GEOADRIA

Conflict of geopolitical discourse illustrated by the example of the geographical name of Lokrum island

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The conflict of geopolitical discourse was illustrated through the example of varying use of geographical names for Lokrum Island on early modern nautical charts and in navigation guides. Analysing the geopolitical dynamics between the Venetian Republic and the Dubrovnik Republic, the research highlights how geographical names (toponyms) reflect and influence territorial ambitions and political narratives. The methodological approach employs a comparative qualitative analysis of historical cartographic sources and navigation guides, using an interdisciplinary approach that includes contemporary research paradigms such as border studies, imagology, cultural geography, and geopolitical discourse to investigate the use of toponyms in the context of various factors such as political ideology and cartographic tradition. The results reveal that naming Lokrum Island with multiple names, such as *Lacroma*, *Croma* and similar names, and *Scoglio di San Marco*, served as a tool for asserting dominance and shaping political discourse. Special attention is given to toponyms as political and cultural hegemony instruments, demonstrating how powerful states used cartography to justify their territorial claims. The analysis shows that cartographic representations not only reflect the

construction and perpetuation of ideological narratives but also actively participate in it. This research contributes to a broader understanding of how cartography and toponymy function as instruments within geopolitical discourse, providing new insights into geopolitical processes.

Keywords: geopolitical discourse, toponym, Lokrum Island, Adriatic Sea, history of cartography, nautical charts

INTRODUCTION

Geopolitical discourse represents the analysis and interpretation of global political events and processes, with a particular focus on geographical factors and spatial relationships between states. This discourse is often employed in the analysis of international relations, strategies, and policies, where geographical features play a key role in shaping political decisions (Flint, 2021). It also examines how spatial dynamics influence global political narratives. By analysing geopolitical discourse, one can understand how states leverage geographical advantages or navigate limitations in pursuing their political and economic objectives (Cohen, 2015). Geopolitical discourse is continuously adjusted and revised to justify treating some states as allies and others as adversaries. Throughout history, political leaders have had to convince their citizens that wars they were asked to participate in are necessary, and even that such wars ensure a better future (Flint, 2021).

Critical geopolitics explores the geographical and political assumptions underlying traditional geopolitical practices (Ó Tuathail, 1996). Geopolitical discourse encompasses how political actors construct and use geographical narratives to justify their actions and policies. These narratives often involve issues of identity and power in spatial terms, influencing public opinion and political decision-making. This discourse is crucial in shaping how geopolitical events and processes are understood and represented. Within geography, critical geopolitics is used as an approach aimed at deconstructing geopolitical discourses and revealing the hidden power relations embedded within them (Jones & Sage, 2010), including the study of nautical charts and the accompanying texts. This approach underlines the importance of analysing

spatial representations to uncover their political implications, offering a nuanced perspective on geopolitical practices and their impact on global politics. For example, maps can legitimize territorial claims or depict certain regions as unstable or dangerous (Harley, 1988). States incorporate geographical references and cartographic depictions into their geopolitical discourse to reinforce or justify political actions such as territorial claims or military interventions.

Geographical names

Nautical charts are not only significant geographical sources but also important toponymic records that can be studied from a geographical perspective. From this viewpoint, important factors, processes, and interactions stemming from the socio-economic organization of the depicted space can be identified and explained (Faričić, 2017). Language and maps become intertwined when linguistic signs are needed to mark a specific place (object) on a map. In the context of nautical charts, the connection between language and maps has existed since the first known nautical chart. A geographical name, or toponym, provides each spatial object with its identity. Toponymic forms are not created out of nothing; they are drawn from the lexical corpus and knowledge about space and naming throughout history. At some point, the nomenclator had to assign a name to a specific geographical object to distinguish it from others. From a communication (linguistic) perspective, a toponym functions like any other name within a communication system, similar to a person's name. Words from the general lexicon have universal meanings, while onomastic lexicon words specifically identify reality, in this case, geographical reality, and refer exclusively to one unique object. For instance, the nesonym Lokrum refers solely to the island in the vicinity of Dubrovnik and no other. However, there are exceptions where multiple objects share the same name. If a cartographer names an object, such as Lokrum Island, users of the nautical chart—provided they belong to a cultural community familiar with the chart—will recognize that it refers to a specific island in the Adriatic within the Dubrovnik archipelago. This process can be described as identification, or the linking of the geographical name with its geographical reality (Skračić, 2009). Toponyms

play an important role in the creation and organization of (cognitive) maps and in spatial orientation (Reszegi, 2020). Geographical names are indispensable in communication, orientation, spatial identification, navigation, and other activities that take place in space. Beyond their primary function of spatial identification, toponyms often carry a symbolic component, where the motives of the nomenclator suggest certain meanings within a specific cultural context (Orth, 1987). By comparing maps from various historical periods, geographers can trace the routes of toponym dispersion, their migration paths, and cultural influences (Šakaja, 2015). Toponyms are the lifeblood of every nautical chart, providing an essential means for distinguishing geographical objects (Campbel, 1987). The relationship between toponomastics and cartography is almost inseparable; indeed, cartography without the process of naming would be unimaginable. Language, script, and maps represent one of the fundamental human needs for transmitting information, that is, for communication and the systematic, permanent recording of data.

The study of geographical names is of paramount importance for geopolitical discourse, as geographical names often reflect and perpetuate power and ideology. Changing the names of cities or regions can be a political act, aimed either at erasing historical legacies or strengthening new national identities. Toponyms, therefore, become tools for exercising political and cultural hegemony over certain territories (Alderman, 2008). This is evident in cases such as the renaming of cities in post-Soviet states or within decolonization contexts (Berg & Vuolteenaho, 2009).

By comparing the content of toponyms with contemporary geographical reality, conclusions can be reached about political shifts. From the perspective of cultural geography, toponyms provide insights into the cultural politics of naming and the broader social contexts that shape various models of toponymy. Toponyms also carry symbolic value; the name of a place is its most significant symbol. Naming a place is one of the fundamental factors in constructing its meaning and identity. On one level, it marks the geographical location, while on another, it illuminates the ideology that defines what the 'correct nomenclature' is. In the

field of new cultural geography, particular attention is given to the ideological dimension of toponyms, from which dominant political discourses and worldviews can be interpreted. Ideological toponyms are prone to change. The renaming of toponyms often accompanies radical socio-political changes, influencing national discourses and the renewal or construction of identity. By erasing toponyms, the past is erased -or an attempt is made to erase it - while a new symbolic order is established through the introduction of new toponymy. As part of the symbolic landscape, toponymy functions as a cultural text with dual meanings: it signifies location and participates in cultural relations. Toponyms indicate a place, but they also refer to a culture (Šakaja, 2015).

Although the primary purpose of toponyms is not to serve as historical records, they inevitably turn into them, acting as enduring witnesses to social, cultural, political, and linguistic changes (Šimunović, 2005). They are one of the longest-lasting connection between people and space and provide an excellent foundation for interpreting cultural interaction (Skok, 1950). Until the late 18th century, map-making was based on spatial descriptions and observations without geodetic measurements. Charts were often copied without significant changes, including the uncritical reproduction of toponyms (Faričić, 2007). When examining nautical charts, it becomes apparent that older chart templates were often used for their creation, including the toponymic corpus, with the same or similar errors.

Research objective

The main objective of this paper is to determine the geographical name assigned to Lokrum Island on early modern nautical charts depicting the Adriatic Sea, as well as in sailing directions from the same period, and to explore how its name corresponds with the territorial claims and the geopolitical discourse of the Republic of Venice and the Republic of Dubrovnik.

The purpose of studying polyonymy, such as that of Lokrum Island, contributes to the understanding of geographical reality throughout history, as geographical names can be seen as fossils within the linguistic-geographical layer, bearing witness to specific geopolitical and socio-economic processes of change and development. Additionally, polyonymy reflects

diverse perceptions of geographical space that are not only based on geographical knowledge but also on the imagination associated with the symbolic meaning of the named object, whose contexts take on local, regional, and even global perceptions of the named object (Faričić et al., 2023).

Based on a comprehensive overview of existing literature and knowledge, the hypothesis is proposed as follows: The polyonymy of Lokrum Island reflects the geopolitical conflicts and territorial claims of the Republic of Venice and the Republic of Dubrovnik, and those names participated in the creation and affirmation of territorial claims and, indirectly, in the geopolitical discourse of these republics.

Research area

The research focuses on analysing the complex relationships between the Republic of Venice and the Republic of Dubrovnik during the early modern period in the Adriatic Sea region. The Republic of Venice and the Republic of Dubrovnik had a complex and multi-dimensional relationship during the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. Their interaction was shaped by a mix of rivalry and cooperation, rooted in their shared maritime culture, strategic locations along the Adriatic coast, and the broader geopolitical dynamics of the Mediterranean world. The power and wealth of these two maritime republics largely derived from trade. However, Venice was the dominant force, with a larger navy and broader trade networks. This dominance led Venice to view Dubrovnik as both a potential rival and a subordinate entity that could be exploited. Aware of the power imbalance, Dubrovnik often sought to maintain a degree of autonomy by skilfully navigating diplomatic relations between Venice and other regional powers, such as the Ottoman Empire (Lane, 1973; Harris, 2006).

The research area includes Lokrum Island, which is part of the Dubrovnik-Cavtat island chain and plays a significant role in the geopolitical context of these republics while offering important insights into their historical relations and territorial ambitions. Besides Lokrum, this chain includes the islands of Bobara and Mrkan, as well as smaller rocks (Magaš et al., 2001). The island is located about 600 meters southeast of Dubrovnik (Hećimović, 1982) and covers

an area of only 693.80 square metres (Duplančić Leder et al., 2004). It serves as a natural breakwater for the old port of Dubrovnik, while Konalić (Lokrum Channel) was an important anchorage in front of the port, making it significant on the Eastern Adriatic shipping route. The Venetians recognized its importance in the 1630s, when they attempted to capture it. It is possible that by inviting the Benedictines to the island at the beginning of the 11th century Dubrovnik sought to secure the island under the protection of the Church and the Pope, as its conquest would threaten Dubrovnik's trade and freedom (Ničetić, 2002). The Republic of Dubrovnik established Benedictine monasteries in strategic locations to monitor ships passing through the surrounding seas - not only warships and enemy vessels but also merchant ships or those arriving from plague-infected regions. Monasteries were established on islands: Mljet, Šipan, Sv. Andrija, Sv. Jakov, and Lokrum. These monasteries also had defensive roles, especially as part of communication networks, with some fortified monasteries occasionally serving as refuges (Lučić, 1989).

REVIEW OF THE EXISTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

A substantial number of scholars have explored geopolitical discourse and geopolitical issues in general. The works of Cohen (2015) and Flint (2021) are significant for the theoretical framework of geopolitical discourse, while the work of Jones and Sage (2009) is important for studying geopolitical discourse within the framework of critical geopolitics. To the best of the author's knowledge, few authors have studied geopolitical discourse from the perspective of early modern cartographic and accompanying sources (sailing directions). The study of geopolitical discourse through historical toponymy opens the door to examining current and future changes in the geographical names of specific locations around the world. The renaming of places serves as a powerful political tool, reflecting political and cultural transformations within social contexts and relationships.

The study of toponymy on nautical charts is a crucial aspect of cartographic research. It provides key insights into how geographical names reflect and shape navigation practices, cultural identities, and political territories. The contributions of Croatian scholars, such as

Skračić, Skok, Faričić, Šimunović, and Kozličić, have significantly broadened the understanding of toponymy in the Adriatic Basin. Skračić (1996, 2009, 2011), with his extensive body of work, stands out for his detailed analysis of toponymy. His research into the polyonymy and etymology of toponyms reveals how cultural and political histories of regions can be traced through geographical names, providing insights into naming processes that transcend purely geographical aspects. Skok (1950) contributes to the understanding of the cultural and linguistic layers that shape Adriatic toponymy. Skok's etymological analysis of toponyms reflects the complex historical processes of assimilation, coexistence, and conflict among different cultural influences in the Adriatic, highlighting that geographical names can serve as windows into the region's past. Šimunović (2009), in his work *Uvod u hrvatsko imenoslovlje*, offers a thorough introduction to Croatian onomastics, studying the origins, development, and meanings of names, including geographical names (toponyms). He analysed the historical, cultural, and social factors that influenced the formation and transformation of these names. Kozličić (1995) revealed how toponyms and other geographical elements have developed and changed on cartographic representations over the centuries, providing key insights into the cartographic, toponomastic, and historical heritage of the Adriatic. Faričić (2007, 2011, 2017) holds a significant position in the study of toponymy on nautical charts, with a particular focus on the Adriatic Sea and its cartographic representation throughout history. His works offer detailed insights into the methodological study of toponyms and into how geographical names reflect the cultural, political, and historical layers of the region. Through these and other works, Faričić not only provided key insights into the history and development of Adriatic toponymy but also highlighted the importance of geographical names in the processes of constructing spatial knowledge and identity. Additionally, the work *La toponomastica in Istria, Fiume e Dalmazia* (2009) is significant for understanding and tracking the changes in the toponymy of the eastern Adriatic coast.

The most significant work on the study of polyonymy in the Adriatic Sea is undoubtedly the work of Faričić et al. (2023). This study further deepened the understanding of the

cartographic representation of the Adriatic, investigating how spatial relationships and identities are transmitted and constructed through toponyms. In general, the study of the polyonymy of geographical objects was addressed by Skračić (2009) and Crljenko and Faričić (2022). The naming of the Adriatic Sea was explored by Kozličić (1990), Budić (2021), and Tabain (1976). The works of Giraut and Houssay-Holzschuch (2016), who interpret the importance of toponyms for the construction of identity, and Gill (2005), who explored the same topic in the context of Moscow, are also relevant for this research. Of course, it is also essential to understand the geopolitical circumstances of the period in question.

This body of literature highlighted the importance of toponymy as a medium for communicating cultural, historical, and political narratives. Toponyms on nautical charts serve as bridges between the past and present perceptions of space, reflecting complex processes of identity construction, territorial claims, and cultural interactions. The research of Skračić, Skok, Faričić, Kozličić, Šimunović, and others collectively illustrates the dynamic relationship between geography, culture, and history in the context of the Adriatic Sea's nautical cartography, encouraging continued reflection and research on how toponyms shape collective understandings of the region's rich cultural and historical heritage.

Numerous scholars have approached the general study of imagology and discourse theory. However, fewer have engaged with imagological topics related to nautical charts, and even fewer with early modern nautical charts, particularly those depicting the Adriatic Sea. Significant works include those by Mlinarić and Gregurović (2011), which explored issues of hetero-image and auto-image on geographical maps of Croatian territory. A number of scholars and authors have explored the theme of the 'Other' and 'Otherness' in the context of geographical maps, focusing on how maps reflect and reinforce power dynamics, colonialism, and cultural biases. Harley (1988, 1992) is one of the most important scholars in the field of critical cartography. His works, among other things, demonstrate how maps serve as instruments of cultural imperialism. Wood (1992) is known for his work on the power of maps and their role in society, investigating how maps influence perceptions of the world.

Monmonier (1995) illustrated the manipulative potential of maps, showing how they can distort reality. Culcasi (2008) studied how Western countries cartographically created the Middle East region. She examined cartographic sources from British, American, and local cartographers. Culcasi found that non-local cartographers imposed an artificial regional identity on the landscape, reflecting a clear disregard for Arab rights to self-determination. This region was artificially produced over decades. In this case, maps were just one part of a broader Western discourse that portrayed the region as unstable, unpredictable, turbulent, and dangerous. These authors contribute to a rich body of literature that calls for a critical examination of the assumptions underlying cartographic representations and considers the social and political implications of mapping practices. These authors explore from different perspectives how geographical maps and charts not only reflect but also shape our understanding of the world, often in ways that promote certain ideologies and power structures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As part of the conducted research, a comparative qualitative analysis of geographical names on maps and charts was performed to understand and recognize specific forms of communication that maps, and charts, as a medium for transmitting information, enable. This analysis is based on an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates contemporary research paradigms such as border studies, imagology, cultural geography, and geopolitical discourse to explore the use of toponyms in the context of various factors such as political ideology and cartographic tradition. This methodological framework views charts not only as tools for navigation and the depiction of spatial data but also as complex media for cultural and political communication, conveying multi-layered messages. Charts were studied as symbolic visual, historical constructs and representations of subjective reality composed of symbolic records that retain features of cultural representation (Harley and Woodward, 1987; Krleža and Mlinarić, 2022). In line with this, the research examines the portrayal of the 'Other' under the influence of the 'ruling powers,' namely the cartographer who created the chart and the empire where the chart was produced. To achieve this, a comparative method was used to analyse the

charts and sailing directions under study (Mlinarić and Gregurović, 2011). Toponyms are an essential and constant element of any map, enabling not only spatial but also linguistic orientation, allowing the interpretation and decoding of geographical content. Since a map is a collection of codes, with symbolism being an integral part, it is crucial to deconstruct the map, study each of its components, and question its purported objectivity. In this case, chart deconstruction includes an analysis of toponyms, which involves interpreting the messages that cartographers intended to convey to chart users. The key to understanding a map is recognizing the dominant ideologies of the period in which it was created and identifying the centres of power at the time, whether political, religious, or social (Harley, 1992). For this reason, when interpreting geographical names, it is necessary to:

- Identify the geographical object depicted and whether it has been named (and if named, how it was conducted), and

- Determine the relationship between the toponyms and the social and economic functions of the named geographical object (Faričić, 2017).

A comprehensive understanding emerges at the intersection of practical, symbolic, and experiential elements, and the overall impression a map leaves depends on the depiction, the discourse from which the map is viewed, the forces that influenced its creation, the user's prior knowledge, power dynamics, and other factors (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1996). For imagological interpretation, it is essential to understand concepts such as the ' Other' and 'Otherness.' When placing oneself at the centre, 'the Other' always represents something external, a person who is different (Culcasi, 2008). The cartographic representation of the 'Other' can be analysed through constructionist theory, which suggests that social and historical context determines how the 'Other' is viewed, where the construction of the 'Other' intertwines with the construction of 'Us' (McDonald, 1993). The field of critical geography examines the discursive creation of the 'Other' and the ways in which these knowledge productions inform international relations, especially imperial and colonial projects (Mountz, 2009). Imagology, the study of representations and images of the 'Other,' along with the concept of differentiation between

'Us' and 'Others' as a means of establishing identity, provides frameworks for understanding the role of toponyms in constructing cultural and political narratives on nautical charts. These methodological approaches enable the exploration of how geographical names contribute to the representation of foreign countries and peoples, often reflecting the perceptions, prejudices, and power relations of the time (Mlinarić & Gregurović, 2011).

In order to locate and analyse toponyms on historical nautical charts, it is necessary to compare them with toponyms on contemporary nautical charts and/or topographic maps, as well as with linguistic registers and analyses of the toponymic corpus of the researched area (Faričić, 2017).

By applying hermeneutics, it is possible to decipher the complex symbolic messages embedded in cartographic materials, understand the social history, and the cultural and political narratives that shape and define spatial representations. This positions charts as important media in the communication process, not only by transmitting geographical information but also as platforms through which cultural identities, political ideologies, and collective beliefs are articulated, negotiated, and maintained.

This research, inter alia, relies on the historical analysis of archival sources, which is crucial for studying the use and perception of toponyms in the specified historical period, revealing the interaction between cartographic practices and broader socio-cultural and political processes. Critical text analysis complements cartographic analysis by studying written sources, such as navigational instructions, sailing directions, and existing scientific literature, which can provide contextual information about toponyms, including their use and changes. This approach facilitates an understanding of how geographical names were perceived and used in the broader social and cultural context.

For the purposes of researching the names of Lokrum Island, approximately one hundred nautical charts and a dozen sailing directions were reviewed. The charts were grouped chronologically and by the country of publication. For each chart, the geographical name of Lokrum Island was recorded, with special attention given to charts where Lokrum is named

with the nesonym Saint Marc. This systematization enabled a chronological overview of the differentiation of the names of Lokrum Island. One of the limitations of this research is the fact that many charts were not preceded by geodetic measurements, and often did not even involve direct data collection from the field, as most charts were created based on the reproduction, modification, and/or compilation of the existing charts. This leads to the conclusion that cartographers may not have been familiar with the semiotics of the geographical names used by their predecessors or those on the charts they used as templates for their own charts, and that they uncritically adopted the content of the charts.

Most preserved late medieval and early modern nautical charts of the Adriatic were made in Venice, which at the time was the leading maritime centre in the Adriatic. For the purposes of this research, original nautical charts of the Adriatic from Croatian and Italian institutions were reviewed and examined. They include the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana and Museo Correr in Venice, the State Archives in Zadar, the Croatian State Archives, the National and University Library in Zagreb, the Maritime Museum in Split, the University of Trieste, and the University of Zadar, Research Library. The research also covered numerous old nautical charts whose digital reproductions are available on the websites of European and American libraries, as well as the charts from private collections, especially those of Marco Asta from Bologna.

Maps and toponyms as instruments of power

To an inexperienced user, a map often appears as a true representation of reality, a depiction or visualization of the world. Within this perceived authenticity lies the potential for various interpretations, or reinterpretations, of geographical reality. One such possibility is the manipulation of reality, which lies in the hands of the cartographer. Maps depend not only on the cartographic skills of the cartographer, the techniques, and technologies used, but also on cultural and historical-political changes (Mlinarić & Gregurović, 2011). In the Adriatic, these changes were influenced by political turmoil between imperial powers such as Venice, the Habsburgs, the Ottomans, and others, and their cartographic policies. The fact is that maps are suggestive; they can be used to interpret not only geographical information but also political,

confessional, cultural, linguistic, and ideological situation. Maps often served as tools for direct or subliminal manipulation of information. In order to interpret the geopolitical discourse on maps/charts from a contemporary perspective, it is essential to understand the cultural, political, and other circumstances in which the maps/charts were created.

Maps are not merely technical tools; they are also expressions (and productions) of ideological values, social and cultural norms, and visions of the world. In this sense, toponyms play a crucial role in understanding the performative process of 'territorialisation' and can be used to study cultural identity and political turmoil in the mapped space. Changes of toponyms are not only part of the historical fluctuation of language, they also act as 'markers' of geographical features, territories, and identity spaces (Siniscalchi & Palagiano, 2018).

The communicative effectiveness of a map as a historical source, among other things, depends on its persuasive power and its suggestiveness. There is a possibility of distorted perception of spatial reality if it is based solely on maps. Therefore, the credibility of maps must be considered, regardless of the reliability attributed to the author due to their competence or the institution behind the creation of the map, which is expected to guarantee objectivity through institutional verification of spatial data. However, the credibility of the map's content, in addition to the degree of generalization, its scale, and thematic focus, is largely influenced by the intentions of the commissioner and the cartographer's subjective approach to the task entrusted to them or that they set for themselves. In the past, especially before the use of geodetic surveys, maps were not the best possible technical representations of reality but were often influenced by methods of visual art, including various iconographic patterns. As a result, many symbolic images complemented the depiction of material, visible reality. As such, maps function as semiotic systems that organize geographical knowledge into visual schemes subject to culturally accepted interpretations of the territory, whether real or abstract. The cartographer is the one who selects the content to be included on the map. The map user, based on their mental frameworks, cultural beliefs, acquired knowledge, imagination, and prejudices, adds layers of meaning and interpretation to the map, thereby altering the structure of the

cartographic information. Because of the potential for multiple readings and interpretations of the content depicted, maps play an important role in shaping perceptions. Early modern nautical charts, like other maps, allow users to understand space within the framework of specific imperial policies, while also providing certain temporal context. Cartographers often depicted their empires as superior on maps, using techniques to exclude the 'Other' from the space (Mlinarić & Gregurović, 2011). An example of this is the name of the Adriatic Sea, which was often referred to as the Gulf of Venice (Golfo di Venezia), presenting the entire Adriatic as an extension of Venice's harbour (Marković, 1993; Faričić et al., 2023). The name of the Adriatic Sea is a good example of polyonymy. Many geographical features have multiple names. This phenomenon can be approached from either a diachronic or synchronic perspective. The synchronic approach is used to uncover the views or attitudes of the cartographer or the commissioner toward a particular space, while the diachronic approach illustrates the chronological sequence of naming and the use of geographical names in communication within and about the space (Skračić, 2009; Crljenko & Faričić, 2022; Faričić et al., 2023). The coexistence of various motivations for naming a particular geographical feature, at a time when there was no registry of geographical names, led different communities to name the same feature according to their own needs. Thus, political issues were often involved in the naming process, sometimes overtly and sometimes subtly, and ignorance was also occasionally a factor (Skračić, 2009). The polyonymy of the Adriatic Sea stems from the fact that throughout history it has been a zone of confrontation between multiple geopolitical entities and diverse socio-economic processes. Of course, this is not the only example of polyonymy. Venetian cartographers often used toponyms to express dominance and power over certain territories. Charts were used as confirmations of legitimacy for controlling these areas and as political and ideological tools. In toponomastics, it is not possible to unilaterally distinguish correct from incorrect forms of geographical names, which becomes most evident when discussing geographical names from different toponomastic origins, such as different countries in border areas or different linguistic communities inhabiting and using the same space in various ways.

A particular community may communicate internally without issue, but different communities may need help in communicating a particular toponymic form, and disputes may arise when names express political aspirations in relation to the named space.

Gottman (1964) interpreted political space depicted on maps as a space filled with signs. He introduced the concept of iconography as the overall system of symbols in relation to which the graphic representation is interpreted. Hence, maps function as dynamic tools for conveying cultural values. Bonnemaison (2005) adds another dimension to the discourse through the concept of geosymbolism, emphasising the geosymbol as a mediator between spatial location and a cultural belief system. This perspective highlights the role of maps in creating geosymbolic spaces that convey specific cultural and identity narratives through the selection and depiction of particular symbols. A geosymbol is embodied in a specific place, serving as a spatial indicator, a sign in space that reflects and shapes identity, whether it is a sacred place (Jerusalem), a prominent location (mountain), or a sacred object (church). It designates territory through signs, establishing a territorial iconology, marking territorial boundaries, and simultaneously creating them. It structures space and assigns meaning to it by producing and constructing territories. Cultural space is a geosymbolic space imbued with emotions and meanings.

Giraut and Houssay-Holzschuch (2016) identify four political contexts that lead to the (re)naming of geographical features:

- Conquest – the subjugation or control of territory through force. Other forms of political or cultural acquisition of territories or claims over them can also be found within this context.
- Revolution – a radical change in the political order. Examples of such revolutions include the fall of empires or authoritarian regimes.
- Emergence – new places are created and named, either because they are newly developed or newly individualized.

- Commodification – a concept that encompasses all contexts where powerful individuals or corporations appropriate the toponymic landscape, which forms part of the public good, for their own (financial or symbolic) profit.

They also outline four (though there may be more) technologies that drive the (re)naming of locations to achieve specific political goals. Toponyms are used to construct and maintain collective identity within space. They identify four technologies:

- Cleansing – used to eliminate toponymic traces inherited from the previous political order.
- Founding – inscribes cultural and political references into toponymy to create, legitimize, and ultimately sustain a new political and cultural order, at both the local and/or national level. Naming places after founders, ideological values, or events associated with the founding shapes the toponymic landscape and helps legitimize the existing power structures by linking the regime's view of itself, its past, and the world with the seemingly mundane environments of everyday life (Gill, 2005).
- Restoring – seeks to re-establish memories and cultures by using old toponyms to atone for historical injustices or legitimize territorial claims.
- Promoting – branding places through names used to achieve valuable and marketable symbolic capital (Giraut & Houssay-Holzschuch, 2016).

Changes in toponyms often reflect profound political and cultural shifts within and between societies. One such example is the renaming of Stalingrad to Volgograd in 1961, which reflected the rejection of Stalin's legacy and the broader process of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union (Taubman, 2003). Similarly, the renaming of the city of Constantinople, which has been officially called Istanbul since 1930 following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, demonstrates how changes in city names were used as a tool to affirm new identities (Mansel, 1995). These and similar changes played a role in forming national consciousness and identity in the new Turkey (Zürcher, 2004). In addition to the renaming of cities, changes in the names of other geographical entities can also reflect political tensions. For example, the name 'Persian

Gulf' has become the subject of international dispute, as Arab countries prefer the name 'Arabian Gulf.' This toponymic change reflects not only a geographical but also a political struggle for regional influence and identity (Peterson, 2006; Schofield, 2017). After the end of colonial rule, Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe, symbolizing a break with colonialism, a return to indigenous identity, and an affirmation of sovereignty (Soames, 1980). The renaming of the Russian city from St. Petersburg to Petrograd, then to Leningrad, and back to St. Petersburg reflects the city's turbulent history and shifts in political power, from the imperial era to the Soviet period and finally to post-Soviet Russia (Ruble, 1990; Kelly, 2011). Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City in honour of the communist leader. The name change was a deliberate act of consolidating the power of the new regime and marking the successful unification of the country. That renaming was a political statement that reinforced the legitimacy of the communist government and erased remnants of the former regime (Logan, 2000; Harms, 2011). More recently, in 2016, Ukraine renamed several cities as part of decommunization efforts to erase traces of the Soviet past and to distance itself from Russian linguistic and political influences. For example, Dnipropetrovsk was renamed Dnipro (Kuzio, 2022). A closely related example is the issue of naming islands in the Sea of Japan. The dispute over the name of two small islands known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan reflects a broader territorial conflict between the two countries. Both countries claim sovereignty over these islands. South Korea controls the islands and claims that Dokdo has been historically Korean territory since the 6th century, while Japan asserts that Takeshima has been part of its territory since the 17th century. The disagreement extends beyond the name, encompassing historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. The dispute over the name and territory is deeply rooted in the complex history of Japan-Korea relations (Kim, 2014; Akimoto, 2020). These examples illustrate how states use toponyms to assert sovereignty and shift ideological directions. Each of these cases shows how changes in toponyms play a vital role in the geopolitical discourse of each country. They serve as a means of shaping national identity and political history, as well

as a tool in international relations, where geographical names become part of a larger narrative of dominance and/or resistance.

Lokrum and the Lokrum Crisis

Throughout history, Lokrum shared the fate of Dubrovnik. The Republic of Dubrovnik was adept at diplomatic manoeuvring, using its strategic position and diplomatic skills to maintain a degree of independence, especially in economic matters and local governance. The Republic sought alliances and protections that would secure its autonomy against Venetian pressures. In particular, it successfully established a beneficial relationship with the Ottoman Empire, which provided a counterbalance to Venetian influence. The Republic of Dubrovnik secured protection and trade privileges from the Ottoman Empire, ensuring its security and economic prosperity (Braudel, 1972; Harris, 2006; Foretić, 2019). Dubrovnik's diplomacy allowed it to carve out a space for autonomy in the shadow of Venice's greater power. The interactions between these two republics reflected the complexities of regional politics, trade, and cultural exchange. In this context, the small island of Lokrum played an important role.

In 1023, the city prior and the Archbishop of Dubrovnik transferred Lokrum to the possession of the church and requested that the priest Lav and the Benedictine monk Peter build a monastery on the island (Lučić, 1989; Ničetić, 2002). In the earliest documents, the monastery is referred to as the Monastery of St. Benedict; from the 13th century, it was known as the Monastery of St. Mary and St. Benedict; in the 15th century, as the Monastery of St. Mary or St. Benedict; and in subsequent centuries as the Monastery of St. Mary (Ostojić, 1964). The choice of Lokrum as the construction site for the monastery was no coincidence. The presence of the Benedictines on the island helped to defend the city. In the event of any disruption of the possession, church authorities could intervene on an international level. Similarly, when danger approached the city, the Benedictines would send warnings - by bell, or smoke signals during the day, and by fire at night. Lokrum also held important geopolitical significance. The island had two harbours that ships used for shelter. Similarly, these harbours were used when the city's

port was overcrowded with merchant ships. In such cases, ships would wait on Lokrum for their turn to enter the city harbour (Lučić, 1989).

Lokrum was an important tactical point and, accordingly, a target of direct enemy attacks. For example, in 971, the Venetians anchored near Lokrum (and Gruž) with the intention of launching a surprise attack on Dubrovnik (Lučić, 1989). In 1557, Dubrovnik built a lazaret on Lokrum, and a little later added a wooden guardhouse to better monitor maritime traffic in the surrounding waters (Foretić, 2019). In the 16th century, Lokrum was attacked twice by pirates - by Turkish pirates in 1571, who captured all the monks who were not subjects of the Republic of Dubrovnik (Lučić, 1989), and by Uskok pirates in 1577 (Ostojić, 1964). In October 1629, the Venetians issued an order to General Provveditore to stop construction on Lokrum, calling it the Island of St. Mark[1]. The Venetian claim that Lokrum was under Venice's control and was named the Island of St. Mark was not a mere fabrication. Hakluyt (1599) states that John Locke, during his 1553 voyage to Jerusalem, recorded that the Venetians owned *Il Cromo* (Lokrum), a rock located about a mile south of the town. Although the Republic of Dubrovnik offered a significant sum to purchase it, the Venetians retained it more for the namesake than for any profit. The only structure on the rock was a monastery (Hakluyt, 1599, p. 102). The island was regularly referred to as the island of St. Marc in Venetian documents from the 1620s (*Scoglio di San Marco*)[2]. It is significant that in 1626, the commander of the Venetian fleet explicitly

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[1] *23.10.1629. An order to the Supreme Provveditore to stop, by force or persuasion, the construction initiated by Dubrovnik on Lokrum…. Ci scrive il conte di Spalato essergli stato riferto da alcuni mercanti Turchi, che gli Ragusei hanno dato principio a certa fabbrica sopra il scoglio che le sta dirimpetto, nominato di San Marco; che quando cosi fosse, et vi, andassero progredendo, riuscirebbe cosa grandemente dannosa all'inviamento della medesima scala di Spalato, et pregiuducualissima a pubblici interessi…* (Makušev & Šufflay, 1905, p. 256)

[2] *30.6. 1623. An order to the provveditore to satisfy certain claims from Dubrovnik. … Se ben nel negotio delle tre cassette di cere levate il decembre passato dal sopracomito Civran ad un vascello al scoglio di San Marco, che in maggior summa de colli ci haverano caricato da Ragusi…* (Makušev & Šufflay, 1905, p. 214).

25.6.1624. Da se proda zaplijenjena roba dubrovačka, jer oni nijesu htjeli platiti za nju neki malen porez. …che in gratification loro sz ordinata delle cere levate dal sopracomito Civran da un vascello al scoglio di san Marco, et robbe di seta levate del capitanio di Golfo… (Makušev & Šufflay, 1905, p. 223)

mentioned the *scoglio de San Marco di ragione della serenità vostra* in a letter to the Senate[3] (Makušev & Šufflay, 1905). In July 1630, a conflict arose at sea between Dubrovnik and Venice, specifically between a Dubrovnik armed boat and three Venetian galleys under the command of Giovanni Battista Grimani. Sources from Venice and Dubrovnik tell different stories about this incident. From the Venetian perspective, the main issue was the failure to respect Venice's dominion over the Adriatic. The jurisdictional dispute over Lokrum began in earnest in the spring of 1631. This was one of the most intense diplomatic conflicts between Dubrovnik and Venice, known as the 'Lokrum Crisis' (Kunčević, 2021). In May 1631, the Venetian General Provveditore of Dalmatia, Antonio Civran, sent a letter to the Dubrovnik government ordering the demolition of the wooden guardhouse, allegedly illegally built on the 'Venetian' island of St. Mark (Foretić, 2019, p. 99). In the same year, the Senate of Dubrovnik responded with a letter warning the Provveditore that he had been completely misinformed about Venice's authority over Lokrum. The councillors left no room for doubt about their position: '... since the founding of the city, Lokrum has been under our unquestionable authority and is our undisputed possession, and we hope it will remain so until the end of time...' (Kunčević, 2021, p. 106). The conflict escalated further when, on May 22, the Venetian Senate ordered Grimani to patrol between Ancona and Dubrovnik, capture merchant ships, and redirect them to Venice, so that Dubrovnik would 'learn through various hardships' not to challenge a great state like Venice (Kunčević, 2021). Because of this conflict, the authorities of Dubrovnik turned to the European 'great powers,' writing to the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of France, the Republic of Genoa, and many others. After years of diplomatic efforts, the Republic of Dubrovnik decided to send a special envoy to Venice to resolve the issue of Venice's claims on Lokrum, as well as issues related to free navigation in the Adriatic without

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[3] *27.8.1626. The fleet provveditore reports on negotiations with Dubrovnik regarding the seizure of a ship transporting salt and the danger posed to the Split wharf by Dubrovnik's trade. ...Serenisimo principe. – Spedito che io hebbi hieri con mie riverite lettere alla serenita vostra il vascello de Sali termato a vista de Ragusi, che per la medesima citta era destinato, mi condussi a rinfrescar le ciurme al scoglio De San Marco di ragione della serenita vostra contiguo ad essa citta...* (Makušev & Šufflay, 1905, p. 230)

paying customs duties, and free trade for Dubrovnik merchants in Venice, among others (Foretić, 2019). This conflict lasted until the summer of 1635 when Lokrum was ceded to Dubrovnik on the condition that Dubrovnik pay Venice a financial contribution as acknowledgment of Venetian dominion over the Adriatic (Vučetić, 1889). During the Morean War, which lasted from 1683 to 1699, the Venetians once again occupied Lokrum, where, as in Gruž and Cavtat, they established their guards. After the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, the Venetians withdrew from Dubrovnik's territory, including Lokrum (Lučić, 1989).

***Conflict of geopolitical discourse illustrated by the example of the geographical name of Lokrum Island***

The most common names for Lokrum on late medieval and early modern nautical charts are *lacroma, croma, Cromma, Cromina*, and *Chiroma* (Fig. 1), with unusual toponymic forms such as *Cremidy* also recorded. From the studied corpus of nautical charts, the name associated with St. Mark was found on seven of them. It first appeared in 1679 on a chart created by M. Fassoi, who recorded it as *S: marco*. The geographical name of the island written as Saint Marc also appears on a chart by an unknown author from the late 17th century, as well as on the charts of J. Roux (1764), J.-N. Bellin (1771), L. Furlanetto (1784), V. de Lucio (ca. 1792-1796 and later in 1809), and G. Grubas (1803) (Fig. 2).
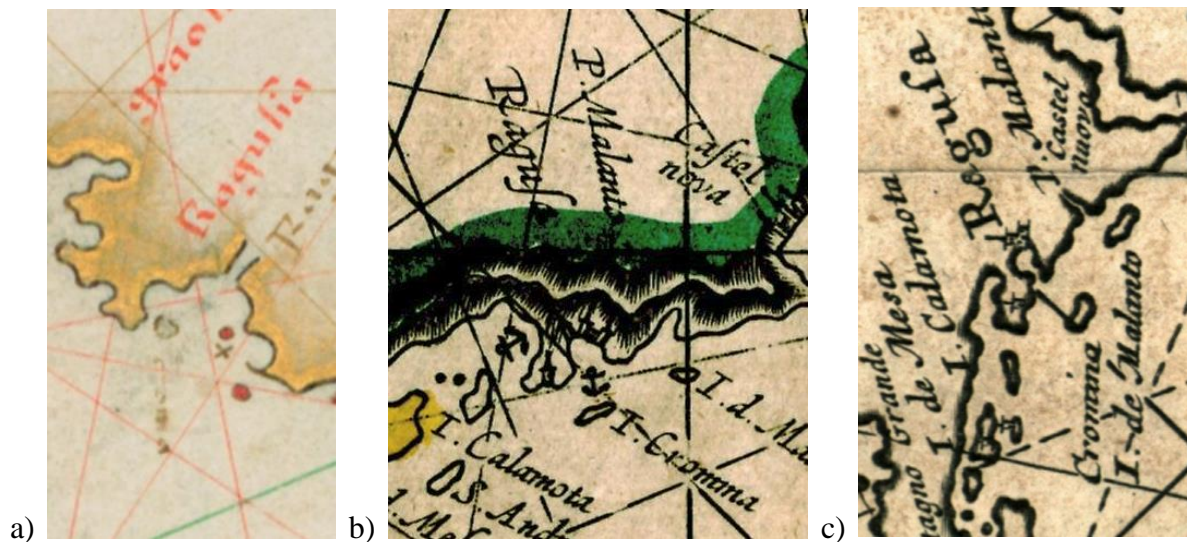
Slika 1. Prikaz Lokruma na ranonovovjekovnim pomorskim kartama s prikazom Jadrana; a) D. Homem 1570, b) P. Goos, 1650, c) P. Van der Aa, 1720.

Figure 1 *Depictions of Lokrum on early modern nautical charts of the Adriatic Sea; a) D. Homem 1570, b) P. Goos, 1650, c) P. Van der Aa, 1720.*

Izvori / *Sources:* a) Homem, D. (1570). [Pomorska karta Jadranskog mora]. Hrvatski državni arhiv, Kartografska zbirka, Zagreb, HR-HDA-902, D.XIV.6, b) Goos, P. (1650). Zee-kaarte van de Golf van Venetien. Privatna zbirka Marco Asta, Bologna, c) Van der Aa, P. (1720). Golfe de Venise avec les Côtes maritimes, Bayes et Ports etc. De la Gréce, Dalmatie et Italie. Hrvatski državni arhiv, Kartografska zbirka, Zagreb, HR-HDA-902, E.IV.29.
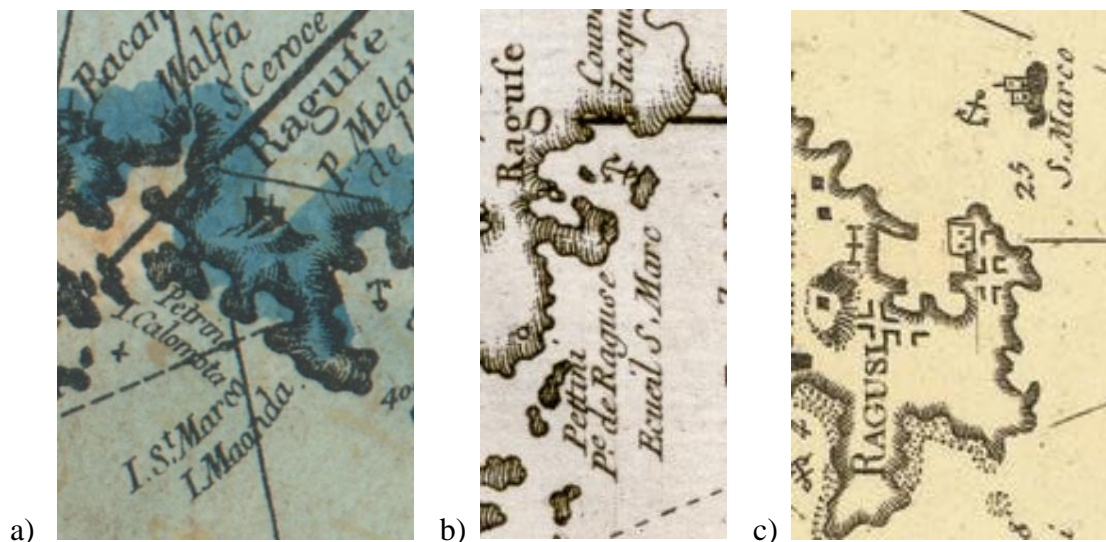
Slika 2. Prikazi Lokruma na ranonovovjekovnim pomorskim kartama s prikazom Jadrana; a) J. Roux 1764, b) J.-N- Bellin, 1771, c) V. de Lucio, 1809.

Figure 2 *Depictions of Lokrum on early modern nautical charts of the Adriatic Sea; a) J. Roux 1764, b) J.-N- Bellin, 1771, c) V. de Lucio, 1809.*

Izvori / *Sources*: a) Roux, J. (1764). Carte de la Mer Mediterranée in 12 fogli - VII Feuille. Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica u Zagrebu, Zbirka zemljovida i atlasa, Zagreb, S-JZ-XVIII-116., b) Bellin, J.-N. (1771). Carte des Isles
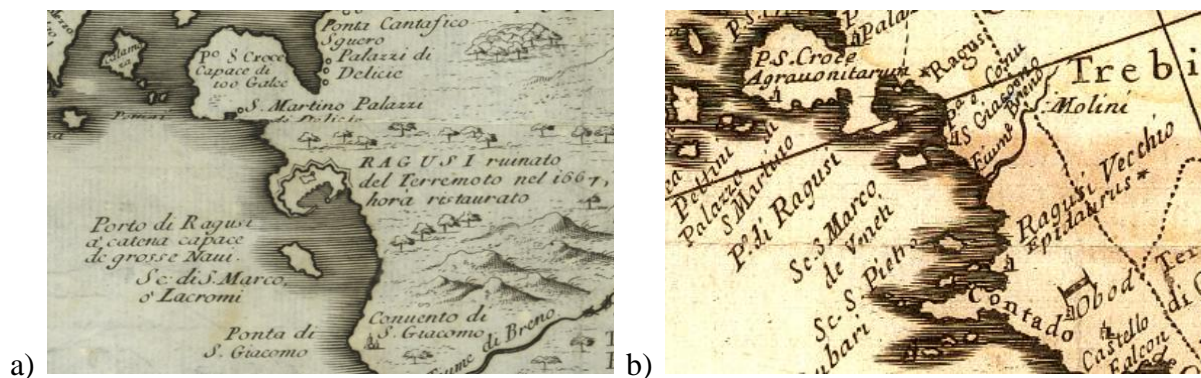
Elaphites, et la Coste de puis Stagno Jusqua Raguse u Description géographique du Golfe de Venise et de la Morée, Pl.22. Sveučilišna knjižnica u Splitu, Split, R-684, c) de Lucio, V. (1809). Nuova carta del Mare Adriatico ossia Golfo di Venezia. Sveučilište u Zadru, Znanstvena knjižnica, Zadar, 15188 D-20.

It is interesting that J.-N. Bellin, in his work *Description géographique du golfe de Venise et de la Morée* (1771), refers to the island as *Chiroma* in the descriptive section, while on the charts from the same year, he calls it *S. Marc*. Bellin states that the island belonged to the Venetians, and that despite various offers, they refused to sell it. By controlling Lokrum, the Venetians kept Dubrovnik '"on a leash.' Bellin employs this expression to describe the control over Dubrovnik that the Venetians achieved by possessing the island. Additionally, Bellin notes that the Venetians prevented Dubrovnik from building a fortress on the island, which would have facilitated their defence against the attacks by sea, including potential Venetian assaults. In this way, Venice further solidified its dominance over the Adriatic. Bellin later mentions that the Venetians eventually 'sold' Lokrum to the Dubrovnik in exchange for Korčula. However, there is no evidence of this in the literature. Korčula was part of the Republic of Dubrovnik for a brief period in the early 15th century (1413–1417) (Dugački & Regan, 2018), but not during the first half of the 17th century when the event Bellin described supposedly occurred. This exchange of Korčula for Lokrum is not mentioned in the reports of M. Sorgo, who led the diplomatic negotiations with Venice on behalf of the Republic of Dubrovnik (Vučetić, 1889). Nevertheless, this account reflects the skill of the Venetians, as they managed to incorporate their narrative of the cunning and powerful Republic into French circles; they supposedly exchanged a small island for a large, inhabited one with fertile land. Bellin also recounts an anecdote, which he admits he doubts is true. Allegedly, one night, a Venetian general erected a structure that resembled a solid fortress. He placed cannons upon this structure, which frightened Dubrovnik and forced them to negotiate with the general. Supposedly, the general agreed to relinquish Lokrum in exchange for Korčula. Even after regaining control of Lokrum, Dubrovnik did not build a fortress, as Bellin notes, due to financial constraints. Although the story is unlikely to be true, the fact that such a story exists reflects the geopolitical discourse Venice built around itself; it highlights the cunning and strategic thinking of Venetian

diplomacy. Venice portrays itself as a shrewd and capable strategist, while viewing the 'Other' (the Republic of Dubrovnik) as naive and deceived. Bellin also mentions that he took details for his maps from Coronelli's isolari. Although Bellin, judging by his text, knew that Lokrum was under Dubrovnik's control, he still referred to the island as St. Mark's, following the Venetian narrative on his maps.

In addition to the aforementioned nautical charts, two geographical maps by V. M. Coronelli, the official cosmographer of the Venetian Republic, are also significant. Coronelli's work *Mari, Golfi, Isole, Spiaggie...* was published in 1694. At the request of the authorities of Dubrovnik, and utilising a manuscript they obtained through the Council of Rogati, Coronelli created and included in this work a detailed depiction of the Republic of Dubrovnik (Marković, 1991). The authorities of Dubrovnik offered him twenty ducats to ensure that the data about their republic was presented accurately and precisely (Lučić, 1988). In a letter from 1685, Dubrovnik requested that Coronelli enter the data without changes and print their report verbatim in the work[4] (Škrivanić, 1959, p. 200). Interestingly, Coronelli referred to Lokrum as *Sc. di S. Marco, o' Lacromi* in accordance with the Venetian name, reflecting Venice's territorial claims over the island. On a map of Dalmatia by the same author, published in the same work, the name *Sc. S Marco* is recorded, with the explicit note *de Veneti* (Fig. 3).

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[4] *… che egli stampi la detta relatione prout iacet…* (Škrivanić, 1959, p. 200)

In the work *Mari, Golfi, Isole, Spiaggie…* (1694/2021), in the chapter titled *STATO DI RAGVSI*, V. M. Coronelli lists the islands owned by the Republic of Dubrovnik. Lokrum is not mentioned among the islands. The islands he lists as being owned by Dubrovnik are Mljet, Lastovo, and Elaphiti Islands (among which he highlights Koločep, Šipan, Lopud, and Sv. Andrija)[5]. This raises the question of whether Coronelli, by his silence, implicitly denied Dubrovnik's ownership of Lokrum. The answer to this question is likely affirmative, considering that he named the island after St. Mark and, in one of his maps, attributed its jurisdiction to Venice. The name persisted even after the fall of Venice, mostly in English sailing directions. In 1811, Laurie and Whittle printed a sailing guide titled *New Sailing Directions for the Mediterranean Sea*. Although they did not highlight the name of the island

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[5] *Delle Isole posedute da questa Repubblica, la prima che si oncontra, ch' e la piu grande, e Meleda, detta gia Melena, e Meligra, di forma lunga, di circuito di miglia 60. larga 10. La Il. ch' e la piu esposta al Mare, e Lagosta. E le ultime, che si trovano sono le 3. conosciute dagli Antichi col nome di Elaphites. Di queste la prima e Calamota, o Calafodia, ch' e la piu piccola, sterile, e meno abitata, di 7. miglia di circuio. La il. di esse, che n' ha diesi e detta Isola di Mezzo, e Lopud dagl' Illirici, perche sta nel mezzo di Calamota, e Giupana; ornata di belle Fabbriche. Due miglia lontano ha lo Scoglio di S. Andrea con piccolo; ma bello Monist. de' Benedittini. L'ultima che di queste tre e la piu grande, e detta Juppana, e Scipan dagli Illirici. Circuise 15 m. fertile, ed abitata* (V. M Coronelli, 1694/2021, p. 94)

on their Mediterranean chart, they mentioned it in the guide. The guide states that the island closest to Dubrovnik has a chapel dedicated to St. Mark. Of the four islands in the Dubrovnik archipelago - Lokrum, Mrkan, Bobara, and Supetar - Lokrum is the only one located directly in front of the old port of Dubrovnik, while the others are closer to Cavtat (Dujmić, 2021). The next sailing guide to repeat this information was *The New Mediterranean Pilot* by J. W. Norie, published in 1817. On Norie's Mediterranean chart, the island is not named. *The New Sailing directory for the Mediterranean Sea, the Adriatic Sea or the Gulf of Venice, the Archipelago and Levant, the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea* by J. Purdy, published in 1827, states that the island closest to Dubrovnik, about one mile away, has a chapel dedicated to St. Mark, located at a latitude of 42º37'45" N, which deviates only a few seconds from the position of Fort Royal. The mention of St. Mark's chapel/church in the sailing guides can be interpreted in several ways. It is possible that this is a cartographic legacy, meaning the uncritical adoption of data from older charts, such as V. De Lucio's chart (ca. 1792-1796), as the data on ocean currents in these guides were partly based on observations from the Venetian sailing guide by V. De Lucio and his work on ocean currents in the Adriatic from 1798 (Dujmić, 2021). It is also possible that the information was taken from an older chart or guide. Besides the sailing guides, the name continued to be used on charts, as seen on a chart resulting from the hydrographic survey by the French hydrographer C. F. Beautemps-Beaupré, where the island is referred to as *I. Lacroma ou S. Marco* (Kozličić, 2006).

In W. H. Smyth's 1854 book, *The Mediterranean: a memoir physical, historical and nautical*, the latitudes and longitudes of various navigation landmarks are provided. The author notes that on the island of *Lacroma*, there is Fort S. Marco, and on the first page of the second edition of J. W. Norie's sailing guide from 1824, it is stated that it was based on measurements and observations of several merchant ship commanders and Royal Navy captains, including W. H. Smyth. It is evident that the Venetian doctrine of claiming Lokrum lasted for more than two centuries and extended beyond the Adriatic region, entering French cartography in the 18th century and English cartography in the 19th century, continuing even after the fall of the

Venetian Republic. The claiming of the island began with diplomatic correspondence that escalated into the 'Lokrum crisis' and continued through cartographic representations.

The political semiotics of the Venetian choice of the name for the island of Lokrum is quite clear. Drawing on the works of Giraut and Houssay-Holzschuch (2016) and Gill (2005), this is a typical example of 'conquest' as a geopolitical context and 'founding' as a technology for establishing a new geographical name, aimed at creating, legitimizing, and maintaining a new political and cultural order, even on a global level. The fact that the name *Scoglio di San Marco* began appearing on nautical charts contributed to its dissemination among sailors and all others interested in using nautical charts and sailing guides, which are important sources of spatial data. Maps are undoubtedly the most suitable means for depicting various spatial relationships that are of great importance in different areas of social and political life. Since Venetian charts often served as templates for the production of charts of the Adriatic Sea, as well as other charts of broader areas such as the Mediterranean, European cartographers adopted the geographical names from these charts, including the Venetian name for the island of Lokrum. The reproduction of content does not necessarily imply the acceptance of the ideas or intentions of the author or commissioner but can also be interpreted as technical copying of content. It cannot be concluded that all European cartographers who used different versions of the Venetian name for the island of Lokrum believed that Venice had exclusive political and economic rights to it. Nevertheless, the Venetian message was successfully conveyed and effectively spread across Europe, at least at the level of cartographic, and indirectly linguistic, communication in space, and about space.

Venetian geopolitical discourse, irrespective of the underlying reasons, either Venetian (primary) or of those who adopted Venetian charts as templates (secondary), persisted for decades. This phenomenon aligns with the common occurrence of the longevity of historical and geopolitical discourses due to successful attempts at their explicit or implicit imposition (Bourdieu, 1990). This is also one of the possible reasons why cartographers and authors of sailing directions supported Venetian toponymy. In sociological terms, this indicates a symbolic

struggle for the dominance of a particular worldview - one in which the position of a specific group is privileged (Bourdieu, 1990), in this case, the position of the Venetian Republic within the political system of the Adriatic. Psychologically, this implies that such a position must provide positive self-confidence, and any attempt to challenge such an interpretation will likely be met with at least disapproval (Musiyezdov, 2022). Therefore, attitudes toward de-Italianization, or the rejection of Venetian toponyms, cannot be reduced solely to political preferences, as the geopolitical discourse also encompasses identities.

Although similar research on multiple naming practices in the Adriatic Sea during the same period is not widely available, this paper contributes to the understanding of polyonymy practices in the Adriatic region. The only known example is the study of the multiple naming of the Adriatic Sea. As mentioned earlier, the Adriatic Sea was often referred to as the Venetian Gulf (*Golfo di Venezia*) on early modern nautical charts, with the Venetians embedding the perception of the Adriatic as an extended harbour of the Venetian capital in their geopolitical discourse (Faričić et al., 2023). The absence of similar examples may indicate the uniqueness of the analysed cases, but it also opens the door to future research that could reveal additional instances of multiple naming influenced by territorial claims. In the broader Mediterranean context, one can highlight the multiple naming of the island of Corfu. This island was regularly named by its Venetian name, *Corfu*, on nautical charts, rather than by the Greek *Kerkira*. This practice of naming Corfu by its Venetian nesonym entered European cartographic circles, where the name *Corfu* is still used today as an exonym (e.g., English *Corfu*, French *Corfou*, German *Korfu*, etc.), while the original name (*Κέρκυρα*) is used in Greece.

CONCLUSION

In this research, a comparative qualitative analysis of toponomastic elements on charts and in sailing guides was employed to understand the specific forms of communication that charts as a medium enable. This analysis is grounded in an interdisciplinary approach, which encompasses contemporary research paradigms such as discourse theories, integration, transboundary studies, imagology, and cultural geography. Maps are frequently perceived as

objective representations of reality; however, they are, in fact, powerful tools for conveying cultural, political, and ideological messages. Toponyms play a crucial role in the process of 'territorialization,' enabling the study of geo-cultural identity and geopolitical dynamics. The use of toponyms in the context of various factors such as political ideology and cartographic tradition was analysed, recognizing charts not only as tools for navigation but also as complex media for cultural and geopolitical communication. Changes in toponyms are not just reflections of historical linguistic fluctuations but serve as 'markers' of territories and spaces of identity. Studying maps/charts reveals how cartographers and map/chart commissioners manipulate geographical reality, often reflecting the ideological and political agendas embedded in their countries' geopolitical discourse.

Variations in geographical names highlight the cultural and political dominance of the Venetian Republic in the Adriatic basin, where Venetian names became standard, indicating that charts were an effective tool for affirming political power and cultural hegemony. Cartographic choices shaped perceptions of geographical spaces and left a lasting impact on linguistic practices, particularly regarding geographical names.

The analysis of the conflict within geopolitical discourse, illustrated by the geographical name of the island of Lokrum, not only reveals profound layers in the communicative potential of charts but also their capacity to reflect and shape geopolitical perspectives and identities. Lokrum is not merely a geographical entity but an element within a network of political, cultural, and historical meanings reflected through cartographic representations and sailing guides of the Adriatic Sea. The conflict between the Republic of Dubrovnik and the Venetian Republic over the ownership of the island, which culminated during the so-called Lokrum crisis in the 17th century, triggered changes in the name of Lokrum on charts and in sailing guides. The variations in the naming of Lokrum, from the Venetian *scoglio di San Marco* to the local *Lokrum*, and the persistence of this naming over centuries, illustrate how cartography serves as a domain where history is written and rewritten. The use of the name *scoglio di San Marco* on charts after the fall of the Venetian Republic, in English and French cartographic works of the

19th century, demonstrates how cartographic communication was used not only for navigational purposes but also as an effective means of consolidating and disseminating geopolitical narratives. This exemplifies how cartographic representations are not neutral but actively participate in creating and affirming political territorial claims and, indirectly, in the geopolitical discourse of countries, confirming the stated hypothesis.

The polyonymy of Lokrum, as well as of the Adriatic Sea, are clear examples of the conflict of geopolitical discourse, illustrating how cartography, through toponyms, can serve as a powerful communication tool, transmitting messages that are simultaneously geographical, political, and cultural. By reflecting on the communicative potential of toponyms on nautical charts, we can better understand how spatial relationships are interpreted, transmitted, and politically instrumentalized, providing insight into the complex relationships between geography, power, and identity. These examples clearly demonstrate how cartographers used toponyms not only to mark geographical locations but also as a means of communicating a broader spectrum of information, ranging from navigational to political. Different names for the same locations serve as reminders of the intricate historical relationships between nations, cultures, and states, simultaneously reflecting the shift of powers that shape cartographic practices.

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