

THE RELEVANCE OF LOUIS ADAMIC IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Janja ŽITNIK SERAFIN¹

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ABSTRACT

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The article first outlines the literature on Louis Adamic (1898–1951), the most successful writer of the Slovenian diaspora. The author then highlights Adamic's prescience in a number of works dedicated to his original homeland. This is followed by a discussion of Adamic's views on the mid-20th century global situation and the prospects for its development, which include some of the most pressing social issues in the world today. The author employs the overview method by supplementing her current research results with other scholars' findings.

KEY WORDS: Louis Adamic, American literature, Slovenian emigrant's literature, history of the 20th century

IZVLEČEK

Pomen Louisa Adamiča v 21. stoletju

Prispevek uvodoma oriše obseg literature o Louisu Adamiču (1898–1951), najuspešnejšem pisatelju slovenskega izseljenstva. Avtorica nato izpostavi prodornost nekaterih Adamičevih napovedi v delih, ki jih je posvetil svoji rojstni deželi. Temu sledi predstavitev Adamičevih pogledov na svetovne razmere sredi 20. stoletja in na najverjetnejše perspektive njihovega prihodnjega razvoja, ki vključujejo nekatera še danes najaktualnejša vprašanja globalne družbe. Avtorica v prispevku uporablja metodo pregledne raziskave: glavna spoznanja svojih dosedanjih raziskav sooča s spoznanji drugih avtorjev.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Louis Adamič, ameriška literatura, književnost slovenskih izseljencev, zgodovina 20. stoletja

¹ PhD in Literary Studies, Research Advisor; Slovenian Migration Institute, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana; janja.serafin@gmail.com — The article is a result of the project "Social, economic and cultural history of Slovenian emigration (1945–1991)" and the research programme "National and Cultural Identity of Slovenian Emigration in the Context of Migration Studies" (P5-0070), both financed by the Slovenian Research Agency.

INTRODUCTION

Louis Adamic (1898–1951) was the most successful writer of the Slovenian diaspora. According to Jože Pirjevec (2009), he can be considered one of the most internationally renowned Slovenes. He left his mark on the 20th century with a remarkable literary legacy comprising twenty large volumes, around 500 articles and other publications, as well as scores of pamphlets, lectures and unpublished manuscripts. In his adopted homeland, Adamic made his voice heard not only in writing, but on lecture tours, in public speeches and radio talks. He was one of the most prolific American social critics in the 1930s and 1940s. His critiques were not limited to the social issues of his two homelands, but extended worldwide, with analyses of the social and political situations of his day and projections about the future of global society.

Works by Adamic resonated deep into the second half of the 20th century, and some are as relevant today as they were six, seven or eight decades ago when they first saw publication. The impact of his works brought Adamic nationwide acclaim, conferences with presidents Roosevelt and Truman, scores of awards, accolades and grants (among other things, he received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1932, was the featured author of the Book-of-the-Month Club in 1934, and received the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for the most significant book on “race relations in the contemporary world” in 1940). He was awarded an honorary doctorate from Temple University in Philadelphia in 1941 and the Yugoslav Order of Brotherhood and Unity in 1944. Adamic enjoyed personal and public support from famous literary figures such as Upton Sinclair, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. His works were selected for the White House library, included in anthologies of American prose, taught at a number of American colleges, distributed to US soldiers during the Second World War, and long benefited from new editions, reprints and translations worldwide.

This survey article will look at Adamic’s enduring relevance and his role in international cultural awareness in the 21st century. First, I will outline the body of scholarly and general interest literature on Adamic, as well as his standing in the history of Slovenian literature. I will then highlight the prescience of a number of Adamic’s prognoses in the works dedicated to his original homeland. Since his views on immigration are particularly pertinent today, I will focus on this area in a separate section. The clearest case for Adamic’s lasting significance, however, is based on his views on the contemporaneous global situation and the prospects for its development, which I explore in the final section. The article will take the form of an overview, where I will include the findings of other Adamic scholars along with my current research results.

LOUIS ADAMIC IN THE HISTORY OF SLOVENIAN LITERATURE

The scholarly and general interest literature on Louis Adamic comprises several thousand articles, papers, studies, reviews and commentaries, lectures, theses and dissertations, thematic dossiers in journals¹ etc., as well as thirteen books, mainly by Slovene and American authors. Among the latter are two collections of proceedings from conferences on Adamic (Stanonik 1981; Gantar Godina 1999), a bibliography of publications by Adamic (Christian 1971), a Slovenian translation of his selected correspondence (Christian 1981), and eight thematic monographs on his life and work (McWilliams 1935; Petrič 1981; Adamič F. 1983; Žitnik Serafin 1992a; 1993; 1995a; 1995b; Shiffman 2003; Enyeart 2019). Adamic's books have been widely translated; notably, most of his books are available in Japanese. Since 2010, an hour-long audio-visual presentation of Adamic's life and work has been freely available online (on the website of the Slovenian Migration Institute and the web portal *Slovinci.si*), which I produced in 2009 in collaboration with Radio Slovenia.

Although Adamic wrote in English, he is included in almost every overview of Slovenian literature from the late 1960s onwards. He features in general overviews of Slovenian literature by Joža Mahnič (1964: 146, 241, 294), Lino Legiša (1969: 308), Franc Zadavec (1999: 294), Jože Pogačnik and Zadavec (1973) et al. In this respect, Adamic is an exception, since the main overviews of Slovenian literature have yet to include other Slovene emigrant authors writing in non-native languages – as they have also yet to include immigrant authors living in Slovenia and writing in their native languages. Why was Adamic integrated into the Slovenian literary canon? Was it due to his ideological eligibility at a time when Slovenian literary history mainly conformed to the political pressures of the then-current regime? Or was his unquestioned canonisation the result of his singular success and international acclaim?

Those who have argued that Adamic is also a Slovenian writer include Zadavec (1981: 101), Denis Poniž (1981: 113–118), and Boris Paternu, who wrote:

In his portrait of Slovenia, Adamic covered, in his particular and concise manner, almost the entire length of narrative writing about Slovenia and its people, from Trdina and Jurčič, through Kersnik, to Cankar, Župančič, and Voranc. Unawares, and despite his otherness, Adamic also became a Slovenian writer the moment he set foot in his homeland. (Paternu 1981: 94)

Indeed, a large part of Adamic's literary subject matter, themes and motifs is derived from Slovenian, and partly Slovenian-American, culture. The Slovenian national and cultural question occupies an important place in the works dedicated to his former homeland; likewise, the protagonists of his narratives are often of Slovenian origin.

1 For instance, the six-article dossier in *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* 9 (1998) marking the centennial of Adamic's birth.

In *The Native's Return*, his most successful book, Adamic draws a dramatic contrast between his past sense of alienation from his native country and its culture, and the new feeling of enthusiastic, vital, and firm belonging to all that is Slovenian – all of which he describes in vivid ethnographic detail, with literary grace and emotional investment. We can find in this contrast a persuasive answer to the question of his Slovenian cultural identity.

WORKS BY ADAMIC ON HIS ORIGINAL HOMELAND

In virtually all his works, Adamic touches upon social and cultural questions concerning his two homelands. In addition, most of his public activities were dedicated to such issues, which testifies to his pronounced bi-national socio-cultural embeddedness. Adamic dedicated *The Native's Return*, *Struggle*, *My Native Land*, and *The Eagle and the Roots* to his original homeland, all of which were translated into Slovene. In addition to these books, Adamic also endeavoured to introduce Slovenian culture, history, and current socio-political issues into American culture with his English translations of Slovenian authors, as well as in his articles, lectures, and radio talks. In general, such mediation is one of the signature characteristics of emigrant and minority authors with a culturally pronounced “dual-homeland” status. Adamic’s English translations of Slovenian authors were extensively covered by Jerneja Petrič in the monograph *Svetovi Louisa Adamiča* [“The Worlds of Louis Adamic”], and in a number of journals such as *Slavistična revija* [“Journal of Slavonic Studies”], *Slovenski koledar* [“Slovenian Calendar”], and *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*.

The country of his birth occupied Adamic from his earliest published work (his translation of Ivan Cankar’s *Yerney’s Justice* was published as early as 1926) until his death, which put an abrupt stop to the final editing touches on *The Eagle and the Roots* (1952), his posthumously published book concerning Tito and Yugoslavia after its expulsion from Cominform, which was likely the cause of his violent death. I will examine the booklet *Struggle* (1934) below in this article. Adamic’s intention in *My Native Land* (1943), published during the Second World War, was to acquaint American readers with the history of his original homeland. Interestingly, it was the first of Adamic’s books on the land of his birth, *The Native's Return*, that brought him the most acclaim; the work gives an account of his first visit to his old homeland using his characteristic blending of travel and documentary writing. Since this became Adamic’s greatest success immediately after its publication, the circumstances of its writing and its exceptional reach are well worth a closer look.

In 1929, Adamic moved back to New York from the West Coast, where he had spent several years in San Pedro translating and writing news articles and reportage. In New York, Adamic finished writing *Dynamite* in 1931–32, an account of a century of class struggle and violence in the USA, as well as his autobiography, *Laughing in the Jungle*. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for both works, which allowed

him to embark on a year-long journey to Europe with his wife in 1932–33. He spent most of this trip visiting his old homeland and enjoyed an exceptional reception in Slovenia and across Yugoslavia. He was even granted an audience with King Alexander I of Yugoslavia.

In 1934, after returning to the USA, Adamic published *The Native's Return*, which had an impressive first print run and numerous reprints. As many as 20 editions of the book were published by Harper in New York and London up to October 1938 (including Harper's *Modern Classics* edition from 1937); further editions were published in London by Victor Gollanz, as well as in Sweden, where the book was translated upon its publication in 1934 (Christian 1971: 69–70). In the first month after the book's release, 50,000 copies were sold. In February 1934, the book was picked by the Book-of-the-Month Club, while a special committee of highly reputable American writers and teachers included the book in a selection of 200 titles (out of about 40,000 published in the previous four years) which were presented to President Roosevelt for the White House library. In the months following the book's release, Adamic reportedly received around 3,000 letters from readers (Grill 1979: 201). Since the book foretold the imminent demise of King Alexander, Adamic became an overnight sensation in the USA after Alexander's actual assassination took place in Marseille in 1934, and was besieged with requests for interviews.

In addition to his best-seller, Adamic also published *Struggle* in 1934 – a booklet with testimonies about the inhumane interrogation methods inflicted on communists imprisoned in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In Yugoslavia, however, both books were blacklisted, and their dissemination, and even mere possession, was punishable with lengthy prison sentences under Alexander's regime (Grill 1979: 191). This was to be expected, as both books denounced Alexander's dictatorship. Adamic was also critical of the Serbian oppression of the other nations constituting Yugoslavia at that time. Despite the ban, both books were highly sought after in Yugoslavia, and illegal trade in Adamic's works could reportedly rake in hefty profits. *The Native's Return* was reissued when US soldiers were deployed to the Balkan Front during the Second World War. Most copies were bought by the US Army and distributed among soldiers to serve as an introduction to local history and the situation in the former Yugoslav kingdom that would lead, in parallel to the national liberation struggle, to a social revolution. *Struggle* also succeeded in provoking strong reactions. On the basis of the book's testimonies, the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners addressed a memorandum to Leonid Pitamic, the ambassador of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to the USA, in which they protested the cruel treatment and torture of political prisoners – particularly the members of the outlawed Communist Party – at the hands of the Yugoslav police. This memorandum was signed by some of America's most famous writers.

After 1945, Adamic publicly supported the Yugoslav position on the Trieste dispute and its opposition to James F. Byrnes's demands regarding its western border (Mikuž 1983: 56–61). Furthermore, he committed to gathering material aid for his old

homeland, an effort he had already launched during wartime. All the while, he published articles on the current situation in Yugoslavia and the USA in his magazine, *Trends and Tides*. In 1948, Adamic's attention was drawn to the Cominform resolution directed against the Communist Party of Yugoslavia – at a time when the discord between Tito and Stalin had escalated with the Yugoslav boycott of the Cominform conference on 20 June 1948 in Bucharest (cf. Dedijer 1969; Robel 1983: 240–247). Adamic felt that these extraordinary developments, the conflict between Tito and Stalin and Yugoslavia's exit from the Eastern Bloc, indicated the country's newly gained stature in a global context. He saw in this the roots of what would become the Non-Aligned Movement: Tito's efforts towards peaceful coexistence and refusal to meddle in the affairs of other states, tendencies that would represent a positive approach to international relations in the decades that followed.

As early as 1949, Yugoslavia started negotiating for economic and military aid with the West, and in fact received it in 1950–51 from the USA, the United Kingdom, and France. Nevertheless, via the US ambassador in Belgrade, Yugoslavia strongly opposed American attempts at dictating its foreign and domestic affairs, a point explicitly made by Tito in his Užice speech in February 1950 (Bekić 1988: 148, 279, 289–290, 134–143).

In 1949, Adamic spent eight months in his old homeland on his second visit. During this time, dramatic events following the Cominform resolution dissuaded him from his initial plan of using this trip to gather material for a new novel entitled *The Education of Michael Novak*, which would never be realised. Instead, he started collecting material for a new book on Tito, Yugoslavia, and its emancipation from the Eastern Bloc. He was aided by a number of friends and relatives, as well as the Yugoslav leadership. Vladimir Dedijer organised a team of assistants, led by Viljem Jager, who collected the required material under Adamic's instructions.² Edvard Kardelj, Aleš Bebler and Moša Pijade took Adamic on a several-week long journey across Yugoslavia, which he related in detail in *The Eagle and the Roots*, published after his death.

In this book, Adamic's scepticism and reservations regarding certain aspects of Yugoslav politics, which unsettled him on this trip, can be read between the lines. He used every occasion to draw the attention of Tito, Boris Kidrič, Dedijer, as well as the Yugoslav representatives in the USA, to the necessity of eliminating the flagrant exploitation of privilege within the Party and state leadership, to the unacceptable practice of using state buildings for private ends, to the lack of transparency in communication with the domestic and foreign publics (as in the event of the Yugoslav downing of two American aircraft in 1946), and to the pointless measures in the state's agrarian policy. He was particularly incensed over the political repression of the Cominform supporters and the Dachau trials in Slovenia. Still, Adamic did not

2 Interview with Vladimir Dedijer and Viljem Jager, in: Žitnik Serafin 1995a: 25–57.

voice his objections in his last book *The Eagle and the Roots*, nor in the many American articles he wrote on Yugoslavia.

Still, as noted above, these objections can be read between the lines of his works. This reticence can be attributed to the fact that Adamic did not want to compromise Yugoslavia at a time when it was under economic blockade and threat of military aggression from the East, since this could damage its position in the negotiations for Western economic and military aid. However, in his letters and discussions with the Yugoslav leadership he consistently opposed those shortcomings of the regime that would eventually come to represent its negative aspects. For example, after returning to the USA in the autumn of 1949, he conveyed to Dedijer the protests and petitions from Slovenian-American relatives of Yugoslav political prisoners, and asked him to appeal to Aleksander Ranković for help.³ These facts, uncovered only when Adamic's correspondence became accessible in the 1980s and then presented to the Slovenian public in the first half of the 1990s, in addition to the testimonies from his close companions, cast a new light on his role in Yugoslavia's post-war affairs.

ADAMIC'S WRITINGS ON AMERICAN SOCIAL ISSUES

Until recently, this part of Adamic's work had been poorly known in Slovenia. As one would expect, most of the works translated into Slovene were those dedicated to his original homeland. In the last couple of decades, however, several scholars have tried to redress the ignorance regarding Adamic's key role in shaping American multiculturalism, with a host of lectures and published studies. In addition, public events, symposia and radio shows focusing on Adamic have also taken place.⁴

Aside from *Dynamite*, his first influential work, Adamic dedicated all of his books on American society to immigration issues. Notable among these are *Grandsons* (1935), *My America* (1938), *From Many Lands* (1940), *What's Your Name?* (1942), and *A Nation of Nations* (1945). His autobiography *Laughing in the Jungle* (1932) and the later *Two-Way Passage* (1941), which led to his White House dinner invitation, can also be seen as part of this body of work. In addition, Adamic was involved with immigration issues as a board member of the Foreign Language Information Service (FLIS), which was closely linked to immigrant organisations and publishers, and as the founder and chief editor of *Common Ground*, the official journal of the Common Council for American Unity, which aimed to integrate the immigrant experience into public education.

3 See: SAZU Library, Louis Adamic archival fonds, Letters file, Letter from Louis Adamic to Vladimir Dedijer, 21 March 1950.

4 Among these efforts, the Slovene translation of Dan Shiffman's study *Rooting Multiculturalism: The Work of Louis Adamic* (Shiffman 2005) is of central importance. The author of this article also attempted to raise awareness about this facet of Adamic's work with a series of published lectures from 2010. The Slovenian Migration Institute, the Slovenian Emigrant Association, and the Grosuplje House of Culture are some of the institutions that have organised conferences, symposia and panel talks to mark some of the anniversaries of Adamic's birth.

In later years, his efforts concerning immigration were focused on editing the nine-part book series *The Peoples of America Series* (Christian 1971: 75). Adamic pursued his research on immigration through numerous study trips, visits to archives and libraries, field research, mass surveys and in-depth interviews; the results of his research were made public not only in books, but in countless articles, lecture tours, radio talks, pamphlets, posters, and published lectures on immigration in the USA.

It is understandable that individuals and groups who suddenly become the involuntary object of observation and study frequently distance themselves, as a result of their discomfort and mistrust, from their observer and his or her findings. In this regard, Adamic enjoyed a great advantage over the majority of other researchers into immigration and related issues. The various groups of the most recent and slightly older immigrants and their descendants saw him as an established immigrant American, and thanks to his successful integration into American culture, this was also how he was seen by mainstream American culture. Since he observed immigration as both an insider and outsider, Adamic was able to identify with both groups. As a result, his insights into the related issues were all the more nuanced. Moreover, owing to this dual involvement he had the attention of both groups.

His work was grounded in a pronounced multicultural emphasis on diversity. He based his argument in favour of diversity on an awareness of the need for acceptance and security felt by countless immigrants he had encountered. While he advocated the shaping of a community that would be more than the sum of its parts, he also maintained a commitment to diversity in recognition of human complexity. Adamic was aware that even those who live within the comparatively well-defined boundaries of an ethnic community cannot be reduced to an ethnic type. And while he tended to dramatise, this involved no moralising. His portraits of immigrants and their narratives invited America to rethink its history; at the same time, their protagonists maintained their individuality. This emphasis on individuality countered the risk of overgeneralising the aspirations and needs of the immigrants (Shiffman 2005: 131). The range of individual characteristics and mentalities of immigrants is eloquently realised in two portraits of men from Slovenia: Tone Kmet, a former steelworker who was a strike-breaker in his youth in order to secure a pension, yet refused American citizenship in old age (Adamic 1940b: 27, 39–40, 45–46); and Michael Novak, a highly successful businessman who gave up his career in late middle age so that he could reconnect with his forgotten and denied cultural origins, and finally achieve a transnational understanding.⁵

Adamic never isolated immigration issues from the broader social context – above all, the questions of the dominant values, social norms and socio-economic stratification of American society. His research was primarily focused, as one might expect, on the more recent immigrants and their descendants, but also on those

5 Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, Janko Rogelj archival fonds, box 3, file 19, Louis Adamic, "The Education of Michael Novak". The archived item is the story outline for a novel which Adamic eventually abandoned. (See Žitnik Serafin 1992b: 73–78)

who already perceived themselves as “old Americans”. Furthermore, he was interested in the intermediate space between these poles, the intersections of their clashing interests and the points where they found common ground. Yet Adamic did not see American society simply as a field ruled by forces of attraction and repulsion between opposing poles, or between the centre and periphery, as multi-ethnic societies are often conceptualised today. Instead he saw it as a complex web of multi-layered social relations and identities, determined by countless shifting factors. This complexity is partly the consequence of the unclear dividing lines between the immigrant and majority currents in American society, and the interweaving of various components of both individual and group cultural identities (Shiffman 2005).

Further, Adamic offers an almost revolutionary view not only of ethnic and cultural identities, but also of national identity whenever he discusses “American identity”. He argues that the formation of the USA, as well as Anglocentric American history and tradition, do not occupy *a priori* a central place in the national identity of Americans. In contrast, his view is that the nation cannot base its identity either on an individual cultural tradition or on the sum of different cultural traditions; rather, its identity is constantly being formed. The nation and its identity are therefore not something that needs above all to be preserved, but a community that must continually discover and articulate itself anew (*ibid.*). This is something that also applies to European nations in the present day.

Adamic realised that the treatment of immigrants in America does not align with its standards of democracy. His entire body of work hinges on this realisation; the suffering of immigrants and their descendants is not merely a stain on American history, but one of its main characteristics (Shiffman 2005: 126). In his introduction to a survey mailed out to thousands of Americans in the early 1940s, Adamic could thus note that more lives had been lost among European immigrants in work accidents during the country’s construction in the past century than among the settlers who conquered the West and fought the War of Independence. It is therefore crucial that America recognises this fact, which represents the most important part of its identity (Adamic 1940a: 302). Adamic was also aligned with modern-day multiculturalists in his efforts to raise awareness of the reality and effects of xenophobia. He described, for instance, the feelings of inferiority experienced by victims of xenophobic persecution, who are consequently driven to economic, social and cultural “marginality”; rather than America’s creative impulses, they are motivated by fear and confusion, which reduce and diminish their presence (Adamic 1940c: 67). It should then come as no surprise that they often adopt a defensive and occasionally aggressive attitude.

Adamic fought the marginalisation of immigrants, and thus their defensive attitude, by tearing down stereotypes and prejudices: claims about the vast numbers of illegal immigrants, the disproportionate crime rates in immigrant communities, the loss of millions of American jobs to immigrants, the excessive burden that immigrants impose on the welfare system, and, last but not least, the belief that mass deportation would put an end to the economic crisis (Shiffman 2005: 126–127). The

persistence of these stereotypes up to the present day speaks to the continuing relevance of Adamic's work. It is further apparent if we look at today's highly polarised public opinion in the USA, Europe, and elsewhere regarding aspects of immigration that are virtually identical to those at the forefront of public discourse in the 1930s and 1940s. These issues are no less pressing now than they were at the time of Adamic's pioneering struggle for the equality and integration of immigrants – regardless of the substantial resources that governments have allocated since then to research work and continual legislative changes in this area.⁶

ADAMIC ON GLOBAL ISSUES

At the encouragement of Upton Sinclair, Adamic started writing *Dinner at the White House* in 1945. The book relates the story of the White House dinner on the occasion of Churchill's visit in January 1942, which Adamic attended on an invitation from Roosevelt. Adamic reports on their talk and adds extensive critical commentary in light of subsequent American and British foreign policy decisions. A footnote in the book led Churchill to sue Adamic for libel. His publisher Harper and Brothers took responsibility for the contentious footnote and paid a substantial share of the damages, and thus Adamic lost his long-standing relationship with the firm.

During these years, Adamic worked to further the publication of articles against the Cold War and arms race, as well as the mounting anti-Soviet propaganda in the USA. He emphasised the necessity of peaceful cooperation between American capitalism and Soviet socialism, which he believed ought to complement each other with their contrasting values, rather than stand opposed. He maintained a conviction that the two systems could learn from each other in the necessary attempt to reduce their own deficiencies.

As early as 1949, Adamic advised Tito to favour internationalism and form closer ties with India and other "non-aligned countries" in order to resist the bloc politics which threatened world peace. He writes to this effect in *The Eagle and the Roots*; however, he had already adopted this view soon after the Cominform resolution, at the time when the Yugoslav leadership was far from ready for an actual and definitive (economic, military, political, and ideological) break with the Eastern Bloc (Žitnik Serafin 1993: 44). A solid foundation for the Non-Aligned Movement was established upon Tito's visit to India in 1954–55, and the Tito, Nehru and Nasser summit in the Brioni Islands in July 1956. The three leaders declared their commitment to non-bloc politics, disarmament, ending nuclear weapons testing, non-interference in domestic affairs, and peaceful coexistence and cooperation between countries regardless

6 One example of a complex approach to the most pressing aspects of immigration, in relation to the European response to the arrival of refugees since the autumn of 2015, is the recent volume *The Disaster of European Refugee Policy: Perspectives from the "Balkan Route"* (Žagar et al. 2018).

of their political systems. As on many earlier occasions and in regard to other issues, Adamic's predictions and suggestions were again remarkably prescient when it came to international politics and relations.

Comparing the published and unpublished portions of Adamic's manuscript for *The Eagle and the Roots*, we can see that as much as two fifths of the entire volume were cut from the American edition. Most glaring is the omission of the manuscript's longest chapter, "Game of Chess in an Earthquake", which was removed on the instructions of the book's editor Timothy Seldes and Adamic's widow, Stella. In this chapter, amounting to 440 typed pages, Adamic discusses the contemporaneous situation in the USA and around the world. Using many quotes from American daily press, books, and speeches from opinion leaders, he mounts a scathing critique of both American domestic politics, in which political liberties are curtailed and democracy eroded, and of American foreign politics in the context of the Cold War, the arms race and interference in the Korean conflict, which led to the catastrophic war with millions killed.

The central themes of this chapter include the unjust global distribution of natural and energy resources, political and economic imperialism, manipulative media in the thrall of capital, exploitation of patriotic sentiment for warmongering, incitement of hatred between nations and cultures, and the probability of either war or peace in different parts of the world based upon oil and other economic interests of American capital. Seven decades after Adamic wrote the manuscript, these issues continue to be at the root of humanity's gravest predicaments, which cannot but affirm the enduring significance of his views. In light of the criticism and political persecution Adamic was subjected to during the McCarthy era, the editor's decision to omit the chapter from publication should come as no surprise.

CONCLUSION

Adamic's social criticism is almost always based on a historical perspective, particularly in *Dynamite* and *My Native Land*, but also in his works on immigration and inter-cultural relations, as well as in his last, posthumously published book. Along with the analysis of past and present social conditions, Adamic's critiques frequently involve the visionary anticipation of future trends and events that would then in fact take place. For example, his predictions on the fate of King Alexander and the Yugoslav monarchy, which Adamic put forward in *The Native's Return*, or his forecasts on the future development of inter-cultural relations in the US, his lucid views on the social development of socialist Yugoslavia and the international stature of Tito, and, last but not least, his anticipation of Yugoslavia's ensuing troubles, rooted in the errors that the Yugoslav leadership made in the early post-war years. No less prescient were some of his observations on the economic, social and political trends in global social development.

The considerable numbers of American scholars of multiculturalism and immigrant integration who still refer to Adamic's work today and offer commentary on his views also attest to his enduring relevance. A monograph on the echoes of Adamic in the current multiculturalism and immigration debate was published in 2003 by Dan Shiffman, a professor of literature and one of the foremost Adamic scholars in the USA. *The Encyclopedia of American Multiethnic Literature* likewise dedicates a sizeable entry to Adamic. Adamic's relevance and lasting presence in the cultural awareness of a certain part of the Slovenian and international public is also apparent from new studies on the writer (including this dossier and the recently concluded research by John Enyeart), as well as recent translations of his works. Among these are an extensive compendium of extracts from Adamic's oeuvre (Müller 2015), and new Slovene translations of *The Truth about Los Angeles* (Adamič 2012) and *From Many Lands* (Adamic 1940a). Lastly, the abiding interest in Adamic's literary and intellectual heritage on the part of the Slovenian and international public was amply displayed in the large turnout for the recent festivities celebrating the 120th anniversary of the writer's birth (bearing the title "From Many Lands"), which took place in Ljubljana, Grosuplje, and elsewhere, and encompassed events ranging from a cross-border children's art contest to a pair of exhibitions and an international academic conference.

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