

THOMAS F. MAGNER

## THE YUGOSLAV ACADEMY DICTIONARY: AN APPRECIATION

*»A Dictionary is an historical document, the history of a nation contemplated from one point of view...«*

Richard C. Trench, 1857

Next year, 1978, marks the hundred year anniversary of the publication of the *Ogled* or »Specimen Copy« of a remarkable dictionary, *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*. Authored by Đuro Daničić, the *Ogled* was both an announcement that the recently established (1866) Yugoslav Academy had decided to compile, under Daničić's editorship, a historical dictionary of the Serbo-Croatian language and also an invitation to »other educated people, here and abroad« to comment on the proposed plan for the dictionary. The first fascicle (*svezak*) of the dictionary appeared in print in 1880 and the last, number 97, in 1976.

The 97 fascicles (*svesci*) are gathered into 23 volumes (*knjige*) with a total of 21,828 pages; each volume from 1 through 22 has 960 pages while volume 23 has 708 pages: 564 in fascicles 95 and 96, and 144 in fascicle 97. Each page measures 20½ cm × 29 cm with entries in two columns (except for *svezak* 97); the margins on each page are quite generous and the print throughout is very legible. In all, there are more than 250,000 entries, beginning with the particle *a*, which receives 26½ pages, and ending with the 5-line entry, *žvuknuti*, a nonce verb meaning »to fire, to hit.«

Fascicle number 97 is entitled *Dodatak* (Addition) and is not part of the dictionary proper but rather is a compendium of fascinating information about the dictionary's editors and their trials and tribulations

over the hundred some years of lexical gestation and production. Besides Daničić, who died in 1882, the editors have been Matija Valjavec (1882—1883), Pero Budmani (1883—1907), Tomo Maretić (1907—1938), Stjepan Musulin (1947—1969), and Slavko Pavešić (1967—1975). The editor of fascicle 97, the retrospective story of the dictionary, is Professor Ljudevit Jonke whom we are honoring in this present volume. I would hope that this fascicle might soon be translated into other languages so that scholars, in particular students of lexicography, who do not read Croatian, would be able to benefit from the description and analysis of the principles and methods which guided the editors and their assistants in the making of this Academy Dictionary. A Supplement (*Dopune*), made inevitable by the appearance of the previously unnoted lexical material during the intervening century but more importantly because of the different approaches of the various editors, will appear in two volumes in the near future.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of the story of the Yugoslav Academy Dictionary is its inception. The Yugoslav Academy had just been established in Zagreb through the inspiration and efforts of the remarkable Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer. Its first secretary was not a Croat but rather a Serb from Novi Sad, Đuro Daničić (born Đorđe Popović). Daničić, the dedicated disciple of the great Vuk Karadžić, came to a Zagreb awash in linguistic cross-currents and almost single-handedly dictated the course of Serbo-Croatian lexicography and the direction of standardization of the Serbo-Croatian language. At that time in Zagreb, as Ljudevit Jonke points out (*svezak 97*, page 82), there were four competing orthographic systems. Daničić in effect ignored the local orthographic possibilities and imposed the Croatian equivalent of Vuk's Cyrillic alphabet, creating in the process four new graphemes: *đ*, *ǰ*, *ǎ* and *ǎ̇* to distinguish unit sounds from the sound combinations represented by *dj*, *dž*, *lj*, and *nj*. Daničić's four creations are used throughout the dictionary and in some of the Yugoslav Academy's other publications; only *đ*, however, survives in general usage today.<sup>1</sup> One can appreciate the linguistic fluidity of the Zagreb situation by imagining the consternation and opposition which would have greeted an attempt by Doctor James Murray to introduce any new letters into the *Oxford English Dictionary* which he was editing about the same time (its first part appeared in 1884). Maretić (*svezak 97*, page 37) quotes A. L. Schlözer's apt comment that people accept new letters about as happily as they accept new taxes.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Old English *edh* (*ð*) and corresponding to Cyrillic *h*, the letter *đ* has never become firmly established in the *latinica* writing convention. For one thing it is visually not very distinctive in the small print which is common in Yugoslavia; the small horizontal bar fuses together with the rest of the letter, the result sometimes indistinguishable from the letter *d*. In writing and typing Yugoslavs tend to substitute *dj* and are not troubled by the possibility of confusion with *dj* (i. e. *d+j* as in *djevojka* »girl«). Another reason for disregarding *đ* is the fact that the *đ* : *dž* contrast does not exist in a large portion of the Serbo-Croatian speech territory, that is, in the western part precisely where *latinica* is the usual writing system.

Dr. Samuel Johnson's self-mocking definition of a lexicographer as »a harmless drudge« is accurate to the extent that an immense amount of drudgery was the lot of 18th and 19th century lexicographers.<sup>2</sup> Another distinctive characteristic was that of single-minded dedication and self-confidence, sometimes even arrogance. One thinks here of the crusty Doctor Johnson himself, of the contentious Noah Webster and of Daničić who did not accept advice gracefully. As Vatroslav Jagić wrote: »I did not want to make any remarks [about the plan for the dictionary], knowing from experience that objections were unpleasant to my friend, but I felt that Daničić's program in reference to the new period in the history of the Serbo-Croatian language was too narrow.«<sup>3</sup> Daničić ignored criticism of his fanciful etymologies and included his putative Indo-European constructs in the Academy Dictionary. Again Jagić: »What was the use, for example, in etymologies such as that under the word *bog* 'from the root *bhag*, to give' or that under the word *bos* 'from the root *bhas*, to shine' . . . ?«<sup>4</sup>

What should the ideal dictionary encompass? Perhaps the best answer is that offered by the Dean of Westminster (later Archbishop of Dublin), Richard Chenevix Trench, whose thoughts on this matter were influential in the planning of the Oxford English Dictionary. In a lecture before the London Philological Society in 1857, he described the ideal dictionary as follows:

»A Dictionary, then, according to that idea of it which seems to me alone capable of being logically maintained, is an inventory of the language: much more indeed, but this primarily . . . It is no task of the maker of it to select the *good* words of a language. If he fancies that it is so, and begins to pick and choose, to leave this and to take that, he will at once go astray. The business which he has undertaken is to collect and arrange all the words, whether good or bad, whether they do or do not commend themselves to his judgment, which . . . those writing in the language have employed. He is an historian of it, not a critic.«<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Johnson had six assistants and Daničić, a century later, had only about the same number. It was only with the advent of work on the Oxford English Dictionary that volunteer labor began to play a large role; according to J. R. Hulbert (*Dictionaries: British and American*, rev. ed., London, 1968, page 40), »By 1881 the number of readers was 800, some of whom had sent in as many as 11,000 slips. In 1884 the editor reported that one reader had sent in 100,000 quotations, and another 36,000.«

<sup>3</sup> Page 745, *Istoriija slavjanskoj filologii*, St. Petersburg, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Pages 4—5, *On Some Deficiencies in Our English Dictionaries*, 2nd ed., London, 1860.

Daničić was actually trying to achieve two goals in the Academy Dictionary: the recording of all Serbo-Croatian lexical material from the earliest times (the oldest source is an inscription from 1114) up to the end of the eighteenth century, and the recording of authentic »folk« lexemes from the nineteenth century. He was functioning both as a historian of the lexicon and as a language-planner for his own century. For this second goal he utilized primarily the lexical material of Vuk Karadžić and other sources which he considered to be *narodni* »folk (origin)«. He ignored Croatian writers of the nineteenth century (e. g. Ivan Mažuranić), considering them to be unsuitable for creating the lexicon of a standard Serbo-Croatian language. Succeeding editors deviated from his narrowly conceived plan for nineteenth century sources and included Croatian literary sources. One can say then that the Academy Dictionary contains historical lexical material up to the middle of the nineteenth century (there is some from later) but there is an unevenness of representation in this (19th) century. The sources for all periods are listed at the end of *svezak* 96 with indications as to their use by the various editors. The forthcoming *Dopune* are expected to remedy the deficiencies caused by the progressive enlarging of source material over the years.

Daničić has been criticized many times for not including kajkavian words except for those in Belostenec's dictionary. As he stated in the *Ogled*, the task of representing the kajkavian lexicon should be left to a »provincial dictionary« as it would be a »shame to lose time on this dictionary reading the whole kajkavian literature« (*svezak* 97, page 7).

In retrospect though, his decision to ignore the kajkavian material was a reasonable one, given the linguistic perceptions of the time. It has been the fate of the kajkavian heritage to be claimed by both Slovenes and Croats and consequently the kajkavian situation has always been tinged with ambiguity. As Maće Hraste points out,<sup>6</sup> the leading Slavists of the day disagreed on the relationship of the kajkavian dialects to Slovenian and Croatian. He lists the following as assigning kajkavian to Slovenian: Kopitar, Miklosich, Oblak, Valjavec, Murko, and Maretić; those who believed that kajkavian was Croatian were: Šafarik, Florinski, Rešetar, V. Rožić, Polivka, and Lukjanenko. The great Jagić, himself a native speaker of Varaždin kajkavian, vacillated for most of his life on this matter and it was only in his old age (he died in 1923) that he assigned kajkavian to the Croatian sphere.

Vuk Karadžić, Daničić's mentor, viewed kajkavian as a transitional dialect between Slovenian and Serbian (*jezik kao prijelaz iz Kranjskoga u Srpski*) and he considered kajkavian speakers to be Slovenes.<sup>7</sup> In the first map of Serbo-Croatian dialects, that of Aleksandar Belić in 1905, the kajkavian dialects are not even shown. Belić explained his omission thus: »The kajkavian dialect represents a mixed speech, a Slovenian-

<sup>6</sup> Page 508, »Kajkavski dijalekt,« *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, Vol. 4, 1960. •

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Milan Rešetar, *Der štokavische Dialekt*, Schriften der Balkan-kommission VIII, Vienna, 1907, page 3.

Serbian, at the base of which is a Slovenian dialect.«<sup>8</sup> Leskien, as late as the year 1914, does not treat kajkavian in his discussion of Serbo-Croatian dialects but refers to it elsewhere as »eine Übergangs- oder Zwischenform zwischen Serbo-kroatisch und Slowenisch.«<sup>9</sup>

Thus, Daničić may well be forgiven for his decision to leave the kajkavian lexicon to another day and another dictionary. Had he decided to include kajkavian, the additional work required of him and his successors would have been substantial and might have delayed the completion of the dictionary for another decade.

The Academy Dictionary is a mother lode for historians, linguists, folklorists and students of South Slavic cultures. Specialized works dealing with accentology, onomastics, etymology, language change, regional usage, comparative Slavic and many other fields will depend in large measure on the Academy Dictionary for information and enlightenment. Jonke (*svezak 97*, page 82) has noted the extent to which Petar Skok's etymological dictionary (*Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*, 1971—1974) is indebted to the Academy Dictionary; the abbreviation ARj (for *Akademijin rječnik*) appears over and over as the first reference for Skok's etymological entries.

I find the Academy Dictionary to be a particularly valuable starting point in seeking answers for questions pertaining to the Serbo-Croatian language, Yugoslav history and South Slavic culture in general. Who, for example, was *Kulin ban*? Kulin (under that entry) is, we learn, an *ime muško*, »a man's name.« A regal sounding example from a charter of 1189 is given, to wit, *Ja ban<sup>o</sup> bosn<sup>o</sup>ski Kulin<sup>o</sup>*. Under *ban* we find an equivalent example in a Latin document (dating from 1234—1249): *Ego banus Culinus Bosne*, with the last form seemingly a Serbo-Croatian genitive though probably the 13th century rendition of Latin *Bosnae*. We learn further that *ban* was »*dux, dominus, princeps*,« etc., and was cited as *Boanos* by a Greek writer of the tenth century. We have to go to Skok to learn that the writer in question was Constantine Porphyrogenitus. What was a *forinta* and what was it worth? Derived from Italian forms meaning »florin« the *forinta* (*/forint/vorinta/fijorin*) was a silver coin worth two and half Austrian francs in 1877. Where did the young Popović get the name Daničić? Under the entry Daničić the editor, Pero Budmani, tells us that it is a surname meaning *Daničin sin* and occurs in folk songs from the 16th century. Jonke (*svezak 97*, page 80) comments that reading the material under the entry *glava* is a pleasure in itself, like reading a short story (*Uživanje je čitati taj tekst, i te primjere i ta značenja, kao da čitamo kakvu pripovijetku.*) The Academy Dictionary is not, of course, an encyclopedia but it is a most convenient reference work for the initial stage of many inquiries.

Yugoslavs writing about the Academy Dictionary show their pride in its progress and completion with phrases such as *trajan spomenik našeg*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, page 7.

<sup>9</sup> Pages XXII—XXIII, *Grammatik der serbo-kroatischen Sprache*, Heidelberg, 1914.

jezika, »lasting monument of our language«, *Opus Herculanum hrvatske filologije*, »Herculean achievement of Croatian philology«, *Uz svršetak jednog velikog posla*, »At the completion of a great work«, et cetera. As a foreigner, I can testify that their pride is justified; in fact, their expressions of satisfaction are rather restrained. The Academy Dictionary is a magnificent achievement, the only one of its kind in the entire Slavic world. Bishop Strossmayer foresaw the importance and greatness of the dictionary before the first fascicle even appeared; in 1878 he wrote to the president of the Yugoslav Academy, Franjo Rački: »Rječnik će biti isto tako ... monumentalno djelo kao Univerzitet, Akademija ... đakovačka katedrala ...«, »The Dictionary will be just as much a monumental work as the University, the Academy ... the Đakovo Cathedral ...«<sup>10</sup>

### Sažetak

#### RJEČNIK JUGOSLAVENSKE AKADEMIJE: OCJENA

Ocjenjujući Akademijin Rječnik autor navodi neke glavne njegove osobine i smatra da bi svezak 97, koji je uredio Ljudevit Jonke, trebalo prevesti na strane jezike kako bi učenjaci koji ne poznaju hrvatski saznali o principima sastavljanja ovog djela.

Dalje se osvjetljuje Daničićev urednički zadatak s citatima iz spisa engleskog leksikografa 18. stoljeća dr Johnsona i R. C. Trenchera, te se Daničića uspoređuje s američkim leksikografom Websterom i urednikom Oxfordskog engleskog rječnika Murrayem.

Autor navodi Jagićevu kritiku uskoči Daničićeve koncepcije Rječnika, ali nalazi i opravdanja za Daničića zbog isključenja kajkavskog dijalekta iz Rječnika uzевši u obzir ondašnje viđenje kajkavskog dijalekta i neslaganje među filozozima o pripadnosti kajkavskog dijalekta slovenskoj ili hrvatskoj sferi.

A. Rj. može poslužiti kao izvor podataka povjesničarima, lingvistima, folkloristima i kulturolozima. Na primjerima natuknica *Kulin*, *ban*, *forinta*, *Daničić*, autor praktično pokazuje kako Rječnik, iako nije enciklopedijski, daje vrijedne podatke za početak bilo kakva istraživanja. Autor nalazi da je ovo jedinstveno leksikografsko djelo u slavenskom svijetu.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Stjepan Musulin, »Hrvatska i srpska leksikografija«, *Filologija* 2, 1959, page 62.