fact that everyone is using my song without even informing me about it, not even mentioning that it is my song, the one I once wrote and was the first to sing," said Redzepova, branded by many as the "Queen of Roma music in the Balkans".

She added that a million dollars in compensation was not "much".

"This is one of the most popular films now and it will make a fortune," she said, adding that she was "furious" at the disrespect shown to her by the filmmakers.

A tune by another famous Balkan musician, Goran Bregovic, can also be heard during the film, but reports say his financial demands had been satisfied prior to the movie's distribution.

In *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*, British comic Sacha Baron Cohen plays a fictional Kazakh journalist blundering across America in search of cultural enlightenment.

The movie has become a worldwide box-office success since its release but has angered many Kazakh officials as well as several of the unwitting members of the public who appear in the critically acclaimed satire.

Bad Arolsen, Germany- Two sisters who survived five years in Nazi concentration camps, only to be separated in the chaos of 1945 and end up in two different countries, have been reunited after Red Cross investigators discovered they were related. Regine Boehmer, imprisoned at age 8 with the rest of her family because they were Gypsies, thought her younger sister Erika was dead. But the investigators tracked down Erika Hrasova in the Czech Republic and broke the news to her that she had relations in Germany.



Photo: Left to Right; Regine Boehmer, Karin Guth, and Erika Hrasova. (Boehmer) (Karin Guth was also instrumental in this reunion through her work preparing documents, etc, to initiate the contact with the Bad Arolsen Red Cross.)

The experts said it was too long ago to establish why Erika, who had been imprisoned by the Nazis at the age of 4, had been separated from the rest of her family when British troops liberated starving inmates from Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in May 1945.

"I recognized her straight away," said Hrasova on Tuesday in Bad Arolsen, where the Red Cross international tracing service uses a vast library of World War II documents to track down lost people.

"The eyes. The mouth. I knew at once she was my sister," said the elder, Boehmer. The delighted sisters said Hrasova plans to move to Hamburg so they can spend their last years together.

The younger sister only speaks Czech and the elder German, but Boehmer said, "Since we met up again at the weekend, we've chatted the whole time. I don't know how, but somehow it has worked."

Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa

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Duck Hunting in Deutschland (as told to Ronald Lee by Hans Braun)

Hans Braun's Sinti method of hunting ducks. Hans and his sons went to a municipal park in the 1970s in Germany and saw a pond filled with fat ducks. So they took some bricks, tied fishhooks on lines to them and baited the hooks with worms. They placed the bricks around the pond with the lines in the water. When the ducks came at feeding time and pulled at the worms, the hooks became stuck in their beaks, the bricks fell into the water and pulled the ducks under, where they drowned. During the night, Hans and his sons came back, pulled out the bricks with ducks attached and used the ducks for a feast. A little piece of Sinti ingenuity. After the horror and starvation of the Holocaust, what's a few ducks from the government?



Release: November 15th 2002



Jony Iliev & band
"Ma maren ma"

Cat. Nr.: CD-ATR 0102
 Format: CD, 13 tracks
 Total playing time: 46:27
 English text info included
 File under: World / Gypsy / Bulgaria

"A Bulgarian singer who deserves nothing less than stardom" - Songlines 01/03
 Welcome to the world of Bulgarian Gypsy singer Jony Iliev. Join him on a frantic ride through the streets of Sofia's Gypsy quarters and its nightclubs. Let him entrance you with the Balkan groove of his diabolically swinging band and indulge in the maestro's voice and his songs situated somewhere between dream and reality.

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I originally met Yul Brynner, not as a reporter, but in England in 1969-70 when I was working with the original Gypsy Council. He donated a caravan to the caravan schools project where I taught for a while. Then I met him a few times in New York including the time we went to the UN to deliver the IRU application for consultive status. Later, he called me when he and Natalie Wood were presenting the Best Foreign Film Awards in Los Angeles and asked me for something he could say in Romani since the best film for that year was one of the Toni Gatliff films about Roma.



I was with Brynner and Nathalie Wood in New York in a Russian restaurant off Broadway where Aliosha Dimitirievitch and his Russian Romani band were performing, the night before when I was in New York to be part of the delegation of Brynner, Ian Hancock, John Tene and myself who delivered the petition asking for membership as an NGO in the UN for the International Romani Union in July, 1978 (accepted a year later). Nathalie Wood claimed to be part Romani as did Brynner (which I know to be true from European Romani relatives of his even though one of his daughters now denies this in her book).

Ronald Lee



**Kali in Every Woman:
 Motherhood and the Dark Goddess Archetype**

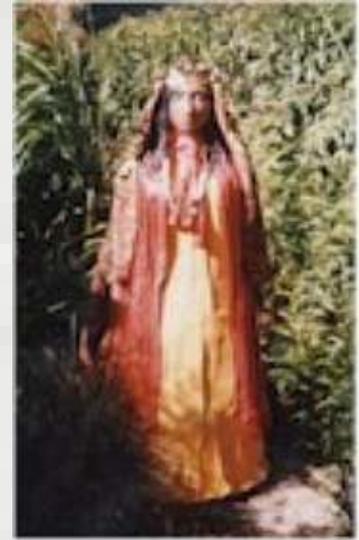
Wherever there's a woman in any home
 doing her work
 screening her smiles with her veil,
 she is You, Ma;
 she is you, Black Goddess.
 Carefully rising with the light of dawn
 to attend with softened hands
 to household chores,
 she is You, Ma;
 she is You, Black Goddess.
 The woman who gives alms, makes vows,
 does worship, reads scriptures
 all correctly and with a smile
 who drapes her sari over the child on her lap
 soothing its hunger with a lullaby,
 she is You, Ma;
 she is You, Black Goddess.
 She can't be anyone else;
 Mother, sister, housewife
 all are You.

- Ramprasad (c.a. 1718-1775)

To Roma and Sinti, the Goddess, Kali is viewed as a trinity. Her symbol is a triangle.

Kali: Goddess of Retribution

According to her devotees, Kali in her human form was the wife of a despotic Rajah who ill treated his subjects so she strangled him in his sleep and was then elevated to goddess stature. The Thugs, a sect of religious killers were devotees of Kali and strangled rich merchants and distributed their money to the poor, sort of Indian Robin Hoods. Other aspects of Kali as a Shakti include the protectress of the oppressed and persecuted which is probably why Roma and Sinti attend the shrine of Sara Kali in France. Sara is also another aspect of Kali, through Kali/Durga/Sara, a Trinity mentioned a lot in Hindu scripture. (Ronald Lee)



Elizabeth U. Harding, an intrepid Kali adventurer and fan, describes in her memoirs how laborious and stressful it is to reach the inner sanctum of Kali at the Dakshineswar Temple at Calcutta, owing to the regular galore of devotees who generally swarm her temple. After having reached the inner hall housing the sanctum sanctorum this is what she says: "Out of sheer awe and admiration one's voice automatically turns into a whisper - yet, there is nothing intimidating about this place.

Ushered into the presence of the deity our voices automatically drop to a whisper, as a tribute of respect to the divine presence. Finally face to face with Kali herself, this is what transpires in the author's mind:

But when one finally stands before Kali, time seems to stand still. Everything stops. The people, the noise - all is mysteriously gone. One stares with wide eyes, forgetting even to blink. All one sees is Kali and nothing else. Overwhelmed with feeling one whispers, 'I love you.' And from within she replies, 'You do so much more for I am the source of your being!'

This is the spirit in which to approach Kali. The Great Goddess herself will then reveal her mysteries for all of us, solving in the process, the eternal questions of life.

6th December 2006, Diyarbakir

The Diyarbakir Dom Dayansma Dernegi was today established in the Gazi Kösk area of Diyarbakir. The new Baskan of the Association, Mehmet Demir, expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of the meeting, and at the support the fledgling community group had received from Özhan Önder (Middle East Technical University), Gül Özatesler (Bogazici University), both PhD candidates working in Romani Studies, Bertil Videt (International Institute for Research & Education, Amsterdam) and Adrian Marsh (Researcher in Romani Studies, Greenwich University). The new board also expressed its thanks to the previous visitors to them (Adrian Marsh, Bertil Videt, Dr. Thomas Acton, Idaver Mehmedov, Gunnar Grüt and Özhan Önder) for their interest and support of the Dom communities in Diyarbakir and the region. The President of the National Federation of Romani Associations, ROMDEF expressed his support for the new association by telephone, and his promise to visit the new organisation to support its membership of ROMDEF in the near future. He welcomed Mehmet Demir as President of the Diyarbakir Dom Solidarity Association to the family of Gypsy organisations in Turkey and expressed his pleasure at the establishment of the first Dom organisation in the Republic.

The meeting also elected a Vice-President, Bahattin Çiftçi, Secretary Muhsin Demir, Treasurer Imam Esmer. The newly established board also recognised the importance of ensuring a representative for womens' issues, and elected Sirin Garbul as such. The interests of young Dom people were discussed at the meeting and Namet Garbul was elected to the board as representative for them. The board of the DDDD also agreed to

members from as wide a constituency as possible , including Dom from Hancepeke, Yeniköy, Seyratepe and other districts of Diyarbakir and its suburbs. The board also discussed the prospect of other Dom associations being founded, and agreed to support the growth of these as an important part of the democratic process, if the Dom desired it. "We want to learn the principles of democracy for ourselves, to encourage all of us to become active citizens", Mehmet Demir said after the meeting.

The DDDD will concentrate upon its primary aim of improving the social, economic, educational and cultural life of its members, and to achieving significant changes in the current situation that the majority of Dom find themselves living in. Poverty, poor education, lack of employment or training opportunities, and housing issues were all emphasised as huge problems faced by ordinary Dom people, that must be addressed.

"We know that the establishment of this Association is the first small step in addressing these problems, but for us this is an historic day! We can only achieve more by working with our Romani brothers and sisters in Turkey and Europe" said Badi Çiftçi.

News of the new Association's activities will be distributed on a regular basis.



Diyarbakir

Adrian Marsh, MA

The three open caves of Gypsy Culture in Granada 24. 11. 2006

It's said that people are hostile to what they don't understand, or in some cases simply what they do not know. For many it's the origin of racism and perhaps over the years it could be the reason why Gypsies have been marginalised in Spain. Therefore any initiative to help open up the mysteries of the **Calé** community in Spain must be congratulated. Sometimes the opening up comes from inside the community itself.

At the start of the nineties a group of Gypsy women from Granada formed themselves into an association called Romi. One of their main goals has been to set up a museum to explain the culture of the Gypsy woman, and now that goal has been achieved.

Three caves in the **Sacromonte** area of Granada now hold the very first museum to 'La Gitana' in Spain. Help from the regional government in the form of a 350,000 € grant has set up the centre, and the Mayor of Granada, **José Torres Hurtado**, has said that he hopes the centre will become a new tourist attraction for the city.

The first cave looks at the history of how the gypsies left India and were subjected to particular laws under the Catholic Kings here in Spain. For example a law in 1499 condemned them to a lifetime of slavery. In the 1800's they were still forbidden to speak in Caló or even wear their traditional dress.



Granada, Spain

The second cave concentrates on the activities of the women's group itself and looks at famous gypsies from history. You may be surprised to see references to **Charlie Chaplin** and **Elvis Presley** here.

The third cave has details of traditional gypsy health remedies handed down through the generations.

We send our congratulations to the Director of the Romi Association of Gypsy women in Granada, **Loli Fernandez**.

Food for Thought

Our food consists of spicy, piquant, hearty dishes. Hot **"Goulash"** is a known one. The Lovari Gypsies in Hungary eat this dish a lot.

Another Romani meal is **"Sarmi:"** Stuffed cabbage rolls with a richly spiced mince meat filling.

"Ankruste" are small baked cakes made with corn flour, flavoured with coriander and cumin seed.

"Jaxnija" is a thick, minced meat and bean soup.

"Haluski" is a potato and flour dough, sort of like dumplings, served with either cottage cheese, saurkraut or boiled cabbage. A trickle of spicy oil is poured over the dumplings before they're served.

"Pasvare" a typical Roma dish of ribs cooked in a spicy broth.

"Pufa", is a soda raised, flat bread, baked in a pan.

"Lamb Morenas" is a Kalderash dish consisting of small pieces of lamb cooked in a red, mildly spiced sauce with small peppers, green beans and other vegetables.

"Zigeunersalat or Gypsy Salad " Potatoes, peas, salami, Swiss cheese and sweet gherkins are coated in French dressing, piled atop a lettuce bed and topped with hard cooked eggs and anchovies in this distinctive dish."

"Chicken Paprikas" Tender pieces of chicken cooked in a spicy Paprikas sauce.

"Gypsy Cevapcici" Delicious, mildly spiced mini sausages served with a garnish of pickled onions, gherkins, olives and fresh bread.

"Kiralengi tyara (Cheese platter)" Tasty, Gouda, Swiss cheese and others served with a large piece of bread and a garnish of pickled onions, gherkin and pickles.

A really interesting dish for dessert is **"Poovengur drey a koori"**, which is a potato hollowed out and filled with jam baked in a tin can with the lid tightly on, in the ashes of the campfire.

Now, here's a specialty you won't see much of in Australia, **"Otchypudding"** and **"Jograys."**

Otchypudding is a pudding made with Hedgehog and **Jogray** is a Joey Gray, a traditional Gypsy stew that can be made with most meats; usually rabbit, but also eels.



Pasvare



Sarmi



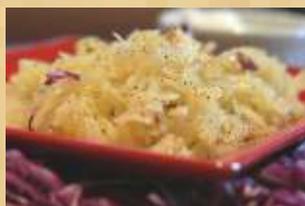
Goulash



Kiralengi tyara



Lamb Morenas



Haluski



Pufa



Chicken Paprikas



Gypsy Cevapcici



Gypsy Salad

Romani History

A new theory on Romani history based on ongoing research into recorded and factual evidence is being prepared by Ronald Lee and other scholars, including Ian Hancock, Marcel Cortiade and Adrian Marsh. Using language studies, blood groupings, DNA tests and the factual evidence in the writings of the period by Firdausi and other scholars at the Ghaznavid court of Mahmud and later, the Persians, Armenians, Turks and Greeks, the theory suggests that a group of Indians numbering in the thousands were taken out of India by Mahmud Ghazni in the early 11th century and incorporated as ethnic units, along with their camp followers, wives and families, to form contingents of Indian troops to serve in the Ghaznavid Emirate in Khurasan as ghazis and in the bodyguard of Mahmud and his successors. The existence of such troops is well documented in contemporary histories of the Ghaznavids, as is their participation in the battles in Khurasan. The theory goes on to explain that in 1040, the Ghaznavid empire was overthrown by the Seljuks and that the Indian contingency, numbering around some 60,000, were either forced to fight for the Seljuks and spearhead their advance in their raids into Armenia, or fled to Armenia to escape them. In any event, the Indians ended up in Armenia and later, in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rûm. These proto-Romanies remained in Anatolia for two to three hundred years and during that time they abandoned their military way of life and took up a nomadic lifestyle based on artisan work, trading, animal dealing and entertainment. Gradually, small groups wandered westwards across the Bosphorus to Constantinople and from there up into the Balkans to reach Central Europe by 1400, leaving local groups in all the regions they had passed through. Roma made their home in almost all countries of Europe where it has been, and still is, the failure of all of the governments of those countries to provide protection for Roma against persecution and massive discrimination by the police, local authorities and the local population that are the causes of the present conditions. Under the Geneva Convention on Refugees, this is tantamount to official persecution and allows Roma to seek refugee status in signatory countries. Little action is taken to prevent massive job discrimination in the workplace, housing and public sectors. In Romania and elsewhere, employment ads in the local papers are allowed to state: No Roma wanted or words to this effect. Roma are in effect living in a state of Apartheid in the New Democracies. In the Czech Republic signs appear in windows of discotheques, cinemas and restaurants stating: No dogs or Gypsies allowed! Now that Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland are EU members and the other new democracies

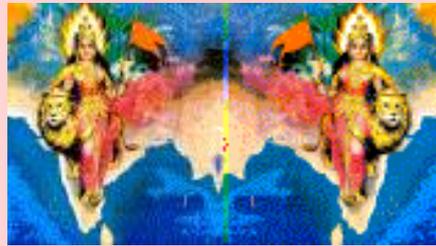


that have large Romani populations are in line for EU membership in the near future, it remains to be seen whether conditions will improve for the Roma, or will proposed improvements be endlessly delayed or even abandoned. If the evidence of the treatment of Roma in some of the long-established EU countries is any example, such as the deplorable refugee camps in Italy, the campsite problems in Britain, prejudice and actual persecution in Germany, Austria, France, Britain, Italy and elsewhere, the future of Sinti and Roma in Europe is not all that promising. The problem is not so much one of ethnic or national rights of Roma as minorities, where the present focus now lies, but of fundamental human rights as guaranteed under the United Nations Charter of Human Rights.

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Djurdjevdan (Hederlezi)

Hederlezi/Djurdjevdan or Hederlezi/Saint George's Day are celebrated together on the same day by Muslims and Christians. Halal lamb is served to the Muslims and regular lamb to the Christians at the same feast. In origin, neither Hederlezi nor Djurdjevdan are Muslim or Christian. Hederlezi is a pre-Christian Romani spring festival with roots in India, while Saint George is really Krishna by origin, the warrior knight figure, which Roma converted into Saint George in Byzantium, because of the Greek Icons showing St. George killing the dragon which they took to be the devil. Hence the word beng for devil, which means frog in India, as Romanies had no concept of the devil, invented by the Christians, when we first encountered Greek Orthodox Christianity. Spring water is said to have healing and protecting powers.

(Source: Ronald Lee)

On the 6th of May – the day of the celebration proper – all participants dress festively. Each Roma family should have bought at least one sheep, in order to be able to start with the preparations in the morning.



LACHO DROM