

GEOGRAPHIC NAME ZAGORA AND ITS REFERENCE TO AREAS IN THE DALMATIAN HINTERLAND IN THE SELECTED NEWSPAPER MEDIUM

GEOGRAFSKO IME ZAGORA I NJEGOVA POJAVNOST NA PODRUČJIMA DALMATINSKOGA ZALEĐA U ODABRANOM NOVINSKOM MEDIJU

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In the Croatian language, the word "zagora" or "zagorje" refers to an area "on the other side of a mountain or a hill". Throughout history, this term has been widely used to describe places physically detached from some other, economically or politically more prominent areas; and has thus been adopted as a geographic name (toponym) for places which were "in contrast" to such areas and separated from them by an element of terrain. The term *zagora* is therefore a geographic name which denotes an area observed from an outside point of view, and which is later on accepted by the domicile population, becoming an endonym. In the context of the Croatian national territory, the most prominent usage of this toponym has been present in specific traditional regions in northern and southern Croatia; namely, Hrvatsko zagorje in northern Croatia, and a rather undefined area in the Dalmatian hinterland in southern Croatia. The extent and the degree of identification of the areas in southern Croatia bearing that particular geographic name have not been precisely defined, although there are many obvious indications of the existence of such a region in many contemporary sources.

The aim of this paper is to research the perceptual character of an area in the Dalmatian hinterland in relation to geographic names *Zagora* and *Dalmatinska zagora* by means of content analysis. The final conclusions are drawn on the basis of informal geographic data retrieval from a chosen contemporary medium source (*Slobodna Dalmacija* newspaper). The observed extent of perception provides provisional maps which serve as approximations of collective cognitive maps and represents a starting point for a more extensive research on vernacular aspects of the Dalmatian hinterland.

Key words: *Zagora, Dalmatinska zagora, perceptual region, cognitive map, media, identity*

U hrvatskom jeziku riječi "zagora" i "zagorje" odnose se na područje "s onu stranu gore". Tijekom povijesti ti su termini često korišteni prilikom određivanja mjesta i područja koja su fizički (reljefno) odvojena od drugih, gospodarski i politički važnijih područja te su kao takvi postupno usvojeni i kao geografska imena (toponimi) za reljefno odvojena mjesta i zone koje su u kontrastu prema takvim područjima. Stoga danas termin *Zagora* predstavlja često geografsko ime koje označava područje nekoć percipirano i razmatrano s neke izvanjske točke gledišta, a koje je kasnije usvojeno od strane domicilnog stanovništva postavši u određenoj mjeri endonim. U kontekstu hrvatskoga državnog teritorija, najznakovitije korištenje varijacija ovoga toponima prisutno je u posebnim tradicijskim regijama na sjeveru i jugu države, u nazivima Hrvatsko zagorje i Dalmatinska zagora. Za razliku od Hrvatskog zagorja, prostorni obuhvat i razmjeri identifikacije s nazivom *Zagora* u dalmatinskom zaleđu nisu preciznije generalno definirani, iako postoje mnogi jasni pokazatelji percipiranja takve prostorne jedinice u mnogim suvremenim izvorima.

Cilj ovoga rada je istražiti perceptivne značajke područja dalmatinskog zaleđa u kontekstu geografskog imena *Zagora/Dalmatinska zagora* putem analize sadržaja. Analizira se i zaključuje na temelju neformalnih geografskih podataka izoliranih u odabranom suvremenom mediju (dnevni list *Slobodna Dalmacija*). Zamijećeni prostorni obuhvat percepcije omogućuje izradu karata koje predstavljaju aproksimacije kolektivnih kognitivnih karata i pružaju temelj za daljnje opsežnije istraživanje vernakularnih aspekata dalmatinskoga zaleđa.

Ključne riječi: *Zagora, Dalmatinska zagora, perceptivna regija, kognitivna karta, mediji, identitet*

Introduction

Geographic names or toponyms play an extremely important role in geography. They function as linguistic representations (symbols) of the world by which humans interact with spatial autonomous agents (SCHULZ ET AL, 2008). In the case of perception of space, or rather, the connection of land and its inhabitants, they play a very important role – they serve as symbols for articulating the geographic reality, thus providing an output of cognitive processing of an area or place. As Claval (1998, 142) puts it, "space cannot be known, shared and memorized except by language." Therefore, language is the main media of structuring people's experience of place and the bearer of connotations held in individual and collective memories. Such memories, usually upgraded by shared geographic names, as well as a number of individual spatial symbols and connotations, serve as basic elements of people's cognitive map of a certain area. The term 'cognitive map' was initially used by Tolman (1948) in his study of rats' behavior in a maze. In the context of geography, as Mansbridge (2002) puts it, the term is primarily "used to describe the cognitive processes by which humans acquire and mentally represent spatial knowledge. A cognitive map may range from a mental image similar to a map on paper, with metric and relational qualities, to a collection of information which differs according to purpose."

It is important to note that "cognitive map" is a broad term used in a range of sciences. In geography, its meaning is primarily related to spatial aspects of mental imagery, i.e. spatial structuring and correlations between locations, distances, forms, orientations produced in individual's consciousness through a processes of mental comprehension of locations and areas, as well as their attributes, extents, etc. (DOWNS, STEA, 1973). Another term for cognitive map used in geography is "mental map" which is often used as its synonym. Its first usage in geography appeared in the research of Gould and White, in terms of differentiated mental image of parts of an area evaluated from the point of view of their perceived favorability for living (GOULD, WHITE, 1974, according to ŠAKAJA, 2004.).

In the process of forming a cognitive map in the consciousness of an individual, grounding is the most important aspect. Grounding refers to the relationship between things in the world, internal categories, and their symbols (HARNAD, 1990 according to SCHULZ ET AL, 2008). Thus,

geographic names are linguistic agents of the inhabitants' view of their geographic surroundings. Many scientists argue that there are three basic forming elements of collective identities of space: 1) consciousness of shared area; 2) consciousness of shared history; 3) consciousness of shared culture (see: CRLJENKO, 2008). Although collective spatial identities, or rather, spatial identifications of population represent one of the most important aspects of the relation between humans and their surroundings, geographic names have even broader significance than that of being agents of identity. They bring forward natural, social, cultural and other connotations at individual and collective levels, and serve as cognitive "focal points" in the understanding of space, not only among indigenous population of an area which is prone to identify with it, but also among "outsiders".

At the level of larger spatial units such as regions, especially those which are not formally delineated and/or do not exist as formal administrative units, cognitive maps are usually a result of historically and traditionally inherited perception. They are a result of either a historical existence of a region, or of a sense of regional homogeneity based on some other factors (physical, economic, demographic) and their influence on processing places innhuman consciousness. Usually, a geographic name represents a strong individual symbol of a number of factors influencing perception of space and affiliation to it. Therefore, toponyms play an important role in the formation of spatial identities, whether they bear symbolism at local, regional, or national levels. In other words, geographic names are important features of spatial and territorial identity, and they have a significant role in perception of an area (SAPAROV, 2003).

In the context of regions, cognitive mapping differs from person to person, which is related to individual perception of the importance of each factor (although the choice of factors in individual's consciousness is also relative). The overall result is a perceptive region, a concept of region which is not clearly delineated since it derives from a complex of individual perceptions of a region. Such a region is perceived as existing by its inhabitants and other members of society. They exist as a part of the national culture; they are not intellectual creations of professional geographers, but rather products of common people's spatial perception. They are made up of cognitive maps of the population. (JORDAN, 1978, according to ŠAKAJA, 2003). Essentially, perceptual regions are to be viewed as sole product of human consciousness' synthesis. In

other words, the inherited symbols and narratives, the historical and geographical factors, as well as contemporary effects of dynamic socio-geographic trends and administrative changes all influence the cognitive view of a region. Thus, attempting to approximate the extent of a perceptual region is a task which requires understanding that borderlines are, as Paasi (2002, 807) puts it, "just one possible conceptualization that has guided geographical thinking since the institutionalization of the field". As can be seen from the object of this paper's research, borderlines have a "double role": they serve as a factor of cognitive mapping in some cases such as the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (a historical border with a strong modern imprint), as well as a referential frame in applying the methodology (existing administrative divisions; namely, the municipal one).

In many scientific and non-scientific publications, most of the area of the Dalmatian hinterland is referred to as Dalmatinska zagora (Dalmatian zagora) or simply Zagora (Fig. 1). Subjective spatial structuring has a key role in forming spatial identities, i.e. sense of affiliation (MIROŠEVIĆ, VUKOSAV, 2010) The aforementioned area is defined by historical and traditional, as well as modern economic contrast in relation to littoral zones of southern Croatia. Also, many dissimilarities can be defined as caused by different natural-geographic features, among which the most important one is relief. Namely, the term *zagora* is a Croatian word referring to the area "on the other side of the mountain", which indicates the external perception of place with a point of observation within a different, neighbouring area, usually the one with greater

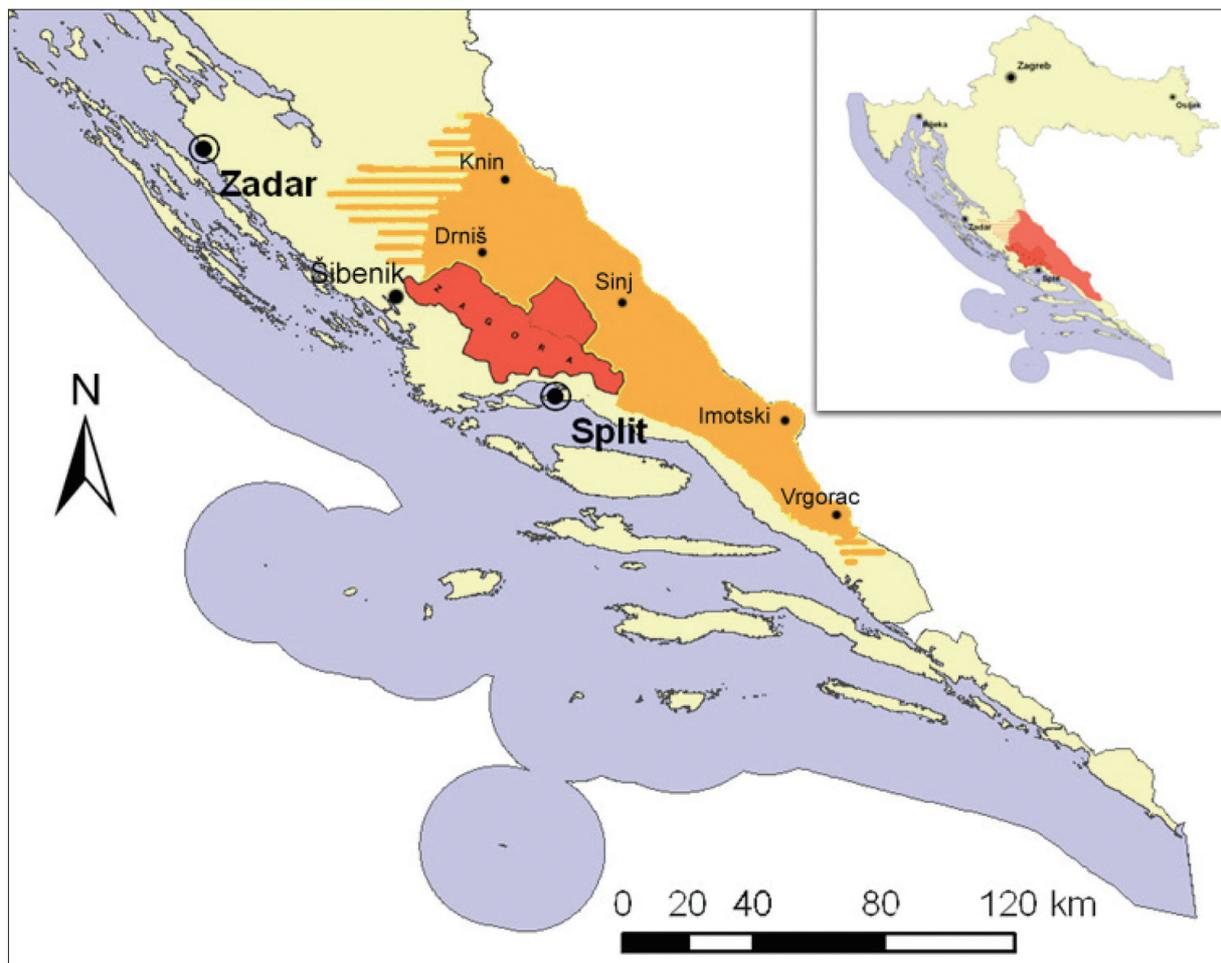


Figure 1 Geographic position of the researched area of Dalmatinska zagora (orange) with the historical area of Zagora highlighted (red).

political, economic and demographic significance (in this particular case, the littoral area). The term *zagora* gradually transformed into a geographic name, which consequently became the name used by the local population in the hinterland, or an endonym. However, there are no modern administrative or formal divisions which would include any of the two toponyms in contemporary regional divisions of Croatia. Today's formal existence of the term *zagora* within the researched area can only be found as a part of the name of the settlement Mirlović Zagora in the municipality of Unešić, which is situated within the researched area.

These facts indicate that many factors have influenced the usage of the toponym(s) within a frame of the researched area. Specific natural-geographic conditions (terrain configuration, climate, hydrology, etc.), in combination with particular historical and socio-geographic features and trends, have created a unique complex of cultural landscapes. Their main traits may be recognized in many traditional characteristics which are reflected in a number of material and non-material aspects, such as types of houses, traditional ways of land use, features of language (dialect), ethnology, etc. Although the homogeneity is not quite clearly articulated, many formal and informal sources of geographic data suggest that it is articulated through one or both of the researched toponyms that, in this case, symbolize a traditional region with a distinctive set of unique traits, as well as with a strong presence within the consciousness of the population.

Previous researches

Within the concepts of regional approach, the concept of a complex region was significantly contributed to by Anssi Paasi (2002, 2003), who theoretically explained and analyzed the concepts of region, place, regional identity, homogeneity, etc. Among the most prominent researchers in the context of cultural aspects of regions (defining cultural landscapes) is Sauer (1925), as well as other scientists of the Berkeley school. Butzer (1978) also discusses cultural traits of geography, i.e. geographic elements of culture. Generally, among the most important are the works of Claval (1998) and Minshull (2007), whose publications contributed to creating a platform for explaining the most basic concepts within

regional geography, various types of regions, regionalism, and most importantly, regional identity and consciousness. Zelinsky (1980) takes a step forward in vernacular aspects in his paper on North America's vernacular regions. Barker (2005) gives his contribution to delineation of vernacular regions of Tennessee, while Mansbridge (2002) uses geographic information retrieval from the Internet in order to determine the "imprecise regions". Among scholars in Croatia, Šakaja (2003) mentions perceptual regions in the paper on ergonyms. Among other vernacular aspects, identities in towns' toponymy of Istrian and Kvarner settlements were researched by Crljenko (2008), while the basic spatial identities of southern Croatia (national, regional and local), within the frame of Dalmatia as a focal point of spatial identities, were extensively researched by Mirošević (2010) in her doctoral thesis. Saparov (2003) deals with the national level of spatial identities, providing a theoretical background regarding the role of geographic names within the perception of territory and affiliation to it.

Zagora and Dalmatian zagora have been studied in many recent and older publications. The most notable ones are those by Matas (1993) and Kužić (1997), as well as other authors who concentrate solely on some narrow units or sub-regions within the Dalmatian hinterland. In the context of geographic regionalization, Rogić (1983) provides a detailed analysis of the Dalmatian hinterland in terms of homogeneously conditioned division upon a number of factors, providing a chart of homogenous regions. Among the latest scientific efforts, the publication of an extensive almanac called "Dalmatinska zagora – terra incognita" (2007) stands out, with a huge contribution to knowledge about the Dalmatian hinterland published in form of a collection of scientific papers about historical, archaeological, cultural and traditional issues.

Methodology

The main methodology in determining the perceptual region relies on the method of content analysis based on the examination of a modern media source; in this case, the daily newspaper *Slobodna Dalmacija*. The examination includes searching online archives of the mentioned newspaper for the analysed geographic names, determining geographic references, quantification, generalizing the references to the

level of municipalities, and presenting the results in form of maps. Content analysis was chosen as the main qualitative method since it represents valid means of systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. Since the toponyms in question bear a geographic reference which is not clear, the identification of collective geographic references from the informal source of data containing these toponyms (such as newspaper) appeared to be a valid choice for the foundation of the methodology.

The focus of the examination is placed on geographic names which derive from the term *zagora*; namely "Zagora" and "Dalmatinska zagora" which do not exist as formal or administrative geographic names. The references to these names within the articles and newspaper reports on specific and defined areas (in terms of naming settlements and/or municipalities) which are mentioned in the context of the researched geographic names serve as a platform for drawing conclusions about the relation between the two geographic names, and they provide an approximation of the extent of territories "covered" by these names.

All the municipalities or their parts which are mentioned within the context of Zagora or Dalmatinska Zagora are determined, as well as the quantity of their occurrences in the selected media within the time-frame of the available archive data (1999-2011). The number of geographic references for each researched geographic name is summed up and presented in form of cognitive maps with color graduation showing larger absolute frequency of occurrence.

Finally, a Municipality Index Value (MIV) is determined for each identified municipal unit. In this way, the number of occurrences in the given time-frame is related to population numbers of each municipality. Also, maps of MIV for Zagora and Dalmatinska zagora, as well as a map for the overall occurrence of the term "zagora", are created.

Dalmatian hinterland – basic historical relations to modern regional references

Southern Croatia, covering the territories of four counties – Zadar, Šibenik-Knin, Split-Dalmatia and Dubrovnik-Neretva – is usually referred to as Dalmatia. The very name was initially used during the Roman Empire (ZANINOVIĆ, 2007), while the

area was a part of the Roman province Dalmatia (Fig. 2). Nowadays it is a historical and traditional region that is still "alive" in the consciousness of the population, and it represents one of the basic regional identities in Croatia, although it does not exist formally as an administrative region.

What is approximately nowadays referred to as "Dalmatia" is actually a territory that basically consists of three specific areas – the islands, the littoral and the hinterland bordering with Bosnia and Herzegovina (MATAS, 1993). In the context of land, Dalmatian hinterland represents the largest of the three areas. Although all of them belong to the zone of Dinaric karst, the access to the sea has had an important historical and economic role in forming cultural landscapes of islands and the littoral area. On the other hand, coastal mountainous range has always been a natural barrier representing an important factor in defining the historical and socio-geographic development of the hinterland. A range of mountains, namely Biokovo, Rilić, Omiška Dinara, Mosor, Kozjak, Opor and Vilaja, was a fundamental natural feature keeping the historically turbulent hinterland from access to the coast, and the historical urban centers such as Zadar, Split and Šibenik. Other natural features, such as climate and hydrology, have played an important role in defining the area's economic basis in the past, in terms of focusing on cattle-raising and agriculture as the most important means of living; in contrast to all the possibilities of access to the open sea which was the main feature of the islands and the littoral strip.

The aforementioned mountainous range was also the main feature in perception of the areas in hinterland. Namely, the term *zagora* (Croatian: "iza gore"; on the other side of the mountain) was often applied to refer to areas whose position and development was naturally separated and, consequently, different from the areas in focus. In this case, the term *zagora* was often applied to name areas that were at the same time close and far away from the cultural, political and historical urban centers on the coast.

A very turbulent history which was often characterized by division of Dalmatia between conquering empires has caused different historical backgrounds of littoral and island zones in comparison to the hinterland. For example, coastal towns were the focal points of the remnants of culture during the early medieval period. Basically, after several waves of Slavic migrations to what



Figure 2 The Roman province of Dalmatia (excerpt of the map "Die unteren Donauländer zur Römerzeit")
Source: Alte historische Karte aus Droysens Historischem Handatlas, 1886



Figure 4: Croatian lands in 1606, during the Ottoman expansion
Source: *Hrvatski povijesni zemljovid za 5.-8. razrede osnovne škole*, 2010

traits they brought or changed in the process, the littoral towns were often centers of culture and economy, while the hinterland was more viewed as an "outback" with people of different cultural heritage (usually viewed as "inferior" in comparison to the littoral one), regardless of the fact that most of the inhabitants of both belts were primarily of Croatian descent. A bordering character of the hinterland zones gave the area a "borderland" character which was reflected in the position of towns (usually fortresses overlooking the border zones between the two or more forces), as well as names of individual areas (Imotska krajina¹, Vrgorska krajina, Cetinska krajina).

¹ "Krajina" – an archaic Croatian word for border areas, used during the Ottoman presence in the Croatian lands (Rječnik hrvatskog jezika, 2000)

The uneven contrast in the historical and cultural development was also reflected in the generative process of certain toponyms, among which the term *zagora* was primarily used by inhabitants of littoral areas for zones "on the other side of the mountain", i.e. in the hinterland. Since the littoral was culturally and economically dominant, the term *zagora* gained a toponomastic role rather early, with the first formal usage in the administrative division of medieval Croatia. A county called "Zagora" was mentioned for the first time in 1071, during the Croatian national rulers (Kužić, 2000), implying administrative restructuring of the Croatian kingdom (although spatial extent and reference are not quite clear). Another mention regarding Zagora in the context of territoriality dates back to 1185, in historical sources regarding the territorial jurisdiction of the Trogir diocese (ROKSANDIĆ, 2007). It was

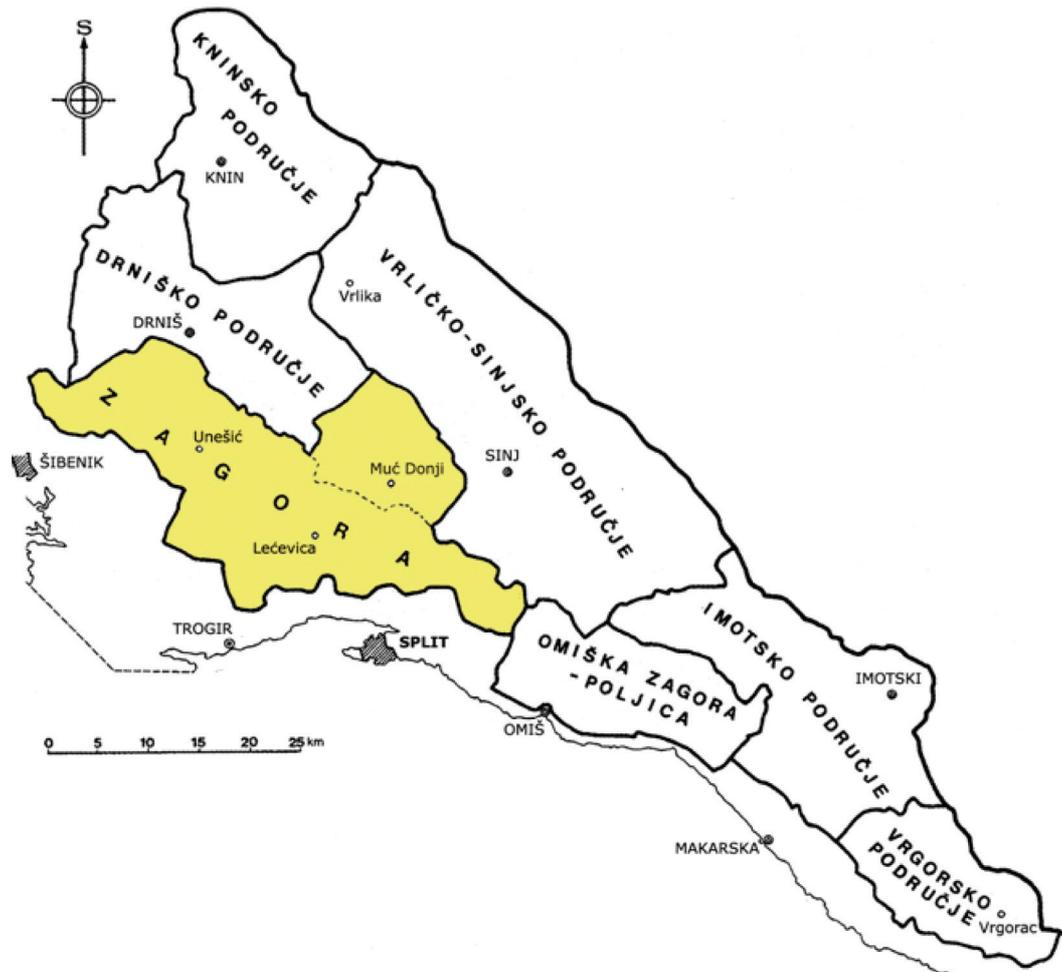


Figure 5 A cartographic view of the extent of historical and traditional sub-regions of central Dalmatian hinterland referred to as "Dalmatinska zagora", with the historical Zagora (yellow) as one of them

Source: Book of abstracts *Zagora između stočarsko-ratarske tradicije teprocesa litoralizacije i globalizacije*, main page

thought that the name Dalmatinska zagora (or "Dalmatian zagora") had been formed much later in the context of referring to larger areas in the Dalmatian hinterland, but it is unclear when it was initially used, or by whom. However, it is clear that, unlike Zagora which has a historical background as standing for an administrative unit in medieval Croatia, Dalmatinska zagora is a toponym with solely perceptual meaning.

References to "Zagora" and "Dalmatinska zagora" in formal sources of geographic data

Although there is no formal or administrative definition of the exact territory of the Dalmatian hinterland which is referred to as "Zagora" or "Dalmatinska zagora", there are many formal

sources of various scientific data which include somewhat individual definitions. Those territorial definitions are usually based upon a criterion or criteria which focus on some aspects of the area in question. It must be noted that with no clear criteria, the perceived divisions of the Dalmatian hinterland represent results of a non-systematized consensus which includes historical, traditional, but also formal and administrative criteria (Fig 5).

Generally, there are two main views in scientific papers and books regarding the extent of the territory referred to as "Dalmatinska zagora", or simply "Zagora". One of them is constructed upon a narrow criteria deriving from historical and cultural traits; namely, the definition which focuses on the historical extent of Zagora. This particular view is preferred by scholars who are closely affiliated to humanistic sciences, and this especially applies

to those indigenous to the territory in the narrow Split-Šibenik hinterland. The extent is based on the existence of a medieval administrative unit called "Zagorska županija" (Zagora County). Its earliest appearance in historical sources dates back to 1071 to the rule of the king Petar Krešimir IV.

For instance, Kužić (1997) mentions both Zagora and Dalmatinska zagora in the context of the aforementioned historical reasons. He argues that historical and cultural criteria which differentiate spatial units in the Dalmatian hinterland should be used as the main criteria in defining what Zagora/Dalmatinska zagora is, i.e. the extent of the territory it encompasses. However, he also uses some natural-geographic features (regardless of their formal bordering role) in defining the region in question:

"Keeping in mind the borders and the extent of the Poljica county, Cetina area and the area of Petrovo polje, northern and eastern borders are quite clear; and if the hinterland of Trogir is viewed separately from the valley of Marina, one gains a more accurate image of the extent of Dalmatinska zagora..."

...Zagora is a part of southern Croatia bordered by mountain ridges Trtar, Veliki Jelinek, Kozjak and Mosor; the area of Poljica, the river Cetina and the area of Cetina, the ridges of Svilaja and Moseć, the area of Petrovo polje and the canyon of the river Čikola." (KUŽIĆ, 1997, 7-8)

However, a broader geographic view which includes alternative criteria besides historical ones is also present in formal sources. Some authors expand the perceived image of Dalmatinska zagora due to the fact that there are many more criteria of homogeneity to be taken in consideration, and they go well beyond the borders defined by those who view Zagora as a historical region. For instance, Matas (1993) recognizes three main belts in central Dalmatia: islands, littoral and hinterland. He implies that "*hinterland belt is the largest*" and that "*in literature, as well as in everyday speech it is referred to as Dalmatinska zagora*" (MATAS, 1993, 6). His view of the extent of Dalmatinska zagora is, thus, broader than the one limited by historical factors:

"The border between the hinterland belt and the relatively narrow, but economically more significant littoral area is defined by coastal ridges: Rilić (1155 m), Biokovo (1762 m), Omiška Dinara (864 m), Mosor (1330 m), Kozjak (780 m), Opor (650 m) and Vilaja (730 m). The northern

border of Dalmatinska zagora is defined by Dinara mountain; the western one by the river Krka and the eastern one by the edges of karst poljes Imotsko, Rastok and Vrgorsko. Some authors go as far as considering the river Neretva to be the eastern border." (MATAS, 1993, 6)

Among other scientists who are aware of the duality of Zagora and Dalmatinska zagora, Roksandić (2007) argues that, although historical Zagora must be acknowledged, it is inevitable to accept the contemporary homogeneity of broader Dalmatian hinterland, and thus it is necessary to include other territorial units into the extent of the name "Dalmatinska zagora", symbolizing a single area with many common traits:

"Dalmatia on the other side of the littoral mountainous ridges has increasingly become visually monotonous, and economically stagnant, in the growing contrast to the littoral Dalmatia, so there is an instinctive need to express the new historical reality with a single term..." (ROKSANDIĆ, 2007, 186)

Thus, it is clear that, although one must give credit to historical arguments and acknowledge the historical and traditional extent, one must admit the later geographical facts which imply wider homogeneity of the area. Besides formal elements, the key to confirming the validity of usage of the name "Dalmatinska zagora" in the wider context might be found within the vernacular segment; i.e. the perception of the territories under the relevant geographic name by the inhabitants.

Geographic references to Dalmatinska zagora in older informal sources

Although the initial usage of the name "Dalmatinska zagora" in the context of an area larger than the original historical Zagora is thought to have derived in a post WW2 period as a name for most of the hinterland which was economically stagnant in comparison to the industrialized coastal areas, the earliest informal references are probably quite older and derive from other criteria such as homogeneity of natural-geographic features and the similarities in the ways of life and traditional economies. An interesting informal reference appears in 1932, in a paper written by a famous Croatian writer Dinko Šimunović, clearly indicating that the broader reference of both terms was present even before the post-war industrial period:

"Here I must note that many folklorists and publicists, littoral as well as foreign ones, mix up our Dalmatian Ogorje with Dalmatian Zagora which is, actually, more similar to the littoral areas: almost the same waterless karst and scarce vegetation, with a clear view of the sea from most of the hills, appearing so close, almost as if you could put your foot in it. However, these writers have probably been only as far as Labin and Perković, Kotlenice or Muć, where they saw only small houses without any conveniences, with wastelands and illnesses, and in spring – by seeing the administering of corn to the poorest – even hunger. That is why, along with other attributes, they named this beautiful land "Hungry and naked Dalmatia".

Yet, Dalmatian Zagorje, to us true Zagorans, is not synonymous only to the so much bewailed and mourned Zagora, but also to the rich hamlets in Strmica and Golubić, by the Kninsko, Kosovo and Petrovo poljes, as well as white neighborhoods in lowlands of Vrlika, Hrvace, Sinj and Imotski." (ŠIMUNOVIĆ, 1932, 1-2)

These lines clearly indicate that the cognitive view of Zagora was broader than the simple historical area bearing that name. Also, the text shows certain similarities in natural and economic features both in and outside historical Zagora. This indicates that "Zagora" as a geographic name carries much of the symbolic "weight" deriving from the very linguistic meaning of the word *zagora*, as well as from the consequential socio-geographic features arising from the interaction of land and people.

Several other papers published in 1930, therefore prior to the Second World War, also indicate the perceptual existence of Dalmatinska zagora as a wider belt of the Dalmatian hinterland in contrast to the narrow historical Zagora. In the paper entitled "The ancient Slavic legal customs in Dalmatinska zagora", Bulić (1932) implies the common Slavic traditional grounds for some legislative aspects in Dalmatia's interior. In the text he clearly states:

"...These crucial everyday life features that are one millennium old cannot be clearly noticed by a foreigner solely through the presence of external monuments because he is likely to travel along the coastal frame of Dalmatia where those monuments are erected, and because he does not initiate communication with the local population; and especially because a foreigner is unlikely to

go to the interior of the land, to the so-called Dalmatinska zagora." (BULIĆ, 1932, 21)

These quotations show a clear indication of perceptual understanding of "Dalmatinska Zagora" referring to a wider area of the Dalmatian hinterland. Therefore, contemporary suggestions about the post-war, socialist and industrial origin of this perception, which can be found in some modern formal and informal sources, are obviously incorrect.

Analysis of the occurrence of the geographic name Zagora in the selected medium

As mentioned earlier, the research of perceptual aspects in terms of relation of the name Zagora and the extent of the relevant territory might contribute to validity of the usage of the name in the wider sense. Among many sources of informal geographic data, contemporary media represents the one which is perhaps the most accurate in terms of reflecting the perceptual extent from the collective consciousness of population. Namely, news reports and articles from various geographic locations usually include geographic references which, in cases of expressing areas which are not formal or administrative, mostly reflect the cognitive identity of place, i.e. the belonging of a certain area to a certain perceived region. When investigating the impact of informal endonyms such as Zagora (endonyms which do not translate the reality of administrative and formal spatial units, but rather that of purely cognitive ones which rely on history and tradition), the important element is the background of the reporter, or writer of the examined media article. Therefore, the reflection of the perceptual extent of a region will be more accurate if it is observed within media which are closely related to the researched area. This implies that the writers of reports and articles are more familiar with the area. In the ideal scenario, the writer of the article is a correspondent from a researched area.

The following comparison indicates the importance of indigenous correspondents in terms of higher accuracy of geographic references. In the 9 April 2011 issue of *Slobodna Dalmacija*, the journalist reported about the success of a Croatian wine which originates from Benkovac on an international wine competition. The author, who is not indigenous to the area, gives a following geographic reference:

"...Korlat Syrah is the first wine from the new vineyard grown on a barren rocky area of Dalmatinska zagora near Benkovac..." (*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 9 April 2011)

The area of Benkovac is practically never referred to as "Dalmatinska zagora" among the local population who tend to position the area they inhabit within the Dalmatian sub-regions Ravni Kotari and Bukovica. Hence, the author, who was not indigenous neither to Benkovac nor to the area commonly viewed as Zagora was clearly misguided in her referencing.

On the other hand, an example of reporting about the same area by an indigenous reporter shows a much more accurate geographic reference. In the 8 August 2011 issue of *Slobodna Dalmacija*, an indigenous author reports from Benkovac about the performance of a local cultural-artistic group in that town.

"..Last year a new cultural-artistic group was founded in the area of Benkovac.... with members from most of the villages in Bukovica..." (*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 8 August 2011)

An indigenous reporter in the latter example gives a clear geographic reference of the area of the same town. This particular reference is much more accurate than the one given by a non-indigenous reporter whose perception of the entire Dalmatian hinterland is clearly generalized.

Therefore, it can be assumed that the cognitive map which is based on the analysis of informal geographic data from a medium will be more accurate if the "carrier" (i.e. reporter) of the data is a person who is indigenous to the area he/she writes about. Thus, a larger degree of indigenous correspondents in a media sample is favorable when conducting such an analysis with an aim of creating a cognitive map.

Since the broader area of Dalmatian hinterland is a part of south Croatia, in order to meet the abovementioned area in analyzing the geographic name "Zagora", it was necessary to pick a medium which is most likely to frequently report about the researched area and employ a substantial number of indigenous correspondents. After a preliminary preparation, a daily newspaper *Slobodna Dalmacija* was chosen as a source of geographic data. There were several reasons for this choice:

- 1) The seat and the main editorial board of the newspaper are in Split, the second largest city in Croatia and the administrative center of

Split-Dalmatia County. Most of the researched area belongs to the territory of this county;

- 2) Areas from the counties of southern Croatia are daily reported from in separate sections of the newspaper;
- 3) A network of correspondence with seats of other editorial boards in all the county centers employs a substantial number of indigenous correspondents;
- 4) An online archive facilitates the availability and the analysis of the newspaper issues.

The research included articles and reports in which the term *zagora* appears as a toponym individually or with a prefix "Dalmatinska" (Dalmatian). Among relevant references, the basic condition was to isolate those in which any variant of the toponym was related to a specific formal area or settlement. This specifically refers to those articles that contain names or reports about one or more towns or municipalities which are written about in the clear context of Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora; for example:

"..Dalmatinska zagora, especially the municipality of Lečevica, can finally have a sigh of relief. As we have been informed by a source close to the Split-Dalmatia County government, who wanted to remain anonymous, the central landfill for garbage of the wider county area will not be built near Lečevica after all..." (*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 1 April 2003)

"..Dalmatinska zagora covered with snow – 70 centimeters of new snow in Imotski and the surrounding villages caused eight schools in the area to close on Wednesday..." (*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 17 February 2005)

A total of 70 such textual units (articles, reports) was found in the available archive covering the issues from 1999 to 2011, and the results were collected in form of municipalities (the entries containing only individual settlements were counted as municipalities to which they belonged) summing the number of occurrences for each municipality.

The first step was to count and identify all the municipalities that appeared as geographic references related to Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora in articles in the mentioned period. A total of 31 administrative units of the same level (municipalities or administrative towns) occur as geographic references related to Dalmatinska zagora or Zagora at least once (Tab. 1).

Table 1 Number of occurrences of researched geographical references in the selected medium (1999-2011); total and per variety of toponym

Municipality/town	Number of occurrences (1999-2011)		
	Total	Dalmatinska zagora	Zagora
Sinj	11	6	5
Imotski	9	6	3
Drniš	8	5	3
Vrlika	7	4	3
Muč	7	4	3
Vrgorac	7	4	3
Unešić	5	0	5
Lećevice	5	1	4
Klis	4	1	3
Cista Provo	4	1	3
Zagvozd	4	0	4
Civljane	3	0	3
Trilj	3	2	1
Šestanovac	3	2	1
Lovreć	3	2	1
Promina	2	2	0
Kijevo	2	0	2
Primorski Dolac	2	0	2
Prgomet	2	0	2
Zmijavci	2	1	1
Knin	1	1	0
Skradin	1	1	0
Hrvace	1	1	0
Seget*	1	0	1
Otok	1	1	0
Dicmo	1	0	1
Dugopolje	1	0	1
Omiš*	1	1	0
Proložac	1	1	0
Zadvarje*	1	0	1
Runovići	1	1	0

*municipalities and towns which include parts of the littoral areas

Source: *Slobodna Dalmacija* archives

Thus, the 31 administrative units provide an approximation of the cognitive extent of the term "zagora" in the Dalmatian hinterland in its two present varieties. Yet, in order to acquire a better view of the extent, it was crucial to differentiate the isolated administrative units on a special thematic map. Such a map (Fig. 6) provides an approximation of the cognitive region in question and makes the analysis easier. The map outlines an area which is probably more or less included in the collective consciousness of the population, based on the informal geographic retrieval from

the selected medium (*Slobodna Dalmacija*). It is obvious that the perceptual region included in the extent covered by the term "zagora" in its two varieties includes the Dalmatian hinterland in two counties – Šibenik-Knin County and Split-Dalmatia County.

Three particular administrative units that have been identified among the researched geographic references – the municipalities Zadvarje and Seget, and the town of Omiš – appear to indicate that the toponyms refer even to the coastal areas (due

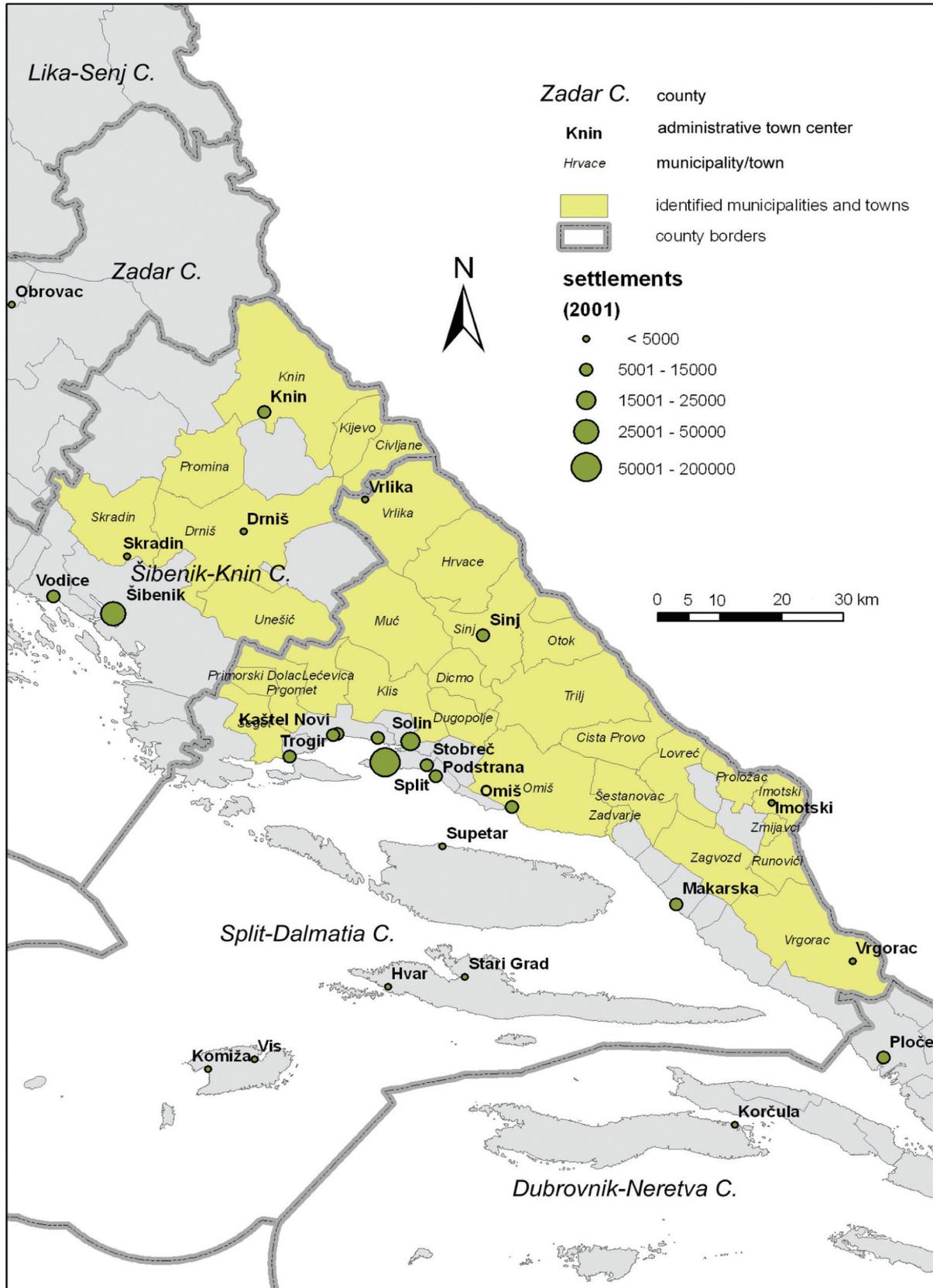


Figure 6 Administrative units with geographic references to "Zagora" or "Dalmatinska Zagora" in the chosen medium (1999-2011)

to the fact that they include parts of the coast within their administrative borders). However, this is actually misleading. These administrative units were identified via generalization of reference levels – the media units contained references to settlements in the hinterland parts of their territory. For example, the town of Omiš was identified due to an identified reference which related a hinterland settlement of Blato na Cetini to the toponym Dalmatinska zagora. Similar generalizations were present in cases of Seget and Zadvarje.

Also, several municipalities within the frame were not mentioned in the context of Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora; namely the municipalities Biskupija and Ružić in Šibenik-Knin County, as well as municipalities Podbablje and Lokvičići in Split-Dalmatia County. There are reasonable assumptions as to why these were excluded from direct geographic references. The municipality Biskupija is mentioned several times within a larger context, namely related to Knin area. Also, it is a rather small municipality with the population of 1696, and it is easier to relate it to the neighbouring gravitational centre when informally reporting on it. The same applies for Ružić which is in the vicinity of the town of Drniš. On the other hand, Podbablje and Lokvičići are situated within the context of Imotska krajina (historical and traditional area of Imotski). There are many informal references which relate these settlements to Imotska krajina, which means that besides their marginal position in the context of functionality, they have also been cognitively related to Imotski. Still, since there is a rather strong perception of Imotski in the context of Dalmatinska zagora, one can assume that these two municipalities are also included in the cognitive map. For the purpose of strictly following methodology, however, they have been excluded from the map due to the fact that their number of occurrences is 0.

When observing the data on the absolute occurrence of geographic references for both varieties and an overall map, it is quite clear that the symbolism of both varieties of geographic names has, more or less, "fused" into a single one. In other words, both terms can generally be viewed as synonyms, although there are certainly exceptions to this observation:

- 1) In terms of understanding Zagora as a spatial unit of a lower level (the historical Zagora in Split's and Šibenik's hinterland), and Dalmatinska zagora as the one of higher level (most of the Dalmatian hinterland);

- 2) In terms of a "double meaning", in cases in which both terms are used for both levels.

The first argument derives from the sphere of formal geographic knowledge, and its traces in informal sources such as modern media appear due to the influence of formal scientific references. Thus, the acquired data show that there are no geographic references of Dalmatinska zagora in certain municipalities whose territories are, partially or completely, formally viewed as Zagora (in terms of historical and traditional meaning)². Such municipalities are Unešić (with 5 occurrences of geographic references to Zagora and none to Dalmatinska zagora), Prgomet (Zagora – 2; Dalmatinska zagora – 0), Primorski dolac (Zagora – 2; Dalmatinska zagora – 0), Dicmo (Z – 1, DZ – 0) and Dugopolje (Z – 1, DZ – 0). Also, in other municipalities overlapping with the territory of historical Zagora, the occurrence of the term Zagora is more frequent than that of Dalmatinska zagora. Those municipalities are Lećeveca (Zagora – 4; Dalmatinska zagora – 1) and Klis (Zagora – 3, Dalmatinska zagora – 1). The only exception is the municipality Muć, with 3 references to Zagora and 4 for Dalmatinska zagora. The explanation for Muć, as well as for other areas in the historical Zagora, can be suggested by the fact that both terms have formally become synonyms in informal sources, due to constant usage of "Dalmatinska zagora" as a toponym for a broader area which includes the municipalities in question. However, the map of gradation of occurrence indicates the domination of Zagora in the chosen medium in relation to the municipalities overlapping with the historical territory.

Further evidence for the assumption that the two geographic names do not appear to show clear distinction in geographic reference lies in the fact that the number of municipalities related to each geographic name is very similar (Zagora – 23 references, and Dalmatinska zagora 21 references). Thus, the municipal units can be divided into three sub-groups (Tab. 2) – those with at least one reference for both geographic names (Zagora and Dalmatinska zagora) and those with references for only one of the varieties (Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora).

² Note: the overall number of occurrences of both toponyms is small, so the possibility of a different outcome (ratio in favour of either of the two toponyms) in alternative informal sources is open.

Table 2 Municipal units according to clear geographic references in the selected medium 1999-2011

Dalm. zagora AND Zagora	Only Dalm. zagora	Only Zagora
Sinj	Promina	Unešić
Imotski	Knin	Zagvozd
Vrlika	Skradin	Civljane
Muč	Hrvace	Kijevo
Vrgorac	Otok	Primorski Dolac
Lećevica	Omiš	Prgomet
Klis	Proložac	Seget
Cista Provo	Runovići	Dicmo
Trilj		Dugopolje
Šestanovac		Zadvarje
Lovreć		
Zmijavci		
Drniš		

Source: *Slobodna Dalmacija* archives

The problem with normalization of data on the level of municipalities arises from the high contrast of population numbers. If the acquired data is viewed parallel to the population numbers, it is clear that the municipalities with greater population numbers and/or more significant urban centers appear to have more references to researched geographic names in the media. The reason for this is logical – more population means more events, as well as more reports and articles in the newspaper. This requires a statistical tool which would provide a correlation between the number of geographic references in the media and population numbers in order to gain a more accurate image of affiliation with the geographic names.

A suitable tool for such a goal is counting the population-weighted index value (BARKER, 2005). It is an index generated for each municipal unit that registered at least one entry per particular label ("Dalmatinska zagora" or "Zagora") in the selected medium. The number of occurrences for each county unit was divided with the total population of that unit and then multiplied by 1,000. The value is called county index value (or CIV). Usage of this index in the context of the municipal level requires labeling it MIV (Municipal Index Value) and large index values represent strong affiliation with Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora in each municipality. MIV is expressed by the formula:

$$MIV = N_f/P \times 1000$$

whereas N_f represents the number of occurrences of a geographic name per administrative unit; and

P equals the total population of the same unit. The calculated MIVs range between double-digit whole numbers and hundreds of a whole.

In the initial phase, an overall MIV was calculated in order to determine affiliation with the term "zagora" in general (regardless of the variety of the toponym). Results show a large range between the highest (12.5 – Municipality Civljane) and the lowest values (the town of Knin – 0.065). The calculated indices show a substantially more accurate affiliation with researched geographic names deriving from the term "zagora" (Tab. 3).

Municipalities with the highest MIVs (higher than 5) are Civljane (12.5) and Lećevica (8.5). The municipalities Kijevo, Zadvarje, Zagvozd, Vrlika, Unešić, Prgomet and Primorski Dolac have an MIV between 2 and 5, while all other municipalities and towns have an MIV lower than 2.

If the acquired MIV data is presented in forms of a map showing graduated colors (a cartogram) showing the values divided in categories, several perceptual "cores" can be distinguished (Fig. 7).

The municipalities with the highest overall MIVs show a pattern of grouping in three particular areas: 1) area on the southeast of Knin (municipalities Civljane, Kijevo and Vrlika); 2) the area in the narrow hinterland between Split and Šibenik (municipalities overlapping with the territories of historical Zagora); 3) area in the hinterland of the mountainous range Biokovo – Rilić (the municipalities belonging to historical-traditional regions of Imotska krajina and Vrgorska krajina).

Table 3 Municipal Index Values of all geographic reference occurrences related to *zagora* (Zagora/Dalmatinska zagora) in the selected medium 1999-2011

Municipality/town	Population (2011)	Total number of occurrences	MIV
Civljane	240	3	12.500
Lećevica	588	5	8.503
Kijevo	405	2	4.938
Zadvarje*	289	1	3.460
Zagvozd	1,184	4	3.378
Vrlika	2,159	7	3.242
Unešić	1,685	5	2.967
Prgomet	689	2	2.903
Primorski Dolac	773	2	2.587
Muč	3,835	7	1.825
Promina	1,109	2	1.803
Lovreć	1,712	3	1.752
Cista Provo	2,377	4	1.683
Šestanovac	1,917	3	1.565
Vrgorac	6,501	7	1.077
Drniš	7,465	8	1.072
Zmijavci	2,080	2	0.962
Klis	4,739	4	0.844
Imotski	10,902	9	0.826
Sinj	24,832	11	0.443
Runovići	2,442	1	0.410
Dicmo	2,820	1	0.355
Trilj	9,417	3	0.319
Dugopolje	3,465	1	0.289
Hrvace	3,653	1	0.274
Skradin	3,807	1	0.263
Proložac	3,796	1	0.263
Seget*	4,863	1	0.206
Otok	5,468	1	0.183
Omiš*	14,872	1	0.067
Knin	15,388	1	0.065

*municipalities and towns which include parts of littoral areas

Source: *Slobodna Dalmacija* archives, population census 2011 (first available data from the census)

Several conclusions can be drawn regarding the probable factor of higher MIVs in these areas.

The first area on the southeast of Knin has high MIVs due to rather small population numbers. Also, since their affiliation with the historical-traditional regions is not very strong, a reasonable suggestion is that the term "zagora" has been perceptively adopted due to specific natural-geographic features.

The second area covers the municipalities which overlap with the historical region of Zagora, so the

factors of perception, as well as with the affiliation to the symbolism of the mentioned geographic name can have historical and traditional reasons. On the other hand, the particular terrain configuration with a rather steep mountainous zone serving as a natural barrier dividing the municipalities from the most prosperous zones in the littoral area, which was the reason why the exonym and the later endonym appeared in the first place, might be an active factor even today, with the modern transportation overcoming accessibility.

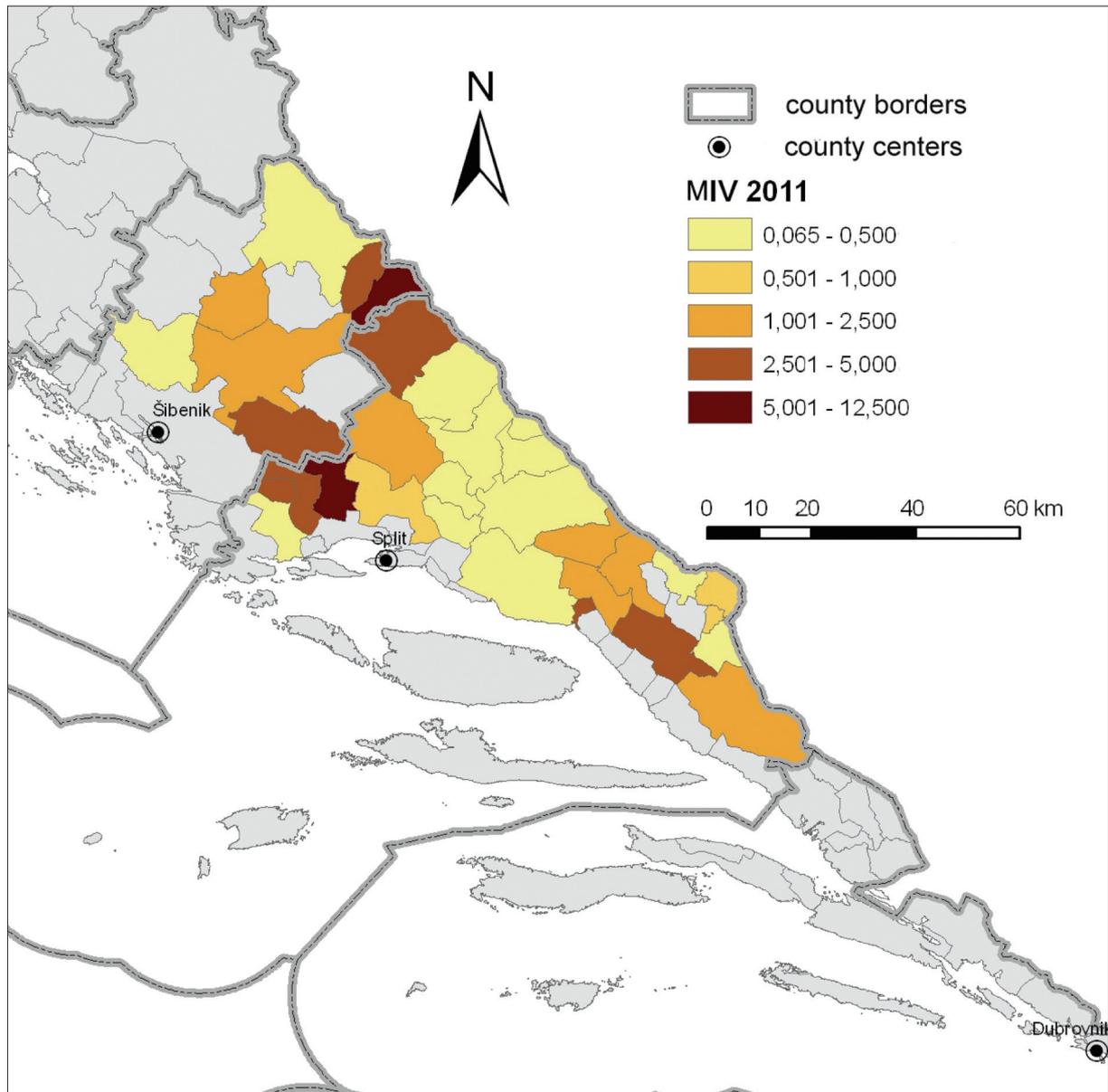


Figure 7 Map of MIVs in the researched area (index population-weighted according to the 2011 census)

The third area is most likely to be affiliated to the perceptual region with the term "zagora" representing a key determinant in its geographic name because of many traditional similarities with the rest of the territory. However, due to the fact that its position is in the hinterland of the highest and steepest coastal mountainous range in Dalmatia, the usage of the term "zagora" is very appropriate even today, which most probably has an influence on the perception of the area.

In terms of calculating MIVs for each of the two varieties of the toponym (Tab. 4), it becomes evident that they are substantially higher in relation to the geographic name "Zagora" (varying from 0.106 to 12.5) in comparison to Dalmatinska zagora (0.065 to 1.853). This could indicate stronger affiliation with the geographic name Zagora in terms of perceptual region. However, another factor should be taken into consideration, especially since the data is extrapolated from an informal source – the tendency of abbreviations in newspapers

Table 4 Calculated MIVs for both varieties of geographic names in the Dalmatian hinterland 1999-2011

Municipality/town	MIV (Dalm. zagora.)	MIV (Zagora)
Civljane	0	12.5
Lečevica	1.701	6.803
Kijevo	0	4.938
Zadvarje*	0	3.460
Zagvozd	0	3.378
Vrlika	1.853	1.390
Unešić	0	2.967
Prgomet	0	2.903
Primorski Dolac	0	2.587
Muč	1.043	0.782
Promina	1.803	0
Lovreć	1.168	0.584
Cista Provo	0.421	1.262
Šestanovac	1.043	0.522
Vrgorac	0.615	0.461
Drniš	0.670	0.402
Zmijavci	0.481	0.481
Klis	0.211	0.633
Imotski	0.550	0.275
Sinj	0.242	0.201
Runovići	0.410	0
Dicmo	0	0.355
Trilj	0.212	0.106
Dugopolje	0	0.289
Hrvace	0.274	0
Skradin	0.263	0
Proložac	0.263	0
Seget*	0	0.206
Otok	0.183	0
Omiš*	0.067	0
Knin	0.065	0
AMI	0.840	1.129

*municipalities and towns which include parts of littoral areas

Source: *Slobodna Dalmacija* newspaper archives; population census 2011 (first available data)

(purposeful omission of "Dalmatinska"), as well as in everyday usage of the terms. This fact is also obvious in certain articles where both varieties of the toponym are present, and it goes in favour of the argument that Zagora and Dalmatinska zagora are actually synonyms.

The mean of all MIVs (*Average municipality index* or AMI) has been calculated to determine the strength of each geographic name in terms of perception. It indicates stronger average MIV in the

group of municipalities affiliated to Zagora (1.129) in comparison to Dalmatinska zagora (0.840). In terms of understanding both varieties of the name as synonyms, it is, again, valid to offer a possibility that the higher AMI for Zagora, as well as the higher number of occurrences in comparison to the other variety, is simply a result of the tendency to abbreviate the name "Dalmatinska zagora" and simply use "Zagora".

Conclusion

In many informal sources of the geographic data, most of the area of the Dalmatian hinterland is often referred to as "Zagora" or "Dalmatinska zagora". However, these particular toponyms do not exist as formal or administrative units (apart from the usage of the term "Zagora" as a part of the name of smaller areas; for example, the settlement of Mirlović Zagora in the hinterland of Šibenik). When reviewing many sources of informal geographic data, the references to Zagora or Dalmatinska zagora may be found; yet usually without a precise suggestion of the extent of such an area. Thus, it is obvious that a region symbolized by one or both geographic names exists in the consciousness of the population. In literature, such a region is referred to as perceptual region. An attempt to determine an approximation of the extent of such a region in the case of the Dalmatian hinterland has been made by analyzing the relevant geographic references in one selected medium (the daily newspaper *Slobodna Dalmacija*) within a time frame of at least 10 years.

The research included articles and reports in which the term "zagora" appears as a toponym individually or with a prefix "Dalmatinska" (Dalmatian). Among relevant references, the basic condition was to isolate those in which any variant of the toponym was related to a specific formal area or settlement. A total of 70

textual units (articles, reports) was found in the available archive covering the issues from 1999 to 2011, and the results were collected in form of municipalities (entries containing only individual settlements were counted as municipalities to which they belonged) summing the number of occurrences for each municipality. Thus, a total of 31 municipalities have been identified to appear at least once in the context of one or both varieties of the researched geographic name. All of the identified municipalities are in the hinterlands of two counties: Split-Dalmatia County and Šibenik-Knin County, which suggests that the overall perception of Zagora/Dalmatinska zagora in the informal sources such as the media primarily refers to this part of Dalmatia (and not to all of Dalmatian hinterland).

The MIV (Municipality index values) calculation shows three "cores" of affiliation to Zagora/Dalmatinska zagora; in the area of narrow hinterlands of Šibenik and Split; in the area of Biokovo's hinterland and one in the scarcely-populated municipalities in the southeast of Knin. Furthermore, the range of calculated MIVs for each particular variety of the geographic name shows a stronger affiliation with the toponym Zagora in comparison to its alternative (Dalmatinska zagora). This suggests more frequent informal usage of the first variety, for which one of the reasons could be a tendency to abbreviate the name "Dalmatinska zagora".

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