

KAJ BO Z GRADIVOM PROFESORJA CHRISTIANA ZA MONOGRAFIJO O LOUISU ADAMIČU

Tine T. Kurent

Profesor Christian, klical sem ga Henry, je bil nazadnje v Ljubljani zgodaj poleti 1994. Takrat je najino preliminarno poročilo o Vankovem kolažu *Videnje druge svetovne vojne* že bilo v tisku, zato nisem več mogel vnesti njegovega podatka, kaj je Adamič pisal o Douglasu Chandlerju. Tekst sem mu lahko prebral le iz tipkopisa. Menil je, da ga mora vključiti v končno razpravo: »*I will need it for the reference.*« Mene pa je zanimala velikost kolaža. Vankova žena Margaret, njen oče dr. DeWitt Stetten in njena prijateljica Stella, žena Louisa Adamiča, so bili namreč Judje, zato sem pričakoval v dimenzijah kolaža gematrična sporočila. S številkami v merah (v inčih) mi je lahko takoj postregel, o drugih podatkih mi je obljubil dolgo pismo, obenem pa je želel, naj mu napišem vse povedano. Peljal sem ga po Ljubljani, da je fotografiral spomenik Ivanu Adamiču in Rudolfu Lundru, poljansko gimnazijo, na kateri se je šolal Louis Adamič, in še kaj. Naslednjega dne je odletel domov; spotoma mi je iz Londona poslal kartico s pozdravi in obljubo »*my long letter follows*«.

Najin članek je kmalu izšel,¹ poslal sem mu ga, prav tako pa tudi dve dolgi pismi s podatki, ki so ga zanimali. Od njega pa nič. Tudi na novoletno čestitko ni odgovoril. Zato mu za naslednji božič nisem več pisal.

Medtem sem objavil dopolnilo, kdo je bil Vankov in Adamičev Chandler.² Resignirano sem se že sprijaznil s tem, da z najino razpravo ne bo nič –

¹ Henry A. Christian, Tine T. Kurent, Kolaž Maksimilijana Vanke »Videnje druge svetovne vojne«, *Zbornik občine Grosuplje*, 18 (1994), str. 221–223.

² T. Kurent, Vankov in Adamičev Chandler: Dogodek iz njune borbe proti nacizmu in antisemitizmu, *Zbornik občin Grosuplje, Ivančna gorica, Dobrepolje*, 19 (1996), str. 209.

mislil sem si, da je pač našel novo zanimanje, ko mi je čez par let pozno ponoči prinesel sel pismo (*Extremely urgent*) s končno redakcijo najine razprave o Vankovem kolažu in tremi sporočili.

Sporočilo z dne 30. junija je cirkular, namenjen vsem, ki jim zadnji dve leti ni pisal (**priloga 1**). Sporočilo, napisano 15. julija (**priloga 2**), je kopija prijave najine razprave urednici revije *Art in America*,³ sporočilo z datumom 16. julija pa je bilo namenjeno meni (**priloga 3**). Sporoča, da bilo leto 1995 izgubljeno leto – svojo bolezen je omenil že na prejšnjem listu. Pomemben se mi zdi odstavek, kjer mi sporoča, kako je poskrbel za redakcijo in dokončanje svojega pisanja o življenju in delu Louisa Adamiča:

*Obstaja možnost, da bo nekdo – sicer kvalificiran, vendar ne ravno literarno – sposoben prevzeti vse moje delo. Če bo šlo po sreči, bo dobil vse moje trakove, na katerih razlagam svoje še ne napisane poglede na Louisa in njegovo življenje; dobil bo vse moje gradivo in zapiske, tako da bo zgodba končno in tudi korektno le povedana. Bomo videli, vendar če bo kaj iz tega, boš zagotovo vključen in se boš dobil z njim in tako naprej.*⁴

Henryjevo pismo me je razžalostilo. Prijatelj mi umira in objava dela o stricu Louisu se ustavlja, če ne celo izgublja. Obenem pa mi je naložil delo za objavo najine razprave:

Verjamem, da je najin članek zdaj kar dober in kompleten; poskusil sem vključiti kar precej iz najine krajše verzije in dati temu vso moč, ki po mojem iz njega izhaja. Zdaj pa prepuščam tebi, da ga spraviš pod streho...

Računal sem, da bi bile za objavo najprimernejše *Likovne besede*, ki prinašajo tekste v angleščini s slovenskim prevodom in ilustracije v barvah. Dr. Jaka Bonča, ki je bil tam sourednik, mi je obljubil, da bo razprava izšla že v prvi številki, že decembra. Vse to sem sporočil Henryju, da bi ga razveselil. Pa sem se veselil prezgodaj.

Henry mi je odgovoril šele 12. avgusta (**priloga 4**), da ga bolezen ovira pri pisanju. Dovoljuje mi, da razpravo priredim za tisk: »Napiši, prosim, kakršno koli obliko ali različico, ki bi jo rad videl, da pride v omenjene publikacije, revidiraj, kot se ti zdi prav.«

³ Christianu je bilo očitno mnogo do tega, da razprava izide, če ne v ZDA, pa pri nas ali na Hrvaškem, v angleščini ali pa v slovenščini. Razlagal mi je, da je Vankov kolaž *Videnje druge svetovne vojne* zanimiv kot simbol za ameriške Jude toliko kot Picasso-va *Guernica* za antifašistični svet. Za nas je zanimiv tudi zaradi Adamiča.

⁴ To je moj prevod; tudi naslednje angleške citate sem prevedel v slovenščino. T. K.

Ko že druga številka revije *Likovne besede* ni prinesla najine razprave, sem prosil uredništvo, naj mi tipkopis in ilustracije vrne, ker sem se bal nadaljnega zavlačevanja. Urednik g. Ložar se je ljubeznivo opravičil za zamujanje, napol obljubil, da bi razpravo le objavil, če je drugje ne bi marali, in predlagal, naj mu ob priliki pošljem še kaj. Ker sem se bal podaljšanega zavlačevanja, sem ponudil delo reviji *Dve domovini*. Dr. Janja Žitnik me je razveselila z obljubo takojšnje objave. Rad bi poslal Henryju natisnjeno razpravo čimprej, škoda samo, ker revija *Dve domovini* ne objavlja ilustracij v barvah.

Barvno reprodukcijo Vankovega kolaža je objavila pozneje gospa Alenka Puhar v *Delu* s pripombo, da je ta »ganljivi *hommage* tu prvokrat objavljen v barvah; podrobna razprava o sliki s črnobelimi ilustracijami pa je objavljena v zborniku *Dve domovini*, 1997.«⁵ O Maksu Vanki poudarja, da »je bil hrvaški slikar, tudi profesor na akademiji v Zagrebu, torej je učil tudi večino slovenskih slikarjev, rojenih na začetku stoletja.«⁶

Razpravo sem mu poslal, kakor hitro je izšla, toda profesor Christian je 4. aprila 1997 umrl,⁷ ne da bi videl natisa najine razprave. Potrdila o prejemu nisem dobil, prav tako ne za dva nekrologa. Zaskrbelo me je, da je delo na monografiji Louisa Adamiča ne samo zastalo, ampak da je na ameriški strani najbrž celo izgubljeno. Kdo ga bo nadaljeval? Kdo naših raziskovalcev? Profesor Janez Stanonik, dr. Janja Žitnik, profesor Matjaž Klemenčič?

Molk z one strani luže je trajal vse do pomladi 1999, ko mi je Henryjeva hčerka Judith pisala, da je na prošnjo profesorja Rudolpha Vecolija poslala vse gradivo, ki ga je zbral Henry o Adamiču, ustanovi *Immigration History Research Center* Univerze v Minnesoti (IHRC) s prošnjo, naj dovolim, da izroči tudi moja pisma. Ponudila mi je, da mi pošlje nekaj Adamičevih knjig iz zapuščine. Zaskrbelo pa me je njeno pisanje, da je Henry naročil uničiti »vse njegovo znanstveno pisanje«. To pomeni, da Henry ni poskrbel, da bi nekdo – čeprav ne šolan literarno – mogel nadaljevati (njegovo) delo,« kot mi je obljubil. Komentar Miss Judith ga kaže drugačnega, kot sem ga videl sam.

Judith sem odgovoril, da je njena odločitev, da prepusti gradivo profesor-

⁵ A. Puhar, V Adamičevi orbiti: Med tovarišem in gospodom je velika razlika, *Delo*, 3. september 1998, str. 11.

⁶ Ne Vanka kot eden naših učiteljev ne njegov kolaž očitno za *Likovne besede* nista zanimiva.

⁷ J. Stanonik, In Memoriam Henry A, Christian, *Acta neophilologica*, 30 (1997), str. 3–5.

ju Vecoliju, pravilna, razen če se sama ne bo lotila urejanja očetovih papirjev. Ali ni imel Henry v mislih prav nje kot urednice njegovega dela o Adamiču? Zaprošil sem jo tudi, naj mi pošlje vsaj kopije, ki so v zvezi z Adamičem. Gradivo za Adamičevo biografijo me zanima, najbrž pa tudi celo vrsto naših institucij, na primer Rokopisni oddelek NUK, Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo ZRC SAZU, nenazadnje Adamičev muzej v Prapročah.

Odpisala mi je 21. aprila 1999, da mojih separatov in nekrologov ni dobila, da je njen oče nameraval prepustiti gradivo profesorju Tomu Evertu, ponovno obljubila pošiljko knjig, dovolila objavo Christianovega pisanja in obljubila, da bo sporočila mojo prošnjo za kopije gradiva profesorju Vecoliju. Poslala mi je tudi naslov Vankove hčerke Peggy.

Takoj sem ji poslal separate in kopije objav v zvezi s Henryjem,⁸ podobno tudi na naslov Peggy Vanka.⁹ Obema sem tudi obljubil separat o gematričnih sporočilih v Vankovem kolažu. Medtem sem namreč kolaž decifriral in poslal razpravo v angleščini in slovenščini *Likovnim besedam* – revija objavlja dvojezične razprave – z upanjem, da bo vsaj zdaj objavljen Vankov kolaž v barvah. Urednika sta moje delo prijazno sprejela, čez čas pa sta mi ga vrnila, ker so »sklenili, da ga ne bomo objavili.«¹⁰

V svoji zahvali mi je Vankova hči Miss Peggy Brasko sporočila, da bo prihodnje leto spomladi retrospektiva Vankovih del v muzeju Michener v Doylestownu v Pennsylvaniji, Christianov in moj članek o Vankovem kolažu da je sprejet v katalog razstave.

⁸ H. A. Christian, T. Kurent, Reading a Painting: Maxo Vanka's Collage »World War II«, *Dve domovini/Two Homelands*, 8 (1997), str. 89–105; T. Kurent, Vankov in Adamičev Chandler: Dogodek iz njune borbe proti nacizmu in antisemitizmu, gl. op. 2; H. A. Christian, T. T. Kurent, Kolaž Maksimiliana Vanke »Videnje druge svetovne Vojne«, gl. op. 1; H. A. Christian, T. Kurent, Louis Adamič in Makso Vanka proti antisemitskemu propagandistu, *2000 Dvatisoč*, št. 96/97, 1997, str. 235–240; T. Kurent, In memoriam: Henry A. Christian, 1931–1997, *Rodna gruda*, julij 1997, str. 40; Popravek (Errata), *Rodna gruda*, avg.–sept. 1997, str. 41; T. Kurent, Odšli so. Umrl je Henry A. Christian, *Zbornik občine Grosuplje*, 20 (1998), str. 215; A. Puhar, Med tovarišem in gospodom je velika razlika, gl. op. 5; J. Stanonik, In Memoriam Henry A. Christian, gl. op. 7.

⁹ Enako kot v op. 8, razen objav T. Kurenta v *Rodni grudi* in *Zborniku občine Grosuplje*.

¹⁰ Pozneje so mi povedali, da je odklonil objavo dr. Jure Mikuž, ki da »ima čez vso likovno umetnost od arhitekture do slikarstva.« Potolazili pa so me, da ne gre za nasprotovanje niti Louisu Adamiču niti Maksimilijanu Vanki.

Profesor Rudolph Vecoli, ki vodi Immigration History Research Center Univerze v Minnesoti, me je formalno zaprosil, naj jim dovolim vključiti v Christianovo-Adamičevo gradivo tudi moja pisma, in mi sporočil dve pomembni obvestili. Prvič, da bomo dobili kopije gradiva o Adamiču, kar ga je zbral Henry, in drugič, da namerava njegov *Center* ustanoviti sklad za slovensko-ameriške študije pri IHCR, ga formalno poimenovati po Adamiču in Christianu in tako omogočiti raziskovalcem študij slovenskoameriške zgodovine in kulture. Obenem obljublja, da bomo dobili kopijo inventarja s popisom vsega gradiva v zvezi s Slovenijo in Adamičem.

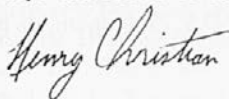
Drugo obvestilo, da namerava IHRC ustanoviti sklad za študij slovenskega izseljenstva v Ameriki, je širšega značaja. Sklad »*A Fund for Slovene-American Studies*« bo za svoje delo potreboval sredstva. V zvezi s tem je Vecolijev poziv za sodelovanje pri financiranju Sklada.

O vsem tem obveščam slovensko javnost s tem poročilom. Prvotno sem nameraval objaviti faksimile obeh pisem Miss Judith Christian in pisma profesorja Vecolija ter jih tudi komentirati, toda doslej še nisem dobil njenega dovoljenja za objavo. Ker je profesor formalno prosil, naj jim dovolim objavljati svoja pisma profesorju Christianu, menim, da moram tudi sam zaprositi za njuno dovoljenje. Profesorju Vecoliju sem odpisal, da bom seznanil vse, ki bi jih njegov načrt za ustanovitev študijskega sklada Adamič/Christian lahko zanimal, in ga prosil, naj mi dovoli objaviti njegovo pismo. Enako sem prosil tudi Judith Christian. Vecoliju sem zaenkrat poslal Adamičeve znamke in se mu zahvalil za vse, kar dela v spomin na mojega pokojnega strica Louisa in pokojnega prijatelja Henryja. Ko nas je obiskal predsednik Clinton, je bil obnovljen sporazum o znanstvenem in tehnološkem sodelovanju med RS in ZDA. Zdaj upam, da bo Adamičev življenjepis le prišel do zaključka in objave.

30 June, 1996

About 1 March it seemed a very good idea to write a short Christmas message to persons who had not received a holiday greeting from me; I quickly realized that group could include those who had not had a message even for two years, and--why not?--some to whom I never sent such messages even though my affection and friendship for them was in no way in question. About 1 May this methodology appeared even more useful. If I worked quickly I could parallel a moment for those who still saw May Day through Hawthorne's May: Pole eyes, those who still cared about Red May Day, and/or those who perhaps once did but preferred May 4 or did honestly not give a damn about May at all except that it is "a long, long time" between then and December. Now, approaching 4 July Independence Day, writing this seems most necessary as I combat in the best manner I can this aggressive cancer which so suddenly is stealing my life.

So to you--dear, old, new friend and/or colleague (thus the letterhead which may not apply or appeal to some)--mid-year joy for the seasons past and with hope the season to come.



435 Wyoming Ave.
Millburn, New Jersey 07041
U.S.A.

Priloga 1: S pismom dne 30. junija 1996 je prof. Henry Christian sporočil vsem, ki jim zadnji čas ni pisal niti za božič, da se bori z rakom.

15 July, 1996

Elizabeth C. Baker
Editor
Art in America
575 Broadway
New York, New York 10012

Dear Elizabeth C. Baker:

We send here an article titled "Reading a Painting: Maxo Vanka's Collage 'World War II'" which we believe is the kind of piece in which readers of Art in America will be interested. Included with a reproduction of the collage and two detail portions of segments 1 and 5 as noted on page 12 of the manuscript are three examples of what we call Vanka's "unknown" sketches, and the Paris-shape view. We can also supply additional slides and prints if needed.

We shall be very grateful for any consideration you and your staff will give this article. We feel Vanka needs to be "recorded" in some more certain manner than thus far and ask therefore that should you find this article does not meet your needs you at least consider our writing another piece stating these unknown categories and using perhaps six to eight other illustrations.

About the authors:

Henry A. Christian is Professor of English and American Culture and Director of the Program in Graduate Liberal Studies at the Newark Campus of Rutgers University. His publications include Louis Adamic: A Checklist, Selected Letters of Louis Adamic published in Slovene, The City in Literature: An Introduction, and articles on Adamic and other American writers published in the United States, the Netherlands, Japan, and the Republic of Slovenia.

Tine Kurent is the nephew of the Slovene born American writer Louis Adamic and Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He was educated in Belgrade, Ljubljana, London, and Athens. He has lectured in Yugoslavia, Italy, Java, U.S.A., and Cyprus, and has published articles on architecture, the modular aspects of Roman construction, theory of composition, and especially the work of the Slovene architect Jože Plečnik in scholarly journals in Europe and Asia. His The Slovene Insurance House: Plečnik's Symbols: 1900-1990 appeared in 1990. He and Henry A. Christian have previously published an article on a John Ross collagraph view of the City of Ljubljana and the very short article on this collage mentioned in the footnotes to this submission.

Thank you again for your attention.

Yours truly,

Better summer address and phone:
435 Wyoming Avenue, Millburn, N.J. 07041
201-379-1058


Henry A. Christian

Priloga 2: Henry Christian ponuja razpravo *Reading a Painting: Maxo Vanka's Collage 'World War II'* reviji *Art in America*.

16 July, 1996

Prof. Tine Kurent
Igriška 12
Ljubljana
Republic of Slovenia

Dear Tine,

I am sorry this has taken so long, but 1995 was a lost year for me and the other sheet tells you about this year. I believe our article is now very fine and complete; I tried to incorporate much of our lesser version and then give this all the power I believe it generates. I now leave it to you to market the piece, hopefully in an English version somewhere. You might end up in Slovene; then I would think possibly it could go into a Croatian journal if you can manage that and are willing. I am also sending it here to Art in America and will worry about double submissions in English if and when that happens. I am happy with this; it may be among my best work with you there too, though perhaps the idea that it may be my last work is exercising some influence. Actually I have arranged to do about three or four articles right here from the house, and one is the opening speech from 1981 for Acta with some few revisions. It is still a very good paper that one from Minnesota--oh, wasn't that all so long ago and don't I regret so much between then and now.

There is the possibility that someone--qualified but not literary exactly--may be able to take over all my work. If it goes right, he will have tapes from me spelling out my not written down insights into Louis and his life; and he will have all my materials and notes, so perhaps the story will be finally told, and correctly. We shall see, but if anything does come of this, you will be involved most certainly and probably meet him and so on.

If you need more prints, so on for the article, let me know. I wish I could go to Munchen and then on Adria to that little field and end up at the Union. Perhaps so day yet...

Zdravo, Tine



12 August, 1996

Professor Tine T. Kurent
 Igriška 12
 1000 Ljubljana
 Slovenia

*I read these expecting
 you more for safety than for
 speed.*

Dear Tine,

Thank you for your two letters. My medical treatments do not allow me to always answer when and how that I wish, but just now I have both some strength and some freedom from drugs to do some real work.

As to Chandler and the first article. That first article was a primary speculation, much like first viewing the collage. Therefore, as I say in note 8, the final article contains several speculations made earlier and able to be discarded as more information unfolds, just as the collage is a very private matter for the three families and then explodes into world-wide meaning because of what Chandler does after the collage has been painted.

Please write any form or version you wish to go into those publications you mentioned, revising as you think fit. I would hold back on giving the piece to Acta--because it is about Vanka, after all, and because I hope soon to send Acta that Symposium speech. I doubt they would want to have two items and I don't want them to have the chance to make a choice.

I too want to see this article in the American journal, but the editor's office said they were far behind on their schedule and a decision would not come quickly--I had hoped it would--and of course it is really a very far hope that they will take the piece; we should be very happy and lucky to have it appear here.

These three copies I send here are $\times \frac{1}{2}$ hope a bit darker, but the original is in New York. Perhaps I should try copies that are larger; that may make the light letters more clear.

Tahara has written me too; I must tell him that Rogelj was the Adamic Memorial Foundation and that there is no means of support for him from such a source. I do not know what he means about "the list of L.A. books to be published for the centennial of Adamic's birthday" or the introduction he believes I will write. I have to ask him; I haven't a lot of space to do such writing. Is such new editions what you refer to in the October 2, 1994 passages about Vida Tomšič?

I do not understand about the Slovenski biografski leksikon; they wrote me a year or so ago asking about my father and mother and so on--information which I supplied. What should I do now? I really had hoped to be in that volume.

I tire now, so Zdravo!



Priloga 4: Zadnje Christianovo pismo 12. avgusta 1996 je narekovala skrb za razpravo o Vankovem kolažu.

SUMMARY

**ABOUT THE MATERIAL COMPILED
BY PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN
FOR A MONOGRAPH ON LOUIS ADAMIC**

Tine T. Kurent

His premature death prevented Professor Henry A. Christian from publishing his monograph on life and work of Louis Adamic. However, he has left a rich legacy – his research material of Adamiciana – as a basis for the continuation of his work. His daughters, Judith Christian and Carolyn Needham, have donated his papers to the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) at the University of Minnesota. Professor Rudolph J. Vecoli, head of the IHRC, has added the new acquisition to the archives of the IHRC, and established a fund for Slovene-American studies. This fund would provide research assistance for graduate students, either American or Slovene, who would help process Slovene-American materials in the IHRC, including the Christian papers, and at the same time, pursue graduate studies related to Slovene-American history and culture. Professor Vecoli informed me that it seemed appropriate to him that such a fund should bear the name »The Louis Adamic/Henry Christian Fund for Slovene American Studies«, and added the appeal for contributions to the fund, both in Slovenia and the United States. By acquiring the Henry Christian Papers, which complement the extensive IHRC holdings of Adamic and Slovene-American materials, and by establishing the Adamic/Christian Fund, a major center for Slovene-American studies will be created.