

FRANCE PREŠEREN, THE GREATEST POET OF THE SLOVENE NATION

France Prešeren was the greatest Slovene poet and has also been acknowledged by some as the greatest Slovene ^{writer} author. Born in Vrba in 1800, he ^{where?} was quite lucky ^{why?} to have a family that could provide him with a good education. Prešeren's talent for poetry ^{was not} had already been spotted in his childhood, and he was encouraged to develop his skills and learn languages like German and Latin.

When he was twelve years old, he was sent to Ljubljana to attend a gymnasium. There he became friends with Matija Čop, who would later become his tutor and one of his best friends. He then went on to study law in Vienna, although his mother's wish was for him to become a priest. During this time he wrote humorous poems, often filled with playful irony and mockery. His life was full of optimism, which ^{can be seen} showed in his poems. A lot of his work during that time is lost, since he often wrote short poems or lyrical anecdotes on small pieces of paper or napkins. Many of his poems from that period became popular, and two of those are *Povodni mož* ("The Water Man") and *Dekletom* ("To Maidens"). ^{why are these 2 poems special?}

After acquiring his law degree he returned to Ljubljana, where he applied several times for an independent law firm ^{not sure what you mean} but was always rejected. He lived in poverty and shame of his inability to be self-employed, which resulted in calmer, ^{but more} pessimistic poems, ^{including} such as one of his most important, *Slovo od mladosti* ("A Farewell to Youth"), in which he ^{proposes/declares} points out that youth is deceitful and only leading a man away from life's truths and corrupt qualities of the human society. Under the watchful eye of Matija Čop, and using stanza ^{into?}, he reached a level of poetry that could be found in literature everywhere across then literary developed Europe. That way ^{is} he entered Romanticism ^{was active in the} and with one of his greatest works, *Sonetje nesreče* ("Sonnet of Misfortune"), a cycle of six sonnets, criticized the way society treats poets and (those of a lesser social position). ^{the lower classes} From then on he is considered to be one of the greatest European Romantics, (along with Goethe, Byron and Pushkin, to name a few).

In 1833, he met Julija Primic and ^{immediately} at once fell in love with her, but since he was poor, she rejected him. Prešeren never truly ^{made peace with} accepted his unrequited love for her and continued to compose poems which praised her beauty and showed that he saw her in the best light possible. He dedicated one of the best works of his life to her, *Sonetni venec* ("Wreath of Sonnets"). It is truly a masterpiece, a ^{cycle?} crown of fifteen sonnets all linked by repeating lines and an acrostic that forms the words "Primicovi Julji" – "to Julija Primic".

The year 1835 was a horrible year for Prešeren – one of his best friends, Andrej Smole, died in the poet's arms, Julija Primic married a wealthy merchant, and his tutor and old friend Matija Čop died, drowning in the river Sava. Prešeren blamed Čop's death on himself, and having lost his tutor and advisor, he decided to dedicate an epic to him. The fruit of the poet's labor ^{was} resulted in *Krst pri Savici* ("Baptism on the Savica"), ^{the} Slovene national epic, which finally gave the Slovene nation an identity and recognition in broader Europe. ^{now considered}

Prešeren later went on to publish a complete collection of his poems, titled *Poezije* ("Poems"), which was issued in 1846 and has been translated into many languages, such as English, French, German, Serbian, Italian, Spanish and even Mandarin. ^{well-known?}

An interesting fact about Prešeren is that he was once so recognizable and admired among European Romantics the Germans claimed that he was of German origin and were very proud of what he'd ^{this work} done. Maybe they aren't to blame for being proud, since besides being a great scholar, a gentle, honorable and generous person, Prešeren was also a human link that brought

the Slovene people together and ^{re-}awoke a national ^{identity} awareness once again.

* he applied several times for a license to practice law independently?