

УДК 75.071.1 Радовић В.
75.071.1 Ракочевић С.
75.071.1 Филиповић В.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5937/bastina34-51627>

Прегледни рад

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CREATION OF VLADA RADOVIĆ, SAVO RAKOČEVIĆ AND VUK FILIPOVIĆ**

Abstract: The work presents prominent artists in Kosovo and Metohija – Vlada Radović, Savo Rakočević, Vuk Filipović. By examining the creativity of Vlado Radović, we can see that he visibly marked the emergence and development of contemporary Serbian fine arts and education in Kosovo and Metohija. Savo Rakočević, today one of the most famous contemporary Serbian painters, also achieved his creative beginnings in Kosovo and Metohija. Vuk Filipović was a prominent university professor and writer, but he also dedicated part of his creativity to painting.

Keywords: Kosovo and Metohija, contemporary Serbian painting, Vlada Radović, Savo Rakočević, Vuk Filipović.

Painting creativity that developed in the medieval period in the Kosovo-Metohija area was interrupted by the five-century Ottoman rule. After liberation from the pressure of the Ottoman Empire, and especially after the Second World War, Kosovo painting experienced its new beginning and gradually developed to its unique intensities and breadths (Goči 1988: 41).

After the Second World War, artistic art education began in Peć in Kosovo and Metohija, where Vlada Radović, as a creator and educator, made a significant contribution.¹ He established himself as an artist in Kosovo and Metohija in the time after the Second World War. Immediately after the events of the war in 1947, he became a member of ULUS (Muharremi 1988: 17-32.). Vlada Radović was the first of the Serbian artists to hold a solo exhibition in Kosovo and Metohija, in Peć in 1948 (Muharremi 1986: 17-32). The art critic Muharemi concludes that after 1950, Radović's creativity became richer and more diverse, starting from the study of nudes to compositions in which the first signs of intimacy can be seen (Muharremi 1986: 29,89).

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** The paper was written as part of the scientific research work of NIO according to the Agreement concluded with the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the RS number: 451-03-66/2024-03 dated 01.26.2024.

1 Vladimir Vlada Radović (1901–1986) was born in Peć and is one of the first contemporary painters in Kosovo and Metohija. He worked at the High School for Applied Arts in Peja since its foundation. He was an outstanding cultural worker in the province. He exhibited several times independently and in groups in the country and abroad. He is the winner of several awards for artistic creativity (Muharremi 1986: 17–32).

His creativity was multimedia and at the same time nurtured the artist's sense of belonging to the Serbian cultural identity. Multimedia art aspires to erase the borders between media, technologies and life, and as such is present in Radović's artistic being, with which he refined and synthesized his basic life and philosophical-artistic determinations. The creativity of the artist during the development and creative beginnings and his interest in different media of expression is evidenced by the fact that in the second grade of high school, Radović sent poems and reports printed in youth magazines, which were published in Skopje. After the Second World War, he wrote humor and satires published in "Jedinstvo" and "Rilindia". In his town, he also organized the "Skaut" society, the forerunner of the later Mountaineering Society "Deravica" in Peć (Muharremi 1986: 19).

Vlada Radović is a painter who painted portraits and landscapes with great dedication and attention, remaining faithful to the traditional realist and post-impressionist creative expression. This watercolorist, mostly of reflective feelings, in his works represented the common man and the nature of his homeland with all its beauty. Radović's artistic creation is the embodiment of the spirit and the representation of a time. This fine artist and painting pedagogue was joined by several contemporaries, artists from Kosovo, "[...] who raised painting as an art in terms of author-aesthetic values and characteristics, shaped it as an autochthonous art with native content and a universal expression and message" (Goči 1988: 41).

In a conversation with Zvonko Pavličić, an academic painter and art historian, Radović expressed his basic philosophical and aesthetic views on art and life (Tubić 2007: 88). This interview is not only a personal autobiographical confession of a visual artist and cultural creator, but reaches the level of artistic discourse realized through the dialogue of two theoreticians and interpreters of the basic ontological values of art. Summarizing the conversation with the painter, Pavličić made a short and succinct conclusion: "Through his eighty-two-year journey through artistic labyrinths, he permanently marked the origin and development of our contemporary art" (Tubić 2007: 88).

The largest number of Radović's paintings were created in the watercolor technique. There are few Serbian painters who favored the watercolor technique to such an extent as Vlado Radović. Watercolor allowed him the greatest painting/creative freedom, immediacy and quick realization of what he perceived. He rarely used other painting techniques, among which pastel should be mentioned. As for drawing techniques, he often used charcoal, graphite and felt-tip pen. As a watercolorist, he had no immediate role models, but rather independently, individualistically, in the eternal search for the secret of art, he came to his poetics and painterly poetics realized with the technique of "water colors". It is necessary to emphasize that a watercolor by the famous and world-famous French sculptor Auguste Rodin, seen on one of Radović's many study trips, left a strong impression on his determination and acceptance of that painting technique (Tubić 2007: 89; Muharremi 1988: 30-31).

The medieval artistic heritage of Kosovo and Metohija, with its representative examples of sacral architecture, plastic and painting, was deeply rooted in the individual identity of Vlade Radović. This tradition is also present in the theme of his painting.

The architecture of the Kosovar ethnos, as well as the motifs of numerous fortifications, which completed Metohija's landscapes, can also be found in Radović's artistic creations. The tower is an architectural form that Radović often encountered, its stone, massive walls represented defense, stronghold and security in the troubled times of the history of these regions. Cold stone towers, ruined facades, bare and open structures attracted the attention of creators. The narrow cobbled streets of Peć, authentic architecture of houses with ethnographic originality and primordial strength, mimickingly merged with the surroundings and lush vegetation, vines, flower yards with wells, become an integral part of Radović's thematic commitment (Tubić 2007: 89). And the Albanian art critic Muharremi writes that Vlado Radović is a painter of his climate with extraordinary motifs and characters, which resulted " [...] in his landscapes and portraits with a specific and recognizable note". He intensively paints the Dečane monastery, the Peć Patriarchate, the Virgin of Ljeviška and other motifs from Metohija, which completes his pictorial experience of the environment and the reality that surrounds him (Muharremi 1988: 91).

The cultural heritage of the towns of Metohija, urban environments and their picturesque surroundings left a strong impression on Radović. Successful modeling is solved, first of all, by color relationships, valerian gradations, as well as by insisting on light-dark contrast. Vlada Radović's line has coloristic values. The plasticity of the physiognomy of the face is softened, which was all achieved with direct and broad strokes, which gave off modern immediacy and quick painterly observation. The composition indicates the possibility that the painting "Self-Portrait" was made on the basis of a photographic cliché, which points to another important moment in Radović's work, which is the syncretic relationship and creative interweaving of his work with the art of photography. Reflecting directly through Radović as an artist, the harmony of the Metohija landscape is represented in most of his paintings. There is the Bistrica, Rugovska gorge, the fertility and tameness of the Metohija basin, which is contrasted with the beauty of the Prokletije wilderness. Radović, a painter of immense sensibility, establishes an intimate dialogue with nature, a kind of empathy and an archetypal connection beyond the awareness of time. The artist represented the missionary and progenitor of Kosovo-Metohija modernism (Tubić 2007: 89-90).

Sava Rakočević, a rebellious young artist² from Peć, was a pioneer among artists whose canvases featured topics from Serbian national culture. He was an artist

2 Sava Rakočević was born in 1933 in Peć. He finished elementary school in his hometown. In 1950, when he was in the third grade of the Gymnasium, he lost his real education in Yugoslavia because of his dissident views. Thanks to the support of the painter Lazar Ličenoski, in 1954 he enrolled in the Art School in Skopje, which he successfully completed. He graduated in Belgrade in 1960 in Vinko Grdan's class as the best student at the Academy of Applied Arts. He is the winner of the first prizes at the festivals of young artists of Serbia and Montenegro: in Pančevo in 1959 and in Leskovac in 1960. In the 1950s, works dedicated to Kosovo Metohija motifs were created in the Impressionist spirit; the landscapes of old Pristina, which no longer exist, are preserved on Rakočević's canvases. The mosaic in the "Kosovo Peony" hotel in Pristina, with the image of a Kosovar girl with peonies, was made in 1965; due to social changes in the country, it is covered with plaster. The Association of Artists of Kosovo and Metohija awarded him an award for painting in 1962. In constant conflict with the ideology of the government, Rakočević left the country in 1966 and went to Chicago. His first works in America and Canada were iconostasis and mosaics in the Byzantine style.

who painted Kosovo Testament motifs with an impressionistic approach. His paintings often feature Kosovo landscapes. Dealing with issues related to Serbian cultural identity in the 1950s in Kosovo and Metohija was neither a simple nor a rewarding task.

Writing about Rakočević's creativity, Zoran Gluščević concludes that the artist learned the artistic process and technique in his hometown (in Metohija), i.e. the art of reproducing conventional artistic and visual form, transforming it into a stylized one (Gluščević 2001: 17). This skill also came from the centuries-old art tradition of Kosovo and Metohija, where significant Serbian monasteries and churches preserved the Byzantine way of stylization in their frescoes and icons. The artist was born and grew up in such an environment, rich in artistic and architectural creations, spending considerable time in famous medieval monasteries. Therefore, it influenced and awakened the tendency in him to look at life in a special way, which he will constantly portray through fine art. The beginnings of Rakočević's creativity can be brought into the context of the young man's critical reflection on events from his immediate environment. Sava Rakočević is an artist who at no time reconciled with the "difficult" position of his people in Kosovo and Metohija and the "threatened" understanding of the importance of this area for Serbian cultural identity. Rakočević is aware of the significance and importance of Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian history, culture and art, as well as the importance of the Kosovo Testament (Gluščević 2001: 17).

According to Dragoljub Stojadinović, Rakočević's highlights as the dominant part of this artistic memory date back to his high school days in Peć, when, in accordance with his own youthful rebellion, Stojadinović painted caricatures of the then revolutionary leaders of Yugoslavia (2006: 37). In addition to painting them with a caricature grotesque emphasis, he actively shared the same drawings around the school, trying to animate other peers to understand the artificial halos, with which those leaders imposed their ruling charisma (Stojadinović 2006: 37).

Even in the first phase of his creativity, Rakočević created the painting "Houses Extinguished" (1954). Soon after that, the oil on canvas "At Gazimestan, a monument to Kosovo's heroes" was created (1957). The work represents the artist's view of this historical space and its importance for the culture and history of the Serbian people. Sava Rakočević actually painted a monument around which the tradition and historical memory of the Serbian people gather. It is important to keep in mind the following fact: the creation of this picture is related to the time when the story of Kosovo's heroes was not emphasized, but systematically suppressed, especially in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija. With the painting "At Gazimestan, a monument to the heroes of Kosovo", the author simultaneously expressed his own connection with the national spirit from the glorious past of the Serbian people, but also his artistic courage, which ensured his work a guarantee of durability and authenticity within the framework of world artistic heritage.

According to Zoran Gluščević, the vivid and emotional colors in Rakočević's painting "Houses Extinguished" reflected a balance with the unpleasant fact that Serbian fireplaces are continuously extinguished in Kosovo and Metohija (Gluščević

2001: 8). It is clear that the disappearance of Serbian life in the southern Serbian province also brings the extinction of Serbian culture in this area. At the same time, the following two paintings by Sava Rakočević were created: “Stara Peć” and “Motif from Kosovo”, in which similar intensities of the joy of life and lyrical vibrancy are present, which flow from the artist’s inexhaustible treasury of childhood. “The work is not only a visual impression and a record, it raises questions of meaning and participation in the riddle of life’s essence, which is not only used by the medium of art, but that medium gives birth to it as a sensation and an experience” (Gluščević 2001: 8).

Among the first Serbian creators who independently exhibited in Kosovo and Metohija was Vukašin Vuk Filipović (1930-1990), a prominent writer and literary critic, professor at the University of Prishtina (Kocriћ 2013: VII). He organized two solo exhibitions of watercolors in 1957 and 1960 in the Foyer of the Provincial National Theater in Pristina. They were one of the first independent art exhibitions in Kosovo and Metohija. Vuk Filipović also dealt with art criticism, he wrote a text on the occasion of the first independent exhibition of Svetomir Arsić Basara in Prishtina in 1961. In the text, Filipović recognizes the artist’s qualities and hints at his future great achievements (Ђорђевић 2003: 211). Later, Basara wrote about Filipović: “He flew like a comet from the Kosovo-Metohija sky, lit up like a meteor with all his brilliance and left a deep, striking and indelible mark in his time and in his people (drawings, plays, paintings, short stories, novels, essays and exhaustive studies on our writers and poets)” (Arsić 2002: 19).

The beginnings of contemporary art in Kosovo and Metohija are related to the period after the Second World War. Then comes the beginnings of education in the field of fine arts. Vlada Radović, Sava Rakočević and Vuk Filipović are among the first Serbian artists in the province at this time. They marked the beginnings of Serbian artistic creation in a difficult time, which were later continued by artists inspired by their work.

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Звездана М. ЕЛЕЗОВИЋ

СТВАРАЛАШТВО ВЛАДЕ РАДОВИЋА, САВЕ РАКОЧЕВИЋА
И ВУКА ФИЛИПОВИЋА

РЕЗИМЕ

У раду се говори о истакнутим ликовним ствараоцима на Косову и Метохији, може се рећи да се почеци савремене ликовне уметности на Косову и Метохији везују за период после Другог светског рата, говори се о Влади Радовићу, Саву Ракочевићу и Вуку Филиповићу. Увидом у стваралаштво Владе Радовића, можемо уочити да је он видно обележио настанак и развој савремене српске ликовне уметности и образовања на Косову и Метохији. Своје стваралачке почетке на Косову и Метохији је остварио и Сава Ракочевић, данас један од најпознатијих савремених српских сликара. Вук Филиповић је био истакнути универзитетски професор и књижевник али је део свог стваралаштва посветио и сликарству.

Кључне речи: савремени српски сликар и амерички сликар, Влада Радовић, Саво Ракочевић, Вук Филиповић.