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“The Making of the Cultural Lexicon in Croatian and Serbian in the 19th Century”

Regardless of what one thinks about political and sociolinguistic problems in post-Yugoslav era, it is clear that present-day Standard Croatian and Standard Serbian are quite similar in many regards. On the one hand, the similarities are due to the fact that both standard varieties are based on Neo-Štokavian dialect, which explains the likeness of e.g. morphology or common lexicon. However, standard varieties also need additional words that are not present in organic dialects and such words often arise in written works, literature and dictionaries. This is what we here call *cultural lexicon*, often related to innovations, modern and urban world or abstract ideas – words such as Croatian and Serbian *kišobran* ‘umbrella’, *vatrogasac* ‘firefighter’, *poglavlje* ‘chapter’ or *usluga* ‘favor’. Many such words were coined in dictionaries and literary works in the (long) 19th century. In this presentation, we shall try to trace the origin of such words in Croatian and Serbian, and try to see how it came to be that present-day Croatian and Serbian share a large number of them – thus, we shall concentrate on words belonging to both Standard Croatian and Serbian and not on those in which they differ and try to establish their origin, i.e. whether they ultimately stem from sources that can be deemed Croatian, Serbian or neutral. Through this, we shall try to illustrate a complex process of language standardization in the (long) 19th century, which has yielded such contentious present-day political and sociolinguistic situation.