

## Filip Višnjić - The Serbian Homer



Filip Višnjić (actually Filip Vilic) was born in Gornja-Trnava in the Ottoman Empire in 1767. The blind Serb, who accompanied his poetry and epics on the Gusle, was celebrated as a song writer and singer. Best known is the painting by Josip Danilovac from 1901 shown on the Yugoslav postage stamp, which is ascribed the greatest resemblance to the singer.



Filip Višnjić joined the Serbian army and sang the heroic deeds of his compatriots for their moral support. Vuk Karadzic used a representation of the singer in the book "Narodne srpske pjesme" in 1823. The painting can be seen on the decorative field of the stamp from the Serbian Republic. The depiction on the stamp was created by Nebojsa Djumic in 2017.



Anastas Jovanovic painted the young Višnjić in 1848 among the Serbs (decorative label of the Europe stamp 1998).

The guslar playing music on the postage stamp from 1992 is a detail from an oil painting by Vlaho Bukavac from 1879.

Filip Višnjić, also known as the Serbian Homer, died in 1834 in the Serbian town Grk, which is now called Višnjićevo. The songs that have survived to this day include "Smrt Marka Kraljevica", "Pocetak bune na dahin" and "Knez Ivo Knezenik".



The gusle (also gusla or lahuta) was used in the Balkans as a traditional string instrument by the epic singers like Višnjić. The bowl-neck lute from the group of chordophones is played by bowing a horsehair string over a sound box made of maple wood.





Filip Višnjić was honored in many towns in Serbia and the Serb Republic in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Bijeljina the Guslar and his instrument were included in the coat of arms. In front of the national library that bears his name is the sculpture of the singer depicted on the ornamental field.

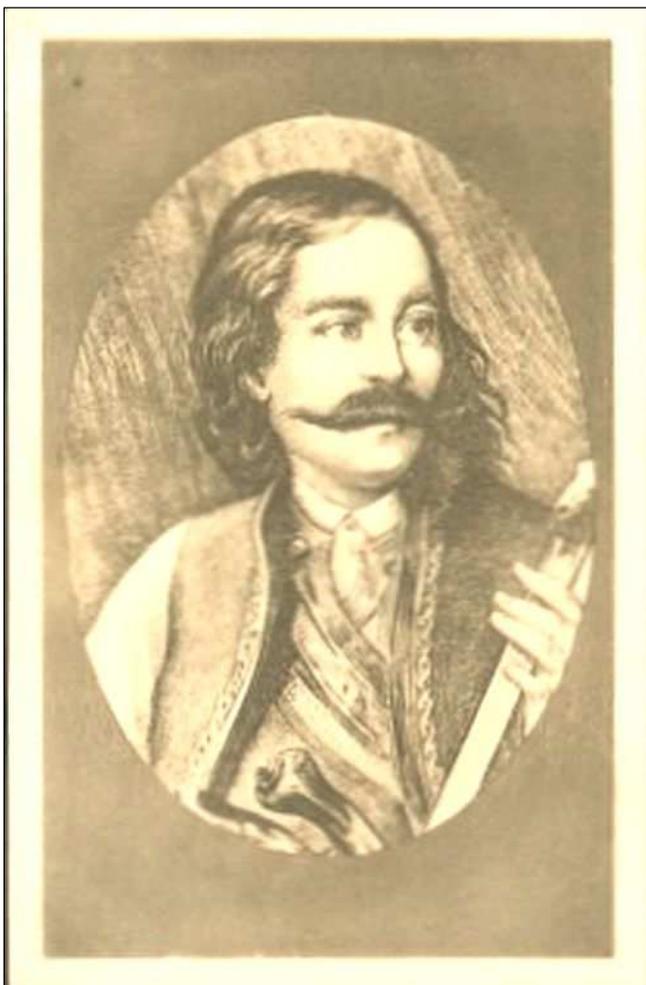


The grammar school in Bijeljina also got his name.



In the Serbian city of Krusevac, a sculpture by Filip Višnjić was placed on the base of the hero monument created in 1904 by Djordje Jovanovic. The design was awarded at the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris.

From 1941 to 1944 this sculpture was depicted on the 50 dinar note of the occupation paper money in Yugoslavia. From 2012 to 2019 a picture of Filip Višnjić adorned the banknote of 20 convertible marks. There was a gusle on the back of the banknote.



Stamps:

Bosnia Herzegovina 22.06.2018 (Michel 736);

Bosnia Herzegovina (Serbian Republic) 26.11.2007 (Michel 412), 29.05.2017 (Michel 721 + label), 19.09.2019 (Michel 811)

Yugoslavia 25.12.1954 (Michel 759), 02.10.1992 (Michel 2564), 04.05.1998 (label of Michel 2855)

Serbia 10.03.2020 (Michel 931).

Sources: V. M. Jovanovic „O liku Filipa Visnjica i drugih guslara Vukova vremena“ („About the character of Filip Višnjić and other guslars from Vuk's time“); several Wikipedia articles.