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Authority, Nation, and Lexicography: A Case Study of Major Serbian Dictionaries*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present paper explores how Serbian lexicographers use authority and concrete techniques to support their dictionary solutions for national lexicographic projects in the 19th, 20th, and 21st century.

Our case study falls within the tradition of metalexicographic research, particularly how dictionaries and their sociocultural surroundings interact via various ideologies—that is, ideologies around the standard language variety¹ and ideologies involved in dictionary making.²

The following research questions are addressed:

- How do lexicographers justify the solutions in their dictionaries?
- What kind of authority is behind the solutions in dictionaries?
- What are the mechanisms of establishing authority in dictionaries?
- How do the perspectives of dictionary compilers differ from their users?

These are broad questions concerned with the dynamics between dictionary makers and dictionary users. This particular case study is just a small stone in the mosaic of possible answers.

I will now turn to outlining the conceptual underpinnings of the present research. Determining the place of lexicographic work in its respective society, I support sociocognitive metalexicography, most notably how the “dictionary

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1 John Edwards, *Language and Identity: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) and John Edwards, “Foreword: Language, Prescriptivism, Nationalism—and Identity,” in Carol Percy and Mary Catherine Davidson (eds.), *The Languages of Nation: Attitudes and Norm* (Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 2012), pp. 11–38.

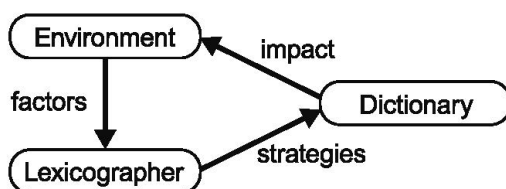
2 Michaël Abecassis, “The Ideology of the Perfect Dictionary: How Efficient Can a Dictionary Be?,” *Lexikos* 18 (2008), pp. 1–14; Patricia Anderson, “Lexicographic Authority and a Colonial Legacy,” in *The Making of the New Tunica Dictionary* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2020), pp. 30–42.

[is] a system of intercultural communication between the compiler and the user.”³

If we apply the sociocultural approach to the study of the sociolinguistic factors in the Serbian lexicographic tradition, the dictionaries are socially and culturally embedded; they represent systems of intercultural communication between the compiler and the user, where both involved parties have certain attitudes and belief systems about linguistic variation. In other words, environmental factors affect how lexicographers make dictionaries, influencing certain lexicographic strategies, so that the dictionaries adhere to their sociocultural environment. However, the situation is more complex than that. Dictionaries have oftentimes been the harbinger of change, and even more frequently, it mirrored or incorporated sociocultural changes.

The relation between the three key components of the process of dictionary making—*factors*, *strategies*, and *impact*—can be represented as in Figure 1. As can be seen, the factors influence lexicographic strategies, which not only shape the elements but, at the same time, provide feedback to the environment of the dictionary. How these components interacted in South Slavic lexicographic traditions (to which the Serbian tradition belongs) is reviewed in my recent paper.⁴

Figure 1: Sociolinguistic Aspects of Lexicography



As seen in the title of this paper, two key concepts of this research are *authority* and *nation*. The social sciences have focused on authority since the ground-breaking scholarship of Weber⁵ who established the three main types of authority: traditional (e.g., a religious tradition), charismatic (the kind we find in politicians that attract a following based on their persona), and rational-legal (for example, the authority codes in a legal system). In a recent book, Huemer⁶

3 Heming Yong and Jing Peng, *Bilingual Lexicography from a Communicative Perspective* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), p. 15.

4 Danko Šipka, “Sociolinguistic Factors in South Slavic Lexicographic Traditions, in Dominguez Rodrigues,” Victoria et al. (eds.), *Words across History: Advances in Historical Lexicography and Lexicology* (Las Palmas: Grand Canaria University Press, 2016), pp. 413–424.

5 Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 1992, first published in 1919).

6 Michael Huemer, *The Problem of Political Authority: An Examination of the Right to Coerce and the Duty to Obey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

reviews the notion of authority (primarily political) construed by various authors and intellectual traditions, most of them after Weber's seminal essay. The picture that emerges is that many of arguments and the evidence have been used and a variety of sources have been introduced. In the particular context of this article, it is important to realize that normative linguistic authority can take various forms, using various justifications. Linguistic authority is often intertwined with political authority: the source of authority (linguists, writers, journalists, educators, etc.) establishes a model that the general body of speakers, such as politicians, is expected to follow (i.e., the rules for using language "correctly" or "incorrectly"). Obviously, normative linguists and other sources of authority will habitually make claims that the source of their authority is objective, but in reality, lexicographic decisions can have various motivating factors behind them. This particular idea about the importance of normative linguistic authority is widespread in all Slavic cultures, and it is considerably more prominent than in some other cultures—for example, in English, where normative linguists have extremely limited impact, as demonstrated by Milroy and Milroy⁷ who explored the idea of authority in the English language.

When discussing ethnicity and nation, the line of relevant research extends from Gellner⁸ who emphasizes the constructivist nature of nationalism, to Brubaker,⁹ who understands ethnicity not as a state but rather as a process. The following quote is representative in showing his ideas about ethnicity, race, and nation:

Ethnicity, race and nation should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals—as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded and enduring 'groups' encourages us to do—but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms. This means thinking of ethnicity, race and nation not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of *practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events*. It means thinking of *ethnicization, racialization and nationalization* as political, social, cultural and psychological *processes*.¹⁰

It is exactly these processes of ethnicization and nationalization that play a pivotal role in numerous normative strategies across the Slavic world. In some periods and in some lands the process is painfully conspicuous, in others,

7 James Milroy and Lesley Milroy, *Authority in language: Investigating standard English*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2012).

8 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

9 Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *Archives of European Sociology* XLIII/2 (2002), pp. 163–189; Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2004); Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (2009), pp. 21–42.

10 Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," p. 167.

subtler (see a review of these developments).¹¹ Serbians were no exception. The most salient events in that process were the attempts to introduce and establish the prestigious literary and, later on, standard language form. In that regard, it is useful to keep in mind the distinction between the inclusive and exclusive function of the standard language variety.¹² On the one hand, the standard language form strives to unite all speakers of a given language, and in that sense, a standard language is a device of nation formation; on the other hand, its social role is to divide those who adhere to the standard language variety from those who do not. This dual social function empowers lexicographers to determine what does and what does not belong to the standard language form (e.g., by using normative usage labels). One should also note that in Serbo-Croatian, similar to other Slavic languages, the term *literary language* (in this case *književni jezik*) is ambiguous as it concurrently refers to the literary and the standard language variety.

I proposed a model to study how linguistic authority is implemented in the language variety it strives to establish and maintain.¹³ I label the activities of those who use linguistic authority with a somewhat unusual term, *maneuvers*, to emphasize the fact that these activities and schemes are carefully planned and that they require adroitness. Common to practically all Slavic languages is the prominent role normative linguists play in the public discourse. It is they, along with other members of the elite, the intelligentsia (writers, journalists, politicians, and even performing artists), who engage in lexical planning and refereeing through a series of maneuvers, from bringing about specialized publications, such as normative dictionaries, manuals of orthography, and the like, to general appearances in the media. I call these broad proclamations *macro maneuvers*. Macro maneuvers perpetuate various *micro maneuvers*, recommendations by teachers, compilers of dictionaries, and language editors: teachers correct students, dictionary makers deploy usage labels, and language editors suggest various solutions to authors. These are focused, concrete, and everyday activities that reinforce and maintain the macro maneuvers.

I will now turn to the background and historical setting of the four Serbian dictionaries analyzed in this paper.

11 Danko Šipka, *Water, Whiskey, and Vodka: A Story of Slavic Languages* (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 2023).

12 Dick Smakman, "The Definition of the Standard Language: A Survey in Seven Countries," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 218 (2012), pp. 25–58.

13 Danko Šipka, *Lexical Layers of Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

2. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

In exploring the history of Serbian dictionaries, I use Hobsbawm's general historical periodization¹⁴ which includes the long 19th century (from the French Revolution to the First World War, 1789–1914) and the short 20th century (from the First World War to the fall of Communism, 1914–1991). Rather than accepting purely mechanical borders of the centuries, Hobsbawm follows the logic of pivotal events that have thoroughly reshaped nations and their societies. These pivotal events have also created the borders of the socio-historical milieu in which major Serbian dictionaries appeared.

The key 19th-century dictionary, *Srpski rječnik* (first edition was published in 1818 with 26,000 entries, the second in 1852 with 47,000 entries) by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić¹⁵ is the pivotal dictionary in the long 19th century. The two key dictionaries of the short 20th are the (1) monumental, still unfolding in the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*, 1957– (currently 250,000 entries, 21 volumes, with a nearly average length per volume of 800 pages; when completed, it is expected to have close to half a million entries)¹⁶ and (2) six-volume *Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika*, 1967–1976 (around 150,000 entries).¹⁷ The latter dictionary started as a common Serbian-Croatian project, but the Croatian partner (Matica Hrvatska, the most prestigious Croatian cultural association) stepped down from the project after the first two volumes were published; Matica Srpska (the oldest Serbian literary and cultural society) finished the remaining four volumes on its own. The final lexicographic landmark in Serbian lexicography is the 21st-century one-volume *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*, 2011 (approximately 80,000 entries).¹⁸ Most attention will be devoted to the second dictionary—that is, the multivolume Academy dictionary, which is by far the largest dictionary, from plans to full realization, stretching over three centuries.

Just like any others, these four Serbian dictionaries were embedded in the social fabric of the societies to which they catered. The historical circumstances and intellectual climate in which these four dictionaries have emerged can be described as follows: At the time when the first of the four dictionaries

14 Eric John Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Eric John Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1995); Eric John Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789–1848* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).

15 Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik* (Vienna: Armenian Monastery, 1818); Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik* (Vienna: Armenian Monastery, 1952).

16 Aleksandar Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika* (Beograd: SANU, 1959–).

17 Mihailo Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1967–1976).

18 Milica Vujančić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 2011).

(Karadžić 1818) appeared,¹⁹ Serbs were divided between the Austrian Empire in the north and the Ottoman Turkish Empire in the south. Serbian intellectual elites in the Austrian Empire came from a class of well-off landowners and clergy. They were firmly rooted in the tradition of Orthodox Christianity, which concurrently entailed strong ties with Russian culture (with Moscow being seen as the “Third Rome”). Jelavich and Jelavich write:

The peoples looked to her as the greatest Orthodox power; this feeling had been encouraged. In the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji of 1774 the base was laid for some sort of a claim to a religious protectorate, although in a very ambiguous form. Not only did the Balkan Christians expect aid from Russia, but important elements in Russian society were strongly attracted along both Orthodox and Slavic lines to the idea of giving assistance to the national movements. . . .

. . . Although Russia was by treaty the protector power, Austria, France, and Britain were to play a role in Serbian affairs. Russian influence, though strong, was limited by the fact that the two lands were not contiguous. Adjacent Austria was in a more advantageous position.²⁰

Needless to say, the ties between Serbs and Russians at the time relevant for this paper were a continuation of the long-standing unity within the Orthodox Christian Commonwealth, of what can be called *Slavia Orthodoxa*, the term coined by Riccardo Picchio. More information about this can be found in the relevant literature.²¹

A consequence of ties with Russia was that one of the literary language varieties of that time was the so-called Slavonic Serbian, a hybrid language form, which included some Russian linguistic features, along with Serbian and those from Church Slavonic, a linguistic variety with a strong presence in Orthodox Slavic cultures. The initial Russian influence that Slavonic Serbian inherited was Russian Church Slavonic, brought to Serbian lands by Russian teachers. Of course, the Slavonic Serbian language has co-existed with several other language varieties, most notably Russian Church Slavonic as the liturgical language and Serbian vernacular with some Russian Slavonic influences. More information about this complex polyglottic situation can be found in

19 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*.

20 Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920* (Seattle and London: Washington University Press, 1977), p. 53.

21 Ana Krečmer, “Pravoslavna Slavija (u slovenskoj istoriji i istorijskoj slavistici),” *Zbornik Matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku* LXIII/1 (2020), pp. 25–46; Riccardo Picchio and Goldblatt, Harvey (eds.), *Aspects of the Slavic Language Question* vol. 1: Church Slavonic—South Slavic—West Slavic; vol. 2: East Slavic (New Haven, CT: Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies, 1984); Rikkardo Pikkio, *Slavia Orthodoxa. Literatura i jazyk* (Moskva: Znak, 2003); Nikita Ilič Tolstoj, “Slavia Orthodoxa и Slavia Latina: obščee i različnoe v literaturno-jazykovoju situacii,” *Voprosy jazykoznaniia* 2 (1997), pp. 16–23.

the relevant references.²² The ideological expression of this embeddedness in Orthodox Christianity is the so-called Panslavism, the idea that Slavic peoples should unite, led by the Russian Empire²³ At the same time, the court in Vienna actively promotes the ideology of Austroslavism, the idea that Slavic peoples of the Austrian Empire should accept Austria as their homeland and unite around it²⁴ provides an account of that ideological formation). At the time of the publication of *Srpski rječnik*, aside from the Serbian Orthodox Church and Church administered schools, there were no cultural institutions of authority. However, shortly thereafter, in 1826, Matica Srpska was formed, a major cultural association with undiminished esteem and authority to this day.

The Serbs in the South, in the Ottoman Turkish Empire, have lived through a period of upheaval, with the mostly unsuccessful First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) and largely successful Second Serbian Uprising (1815–1817), which has led to autonomy within the Ottoman Turkish Empire and independence later in the 19th century as the Principate and then the Kingdom of Serbia. The elites among the Serbs comprise new bourgeoisie, practically without any intellectual life that would be relevant in the context of *Srpski rječnik*.

The next two dictionaries are the multivolume Academy dictionary²⁵ and the six-volume Matica dictionary,²⁶ which are situated in the short 20th century. At the beginning of this century, the Kingdom of Serbia emerged victorious from the Great war, and it united with the South Slavic territories that were previously in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was on the losing side in that war. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was formed in 1918 and renamed into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929. This kingdom morphed into a communist republic in 1945, after the communist movement ended up on the victorious side in WWII. The key national ideology in the kingdom, and especially in the republic, consisted of South Slavic unity and Serbo-Croatian language unity. Unlike the long 19th century, where the Serbian Orthodox

22 Pavle Ivić, *Pregled istorije srpskog jezika*, Celokupna dela, knjiga 8 (Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, 1998); Aleksandar Mladenović, *Slavenosrpski jezik: Studije i članci* (Novi Sad: Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1989); Ljiljana Subotić, *Književnojezičke prilike kod Srba u 18. veku, Susret kultura* (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2006); Ljiljana Subotić, *Istorijska lingvistika*, Lingvističke sveske 2 (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2002).

23 Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology*, second revised ed. (New York: Vintage books, 1960).

24 Andreas Moritsch (ed.), *Der Austroslavismus: Ein verfrühtes Konzept zur politischen Neugestaltung Mitteleuropas* (Wien: Böhlau, 1996).

25 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*.

26 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika*.

Church was the most important institution with authority,²⁷ in the short 20th century, universities and academies of science and arts, along with the aforementioned Matica srpska take that role of authority.

The final dictionary that will be explored here, the one-volume Matica dictionary²⁸ appeared in the 21st century, in independent Serbia, as a consequence of Yugoslavia being left by most of its republics during the wars of the 1990s, with ensuing decoupling of Serbia from Montenegro in 2006. The authority is still firmly in the hands of major cultural institutions that were also pivotal in the 20th century. What has changed is that the ideology of South Slavic unity is not present anymore.

One should note that there were two other monolingual Serbian dictionaries in the short 20th century: Bakotić,²⁹ which was self-published by a non-linguist and never gained any traction, and Moskovljević,³⁰ which was banned right after its publication by the communist authorities of the time, who disliked some definitions. All copies of Moskovljević were confiscated and almost all of them were destroyed, so the dictionary practically died before it could live. A broader review of Serbian and other Serbo-Croatian dictionaries can be found in my bibliography of these dictionaries.³¹

In the next section, I will discuss the macro maneuvers exercised by the authors of the four dictionaries and the behind-the-scenes underpinnings of these maneuvers. Going back to Image 1, I will now explore the sociocultural factors and justifications for the strategies. Then, in Section 4, I will address the implementation of those strategies and the social impact of dictionaries.

3. PLANS AND DECLARATIONS

The first edition of Karadžić's dictionary,³² the long-19th-century dictionary, was published against the backdrop of the contestation between Panslavism and Austroslavism. There are numerous research papers detailing the influence of

27 Obviously shared with institutions such as Matica Srpska and, later in that century, with Društvo srpske slovesnosti "lit. Society of Serbian Wisdom," which has evolved into Sprsko učeno društvo "Serbian Learned Society," and, finally, into Srpska kraljevska akademija "Serbian Royal Academy."

28 Vujančić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*.

29 Lujo Bakotić, *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* (Belgrade: self published, 1936).

30 Miloš Moskovljević, *Rečnik savremenog srpskohrvatskog jezika s jezičkim savetnikom* (Beograd: Tehnička knjiga, Nolit, 1966).

31 Danko Šipka, *A Bibliography of Serbo-Croatian Dictionaries* (Springfield: Dunwoody Press, 2000).

32 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*.

Jernej Kopitar, a clear proponent of Austroslavism, on Karadžić.³³ Most notably, Bonazza clearly states the connection of Karadžić with Austroslavism:

Auf jeden Fall—und unabhängig von Vuks Willen und Absichten—der Austroslavismus erwies sich als ein wichtiger Gefährte, der Vuk auf dem Weg zur Begründung der serbischen Literatursprache und damit zur Erringung der kulturellen Emanzipation seines Volkes begleitete.³⁴

[At any rate—and independently from Karadžić's will and views—Austroslavism has proven to be an important companion, which followed Karadžić on the way of establishing Serbian literary language and with it achieving cultural emancipation of its people.]

Indeed, Karadžić was coached by Jernej Kopitar, a philologist and an Austrian state censor, and Karadžić's reforms broke with the previous Serbian tradition of literacy, which was strongly Panslavic. However, his general line of argumentation was not rooted in geopolitics or politics but rather on the rational authority of consistency.

His main argument, stemming from rational authority, is the requirement that written and spoken language be the same. In the front matter to his dictionary, he praises those who "pišu Srpski (kao što narod govori)" [write Serbian (the way the people speak)].³⁵ He criticizes the hitherto literary tradition as follows:

[...] kod nji ne treba znati nikakve gramatike (ni Srpske ni Slovenske), nego zareži pero i piši po svom vkusu; što ne znaš Srpski, metni Slavenski; što ne znaš Slavenski, metni Srpski; a što ne znaš ni Srpski ni Slavenski, metni kako ti drago (što ti prije na um padne).³⁶

[they do not need to know any grammar (neither Serbian, nor Church Slavonic), you just need to sharpen your quill and write according to your own taste: what you do not know in Serbian, put it in Church Slavonic; what you do not know in Church Slavonic, put it in Serbian; and what you do not know in Serbian Slavonic, put it whatever way you like it (whatever first comes to your mind).]

He also praises the consistency of his own dictionary with the way people speak: "Ja mogu slobodno kazati za ove riječi, što su ovde skupljene, da su

33 Thomas J. Butler, "Jernej Kopitar's Role in the Serbian Language Controversy," *Slavic and East European Journal* 13 (1969), pp. 479–488; Golub Dobrašinović, *Kopitar i Vuk* (Tršić: Vukov sabor, 1980); Golub Dobrašinović, *Kopitar i Vuk* (Tršić: Vukov sabor, 1980); Monika Kroepej, "The Cooperation of Grimm Brothers, Jernej Kopitar and Vuk Karadžić," *Studia mythologica slavistica* XVI (2013), pp. 215–231; Jože Pogačnik, *Bartholomäus Kopitar: Leben und Werk* (München: Rudolf Trofenik, 1978); Miodrag Popović, *Vuk Stef. Karadžić* (Beograd: Nolit, 1964).

34 Sergio Bonazza, "Vuk Stef. Karadžić und der Austroslavismus," *Europa orientalis* 7 (1988), p. 369.

35 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*, p. vi.

36 Ibid., p. vi.

u narodu sve poznate i da se izgovaraju kao što su ovđe zapisane.”³⁷ [I can easily say for those words, that are collected here, that they are all known to the people and that they are pronounced the way they are written here.] This consistency was de facto established between his proposed model of the standard language and the dialect of his native village in Western Serbia.³⁸

Karadžić’s model of the standard language established in his 1818 dictionary had gradually displaced the previous, and before the long 19th century was over, it became the only standard language form. This dominance of his model was partially established by the work of his followers, who were hard at work establishing his charismatic authority. Ivić³⁹ notes that Karadžić’s reform prevailed in practice during the 1860s and that the last restriction of the use of his form of the Cyrillic script was lifted by Serbian government in 1868. As shown in Palavestra,⁴⁰ Karadžić’s model had been accepted by Serbian philological elites two decades earlier, in 1847, when four pivotal books were published: (1) Karadžić’s translation of the New Testament; (2) the study titled *War for Serbian Language and Orthography*, a glorification of Karadžić’s work by his disciple, a learned philologist Đuro Daničić; (3) a collection of poems by a celebrated Serbian poet Branko Radičević; and (4) *Mountain Wreath*, a book-length poem by Petar II Petrović Njegoš, a central figure of Serbian Romanticism. All these works were published in the language proposed by.⁴¹ The establishment of Karadžić’s charismatic authority can be seen in various places. The following dedication to the address to the Royal Serbian Academy by Stojan Novaković about language studies in the aforementioned academy is illustrative in that regard: “Besamrtno srpskom spomenu Vuka Stefanovića Karadžića velikog učitelja srpske pismenosti a srpske narodnosti nenadmašnog znaoca...”⁴² [(Devoted) to immortally Serbian memory of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, a great teacher of Serbian literacy, and an unsurpassable knower of Serbian ethnicity...]

On April 5, 1893, Stojan Novaković proposed the “Srpski Akademiski Rečnik” (Serbian Academic Dictionary, i.e., Dictionary of the Serbian Royal Academy). The Lexicographic Section of the academy was formed at the session of April 12 of the same year. The members were Stojan Novaković, Sv. Vulović, Pera Đorđević, Ljubomir Kovačević, M.Đ. Milićević, Ljub. Jovanović, and Ljub.

37 Ibid., p. vii.

38 Popović, *Vuk Stef. Karadžić*; Pavle Ivić, “Kopitarov uticaj na Vuka Karadžića i razvoj Vukovih stavova,” *Slavistična revija* 29/2 (1981), pp. 149–157; Ivić, *Pregled istorije srpskog jezika*.

39 Pavle Ivić, “Književni jezik kao instrument kulture i produkt istorije naroda,” in Pavle Ivić et al. (eds.), *Istorija srpske kulture* (Gornji Milanovac, Beograd: Dečje novine, Udruženje izdavača i knjižara, 1994), s.v., https://www.rastko.rs/isk/isk_04.html (accessed on November 26, 2024).

40 Predrag Palavestra (ed.), *Godina 1847. u srpskoj književnosti i kulturi: 150 godina kasnije* (Beograd: SANU, 1999).

41 Popović, *Vu, Stef. Karadžić*; Aleksandar Milanović and Rajna Dragičević (eds.), *Godina 1847: prelomna tačka srpske kulture* (Beograd: Savez slavističkih društava Srbije, 2018).

42 Stojan Novaković, *Srpska kraljevska akademija i negovanje jezika srpskog* (Beograd: Kraljevsko-srpska državna štamparija, 1888), p. 3.

Stojanović, all academicians.⁴³ At this point, not only the charismatic authority of Vuk Karadžić and the traditional authority he has established but also the authority of the supreme scholarly institution, the Royal Academy of Sciences, was thrown behind this project. This remains the case with all future dictionary projects, they appear within the two most prestigious scholarly institutions: (1) the Academy of Sciences and Arts and (2) Matica Srpska, the most prestigious Serbian cultural institution. The Academy dictionary was not published until the 1950s. Its groundwork corresponded with Serbia's trials and tribulations, involving four major wars, coups, assassinations, rebellions, and various other disturbances in public life. However, numerous preparatory activities on this dictionary were still done in the intervening period. As early as 1894, the collection of materials started. The Office of the Lexicographic Section formed. The minister of education and church affairs made Dr. Đorđe S. Đorđević, a professor, secretary of the Section. We can see that, very early on, the authority of the state was put behind the project (that too remains a constant the Academy Dictionary and two other lexicographic projects discussed here, sponsored by the Matica). Monolingual dictionary projects have been seen as affairs of importance to the Serbian state, and they have always enjoyed the support of the state. This is quite different from the state of affairs in the English-speaking world, where dictionaries of this kind are purely commercial enterprises.

By the end of 1894 around 20 thousand cards were excerpted from the literature, and two members were charged with developing a field work questionnaire. From that point on, the Lexicographic Section goes through various changes of membership. In 1894, the section included experts outside the academy: V. Jagić, P. Budmani, Jovan Živanović, members abroad, and local experts, such as Milan Rešetar, Tihomir Ostojić, and Sima N. Tomić (all professors), and R. Vrhovac.⁴⁴ We can see that the authority of higher learning is also put behind the project. For example, Vatroslav Jagić, one of the members, was one of the most prominent Slavic linguists of the time and a professor at the University of Vienna. Generally, the Lexicographic Section maintained 4–8 members. The key figure in the development and, eventually, publication of this dictionary, Aleksandar Belić, one of the most prominent Serbian linguists of all times, enters the scene as a member of the Lexicographic committee in 1901;⁴⁵ he becomes its secretary in 1912⁴⁶ and president in 1919.⁴⁷ A trial volume of the dictionary was first published in 300 copies and distributed to the members in 1914;⁴⁸ the complete version for the public was finished and

43 SKA, *Godišnjak* VII (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1894), pp 63–64.

44 SKA, *Godišnjak* VIII (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1895), pp. 87–91.

45 SKA, *Godišnjak* XV (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1902), p. 80.

46 SKA, *Godišnjak* XXVI (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1913), p. 14.

47 SKA, *Godišnjak* XXIX (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1920), p. 145.

48 SKA, *Godišnjak* XXVII (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1914), p. 188.

approved in 1918.⁴⁹ Belić⁵⁰ estimates that before the collection of the materials stopped in 1944, some 4 million cards were collected.

A pivotal event in this dictionary project was the establishment of the Institute of Serbian Language on July 15, 1947, with Belić as its manager.⁵¹ The documents in Belić's archive show that his initial plans changed, giving a more prominent role to the dictionary project. In his letter to the Presidency of the Academy that proposes the establishment of the Institute,⁵² the dictionary project is listed in the second place, following the project of a comprehensive grammar of the contemporary Serbian language. However, in the plan of activities for the first year that he presents to the Academy, the Institute was divided into three sections: lexicographic, dialectological, and experimental phonological. The Lexicographic Section is listed first and described as follows: "najvažniji je i najmnogoljudniji leksikografski odsek."⁵³ [the most important and the most populous is the lexicographic section.] This change, that likely came from the political structures outside academia, is quite understandable. The dictionary was meant to cover the entire Serbo-Croatian language area and to be complementary with the dictionary of Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Science.⁵⁴ As such, it was seen as a tool in promoting brotherhood and unity between Serbs and Croats. An instance of the political pressure from the time is seen in the absolutely unreal promise of completing this dictionary project within the current five-year plan. In his plan of work, Belić notes the following about the Lexicographic Section: "Njegov zadatak je da u granicama petogodišnjeg plana izradi u potpunosti Rečnik savremenog književnog i narodnog jezika."⁵⁵ [Its task is to fully complete, within the five-year plan, the Dictionary of Contemporary Literary and People's Language.] He furthermore estimates that there would be five volumes with the total of 4400 pages. As we know, the reality of the project is that it currently has 21 volumes, with an average length of 800 pages, and that these numbers will likely be doubled once the dictionary is completed, most likely 100 years after the publication of its first volume.

After more than a decade from this declaration, a decade marked by constant understaffing, the first volume appeared in 1959. In their report about this publication, the dictionary team claims that they cannot do anything else with the current staff, but they hope that, with help from the Executive Council

49 SKA, *Godišnjak XXVIII* (Beograd: U Kraljevskoj Srpskoj Državnoj Štampariji, 1919), p. 145.

50 Aleksandar Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 H (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1947).

51 SANU, *Godišnjak LIV* (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1948), p. 39.

52 Aleksandar Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 A (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1946).

53 Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 H, p. 1.

54 JAZU, *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* (Zagreb: JAZU, 1880–1976).

55 Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 H, p. 1.

of the Peoples Republic of Serbia, the Federal Council of Scholarship, the Council of Scholarship of the Peoples Republic of Serbia, and the Presidency of the Academy, they will be able to fulfill their obligations.⁵⁶ There was again a strong sense that the project was of national importance, with the expectation that the state should put its clout behind it.

Throughout this dictionary project, there was a dual symbiotic relationship with the writers of fine literature. First, they were seen as prime sources of the materials. That way, in addition to the traditional authority of “the people” and Vuk Karadžić, the authority of institutions such as the Academy, and the power of the states, charismatic authority of the writers of fine literature has been added to the equation. In his proposal for the establishment of the Serbian Language Institute, Belić balances the role of traditional and charismatic authority in the following manner:

Čim se utvrdilo načelo da u književnom jeziku mora biti primenjen narodni jezik sa teritorije na kojoj se govorilo jezikom sličnim Vukovu jeziku /između 1840 i 1850/, pojavili su se književnici sa različitih tačaka te teritorije koji su učestvovali u izgradnji našeg književnog jezika naporedo sa Karadžićem. Tako se ustalio naš savremeni književni jezik. Iako on ne predstavlja prosto produženje Karadžićeva jezika, on je izrađen u istom duhu, pod okriljem onog narodnog jezika kojim je Karadžić pisao.⁵⁷

[As soon as the rule that people’s language from the territory in which one spoke language similar to that of Vuk Karadžić needs to be used in the literary language, authors of literature appeared in different points in that territory to build our literary language alongside Karadžić. That is how our contemporary literary language stabilized. Although it does not represent a simple continuation of Karadžić’s language, it is constructed in the same spirit, under the tutelage of the kind of people’s language Karadžić used.]

Second, writers of fine literature were seen as the most important users of this dictionary. In the same proposal, Belić writes about the dictionary: “To bi bilo veliko olakšanje našim književnicima, stalna mogućnost leksičkog osvežavanja našeg savremenog književnog jezika i neiscrpan izvor za ispitivanja razvitka našeg književnog jezika...”⁵⁸ [That would be a big help for our writers, a constant possibility to lexically refresh our contemporary literary language, a fathomless source for research about the development of literary language.] One can see that rational authority of the utility of this future dictionary combined with the authority of writers and linguists.

This is equally prominent in the front matter of this dictionary, where fine literature is seen as a principal data source (along with the field-work surveys), following a hierarchy of writers by their quality: “Ali, ustvari, najglavniji

56 SANU, *Godišnjak* LXVI (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1960), pp. 183–187.

57 Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 H, p. 1.

58 Belić, *Belićev arhiv*, document AB III 1988 A, p. 2.

izvori za ovaj Rečnik bili su prostrana štampana književnost naših naroda za pomenuto vreme i znatne Akademijine zbirke rečničke građe skupljene u narodu..."⁵⁹ [But, in fact, the most important source for this dictionary were a broad printed literature of our peoples, during that time and considerable collections of dictionary materials gathered among the people...] and "Naravno, iz opsežne književnosti XIX i XX veka morao je biti izvršen izbor: od najboljih pisaca crpena je većina njihovih dela, a od ostalih (znatnijih) manji broj."⁶⁰ [Of course, from the voluminous literature of the 19th and 20th century, one needed to make choices: most works were excerpted from the best writers, and from others (notable ones) a smaller number was taken.]

Third-party accounts also confirm the prominent role of writers. Thus Stanojčić⁶¹ writes: "...A. Belići M. Stevanović, uvek su polazili od postavke da je osnovni izvor jezičke građe koja je relevantna za izgradnju norme—jezik dobrih pisaca beletristike." [...A. Belić and M. Stevanović have always followed the premise that the most basic source of linguistic material relevant to building the norm (of the standard language variety) is the language of good writers of fine literature.] Further insights into Belić's lexicographic program the history of the dictionary of the Academy can be found in two works by Nenad Ivanović.⁶²

The remaining two dictionaries addressed here were projects of Matica Srpska, the most prestigious Serbian cultural association. Unlike the Academy of Sciences and Arts, there is no single source of information about Matica's projects that would cover their preparatory and execution phases. The information about them are therefore collected from two relevant publications by Matica.⁶³ The sources of information also included personal communications with the authors, the front matters, and third-party accounts.⁶⁴

59 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*, vol. I, p. vii.

60 Ibid., p. xvii.

61 Živojin Stanojčić, "Beogradska lingvistička škola A. Belića i književni jezik našeg vremena," in *Predavanja / Seminar srpskog jezika, književnosti i kulture* 7 (2018), pp. 5–14.

62 Nenad Ivanović, "Leksikografska misao Aleksandra Belića (1926–1955)," in Dragana Mršević-Radović et al. (eds.), *Aleksandar Belić: srpski lingvista veka, knj. 1: O Aleksandru Beliću na Naučnom sastanku slavista u Vukove dane (1971–2016)* (Beograd: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, 2016), pp. 319–343; Nenad Ivanović, "Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti," in Milosav Tešić et al. (eds.), *Srpska leksikografija od Vuka do danas* (Beograd: SANU i Savez slavističkih društava Srbije, 2018), pp. 65–80.

63 The following publications have been used. First, *Rad Matice srpske*, the publication that is in a way Matica's equivalent of the Academy's *Annals*. *Rad* began appearing only in 1971, after the dictionary was planned. Second the *Letopis* was used, that was appearing in the previous period when the six-volume dictionary was planned and started to appear in 1967. It contains only occasional dictionary-related content, as attested by Trečakov 1984.

64 Nenad Ivanović and Nataša Milanov, "Leksikografija srpskog književnog jezika: leksikografski program u Matici srpskoj," in Milosav Tešić et al. (eds.), *Srpska leksikografija od Vuka do danas* (Beograd: SANU i Savez slavističkih društava Srbije, 2018), pp. 81–96.

The ongoing work on this dictionary was mentioned as early as December 1954 in the conclusions of the so-called Novi Sad agreement about the Serbo-Croatian language, where the signatories state the following in point 5:

Radi iskorišćavanja celokupnog rečničkog blaga našeg jezika i njegovog pravilnog i punog razvitka neophodno je potrebna izrada priručnog rečnika savremenog srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika. Stoga treba pozdraviti inicijativu Matice srpske koja je u zajednici sa Maticom hrvatskom pristupila njegovoj izradi.⁶⁵

[To use the entire vocabulary richness of our language and because of its regular and full development, it is absolutely necessary to create a reference dictionary of the contemporary Serbo-Croatian language. One should therefore applaud the initiative of Matica Srpska, which has started its compilation in partnership with Matica Hrvatska.]

The next time general information about this dictionary project was made available, the year was 1971; this is when *Rad Matice srpske* articles began appearing. There were 13 volumes of this publication about the activities of the Matica⁶⁶ at the time when this dictionary was compiled. There is limited information about the dictionary; the annual work on this dictionary project is represented by two paragraphs: the first states the book that was published and the second, the letters of the next volume for that year. In the final report,⁶⁷ plans for an abridged two-volume dictionary, and an updated version of the six-volume dictionary was mentioned.

The six-volume dictionary⁶⁸ establishes the authority of the writers of fine literature even more resolutely than the SANU dictionary.⁶⁹ In the foreword, the authors state that their goal is to compile:

rečnik književnog jezika na osnovu građe koja će se prikupiti iz dela novije i najnovije književnosti, pisane srpskohrvatski jezikom, iz publicistike, stručne i naučne literature...⁷⁰

[a dictionary of literary/standard language based on the materials collected from the works of newer and newest literature, written in the Serbo-Croatian language, from opinion journalism, professional and scholarly literature...]

65 Živan Milisavac, "Letopis, Anketa o pitanjima srpskohrvatstskog jezika i pravopisa," *Letopis Matice srpske* 375/1 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1955), p. 1.

66 Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 1–3 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1971); Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 4–6 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1972); Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 7–8 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1973); Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 9–10 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1974); Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 11–12 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1975); Pavle Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 13 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1976).

67 Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 13.

68 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika*.

69 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*.

70 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 8.

The list of sources⁷¹ shows that the works of literature have been strongly favored over other sources. Approximately 75% of sources are from literature and literature magazines, 19% other sources (mostly textbooks and some newspapers), and 6% previous dictionaries. This imbalance is even stronger considering the quotations within entries, as the authors have resorted to quoting the works of literature much more often than any other sources. Even declaratively, at some places in the front matter, the authors mention only writers, as if the other sources are not present: "Za potvrdu značenja navođeni su najpodesniji primeri iz naših pisaca..."⁷² [To confirm senses, one used most fitting examples from our writers...]

There is also a certain hierarchy of writers, whereby the most prominent writers are each cited with multiple sources. The two most celebrated writers of the time, Miroslav Krleža and Ivo Andrić, are cited with 13 and 7 sources, respectively (which is a quite equal amount, given that Krleža was primarily a dramatist and poet and Andrić primarily a novelist, so he has several longer texts included). Other prominent authors are also represented with multiple works, such as novelist Branko Ćopić with 7 and poets Nator and Matoš with 11 and 8, respectively. This statistic follows the rule established in the Serbian Academy Dictionary⁷³ that: "most works were excerpted from the best writers." Finally, one should not forget that the issue of which writers were represented and how they were quoted was one of the contentious issues that made Matica Hrvatska pull out from this common project after two published volumes (the whole six-volume dictionary was finished by Matica Srpska alone). In general, in this debate, the language issue was a tool of constructing ethnic identification: Serbs were identifying themselves with Yugoslavia and its main language, while Croats were distancing themselves from the country and the common language (For more information about all these contentious issues, see Pešikan⁷⁴ for the Serbian perspective and Brozović⁷⁵ for the Croatian perspective). More specifically, the aforementioned *Letopis*, which was pre-viously instrumental in conducting a survey about Serbo-Croatian linguistic unity, also published in Letopis⁷⁶ papers by Stjepan Babić,⁷⁷ representing Croatian views and Mihailo

71 Ibid., pp. 15–29.

72 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 13.

73 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*.

74 Mitar Pešikan, *Naš književni jezik na sto godina poslije Vuka* (Beograd: Društvo za srpskohrvatski jezik i književnost SR Srbije, 1970).

75 Dalibor Brozović, "Rječnik jezika, ili jezik rječnika," *Kritika* 2 (1969), pp. 3–92.

76 Milisavac, "Letopis, Anketa o pitanjima srpskohrvatskog jezika i pravopisa," pp. 1–126.

77 Stjepan Babić, "Na kraju polemike o rječnicima dviju Matica," *Letopis Matice srpske* 405/1 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1970), pp. 77–79.

Stevanović⁷⁸ representing Serbian viewpoint on lexicographic policies in this dictionary.

This dictionary also uses the authority of a key national institution and the academic environment. On the Serbian side of the project, the editor-in-chief is Mihailo Stevanović, an academician, and the two other main editors are PhDs and were prominent linguists from a university and a research setting, respectively. Finally, support and authority of the state was also at play here. In the front matter, the authors mention that the delegations from both Maticas:

posetili tadašnje predsednike vlada Srbije i Hrvatske i neke ugledne predstavnike našeg književnog i kulturnog života na jednoj i drugoj strani, te su dobili, i u Zagrebu i u Beogradu, obećanje da će materijalna sredstva za taj značajni kulturni pothvat biti osigurana i da će im se pri izvršavanju toga krupnog zadatka pružiti moralna pomoć i saradnja.⁷⁹

[have visited prime ministers of Serbia and Croatia at that time and some distinguished representatives of our literary and cultural life on one and the other side (i.e., Serbian and Croatian—D.Š) and that they received promises in Zagreb and in Belgrade that financial means for this important cultural enterprise will be secured and that they will enjoy moral support at the execution of this major task.]

Similar to the Serbian Academy Dictionary,⁸⁰ the rational authority of filling the gap in existing lexicographic practice is present here too: “Kulturi naših naroda odavno nedostaje rečnik srpskohrvatskoga, odnosno hrvatskosrpskoga književnog jezika novijeg i najnovijeg vremena.”⁸¹ [The culture of our peoples is missing a Serbo-Croatian, a.k.a. Croato-Serbian literary/standard language of the newer and newest times.] They plan to fill this gap by documenting and being informative:

Osnovna je namera Uredništva bila da pruži našoj javnosti dokumentovano srpskohrvatsko jezičko blago današnjeg vremena. Ovaj rečnik je u prvom redu informativan, ali ono što se danas smatra zastarelim, provincijalnim i manje običnim posebno je označeno radi informacije.

78 Mihailo Stevanović, “Ko stavlja u procep Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika MS i MH,” *Letopis Matice srpske* 403/1 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1969), pp. 74–104; Mihailo Stevanović, “O ponovnim kritikama Rečnika MS i MH (u „Kritici”) i povodom njih,” *Letopis Matice srpske* 404/2–3 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1969), pp. 314–329; Mihailo Stevanović, “Povodom prethodnog članka,” *Letopis Matice srpske* 405/1 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1970), pp. 80–85.

79 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 8.

80 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*.

81 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 7.

[The chief intention of the Editorial Board is to offer to our public documented Serbo-Croatian linguistic treasure of the present time. This dictionary is primarily informative, but what is today considered obsolete, provincial, and less common is so marked for information purposes.]

It is interesting to see that the dictionary compilers introduce normative linguistic content but refuse to state that their dictionary is normative. My own research⁸² has shown that this is a common practice across the world of Slavic monolingual dictionaries. To sum up, the two Serbian major monolingual dictionaries that have come to fruition during the 20th century are characterized by a strong presence of the authority of writers, academia, and the state.

The final lexicographic product analyzed here, the one-volume Matica dictionary⁸³ (its first edition was published in 2007), is a one-volume dictionary. The ideas about this dictionary have evolved over time. Initially, the plan was to create a two-volume dictionary:

Povodom inicijative da se pristupi izradi sažetog izdanja Rečnika srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika u dva toma, usvaja se mišljenje i predlog Odbora Odeljenja za književnost i jezik od 18. decembra 1975. godine i to: a) Rad na novom dvotomnom Rečniku smatra se veoma potrebnim, ali bi taj rad za pet godina odložio pripreme na reviziji šestotomnika i njegovog drugog izdanja; b) Potrebno je založiti se za početak rada na pripremi drugog izdanja šestotomnika. Ukoliko se sredstva za ovo obezbede, izradu dvotomnika treba odložiti, što znači da se Rečnik manjeg obima prepušta zahtevima tržišta i postupku koji izdavač utvrdi.⁸⁴

[Concerning the initiative to commence compilation of an abridged edition of the Dictionary of the Serbo-Croatian literary/standard language in two volumes, the opinion of the Board of the Literature and Language Section from December 18, 1975 have been adopted as follows: a) the work on a new two-volume Dictionary is considered very important, but that work would delay preparations for a revision of the six-volume dictionary and its next edition by five years; b) it is necessary to advocate the beginning of the work on preparing the second edition of the six-volume dictionary. If the funds for this are secured, the creation of the two-volume dictionary needs to be delayed, which means that the Dictionary of a smaller size is left to the needs of the market and the procedure which the publisher establishes.]

One can see that this shorter version of the Matica dictionary was given a very low priority. It is then no wonder that the work on it started several decades later. At the time this project was finally given top priority, it was compiled as a one-volume rather than a two-volume dictionary. The word about the role of the market may sound prophetic in that regard.

82 Danko Šipka, *Slovenski jezici: genealogija i ideologija* (Beograd: Savez slavističkih društava Srbije, 2022).

83 Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*.

84 Maletin (ed.), *Rad Matice srpske* 13, p. 32.

Behind this dictionary are again the authority of the Matica, academia, and, indirectly, the state, but what has changed is that the authority of writers has been replaced with the authority of linguists. The following segment of the front matter is illustrative in that regard:

Ovaj rečnik zamišljen je prvobitno kao (šest puta) skraćena verzija Rečnika srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika Matice srpske, pri čemu bi autori odlučivali samo o tome koja reč ulazi u jednotomni rečnik, a koja ne. [...] U njemu se, naime, zbog obima njegovog, moralo 'suditi' rečima [...]⁸⁵

[This dictionary was initially envisaged as (six times) abridged version of the Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian standard/literary language by Matica Srpska, whereby the authors would only decide which words to include in the one-volume dictionary and which to exclude. [...] In it, namely, because of its volume, one had to 'judge' the words.]

What can be seen here is that lexical selection was not conducted by frequency counts (in corpora produced by "good writers" or otherwise) or user surveys. Instead, charismatic authority of linguists who have compiled this dictionary is front and center. While the one-volume format is more user-friendly than the multivolume editions, the authors do not specify who are prospective users of the dictionary. The users are mentioned only in the part about idioms: "Njihovo tumačenje pomoći će posebno leksikografima, prevodiocima, kao i čitaocima književnih dela."⁸⁶ [Their explanations will be especially helpful to lexicographers, translators, and the readers of fine literature.] We can see that, similar to the writers, linguists are seen in a dual role, as sources of authority and as users of lexicographic products.

Looking at what can be found in the dictionary, it seems that the Serbian lexicographic tradition is consciously moving away from its philological intertwining with writers of fine literature, but private communications with the authors of this dictionary paints a different picture. First, the authors testify that their divorce from writers was a pure matter of practicality rather than a strategy. The six-volume Serbo-Croatian dictionary, which was the base for this abridged one-volume edition, contained numerous quotes from Croatian authors. Given that this dictionary is just Serbian, it decided to exclude writers altogether, as replacing quotes from Croatian authors with Serbian ones would not be feasible. Second, a compilation of a new multivolume dictionary at Matica is underway, which is firmly based in the works of fine literature, and, as attested by those involved in the project, the issue of which writers are going to be included was one of the most difficult decisions during the preparatory phases of this project.

⁸⁵ Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

Summing up, plans and declarations for the four major Serbian monolingual dictionaries started from Karadžić, who used rational authority of consistency to fight against the mainstream linguistic currents, serving de facto as a promotor of cultural Austroslavism. Then, the multivolume dictionary by the Academy and the six-volume dictionary of the Matica harnessed the authority of writers, the academia, and the state. Finally, the one-volume Matica dictionary replaces the authority of writers with that of linguists, not programmatically but rather pragmatically. I will now turn to how these declarations were implemented.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND RECEPTION

The micro maneuvers of breaking up with the dominant Pan-Slavic tradition are seen even in the title of the Karadžić's dictionary,⁸⁷ which reads *Српски рјечник* (i.e., Serbian Dictionary, written in Karadžić's new linguistic and orthographic form), rather than *Сербский рѣчникъ* or *Славянский рѣчникъ* or *Славяносербский рѣчникъ* or something similar (which would be the case in the model of language he strived to replace). A further element of implementing his program is in lexical selection; Ivić notes the following on that account:

Karakteristično je da u Vukovom predgovoru i u gramatici priključenoj uz rečnik ima na stotine reči koje u samom rečniku nisu navedene [...] Reči popisane u Rječniku sve pripadaju narodnom govoru; Vuk namerno nije crpao iz knjiga.⁸⁸

[It is characteristic that in Karadžić's introduction and the grammar added to this dictionary, there are hundreds of words that are not attested in the dictionary itself [...] The words listed in the dictionary all belong to the speech of the people; it was Karadžić's conscious decision not to excerpt from the books.]

It is very clear that the lexemes related to the previous Slavonic-Serbian were consciously excluded from the dictionary (although Karadžić used them in his own texts). This radical rift toward the previous Pan-Slavic tradition with conscious or unconscious service to Austro-Slavic ideology was based on the Romanticist notion of "the people." This radical severing of ties with the previous cultural tradition was somewhat mitigated in the second edition of this dictionary,⁸⁹ where some of the words from the previous tradition are included. However, the second edition comes several years after the year 1847, in which the abandonment of the previous Serbian-Slavonic tradition and espousing Karadžić's program has been fully completed (more about that process was discussed in Popović,⁹⁰ and Milanović and Dragićević.⁹¹

87 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*.

88 Ivić, *Pregled istorije srpskog jezika*, p. 185.

89 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*.

90 Popović, *Vuk Stef. Karadžić*.

91 Milanović and Dragićević (eds.), *Godina 1847: prelomna tačka srpske kultur*.

The strategy of enforcing can also be seen in various entries in this dictionary. For example, the entry for school (*škola*) includes, among other things, extended encyclopedic information, which is in direct service of enforcing Karadžić's program:

A u Srijemu, u Bačkoj i u Banatu, ima sad u svakom selu škola, i učiteljima svuda plaća opština; ali se nauke slabo razlikuju od onije u Srbiji: i ovde još uče đeca čitati iz slavenskoga časlovca i iz psaltira (koje ne razumiju svi ni direktori, a kamo li učitelji i đaci); i to je i ovde još (gotovo) sva Srpska knjiga.⁹²

[And in Srijem, Bačka, and Banat there is now a school in every village and teachers are paid by municipalities in all these places; however, teaching is not very different from that in Serbia: here too, children are learning to chant from Slavonic readers and books of psalms (which are not understood even by all principals, let alone teachers or students); and that are here (almost) all Serbian books.]

As stated in section 3 of this paper, in the two 20th-century dictionaries, the authority of Karadžić and writers of fine literature is prominent. In the Academy dictionary, the standard language form established by Karadžić is used as an adaptational filter for dialectal words. Thus, the authors state the following in the front matter:

Karadžićeva opšta pravilnost vredi za sve reči koje bi se htele iz dijalekata uzeti; one ostaju sa svojim značenjem, svojom morfološkom strukturom; ali po glasovima, akcentu i promeni one, ako se unesu u književni jezik, dobijaju njegove osobine.⁹³

[Karadžić's general regularity applies to all words which one would like to take from dialects; they stay with their meaning, and their morphological structure; but in sounds, pitch, and inflection, if they are introduced into the standard/literary language, they get its features.]

This can also be seen in numerous entries in the dictionary. For example, the hypocorism for *wife*, which is primarily used in Southern Serbia, where the dialects feature an expiratory stress system and analytic declension is listed with tonal stress (pitch) and synthetic declension. This is characteristic for the type of the standard language form introduced by Karadžić: "žēnce (žénče), -eta s (supl. pl. ženčad)."⁹⁴ Similarly, other derivatives of this type are presented with the standard language stress and inflectional pattern, even if they are quoted from dialectal sources—for example, "kájsiće, -eta s pokr. dem. od kajsija (Vranje, Vlaj. 1)."⁹⁵

Quotations from the works of fine literature eclipse all other sources. My own sampling of 100 pages from the first 10 volumes of the Academy dictionary shows that literary quotations (e.g., from writers, folk literature,

92 Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*, p. 920.

93 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika I*, p. xxiv.

94 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika V*, pp. 347–348.

95 Belić et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika*.

literary criticism, and journals) comprise slightly less than 70 percent of quoted material for this dictionary, while other sources are found in around 30 percent of quotations. With these other quotes, most frequent are the ones from the dialects. Most quoted authors are the most prestigious ones (see section 3 of this paper), starting, of course, with Vuk Karadžić. The overwhelming number of quotes from the works of Vuk Karadžić is also visible in individual entries. For example, in the entry *a*³ alone, which presents a conjunction, roughly an equivalent to the English *but, however, while, and (on the other hand)*, and so on, there are as many as 21 quotes from Karadžić's collection of folklore. The list of sources for this dictionary includes various subject areas, especially from the field of law but also other theoretical and practical fields, from a manual on how to build a chicken coop to studies from geology and botany; however, sources of this kind are rarely quoted.

Here too, the title of the dictionary is indicative. It reads: *Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian Literary/Standard and People's Language*. As such, it reflects the official policy of Serbo-Croatian unity, the role of literature, and the role of "the people," all this is continuing the ideology established by Karadžić, who called all Štokavian speakers Serbs, and the Dictionary by the Yugoslav Academy,⁹⁶ which calls the language Croatian or Serbian. Needless to say, it is also compatible with the *esprit du temps* of the socialist Yugoslavia. This title became problematic once Yugoslavia disintegrated in the 1990s, but the authors have decided to complete the dictionary under the name Serbo-Croatian. However, responding to the pressures from the public, the following compromise was forged, as attested by Stijović, who reports that the plan is to:

pristupi osmišljavanju *Rečnika srpskog književnog i narodnog jezika SANU*. [...] Predlog Uređivačkog odbora jeste da se *Rečnik srpskog književnog i narodnog jezika SANU* radi u digitalnoj verziji [...] a da *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog i narodnog jezika SANU* nastavi da se izrađuje po dosadašnjoj koncepciji i sa dosadašnjom građom (osavremenjavanom svakako) u papirnoj verziji.⁹⁷

[start designing a Dictionary of the Serbian literary/standard and people's language by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) [...] The proposal of the Editorial Board is that the Dictionary of the Serbian literary/standard and people's language is compiled in a digital version [...] and that the Dictionary of the Serbo-Croatian literary/standard and people's language is continued according to the hitherto design and with the existing materials (needless to say, updated) in the print version.]

Serbo-Croatian unity and the role of literature is front and center in the six-volume Matica dictionary,⁹⁸ titled *Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian Literary/Standard Language*. While this dictionary treats the standard language form, its primary

96 JAZU, *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika IX*, p. 89.

97 Rada Stijović, "Novi tom rečnika srpskoga jezika," *Politika*, February 7, 2021, <https://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/472462/Novi-tom-Recnika-srpskoga-jezika> (accessed on November 26, 2024).

98 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika*.

focus is on the language of fine literature. Non-standard words are thus included if they are used in literature. The authors note the following in the front matter: “Arhaične i zastarele reči, ukoliko se u književnosti upotrebljavaju iz stilskih razloga, ušle su u Rečnik s oznakom arh. i zast.”⁹⁹ [Archaic and outdated words, if they are used in the works of literature for stylistic purposes, are included in this dictionary with the label arch. and outd.] My own sampling of 100 pages from this dictionary shows that the number of literary quotes in this dictionary (e.g., from writers, folk literature, literary criticism, and journals) amounts to around 90%, a significant increase in comparison with the Academy dictionary.

The overwhelming presence of the authority of the authors of fine literature is also seen in dictionary entries. For example, the following two entries for the verb to *mumble* are on the same half-page on the dictionary, separated by only five other entries. The second entry is cross-referenced to the first, however both contain multiple literature quotes. The literature sources in these two entries are underlined:

mumlati, -am nesvrš. onom. —mumljati 1. proizvoditi nerazgovetne glasove (obično o medvedu); gundati; mrmljati. —Beli medved . . . propinje se i mumla. Nen. Lj. Blaž . . . je svukao sa sebe košulju i mumla nesuvislo. Božić. 2. fig. tutnjati. —Mumlaju topovi. Sek. [...]

mumljati, -am nesvrš. = mumlati. —[Bik] je bukao i mumljao naokolo. Lal. U daljini mumljaju topovi. Krl.¹⁰⁰

Various solutions in this dictionary, most notably cross-referencing and defining entries as synonymous, were the principal reasons for ending collaboration with Matica Hrvatska. The initial team used traditional authority of South-Slavic unity and treated Serbian-Croatian differences as mere phonological and morphological alternates, rather than inter-ethnic differences. For example, the front matter¹⁰¹ uses the term *dubleti sa glasovnim razlikama* “phonological alternates”—for examples: *opći* vs. *opšti*, *kemija* vs. *hemija*, *barbarski* vs. *varvarski*, *duhan* vs. *duvan*—where one word is clearly Croatian and the other Serbian. Similarly, examples such as *sudija* vs. *sudac*, *lekar* vs. *liječnik*, *jezički* vs. *jezični*, *adresovati* vs. *adresirati*, *savremen* vs. *suvoremen*, and *preduzeće* vs. *poduzeće* are called alternates with different suffixes and prefixes, although it is very clear that the first word in these pairs is Serbian and the second Croatian. Croatian grievances related to this project were concerned with introducing traditional authority of the Croatian nation, and they were a part of a broader separatist attitude. The complaints about the solutions espoused in this project, which led to the abandonment of this project by Matica Hrvatska, are systematically presented in Brozović.¹⁰² The Serbian reaction was to continue the project and to defend

99 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 11.

100 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* III, p. 462.

101 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* I, p. 11.

102 Brozović, “Rječnik jezika, ili jezik rječnika,” pp. 3–92.

the solutions based on the traditional authority of South Slavic unity. These reactions are presented most systematically in Pešikan.¹⁰³ This too belonged to a broader unitarist attitude. Identical opinions and attitudes can be found in the papers by Stjepan Babić,¹⁰⁴ representing Croatian views, and Mihailo Stevanović,¹⁰⁵ representing the Serbian viewpoint on lexicographic policies in this dictionary. One can see in the case of this dictionary that lexicographic solutions tend to reflect political views, and, at the same time, these reactions produce political reactions in a broader sociocultural setting.

As mentioned in section 3, in the 21st-century one-volume dictionary by Matica,¹⁰⁶ there is a noticeable move away from the authority of writers with the concurrent authority of linguists. This is clearly reflected in the entries of this dictionary, most notably in the practice of quoting from sources. A comparison of the same entry in the six- and one-volume dictionary is illustrative in this regard. For, the exclamation *aj* "hey, woe, etc." reads as follows in the two dictionaries:

aj uzv. 1. za dozivanje i odzivanje. — Aj, braćo, ne dajte . . . ! stade ga opet dreka. Gliš. Aj, more! Udrite hajduka. Vuk. 2. za izražavanje bola, žaljenja, vajkanja, divljenja, čuđenja i sl. — Pa ovako Miloš popijeva: Aj, gdje si mi Drago vojevoda! NP Vuk. Aj, što mari sv'jet za muku. Kranjč. S.¹⁰⁷

aj uzv. a. za dozivanje, zapomaganje ili odazivanje. — Aj, braćo, pomagajte! b. za izražavanje različitih emocija (bola, vajkanja, divljenja, čuđenja i dp). — Aj, što me boli noga. Aj, divnih li ruža! Aj, gde si dosad?!¹⁰⁸

While the six-volume dictionary (the top entry) features two quotes related to Karadžić (one from his dictionary, the other from his collection of folklore) and two quotes from two other authors, Serbian prosaist Milovan Glišić and Croatian poet Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević, the one-volume dictionary (the bottom entry) does not refer to any authors when giving examples. Moreover, the examples in the six-volume dictionary sound detached from contemporary usage, while the ones in the one-volume sound natural.

Yet another difference was in the name of the dictionary. The one-volume dictionary is simply called *Dictionary of the Serbian Language*, so both Serbian-Croatian unity and the authority of the writers of fine literature (represented earlier in the word: *književni* "literary/standard" in the title of the six-volume dictionary: *Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian Literary/Standard Language*) have now

103 Pešikan, *Naš književni jezik na sto godina poslije Vuka*.

104 Babić, "Na kraju polemike o rječnicima dviju Matica," pp. 77–79.

105 Stevanović, "Ko stavlja u procep Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika MS i MH," pp. 74–104; Stevanović, "O ponovnim kritikama Rečnika MS i MH (u 'Kritici') i povodom njih," pp. 314–329; Stevanović, "Povodom prethodnog članka," pp. 80–85.

106 Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*.

107 Stevanović et al., *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika I*, p. 53.

108 Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*, p. 20.

been displaced from the title. While the change from Serbo-Croatian to Serbian is something that reflects historical events and the current political climate, the disconnect with the previous reliance on the authority of fine literature is an innovation specific to this lexicographic project. It is remarkable that a careful reviewer of this dictionary¹⁰⁹ devotes 5 out of 18 pages to discussing the change of the name to *Serbian* and comparing it to previous naming practices in Serbian and South-Slavic lexicography.

A final major difference between the two dictionaries was their reception. While the six-volume dictionary was marked by heated disputes, the one-volume dictionary was met with appreciation and constructive criticism. The authors of the one-volume dictionary acknowledged this in the front matter to the second edition: “Jednotomni Rečnik srpskoga jezika u izdanju Matice srpske naišao je na dobar prijem kod čitalaca, a i kritike su bile uglavnom blagonaklone.”¹¹⁰ [The one-volume Dictionary of the Serbian language published by Matica Srpska was met with good reception among its readership and the critics were mostly benevolent] and:

Od velike pomoći bio nam je članak (s razlogom kritički intoniran) Dragoljuba Petrovića Na marginama Srpskog jednotomnika, objavljen u Letopisu Matice srpske, knj. 483/5, str. 977–994, u kojem su iznete mnoge korisne primedbe i sugestije, od kojih su skoro sve prihvatljive [...] ¹¹¹

[Of great help to us was the paper by Dragoljub Petrović (justifiably critical in tone): On the margins of the Serbian one-volume dictionary, published in *Letopis Matice srpske*, vol. 483/5, pp 977–994, where numerous useful comments and suggestions have been advanced, almost all of which are acceptable [...]]

An ultimate measure of how a dictionary project is received is in its use. It is therefore interesting to see how the views of the users of Serbian monolingual dictionaries relate to those of their compilers. In May 2022, I conducted a survey (ASU IRB approval, ID STUDY00015313) asking Serbian lexicographers and students of philological majors at Belgrade University (a major group of users of these dictionaries) the same set of questions about monolingual Serbian dictionaries. Included in this survey were 51 students and 23 lexicographers. A total of 10 statements was offered to respondents with the five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). In reporting the results, 5 represents “strongly agree” and 1 “strongly disagree.”

Of those ten statements, the following are relevant for the discussion here. First, there is an overwhelming agreement about the social importance of these dictionaries, which can be seen from the following statements presented in Table 1.

109 Dragoljub Petrović, “Na marginama Srpskog jednotomnika,” *Letopis Matice srpske* 483/5 (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 2008), pp. 977–994.

110 Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*, p. 7.

111 Ibid., p. 7, footnote 1.

Table 1: The Social Role of Descriptive Monolingual Dictionaries

Question	Users (N=51)	Lexicographers (N=23)
Publishing descriptive monolingual dictionaries is of primary national interest.	4.06	4.96
The state needs to support publishing of descriptive monolingual dictionaries more strongly.	4.67	4.83

Not surprisingly, lexicographers show a higher level of agreement than their users, but in both groups, the level of agreement with these statements is exceptionally high. This means that using the authority of the state and tradition is not something that remains confined to the quarters of prestigious academic institutions but rather something that also trickles down to the users.

Second, it seems that the users are somewhat more convinced than the compilers of dictionaries that the tools normative authority are effective, which can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: The Perceived Influence of Normative Lexicographic Strategies

Question	Users (N=51)	Lexicographers (N=23)
Normative usage labels in descriptive monolingual dictionaries, such as slang, regional, etc. influence how the users use the words so labeled.	3.16	3.09
The stress pattern of the word registered in descriptive monolingual dictionaries influences how users pronounce that word.	2.82	2.65

This seems to point to the fact that lexicographers assess their influence realistically, without any exaggeration of their role in the society.

I will now turn to the conclusions stemming from the review of these four Serbian monolingual descriptive dictionaries.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The case study of the four major Serbian monolingual descriptive dictionaries shows that there is a multitude of ways in which lexicographers justify their dictionary solutions. The venues where these justifications can be found range from public debates and internal correspondence to, most notably, front matters of these four dictionary projects. These macro maneuvers of justification have

been based on all three types of authority defined by Weber:¹¹² traditional, charismatic, and rational. These macro maneuvers based on various types of authority are then followed by the micro maneuvers of implementing solutions, in which a given type of authority is enforced. The central type of authority changed through the three observed centuries, but some kind of authority has always been present, and the concept of nation (in its ethnic sense, rather than in the Western sense of citizenship) has always been pivotally present. At different historical junctures, *nation* (i.e., "the people") has been construed differently (quite consistently with Brubaker's definition presented in section 1 of this paper), and the authors followed the definitions of their time.

Karadžić mounted his program as an Austroslavic contender of the Panslavic Slavonic Serbian cultural elites. It is then quite natural that he used the rational authority of consistency and utility to support his program. The traditional authority of "the people," or *nation* as he understood it, encompassed all speakers of Štokavian dialects (which includes all today's Serbs, Montenegrins, Bosniaks, and a large part of Croats). By the time the preparatory activities for the Academy dictionary were underway in the late 19th and the late 20th centuries, the authority of "the people," the Serbs, is unquestionable and so is the traditional authority of Karadžić's philological tradition. The emergence of the Academy dictionary adds charismatic authority of the institutions, Karadžić itself, and writers of fine literature.

With all that, the two dictionaries that have begun to appear in the short 20th century, the Academy and the six-volume Matica dictionary, were firmly based in all three types of authority. First, there is the rational authority of utility: there are common references in public appearances and correspondences, as well as the two front matters to the dictionaries that these dictionaries are filling in a gap in the existing lexicographic production. Second, there is the traditional authority of "the people" and the established philological tradition. In the short 20th century, "the people" was not so much an ethnic but rather a class reference. In its ethnic sense, "the people" represented Serbo-Croatian unity. Finally, charisma of the institutions which were publishing the dictionaries is very prominent. The charisma of writers, headed by Vuk Karadžić (best known of them), was also used as a source of authority. This threefold authority has made these dictionaries important national projects meriting attention of the state.

The 21st-century one-volume Matica dictionary displays signs of departure from the authority of writers, using the authority of linguists instead. In addition, "the people" are now exclusively ethnic Serbs. While it would seem that the whole tradition shifts away from the philological symbiosis with writers, private communication reveals that this was done out of necessity rather than programmatically. Additionally, a new multivolume Matica dictionary, which is in the planning phase, strongly relies on literary sources.

112 Weber, *Politik als Beruf*.

The micro maneuvers of enforcing lexicographic authority can be found in various segments of these four dictionaries: their titles, lexical selection, definitions, examples, usage labels, and so on. In light of implementing charismatic authority of writers, quotes from various writers are a pivotal element of dictionary entries in the two short 20th-century dictionaries, the largest and the second largest in this sample. It is important which author is selected to be quoted, with how many works and how often he/she is quoted.

All in all, in the history of these four Serbian dictionaries, one can see various societal and historical factors that have shaped lexicographic strategies. We can also see various reactions to these dictionaries and the general impact they had in their times and societies. In light of the latter, it is interesting to note that users generally share lexicographers' attitudes, in some segments even stronger than lexicographers themselves, about the national importance of descriptive monolingual dictionaries and their normative impact.