

# PRILOZI ZA DOPUNU I MODIFIKACIJU REGIONALIZACIJE REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE

## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SUPPLEMENT AND MODIFICATION IN REGIONALIZATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

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1. Prilog razmatra mogućnost i potrebu da se standardni regionalni sastav Republike Hrvatske na panonski, središnji (gorski) i primorski dio dopuni i modificira na način da se središnji dio tj. Gorska Hrvatska definira na dvojni način: Gorski kotar kao izraziti planinski i Lika kao izraziti kotlinski prostor, što sve čini jedinstvenu Gorsku Hrvatsku.

2. Umjesto termina *regionalna podjela Hrvatske* bolji je termin *regionalni sastav*, jer pojam podjele nosi u sebi politička i geopolitička opterećenja. Države su obično sastavljene od pojedinih regija, dok je podjela nešto drugo: sastav je geografski aspekt, a podjela nosi u sebi politički/geopolitički naboj. Tako je Hrvatska sastavljena od regija i županija, a nije na njih podijeljena, Švicarska isto tako nije podijeljena na etnikume, nego je od njih sastavljena. Međutim, ima i onih koji svjesno ili nesvjesno uzimaju u obzir "podjelu" Hrvatske na način: Istra i "Hrvatska" umjesto Istra i ostala Hrvatska. Za razliku od navedenoga, Belgija jest podijeljena (Valonci i Flamanci), Ukrajina jest podijeljena (unijati i pravoslavni).

3. Za razumijevanje nekog prostora prije je potrebno povijesno i geografsko poznavanje, tj. povijesno senzibiliziranje geografije i obratno, što znači da je riječ o historijskoj geografiji, a ujedno i o geografiziranoj povijesti i historiziranoj geografiji.

4. Glavnina je rada posvećena problemu geografske i funkcionalne lokacije. Tako je regija izrazito locirana u središtu Hrvatske, ali nije preuzela i središnje funkcije, zbog niza geografskih, povijesnih i geopolitičkih razloga.

5. Položaj regije može se, dijelom, izjednačiti s položajem u prostoru "hrvatskog praga", koji se savlađuje tek u 21. stoljeću. Iako centralno locirana u Hrvatskoj – nakon što je u 15. st. definitivno izgubljen hrvatski prostor između Une i Vrbasa (kasnija Turska Hrvatska) – regija nije preuzela i ulogu funkcionalne središnjosti. Ostaje, dakle, stalni kontrast između središnje lokacije i izostanka središnjih funkcija. U povijesnom i geografskom smislu regija je, dakle, imala diobeno značenje i zbog reljefnih i povijesnih i geopolitičkih razloga (visina reljefa, diobena uloga Vojne krajine). Na taj način uočava se bitna osobina razvitka hrvatske državnosti – ona se začela na primorju, u trokutu Nin – Knin – Cetina, a od 15. i 16. st. nova regija jezgre postaje zagrebačka regija.

**Ključne riječi:** funkcionalna raščlamba, goranski (hrvatski) prag, Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska, hrvatska geopolitička potkova, međa, središnjost, periferičnost, Turska Hrvatska

1. The contribution considers the possibility and need for the standard regional structure of the Republic of Croatia divided into Pannonian, central (mountainous) and maritime part, to be supplemented and modified in the way that the central part i.e. Mountainous Croatia is defined in the dual way: The Gorski Kotar region as specially mountainous, and Lika as a special mountain depression (or mountain-encircled valley) space, thus making the undivided Mountainous Croatia.

2. Instead of the expression *regional division of Croatia* the better expression is *regional structure*, because the concept of division has in itself political and geopolitical burdens. Countries normally consist of particular regions, whereas the division is something else: structure is a geographical aspect, and division has in itself political/geopolitical tension. Thus Croatia consists of regions and counties, and it is not divided in that way; Switzerland in the same way is not divided into ethnic groups, but it consists of them. However, there are those who consciously or unconsciously acknowledge "division" of Croatia in the way that: Istria and "Croatia" instead of Istria and the rest of Croatia. Unlike the mentioned, Belgium is divided (the Wallons and the Flemish), Ukraine is divided (Uniates and Eastern Orthodox).

3. To understand a certain space it is necessary to have knowledge in geographical and historical sense, i.e. to perceive geography in a historical manner, and vice versa, which implies that it is the matter of historical geography, and at the same time about geographized history and historized geography.

4. The major part of the work is devoted to the problem of geographical and functional location. Thus the region is specially located in the central part of Croatia, but has not taken over its central function due to many geographical, historical and geopolitical reasons.

5. The position of the region can be, partly, equalled with the position in the space of "Croatian threshold", which is conquered only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although centrally located in Croatia – after the Croatian space between the rivers Una and Vrbas (later Turkish Croatia) had been definitely lost in the 15<sup>th</sup> c. – the region did not also take over the role of functional central position. Consequently, the constant contrast between central location and absence of central functions remains. In historical and geographical meaning, the region, as a result, had a divisional meaning also because of relief and historical and geopolitical reasons (height relief, divisional role of the Croatian Military Border). In that way essential characteristic of the Croatian development of sovereignty is observed – it started in the maritime region, in the triangle Nin – Knin – Cetina, in this way the Zagreb region became the new region of the nucleus from the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> c.

**Key words:** functional analysis, the Mountainous (Croatian) threshold, the Mountainous depression (Mountain-encircled valley) of Croatia, Croatian geopolitical horseshoe, boundary line, central position, peripheral quality, Turkish Croatia

## Uvod

Promatrajući današnju (ne samo od geografa nego mnogo šire) već općenito prihvaćenu geografsku regionalizaciju Hrvatske na Panonsku/peripanonsku – Gorsku i Primorsku Hrvatsku kao zaista relevantan i smišljen izraz jednog vida životne stvarnosti, moguće su ipak i daljnje korekcije i dopune, i to nikako ne u smislu dovođenja u pitanje osnovne koncepcije, nego samo detaljiziranja postojeće sheme. A u tom smislu potrebno je podsjetiti na opću definiciju *geografske regije* (iako je takva definicija u ovom prilogu posve periferna). Ali, treba ipak ustvrditi ono najjednostavnije: *geografska regija je prostor zemljine površine s određenim bitnim i međusobno povezanim i utjecajnim sadržajima i prirodoslovnog i društvenog karaktera, koji sadržaji nisu tek izolirano supostojanje, nego njihov suodnos čini specifičnosti po kojima se ta regija razlikuje od drugih*. Da bi neki prostor bio geografska regija, mora uvijek postojati kompleksnost i suodnos različitih sadržaja. Zato mogu postojati različite klimatske, vodoprivredne, demografske i druge cjeline koje se u odgovarajućim strukama također označuju kao "regije", ali one očito nisu geografske regije.

Regije su omeđene/graničene *međama* i *granicama* (što ni u kom slučaju nije isto), jer su međe geografskoga, dakle složenog, a granice tek jednostranoga političkog, upravnog ili vojnog kao i nekoga drugog značaja. Pri tome je razumljivo da se međe i granice mogu međusobno poklapati. Geografski kompleksni sadržaji i njihovo značenje promjenljivi su u vremenu,

## Introduction

Watching today's – not only by geographers, but also far more broadly – already accepted geographical regionalization of Croatia into Pannonian/peripannonian – Mountainous and Maritime Croatia as a really relevant and conceived reflection of one form of life reality further corrections and supplements are still possible and in no way to question the basic conception, but only more detailed existing scheme. In that sense it is possible to remind of common definition *geographic region* (even though such a definition is completely peripheral in this contribution). But, it is still necessary to define what is most common: *geographical region is the space of land surface with specified essential and mutually connected and influential contents and of natural and social character, whose contents are not just isolated co-existence, but their interrelation gives specific quality by which that region differs from the others*. If a certain space was meant to be geographical region, complexity and interrelation of different contents, should always be present. Therefore various climatic, water-management, demographic, and other units, which are in appropriate professions also indicated as "regions", should be present, but they are obviously not geographical regions.

Regions are bordered/bounded by *boundaries* and *borders* (which is not the same thing at all), as boundaries are of geographical, complex, and borders are only of one-sided political, administrative or military, as well as some other meaning. In this connection it is interesting that boundaries and borders can mutually coincide. Complex geographical contents and their meaning are changeable in time, due to which regional

zbog čega su promjenljive i karakteristike regija, a i njihove međe.

### Regionalna podjela ili regionalni sastav?

Pri raščlambi prostornih cjelina, idući od onih većih prema manjima obično se govori o *podjeli* nekog prostora na neke manje cjeline (regije), te se tako govori o regionalno-geografskoj podjeli Hrvatske, o podjeli na upravne jedinice, podjeli na porječja i sl. Iako se pri tome jasno razumije o čemu se tu radi, sam izričaj *podjela* nije dobar i ne odražava bit stvari, i to stoga što nijedna država, pa tako i Hrvatska, nije podijeljena na regije, nego je naprotiv od njih *sastavljena, što je i smisao državne zajednice, jer različiti njezini dijelovi državu ne dijele nego sastavljaju čineći tako cjelinu*. A to ima i bitno političko i geopolitičko značenje. Stoga valja govoriti o regionalnom sastavu Hrvatske, a nikako ne o njezinoj podjeli – a dobra je riječ i raščlanjenost.

### Pojam Gorske Hrvatske ne odražava u potpunosti geografsku (tj. životnu) stvarnost

U odnosu na nove moguće korekcije i dopune promotrit ćemo primjer Gorske Hrvatske, što se sve sažima u nekoliko aspekata. U najopćenitijem smislu Gorska Hrvatska ima dvije bitne značajke: ona je a) jedini hrvatski veći i markantniji prostor koji se može prirodoslovno definirati višim reljefom, koji b) *po svom smještaju ima središnje značenje, ali nema i središnje funkcije*: za geografsku definiciju Gorske Hrvatske ova je posljednja činjenica od odlučnog značenja, jer uključuje središnjost lokacije i – osim u prometu – nedostatak središnje uloge.

Prema uobičajenim i prihvatljivim gledanjima Gorsku Hrvatsku čine tri bitna sastavna dijela, to su: *goranski gorski masiv* (Gorski kotar kao *goranski prag*), zatim *kotlinski lički prostor* (Lika) s reljefnim okvirom i *Ogulinsko-plašćanska submontana udolina* koja ima povezni i prijelazni značaj. I sada već ovim nabrojanjem dolazimo do biti stvari: jer uočavamo *goranski viši masiv i ličku kotlinu* – oba su ova prostora reljefno viša okosnica Hrvatske između Peripanonije i Primorja, ali se međusobno bitno razlikuju. U Gorskom kotaru dominira viši reljef s prostorno ograničenim poljima i dolinama, u Lici, naprotiv, širi otvoreniji prostor s unutarnjim kotlinama (Krbava) i visokim reljefom na rubovima i

characteristics are changeable, and their boundaries as well.

### Regional division or regional structure?

When analysing spatial units starting from those larger ones towards smaller, it is usually spoken of *division* of a certain space into smaller units (regions), and in this way it is relative to the regionally-geographical division of Croatia, about division into administrative units, division into basins etc. Although, while doing so, it is clearly understood what it is about, the expression *division* is neither good in itself, nor it reflects the essence of the matter, and precisely because every state, and Croatia as well, is not divided into regions, but on the contrary, *it consists of them, which is the point of state community, because its different parts do not divide the state, but unite it making one entirety*. And that has an essential political and geopolitical meaning. Therefore, to speak about regional structure of Croatia is needed, and by no means about its division – and a good word is analysis.

### Concept of Mountainous Croatia does not completely reflect its geographical (i.e. life) realities

In relation to new possible corrections and supplements we shall examine closely the example of Mountainous Croatia, which is summarized into several aspects. In the most common sense Mountainous Croatia has two essential characteristics: it is a) the only Croatian larger and more remarkable space which can be naturally defined as higher relief, which b) *according to its position has the central meaning, but it does not have central functions as well*: for geographical definition of Mountainous Croatia this is the last fact of decisive meaning, because it includes central location and – besides in traffic- lack of its central role.

According to standard and accepted opinions Mountainous Croatia consists of three essential component parts, such as: *the mountainous massif of Gorski Kotar* (the Gorski Kotar region as *mountainous threshold*), then *mountainous depression space* (Lika) with relief setting and *Ogulin-Plaški submountainous valley*, which is of connective and transverse meaning. And now thanks to this listing we come to the essence of things: because we notice *the mountainous higher massif* and *the mountainous depression of Lika* – these both spaces are relieffy a higher framework of

izoliranim humovima. To su dvije posve različite situacije i one moraju doći do izražaja u nazivu regije.

Međutim, pri tome naziv regije favorizira goranski dio, a zapušta onaj lički, tako da čitava regija dobiva naziv samo po goranskome gorskom bloku, pri čemu izostaje lička sastavnica. To znači da *prostor koji je od Gorskoga kotara znatno veći i koji je u hrvatskim okvirima u mnogome najveća, najdojmljivija i najvažnija kotlina – nije uključen u naziv regije, a to nije logično*. I Lika i Gorski kotar u prirodoslovnom se smislu karakteriziraju poglavito reljefom i upravo se u tome više nego bitno razlikuju, i to onoliko koliko se jedan gorski masiv razlikuje od jedne kotline. Stoga je logično naziv Gorska Hrvatska uskladiti s geografskom stvarnošću koju čini Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska (Gorski kotar i Lika s povezanom Ogulinsko-plašćanskom udolinom), jer u svakom slučaju i Lička kotlina zaslužuje svoju posebnu zemljopisnu odrednicu. Zato treba uočiti: istina je da se nazivi regija obično definiraju prema nekoj temeljnoj odrednici koja već i u samom nazivu koncentrira i upućuje na glavne geografske značajke, što je slučaj i s pojmom Panonije i Sredozemlja. Međutim, neke regije – iako se bitno razlikuju od onih okolnih – u sebi su dovoljno različite da opravdano mogu nositi i *dvojni definiciju*, i to već i u samom nazivu, a to vrijedi upravo za regiju Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske, koja se – uza sve zajedničke osobine i različitosti prema Panoniji i Primorju – ipak sama u sebi znatno razlikuje. To je više nego očito ako podsjetimo da Gorsku Hrvatsku čine ipak zapravo dva uvelike različita prostora: Gorski kotar i Lika zajedno s prijelaznom i poveznom Ogulinsko-plašćanskom submontanom udolinom. To znači da bi u geografskom smislu Hrvatska bila sastavljena od rubnoga Panonsko/peripanonskog prostora, središnje gorsko-kotlinske jezgre i rubnoga primorskog prostora.

Croatia between the Peripannonian and Maritime region, but they mutually completely differ. In the Gorski Kotar region higher relief dominates with the fields and valleys spatially limited, in Lika, on the contrary, the more open space (with interior mountainous depressions – Krbava), and high relief in the edges and isolated hillocks. They are completely different situations and have to be revealed in the name of the region.

However, in this connection the name of the region is favoured by the mountainous part, and that of Lika is neglected, so that the entire region gets the name after the mountainous block, in which process Lika component is omitted. That means that *the space which is considerably larger than the Gorski Kotar region, and which is within Croatian framework significantly the largest, the most impressive and the most important mountainous depression – is not included in the name of the region, which is not logical*. Both Lika and the Gorski Kotar region in natural sense are characterized, first of all, by relief and they differ in that more than substantially, and to such a degree as one mountainous massif differs from one mountain depression. Therefore, it is logical to coordinate the name of Mountainous Croatia with the geographical reality made by Mountainous depression of Croatia (Gorski Kotar and Lika with connected Ogulin-Plaški valley), because in any case the Mountainous depression of Lika deserves its special geographical term. Therefore it should be noted: it is true that names of regions are usually defined by some basic term which in its very name concentrates and guides to main geographical characteristics, which is the case with the concept of Pannonia and the Mediterranean. However, some regions – although substantially different from those surrounding them – are in itself different enough to be able to have justifiably *dual definition* and already in its very name, and it just applies to the region of Mountainous depression of Croatia, which, along with all common characteristics and differences towards Pannonia and Maritime region – still considerably differs in itself. It is more than obvious if we remind ourselves that Mountainous Croatia consists of, in fact, two considerably different spaces: The Gorski Kotar (region) and Lika together with transverse and connected Ogulin-Plaški submountainous valley. That means that in geographical sense Croatia would consist of the marginal Pannonian-peripannonian space, central mountainous depression of the nucleus and the marginal maritime space.



## Geografija, povijest i historijska geografija

Za regionalno-geografska, ali i povijesna istraživanja bitno značenje ima povezanost povijesnih i geografskih sadržaja, naravno samo u slučaju kada je to primjereno i kada se opseg i intenzitet te povezanosti pomno i znalački odmjere, dakle, ne u smislu nikakvog determinizma, nego istinske povezanosti i međuutjecaja.

Ta je povezanost prijeko potrebna, i to u onom smislu kako je to već davno izrazio I. Zidić, tj. da *prostor nije tek puka i prazna posuda zbivanja u kojoj se nešto događa, da nije tek topos/mjesto zbivanja, nego da između tog prostora i povijesnih (ali i današnjih) zbivanja postoji veća ili manja interakcija, tj. međuutjecaji*. Naravno, takav pristup nije nikakav determinizam, nego tek ukazivanje na međuovisnost, veću ili manju, ovisno o vremenu i prostoru. Geografski prostor i pejzaž su ovaj današnji prostor, ali ujedno i *sažetak prošlih zbivanja* koja su ostavila traga u tom prostoru, a na ta su zbivanja utjecale i osobine samoga tog prostora. Geografija – to su prostorni odnosi i funkcije prostora, a sve je to u različitim povijesnim razdobljima različito. Zato je – gledajući onako *grosso modo* i bez zadržavanja oko detalja – *geografičnost bez povijesnosti samo amputirana geografija, dok je sama povijest bez (vremenski) odgovarajuće geografije samo amputirana povijest*. Dakako, lakše je biti geograf bez povijesti i povijesnik bez geografije (što je nametnuto i potvrđeno specijalizacijama), ali se time posreduje samo krnja, nekadašnja i današnja stvarnost, a da se o nekoj kompleksnosti i ne govori. Za neke je (tj. za istinske znanstvenike i intelektualce) veza i utjecaj odgovarajućih geografskih i povijesnih sadržaja truizam, a za neke, tj. za one bornirane i za činovnike u znanosti ("znanosti") – nedokučivost i nedostižnost. U povezivanju geografije i povijesti najdalje je došla francuska geografska škola. Drugim riječima, prijeko je potrebno geografski senzibilizirati povijest, odnosno povijesno senzibilizirati geografiju, naravno jedino tamo gdje je to primjereno i logično, čime dobivamo najbolji i najpotpuniji izraz promjenljive prostorne i vremenske stvarnosti.

## Goransko-kotlinska Hrvatska i pitanje središnjosti/periferičnosti

**Središnjost i periferičnost.** Za razumijevanje regionalnih funkcija treba jasno razlučiti pojmove *središnjeg smještaja* i *središnjeg položaja* od pojma

## Geography, history and historical geography

For regional-geographical, but also historical researches connectedness with historical and geographical contents is of essential meaning, of course only in case when it is appropriate, and when the scope and intensity of that connectedness are carefully and skilfully measured, namely, not in the sense of any kind of determinism, but of genuine connectedness and interrelations.

That connectedness is necessary in the sense that has already been expressed by I. Zidić, i.e. that *space is not only pure and empty bowl of event, that it is not only topos/place of event, but that between that space and historical (but also today's) events there is a bigger or smaller interaction, i.e. interrelation*. Of course, such an approach is of no kind of determinism, but only indicating interdependence, bigger or smaller, depending on time and space. Geographical space and landscape are this present-day space, but also *summary of past events* which left the traces in that space, and those events were also influenced by characteristics of that space itself. Geography – they are spatial relations and functions of space, and all of it in various historical periods differently. Therefore, it is – watching it – *grosso modo*- and without bitterness about the details *geographicality without history just an amputated geography, whereas history in itself without (periodically) corresponding geography only amputated history*. Naturally, it is easier to be a geographer without history and historian without geography (which is imposed and certified by specializations), but in this way only incomplete, former and today's reality is mediated, and without mentioning any kind of complexity at all. For some (i.e. true scientists and intellectuals) connection and influence of corresponding geographical and historical contents is truism, and for the others, i.e. those narrow-minded and clerks in science ("science") – unreachability and unattainability. The French geographical school has gone the furthest in connecting geography and history. In other words, it is necessary to perceive history geographically, namely, to perceive geography historically, of course, only where it is appropriate and logical, in this way getting the best and most complete expression of changeable reality in terms of space and time.

## The mountainous depression of Croatia and the question of central /peripheral position

**Central and peripheral position.** To understand regional functions better it is necessary to distinguish clearly the concepts of *central location*

*središnjosti, tj. središnjih funkcija.* Zato treba uočiti: smještaj kao statička kategorija odgovara samo na pitanje "Gdje je što?" dok položaj kao dinamička kategorija uključuje funkcionalno značenje. Središnjost u skladu sa smještajem nije isto što i središnjost u skladu s funkcijama. Neka regija može imati središnje značenje smještaja, a da joj uvelike (ili uopće) nedostaju središnje funkcije u vezi s položajem: dakle, središnji smještaj važna je pretpostavka funkcionalne središnjosti, ali se ova potonja može razviti i bez središnjeg smještaja, u čemu je Hrvatska dobar primjer, jer se u prostoru središnjeg smještaja (a to su Gorski kotar i Lika) nije razvila regija središnjih funkcija, nego se to dogodilo na periferiji, nekada u prostoru između Nina, Zrmanje i Cetine, a danas u prostoru Zagrebačke regije.

Središnja Gorsko-kotlinska jezgra Hrvatske upravo zbog svog reljefa i centralnog smještaja (ne i položaja) u državi ima i specifične osobine, što se dijelom svodi i na problem i značenje središnjosti i periferičnosti nekog etnikuma ili dijela države, pri čemu su po definiciji – funkcije središnjosti one koje neka regija oko sebe pribira, organizira i zrači u okolne prostore, dok periferija svoj smisao i opstanak nalazi u vezi sa središtem.

Urazmatranju pitanja središnjosti/periferičnosti u slučaju Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske posebno treba istaknuti središnji smještaj regije između panonske i primorske Hrvatske, ali i nedostatak središnjih funkcija koje se nisu mogle razviti u relativno nepovoljnoj i siromašnoj prirodnoj sredini i u uvjetima teških prometnih prilika (prijevoji Gornje Jelenje /882 m/ i Kapela /887 m/). Osim toga, dodirni dio jugoistočne Like kao prostor kontakta venecijanskog, osmanlijskog i habsburškog posjeda (čuvena *Tromeđa*) nije mogao razviti određene funkcije u korist hrvatske države i njezinih središnjih funkcija, a tome nisu pogodovali niti duboki osmanlijski prodor u Liku, kao i postojanje Vojne krajine. *Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska imala je, dakle, prednosti središnjeg smještaja, ali ne i druge uvjete za razvitak središnjih funkcija.* Ni Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska, a niti prostor Pounja i *Turske Hrvatske* (između Une i Vrbasa) nisu u tadašnjim političkim prilikama mogli razviti središnje funkcije za čitavu Hrvatsku. Sva pobrojana područja Hrvatske postala su samo međuprostor između Panonije i Primorja bez funkcija središnjosti, dakle i bez gravitacijskog značenja. Hrvatska se, dakle, razvijala na svojim periferijama i prekinuta na dva dijela, goranskim reljefnim pragom kao i prečagom Male i Velike Kapele i Plješivice, bila

and *central position* from the concept *centrality* i.e. *central functions*. Therefore it should be noted: location as statistical category only answers the question: "Where is something?", whereas position as a dynamic category includes functional meaning. Centrality in accordance with location is not the same as centrality in accordance with function. Some region may have central meaning of location, and considerably (at all) lacking central functions connected with position: consequently, central location is an important hypothesis of functional centrality, but the latter may also be developed without central location, in which Croatia is a good example, because in the space of central location (and they are the Gorski Kotar region and Lika) the region of central function was not developed, but it happened in the periphery, formerly in the space between Nin, Zrmanja and Cetina, and today in the space of the Zagreb region.

Central nucleus of the Mountainous depression of Croatia just because of its relief and central location (and not the position) in the country has also particular features which partly comes both to the problem and meaning of centrality/peripheral quality of a certain ethnic group or part of the country, in which process, by definition – centrality functions are the ones gathered, organized and radiated by some region around itself into surrounding spaces, whereas peripheral quality finds its survival and meaning in relation to the centre.

When considering the centrality/peripheral quality issue in the case of the Mountainous depression of Croatia it is particularly important to point out the central location of the region between the Pannonian and the Croatian Littoral, but also the lack of central functions which could not have been developed in a relatively unfavourable and poor natural surroundings, and under the conditions of difficult traffic opportunities (saddles Gornje Jelenje (882 m) and Kapela (87 m)). In addition, adjoining part of the south-eastern Lika, as the contact space of Venetian, Ottoman, and Hapsburg possession (famous *three-border region*) could not develop specific functions to the benefit of the Croatian state and its central functions, and deep Ottoman breakthrough to Lika was also unfavourable, as well as existence of the Croatian Military Border. *The Mountainous depression of Croatia, consequently, had the advantages of central location, but not the other conditions for development of central functions.* Neither the Mountainous depression of Croatia, nor the space of the Una River valley and the *Turkish Croatia* (between Una and Vrbasa), could, at that period of political circumstance, develop central functions for the entire Croatia. All

je i reljefno izolirana od Istre masivom Učke i politički prekinuta Vojnom krajinom, što znači izdvojenost Dalmacije.<sup>1</sup>

Bitna je osobina hrvatskog prostora, u cjelini, nepoklapanje različitih središnjosti (etnikumske, smještajne, položajne). Tako je u ranome srednjem vijeku i sve do osmanlijskog razdoblja središte hrvatskog etnikuma u prostoru između Pounja i Povrbasja (kasnije: Turska Hrvatska), ali su funkcionalna i državotvorna središta izvan tog prostora tj. u Dalmaciji, dijelu Pounja (Bihać) i rubnoj peripanonskoj Hrvatskoj (zagrebački prostor).

Osobina je, dakle, hrvatske državnosti da se ona nije začela i razvila u središnjemu hrvatskom etnikumskom prostoru, nego na njegovim rubovima, a tu situaciju onda naglašavaju i osmanlijska osvajanja i postojanje reljefnih prečaga (Gorski kotar, niz Velika i Mala Kapela i Plješivica), kao i isključivost Vojne krajine iz hrvatske vlasti. Hrvatsko etnikumsko središte Pounje-Povrbasje u 15. st. potpuno nestaje u svakom smislu, a u državotvornom smislu težište se prebacuje u Panoniju, dok dio Primorske Hrvatske ostaje na periferiji. Time se stvaraju i posve novi prostorni odnosi: staro hrvatsko etnikumsko središte nestaje, po svom smještaju Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska dobiva centralno značenje, ona postaje poveznica panonske i primorske Hrvatske, ali zbog niza prirodoslovnih i geopolitičkih povijesnih razloga i zapreka za povezivanje panonske i primorske Hrvatske u jednu državnu i životnu cjelinu.

<sup>1</sup> Pri tome treba napomenuti da Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska ima središnji smještaj samo dijelom, jer Istra nije bila u Hrvatskoj, što će se ostvariti tek 1943. godine, dakle, Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska ostaje samo povezni prostor ograničena značenja.

mentioned Croatian areas could merely become the interspace between the Pannonia and the Littoral without centrality function, consequently, without gravitational significance. As a result, Croatia was developing in its peripheries and interrupted in two parts, the mountain relief threshold as well as with the barrier of Mala and Vela kapela and Plješivica, it was also in relief isolated from Istria by the massif of Učka, and politically interrupted by the Croatian Military Border, which meant separation of Dalmatia.<sup>1</sup>

The characteristic of the Croatian space, as a whole, is substantial, noncorrespondence to different centralities (ethnic, locational, positional). Thus, in the Early Middle Ages up to the Ottoman period, the centre of the Croatian ethnic is in the space between the Una river valley and the Vrbas river valley (later: Turkish Croatia), but the functional and state-building centres are outside that space i.e. in Dalmatia, part of the Una river valley (Bihać) and the marginal peri-Pannonian Croatia (the Zagreb region).

The characteristic of the Croatian citizenship is that it was not conceived and developed in the central Croatian ethnic area, but in its margins, and that situation is then also emphasized by the Ottoman conquests and existence of the relief runs (Gorski Kotar, the Velika and Mala kapela range and Plješivica), as well as exclusiveness of the Croatian Military Border from the Croatian authority. The Croatian ethnic centre the Una river valley – the Vrbas river valley completely disappears in every sense in the 15<sup>th</sup> c., but in the state-building sense the focus is transferred to Pannonia, whereas the part of the Littoral Croatia remains in the periphery. As a result, entirely new spatial relations have been created: old Croatian ethnic centre disappears, and the Mountainous depression of Croatia gets central meaning according to its location, it becomes the link of the Pannonian and the Littoral Croatia, but due to a number of natural and geopolitical historical reasons and obstacles to connect the Pannonian and the Littoral Croatia into one state and life entity.

<sup>1</sup> In doing so it should be mentioned that the Mountainous depression of Croatia has the central location only partly, because Istria was not in Croatia, which will be realized only in 1943, in this way, the Mountainous-depression of Croatia remains only as linking area of limited meaning.

### Središnja regija bez središnjih funkcija

Postojanjem Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske s obzirom na smještaj kao središnje hrvatske regije (poslije gubitka Turske Hrvatske i uz stalni gubitak Istre) odmah se javlja i problem ispunjavanja njezinih naravnih funkcija, tj. organizacije okolnih rubnih prostora uz odgovarajuću prometnu povezanost. I sada – imajući navedeno u vidu – dolazimo do zaista specifične situacije u kontekstu suprotnosti *naglašenoga središnjeg smještaja i naglašenog izostanka svih drugih središnjih funkcija*, što je rezultat nekoliko čimbenika, u tome ponajviše geopolitičkih/povijesnih nesreća: dakle, bitna je osobina zakašnjelost tog prostora u uključivanje i životne tokove hrvatskoga gospodarskog i političkog života, naime, razvitak centara na obali i u Panoniji/Peripanoniji već je toliko odmaknuo (a takva je i tendencija) da formiranje još jednoga važnog životnog središta u centru hrvatskog etnikuma više i nije moguće, a Hrvatskoj kao maloj, siromašnoj i nerazvijenoj zemlji – zapravo više i nije potrebno. To znači da prednosti središnjeg smještaja više ne dolaze u obzir, funkcije središnjosti preuzimaju drugi, ali zato sve više dolaze do izražaja geoprometni nedostaci i posljedice povijesnih/geopolitičkih nedaća: i tako će se sve saldirati stanjem u kojemu, izgleda, kao da su se sve prirodoslovne nepogodnosti i zapreke i društvena zbivanja urotili protiv pretvaranja Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske u prostor središnjih funkcija i značenja.

### Važnost prostornog položaja općenito i položaj regije

Uz spomenutu kompleksnost i povezanost različitih sadržaja posebno treba kao sastavnicu definicije regije istaknuti njezin smještaj i položaj po kojima se regije međusobno bitno razlikuju. Dok smještaj odgovara samo na pitanje "Gdje je što?", položaj ima drugačije, i to funkcionalno značenje, što uključuje odgovor na pitanje „Zašto je to tako?“ Čest je slučaj da je upravo položaj ključna razlikovna odrednica jedne regije od druge, jer mnoge regije mogu biti slične, ali se u isto vrijeme i bitno razlikovati po svom položaju i njegovu značenju.

Razumijevanje smještaja/položaja među najvažnijim je sadržajima geografije kao znanosti, dakle, u ovakvom slučaju jedna je od najgeografskih i najizazovnijih tema koja se

### Central region without central functions

With existence of the Mountainous depression of Croatia with regard to location as the central Croatian region (after losing the Turkish Croatia and the continuous loss of Istria) the problem of implementing its natural functions i.e. organization of surrounding marginal areas along with corresponding traffic connection arises. And now – having in mind the above mentioned, we come to a really specific situation in the context of contradictions *emphasized central location and emphasized absence of all other central functions* which is the result of several factors, mostly geopolitical/historical misfortunes: accordingly, the essential characteristic is tardiness of that area in being included into life streams of the Croatian economic and political life, namely, development of centres on the coast and in Pannonia/peri-Pannonia has been well ahead (and such is the tendency) that forming of another important life heartland in the centre of the Croatian ethnic is not any more possible, and to Croatia, as a small, poor and underdeveloped country – in fact, it is not necessary any more.

That means that advantages of central location are out of the question, centrality functions are taken over by the others, but for that reason geotrafic disadvantages and consequences of historical/geopolitical setbacks are revealed: and in this way everything will be balanced in the condition, in which, it seems, as if all natural inconveniences and obstacles and social events had conspired against transforming the Mountain depression of Croatia into the area of central functions and meanings.

### Importance of spatial position in general and position of the region

Along with the mentioned complexity and connection of different contents it is specially necessary, as the component part for definition of the region, to point out its location according to which the regions are mutually significantly different. Whereas location answers only to the question: "Where is something?", the position has also another functional meaning, which includes the answer to the question: "Why is that so?". It happens, very often, that the position is the crucial differential feature of one region from the other, as many regions can be similar, but at the same time substantially different by its position and its meaning.

To understand location/position is among the most important contents of geography as science, as a result, in this case it is one of the most



bavi prostornim odnosima. Ujedno je to i jedna od najtežih i najzahtjevnijih tema kojoj se u nas, na žalost, ne pridaje dovoljna pozornost. A to je velik nedostatak, jer je razumijevanje prostornog položaja i odnosa ne samo stvar određenih strukovnih zahtjeva nego i izraz prostorne kulture, a time i kulture općenito. Zato pri svakoj raščlambi neke regionalne cjeline i procesa koji se u njoj odvijaju treba nezaobilazno voditi računa o dva aspekta: kada se radi o društvenim procesima, treba shvatiti da geografski prostor u kojem se oni odvijaju, nije tek puka, neutralna i "prazna posuda zbivanja" u kojoj se nešto događa, nego da sadržaji tog prostora bitno utječu na ta zbivanja.<sup>2</sup> Zato treba naglasiti da postoji i neka određena *logika prostora* prema kojoj ono što u nekom prostoru jest i što se u njemu zbiva u skladu je i ovisi o širim i užim prostornim odnosima, o lokaciji različitih sadržaja. I da ne duljimo: svaki govor o geografskom položaju neke regije ili države ubraja se među najgeografskije sadržaje uopće. Raščlamba geografskog položaja (i njegovih inačica) izrazito je zahtjevna i za mnoge je prevelika kušnja i preveliki trenutak istine zbog čega se ta tema zahvaća tek djelomično, a uglavnom i površno. Ali – to je već personalno pitanje.

Pri tome, prvo, ne radi se, dakako, ni o kakvom determinizmu, ali da se radi o utjecajima, većim ili manjim, to je neprijeporno. I zatim, drugo, treba shvatiti da položaj u prostoru nije tek odgovor na pitanje "Gdje je što?", nego da položaj isto tako ima i svoje funkcionalno značenje, često odlučujućeg značenja za razumijevanje društvene stvarnosti. Položaj u prostoru i utjecaj i posljedice koje iz tog položaja slijede (životne mogućnosti i nemogućnosti) jedna su od najvažnijih osobina u svakom regionalnom prikazu, a da se o specifičnim geopolitičkim i geostrateškim problemima i ne govori. Ako je to tako, onda se analiza prostorne lokacije ne može apsolvirati tek na razini ne baš temeljitog i opsežnijeg uvodnog poglavlja (koje se uglavnom i ne dotiče položaja nego tek smještaja), nego mora činiti jedan od najvažnijih sadržaja kao pravi meritum o kojemu onda ovisi i mnogo toga drugoga.

<sup>2</sup> To je već davno uočio Igor Zidić, a on, kao što znamo, nije ni geograf niti geopolitičar.

geographical and challenging subjects dealing with spatial relations. At the same time it is one of the most difficult and demanding subjects to which, unfortunately, enough attention is not given with us. And that is a great drawback, because in order to understand spatial position and relation requires not only specific professional requirements, but also an expression of spatial culture, and in this way culture in general. Therefore, during each analysis of some regional unity and process of development in it, two aspects should unavoidably be taken into account: when it is about social processes, it should be understood, that the geographical space in which they develop is not just a neutral and "empty bowl of events", in which something is going on, but that contents of that space significantly influence on those events.<sup>2</sup> Therefore it should be pointed out that there is a certain *logic space* according to which what in a certain space is and what is going on in it, is in accordance with and depends on wider and narrower spatial relations, about location with different contents. And to make a long story short: every speech about geographical position of a certain region or state is considered generally to be among the most geographical content. Analysis of geographical position (and its variants) is particularly demanding and for many it is too big a challenge and moment of truth because of which that theme is treated only partly, and mainly on the surface only. But – that is already a personal question.

In this connection, first, it is not the matter about any kind of determinism, but about influences, bigger or smaller, that is beyond dispute. And then, second, it should be understood that the position in space is not just an answer to the question: "Where is something?", but that the position has at the same time its functional meaning, often of decisive meaning for understanding social reality. Position in space and influence and consequences deriving from that position (life possibilities and impossibilities) is one of the most important characteristic in every regional review, and not to mention specific geopolitical and geostrategic problems. If that is so, then analysis of spatial location can not be solved just on the level of not such thorough and comprehensive introductory chapter (which generally does not refer to the position but to location), but it should make one of the most relevant content as real meritum, about which, in that case many other things depend.

<sup>2</sup> Igor Zidić, noticed that long ago, and he, as we know, is neither a geographer nor a geopolitician.

Naravno, u to je teško uvjeriti one kojima je prilično svejedno jesu li u pitanju osmanlijski prodori i *antemurale christianitatis*, lokacija Nizozemske, Irske i Islanda daleko na zapadu, radi li se o dodirnom položaju Poljske između Njemačke i Rusije, o središnjoj lokaciji Italije ili Kartage na Sredozemlju, o položaju talijanskih *geopolitičkih kliješta* na sjevernom odnosno južnom Jadranu, ili o kopnenoj zatvorenosti Moskovijske, o položaju uz granicu i u nekom geostrateškom koridoru ili u sigurnom zaleđu, itd., itd. Pri tome je jasno da prostorni položaj izražava iznimnu, zaista iznimnu složenost i interakciju čitavog niza prirodoslovnih i društvenih sastavnica promjenljivih u vremenu koje nalazimo u nekom prostoru i koje su locirane na različitim mjestima, iz čega slijedi sva raznolikost i složenost prostornih odnosa. Pri tome značenje geografskog/geopolitičkog položaja osobito dolazi do izražaja kada se radi o dodirima etničkog i geopolitičkog značaja među sudionicima različitog stupnja snage i moći, ili kada se radi o lokaciji na pravcima tuđih imperijalnih/imperijalističkih strategema i interesa. I da ne duljimo: nema razumijevanja pojedinih regija i procesa u njihovu okviru bez razumijevanja prostornih odnosa tj. lokacije.

### Središnjost položaja i središnjost funkcija

U geografskim regionalnim razmatranjima posve je jasno da je središnji smještaj tek pretpostavka središnjosti položaja, tj. njegovih funkcija, ali da se ta središnjost može razviti i bez te pretpostavke, međutim, najlogičnije je poklapanje značenja smještaja, položaja i središnjosti. Dobar je za to primjer preklapanje centralnog smještaja i funkcionalnoga središnjeg položaja u slučaju Bosne (zeničko-travničko-sarajevski prostor ili "zemljica Bosna") ili Povoljska i Poljske, Praga i Češke i sl., ali treba uočiti periferičnost Beča, Bratislave i Sofije u odnosu na odgovarajuće etnikume.<sup>3</sup> Isto je i u slučaju Zagreba koji je – u svakom slučaju – izrazito rubno položen u odnosu na hrvatski etnikum u cjelini, ali su njegova središnjost i vrijednost geoprometnog položaja

<sup>3</sup> Pri tome primjer s Bečom nikako nije najsretniji, jer je umjesto etnikumske za Beč bila mnogo važnija snaga političke središnjosti koja je prevladavala nad činjenicom blizine Čeha, Slovaka i Mađara.

Of course, it is difficult to convince those who do not care much about whether Ottoman conquests and *antemurale christianitatis* are in question, location of Holland, Ireland and Island far away on the west; is it about contact position of Poland between Germany and Russia; about central location of Italy or Cartagena in the Mediterranean; about position of Italian *geopolitical pliers* in the northern, namely, southern Adriatic; or it is about land closeness of Moscovia, about position along the border and in a certain geostrategic corridor or safe hinterland etc., etc. In this connection it is clear that spatial position reflects peculiar, really particular complexity and interaction of the entire range of natural and social components changeable in the time we find them in a certain space, and which are located in different places from which all variety and complexity of social relation arises.

In this connection the meaning of geographical/political position is especially manifested when it is the question about contacts of ethnic and geopolitical meaning among the participants of different degree of strength and power, or when it is the question about location in the direction of foreign imperial/imperialistic strategies and interests. And not to draw out: there is no understanding of particular regions and processes within their framework without understanding spatial relations i.e. locations.

### Centrality of position and centrality of function

In geographical regional analyses it is completely evident that the central location is merely a hypothesis of centrality of position, i.e. its functions, but that centrality can be developed even without that hypothesis, however, most logical is overlapping with the meaning of location, position and centrality. One good example for that is overlapping of location and functional central position in the case of Bosnia (Zenica-Travnik-Sarajevo space or "small state of Bosnia" or the Vistula river basin and Poland, Prague or Czech etc., but peripheral qualities of Vienna, Bratislava and Sophia have to be observed in relation with corresponding ethnics.<sup>3</sup> The same is with the case of Zagreb, which is – at any rate – particularly marginally situated in connection with the Croatian ethnic, as a whole, but its centrality

<sup>3</sup> In doing so the example with Vienna is in no way the best, because instead of ethnic, the force of political centrality, which was prevailing over the fact of the closeness of the Czechs, the Slovaks, and the Hungarians, was far more important to Vienna..

neprijeporni. I kako je, s vremenom, Hrvatska poprimala sve čudniji oblik *geopolitičke potkove* (ali one koja ne donosi sreću) – sveukupno je značenje Zagreba raslo.

### Gorsko-kotlinska regija Hrvatske kao prostor koji nameće prometne probleme

U geoprometnom smislu Gorsko-kotlinska regija je prostor kojemu je *uloga prečage* jedna od najvažnijih, pri čemu dolazimo do iznimno značajnog jedinstva suprotnosti: s jedne strane regija je predodređena da vrši važnu prometno/transitnu i križišnu ulogu, a s druge je strane prirodoslovno uvjetovana da bude reljefna/prometna prečaga (prijevoj Gornje Jelenje, Delnička vrata, prijevoj Kapela, Banska vrata) koja se morala savladavati, jer je regija bila na pravcu povezivanja s Hrvatskim primorjem i na njegovu sjeveru i na jugu.

**Značenje goranskog praga.** To je uobičajeni naziv za Gorski kotar koji se naziv, međutim, može podići i na jednu općenitiju razinu: naime, s obzirom na vezu Panonije i sjevernog Hrvatskog primorja (u tome i Istre i Dalmacije preko već spomenutih visokih prijevoja) – goranski prag zapravo je *hrvatski prag* koji je dopunjen i Učkom: on odjeljuje važna hrvatska životna žarišta u Panoniji, vrhu Riječkog zaljeva, Istri i Dalmaciji. Klimatski je vrlo nepovoljan i ne jamči sigurnu cjelogodišnju prometnu povezanost, što se ostvaruje tek s otvaranjem željezničke pruge za Rijeku (1873.) i Dalmaciju preko Like (1925.), čemu se danas dodaje i cestovna sastavnica kao najbitnija. Po svojoj definiciji svaki je *prag mjesto gdje se i preko kojeg se može proći, ali i spotaknuti*. Mogućnost spoticanja nekada je bila veća, a s vremenom ona se, istina, smanjuje: nekada – prometnice su se prilagođavale prirodoslovnoj osnovi, a danas – one su u skladu s negiranjem te osnove, jer je za moderni promet to jedino moguće. Međutim, to današnje smanjivanje mogućnosti zaprječavanja i spoticanja više ne može preokrenuti situaciju naslijeđenu iz prošlosti – tako i hrvatski prag može danas biti i stotruko savladan i imati izrazito središnji položaj u Hrvatskoj, ali više *ne može postati funkcionalno središnja regija Hrvatske*.

Izolacijska uloga hrvatskog praga je očita, ali se ne svodi samo na navedeno – treba još spomenuti i izolacijsku ulogu Vojne krajine, što očito nije pridonosilo životnom jedinstvu Hrvatske, a

and value of geotrafic position are undisputable. As, in the course of time, Croatia was assuming more and more strange form of *geopolitical shoe* (but the one that does not bring happiness) – the overall meaning of Zagreb was increasing.

### The Mountain depression region of Croatia as a space imposing traffic problems

In geotrafic sense the Mountain depression region is a space in which *the role of a saddle* is one of the most important, in which process, we come to the especially significant coherence of contrasts: on one side, the region is predetermined to play an important traffic/transit and intersectional role, and on the other, it is naturally determined to be a relief/traffic saddle (the Gornje Jelenje saddle, the Delnice strait, the Kapela saddle, the Ban strait ) which had to be overcome, because the region was on the way to be linked with the Croatian Littoral, both in the north and south.

**Meaning of the mountainous threshold.** This is the usual name of Gorski Kotar, which can be upgraded to a more general level: namely, as regards the connection of Pannonia and the northern part of the Croatian Littoral (including Istria and Dalmatia through already mentioned high saddles) – the Mountainous threshold, which is in fact *the Croatian threshold* completed by Učka as well: it separates the important Croatian life focuses in Pannonia, the top of the Gulf of Rijeka, Istria and Dalmatia. In terms of climate, it is very inconvenient and it does not guarantee safe traffic connection all the year round which is realized only by opening the railway line to Rijeka (1873) and Dalmatia through Lika (1925) to which a road construction is added these days as the most significant one. By definition every *threshold is the place where and across which you can pass, but also stumble over*. The possibility of stumbling was formerly bigger, but over time it is really being reduced: long ago – roads were adapted according to natural base, and nowadays – they are in accordance with negation of that base, because for modern traffic it is the only possible way. However, today's reducing the possibility of prevention and stumbling can not redirect the situation inherited from history – in this way the Croatian threshold can be overcome a hundred-fold and have a remarkable central position in Croatia, but it *can not become the functional central region of Croatia*.

The isolating role of the Croatian threshold is obvious, but it does not refer only to the already mentioned – the isolating role of the Croatian Military Border should also be mentioned, which

također i austrijsku politiku (ne)sjedinjavanja Dalmacije s ostalom Hrvatskom.

**Fizičko-geografska osnova.** Prometni problemi i izolacijska uloga među najvažnijim su povijesnim činiocima koji su onemogućili funkcionalnu središnjost Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske, pri čemu odlučujuće značenje nisu mogli imati ni stari putovi (pounski – naravno ne uz Unu, nego iznad nje), Lujzinska cesta ili lička željeznička pruga, jer je sve to bilo ili nedovoljno ili je zakašnjelo i ti se prometni problemi savlađuju tek početkom 21. st., a to je prekasno za formiranje nove organizacije života, nove životne jezgre i za nove prometne tokove.

Kada se govori o hrvatskom pragu, onda se ne spominje Velebit, iako je i on moćna reljefna prečaga između unutrašnjosti i primorja. A ne spominje se zato jer Velebit nema odlučujuće značenje: naime, jugoistočno od Senja u velebitskom podgorju na obali nema važnih životnih jezgri s razvijenim pomorstvom, dok između Senja i Zadra nema niti jedne važnije luke te stoga niti cesta Gračac-Obrovac (prijevoj Prezid 766 m) nema značenja u smislu definicije regije kao tranzitnog prostora.

**Uloga križišta.** Zbog prirodoslovnih razloga Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska nije mogla postati niti važnije križište sve do u najnovije doba s obzirom na nadregionalne pravce između Panonije i Primorja, i one između Slovenije i Bosne. Različita politička pripadnost ovih prostora (Austrija i Turska) i težnje povezivanja sa sjevernim Jadranom, a ne s bosanskom gorskom jezgrom (koja ima druge izlaze i na more i u Panoniju) također nije pogodovala ulogu križišta, jer prometni pravac Slovenija-Ogulinsko-plašćanska submontana udolina- Bihać, ipak zapravo prolazi izvan regije Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske. U Bosnu se lakše dopiralo iz Posavine preko Banjaluke ili dolinama Bosne i Neretve nego iz Bihaća na zapadu.

obviously did not contribute to the vital unity of Croatia, and also the Austrian politics of (not-uniting) Dalmatia with the rest of Croatia.

**Physical-geographical base.** Traffic problems and isolating role are among the most important historical factors which made impossible the functional centrality of the Mountainous depression of Croatia, in which process, neither old roads could have a decisive meaning (The Una River basin – of course not along the river Una, but over it), Louise road, or railway line through Lika, because all that was not enough or it was late, and those traffic problems are being solved only at the beginning of 21st c., and that is too late to form new streams of life, new life nuclei, and new traffic flows.

When we speak about the Croatian threshold, Velebit is not mentioned, although it is also a powerful relief barrier between the hinterland and the coast. It is not mentioned because Velebit does not have crucial meaning: namely, in the south-east of Senj, in the Velebit foothill region on the coast, there are no important vital nuclei with developed seamanship, whereas between Senj and Zadar there is not any important port, therefore, the road Gračac-Obrovac (saddle Prezid 766 m) has not significance in terms of region definition as well as the transit area.

**Role of intersection.** Due to natural reason the Mountainous depression of Croatia could not become a more important intersection until the recent times as regards supraregional directions between Pannonia and the Littoral, and those between Slovenia and Bosnia. Different political affiliation of these areas (Austria and Turkey) and aspirations to be connected with the northern Adriatic, and not with the Bosnian mountain midsection (which has other outlets to the sea and Pannonia) was not also favourable to the role of intersection, because the traffic direction Slovenia –Ogulin-Plaški submountain valley – Bihać, still in fact passes outside the Mountainous depression region of Croatia. It was easier to reach Bosnia from the Sava river basin to Banja Luka, or along the Bosna and Neretva river valleys, than from Bihać in the west.



## Zaključak

U današnjoj Hrvatskoj u smislu: smještaj – položaj – središnjost – prometnost Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska dio je funkcionalne središnje Hrvatske koju još čini Zagrebačka regija. Spomenuti prostor jest u sredini Hrvatske između Slavonije, Istre i Dalmacije, to zaista jest povezni prostor s time da Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska prestaje biti pragom, nego postaje pravom poveznicom baš kao i Zagrebačka regija, ali ne i ništa više od toga, jer ostale izvanprometne funkcije posve izostaju. Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska postaje danas i područje križišta (s obzirom na novu križišnu ulogu prostora – Žuta Lokva i kod Svetog Roka), ali sve to ne može omogućiti regiji bilo kakvo novo značenje središnjosti – *ona (p)ostaje najvažniji povezni prostor u Hrvatskoj, ali bez središnjeg/gravitacijskog značenja. Zato valja zaključiti: funkcije središnjosti bitne su za razvoj i organizaciju života neke države u čemu prostorni odnosi imaju prevažnu ulogu.*

Ali, zbog nepovoljne prirodoslovne sredine i prometne zatvorenosti kao i povijesnih/geopolitičkih nedaća Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska nije mogla razviti središnje funkcije i nije mogla postati regija jezgre hrvatske državnosti (kao Dalmacija ili Zagrebačka regija). Ona je zaista predugo vremena ostala prag koji se savlađuje tek danas, dakle: *Hrvatski prag će prometnim otvaranjem prestati biti pragom, ali više ne može postati nikakva važna životna jezgra.*

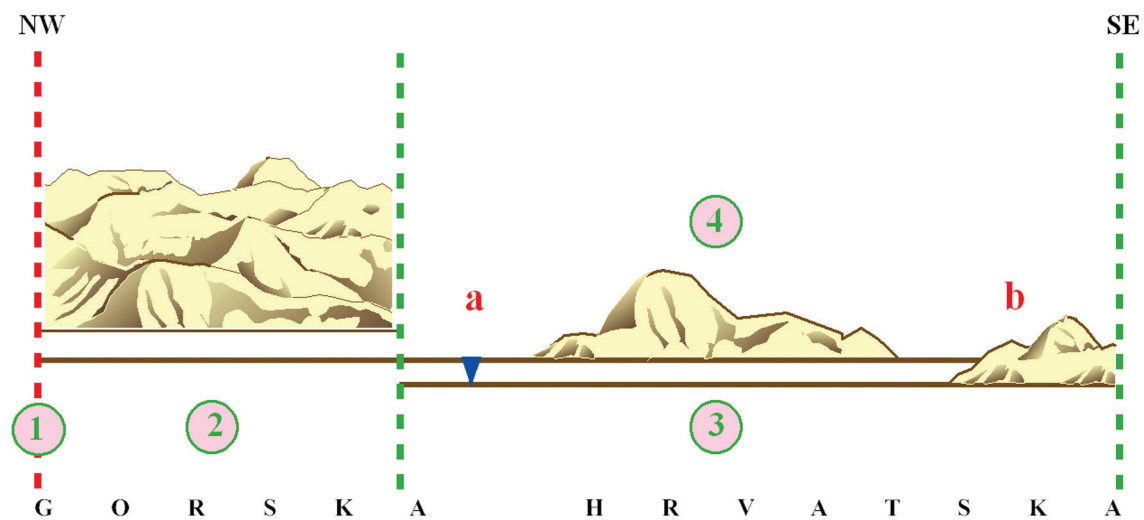
Iako ima središnji smještaj, Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska nije raspolagala drugim utemeljenjima za razvijanje života, tj. povoljnom agrarnom bazom kao temeljem feudalizma i nije mogla vršiti ulogu povezivanja sa svijetom kao u slučaju Hrvatskog primorja ili Panonije.

## Conclusion

In the present day, Croatia in terms of: location – position – centrality – traffic, the Mountainous depression of Croatia, is a part of functional Croatian centre, which also consists of the Zagreb region. The mentioned area is in the middle of Croatia between Slavonia, Istria and Dalmatia; it really is the connecting area so that the Mountainous depression of Croatia stops being the threshold, but it becomes the real connection, as well as the Zagreb region, but nothing more than that, because other non-traffic functions are completely left out. Today, the Mountainous depression of Croatia becomes the area of intersection (in relation to the new intersectional role of the space – Žuta Lokva and near Saint Rok), but all that can not make possible for the region to have any kind of new meaning of centrality – *it becomes (remains) the most important connecting space in Croatia, but without central/gravitational meaning.* Therefore, it is necessary to conclude: functions of centrality are essential for development and life organization of a certain state, where spatial relations have a very important role.

But, due to unfavourable natural setting and closed traffic conditions, as well as historical/geopolitical setbacks, the Mountainous depression of Croatia could not develop its central functions and become the regional nucleus of the Croatian sovereignty (as Dalmatia or the Zagreb region). It really remained too long the threshold, which is surpassed only today, namely: *The Croatian threshold will stop being the threshold by traffic opening, but it can not become any kind of important vital nucleus any more.*

Although it has a central location, the Mountainous depression of Croatia did not have any other foundations available for life development, i.e. favourable agrarian base as basis of feudalism, and it could not perform the role in connecting with the world in case of the Croatian Littoral or Pannonia.

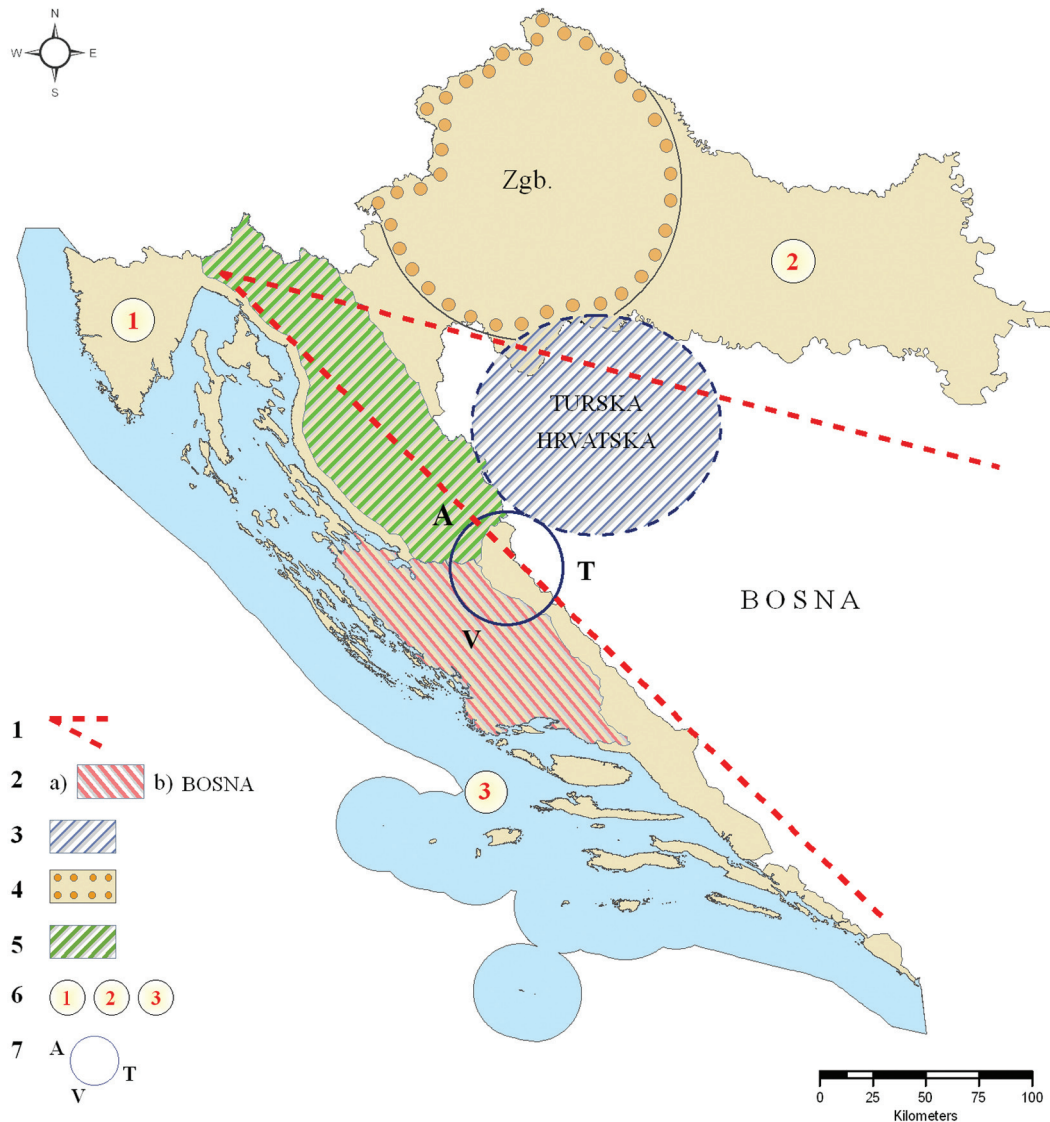


Slika 1. Idealni uzdužni profil Gorske-kotlinske Hrvatske od državne granice sa Slovenijom na sjeverozapadu do Pozrmanja na jugoistoku

Figure 1 Ideal longitudinal profile of the Mountainous depression of Croatia from the state border with Slovenia to the north-west and the Zrmanja river basin to the south-east.

- 1 – (1) Hrvatsko-slovenska državna granica
- 2 – (2) Visoki reljefni blok Gorskoga kotara
- 3 – (3) Kotlinski lički prostor od poriječja Gacke (a) prema jugoistoku do reljefne prečage sjeverno od Pozrmanja (b)
- 4 – (4) U samoj Ličkoj kotlini nalaze se pojedine reljefne prečage, ali to ne poništava definiciju Like kao naše najveće kotline između Gorskoga kotara, Velike i Male Kapele, Plješivice i Velebita.

- 1 – (1) Croatian-Slovenian border
- 2 – (2) High relief block of the Gorski Kotar region
- 3 – (3) Depression of the Lika area from the Gacka river basin (a) towards the south-east to the relief barrier north of the Zrmanja river basin (b)
- 4 – (4) In the very depression of Lika there are particular relief barriers, but it does not set aside the definition of Lika, as the largest depression between Gorski Kotar, Velika and Mala Kapela, Plješivica and Velebit.



Slika 2. Neke osnove historijsko-geografskog smještaja Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske  
 Figure 2 Some bases of the historical-geographical location of the Mountainous depression of Croatia

1 – Važna je fizičko-geografska činjenica da se – uz odgovarajuće društvene posljedice – upravo na sjeveroistoku Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske (u Gorskom kotaru) nalazi jedan od vrhova reljefnoga Dinarskog trokuta, koji je najuži upravo u ovom prostoru što pruža razmjerno povoljne prometne mogućnosti.

2 – a) Najstarija regija jezgre hrvatske državnosti (od 8. st.) između Nina, Zrmanje, Knina i Cetine. Treba uočiti njezin izrazito periferični smještaj u odnosu na ostali hrvatski etnikum. Ova *regija jezgre* raspolaže vodom, agrarnim mogućnostima i povoljnim obrambenim lokalitetima (Knin, Klis, itd.), što je sve povoljno za tada skromne životne potrebe.

1 – It is an important physical-geographical fact that – along with corresponding social consequences – exactly, in the north-east of the Mountainous depression of Croatia (in Gorski Kotar) there is one of the points of the Dinaric triangle relief, which is the narrowest, precisely in this area, providing proportionally favourable traffic opportunities.

2 – a) The oldest nucleus of the region of the Croatian sovereignty (from 8<sup>th</sup> c.) between Nin, Zrmanja, Knin and Cetina. Its specifically peripheral location should be observed in relation to the rest of the Croatian ethnic. This *nucleus of the region* has at its disposal water, agrarian opportunities, and favourable defense localities (Knin, Klis etc.), which is favourable for modest necessities of life at the time.

b) Primorska regija za svoj je državotvorni utjecaj i širenje imala najpogodniji prostor na sjeveru i sjeverozapadu, a ne prema sjeveroistoku, tj. prema Bosni i Hercegovini. Ona je poradi zatvorenosti jednoga šumskog i gorskog prostora, izrazito slabije komunikativnosti i naglašene izolacije bez značajnih superregionalnih prometnica s reljefnim preprekama, uz centriranost na dinarski gorski blok, kao i zbog relativno znatne udaljenosti od životno pogodnih primorskih i panonskih prostora mogla (i morala?) doživjeti poseban politogenetski i geopolitički razvitak izvan stvarne vlasti hrvatskih i ugarskih središta moći, pri čemu ni ikavica, a niti katoličanstvo (uz hereze), što je kasnije izraženio hrvatstvom – nisu mogli imati odlučujući utjecaj pogotovo od osmanlijskog grabeža u 15. stoljeću koji je konačno i trajno definirao političku posebnost tog prostora.

3 – Prostor nekadašnjega središnjega hrvatskog etnikuma, poslije osmanlijskih osvajanja poznat kao *Turska Hrvatska*. Trajnim gubitkom tog prostora otežava se veza južne i sjeverne Hrvatske, čime ona poprima izrazito nenaravni oblik potkove koji stalno podsjeća na to da je u međuprostoru krakova te potkove Hrvatska – gubitnik.

4 – Zagrebačka regija – nova regija jezgre hrvatske državnosti koja se u potpunosti afirmira u 15./16. st. U odnosu na ostali hrvatski etnikum važan je središnji *smještaj* ovog prostora koji se razvija u središnji *položaj*, jer Zagrebačka regija dobiva izrazito povežno značenje i središnje funkcije. Stara primorska hrvatska regija jezgre gubi na značenju, jer nije u mogućnosti okupiti oko sebe sav ostali hrvatski etnikum, a osim toga dolazi pod stranu dominaciju (Venecija), dok su i u gospodarskom smislu mogućnosti u Panoniji veće poradi zemljišnog posjeda kao osnove feudalizma.

5 – Regija Gorsko-kotlinske Hrvatske ima, istina, središnji smještaj i povežno značenje, ali zbog manjih životnih mogućnosti nije mogla razviti i središnje funkcije u odnosu na ostalu Hrvatsku. Važno je i to da je njezino prometno/transitno/križnično značenje ipak došlo prekasno do izražaja, zbog čega nije mogla narušiti već uspostavljene odnose u kojima je prevaga Zagrebačke regije nepovrjediva.

6 – (1), (2), (3) Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska kao spojnica i poveznica Istre, Slavonije (Panonije i Peripanonije) i ostaloga Hrvatskog primorja.

7 – U historijsko-geografskom smislu jedan od najzanimljivijih dijelova Hrvatske, pravi dodir i sutok naših geopolitičkih nesreća, prostor *Trojne granice* između Austrije (A), Venecije (V) i Turske (T).

b) The Littoral region for its nation-building influence and expansion had the most favourable space in the north and north-west, and not in the north-east, i.e. towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. It could, because of closed conditions of one wooded and mountainous area, of significantly poorer communicativeness and outlined isolation without considerable superregional traffic roads with relief barriers, together with centering to the Dinaric mountain block, as well as due to a relatively considerable distance from vitally favourable littoral and Pannonian areas could (and had to?) undergo a special politogenetic and geopolitical development outside real authorities of the Croatian and Hungarian power centres, in which process, neither ikavian speech nor Catholicism (along with heresy), which was later on expressed through Croatianism – could have a decisive influence especially by Ottoman pillage in 15<sup>th</sup> century, which finally and permanently defined the political peculiarity of that space.

3 – The space of the former central Croatian ethnic, after the Ottoman conquest known as *Turkish Croatia*. By permanent loss of this space the connection between the southern and northern Croatia became difficult, thus assuming a specifically unnatural form of a horseshoe, reminding all the time that in the interspace of the legs of that horseshoe Croatia is – the loser.

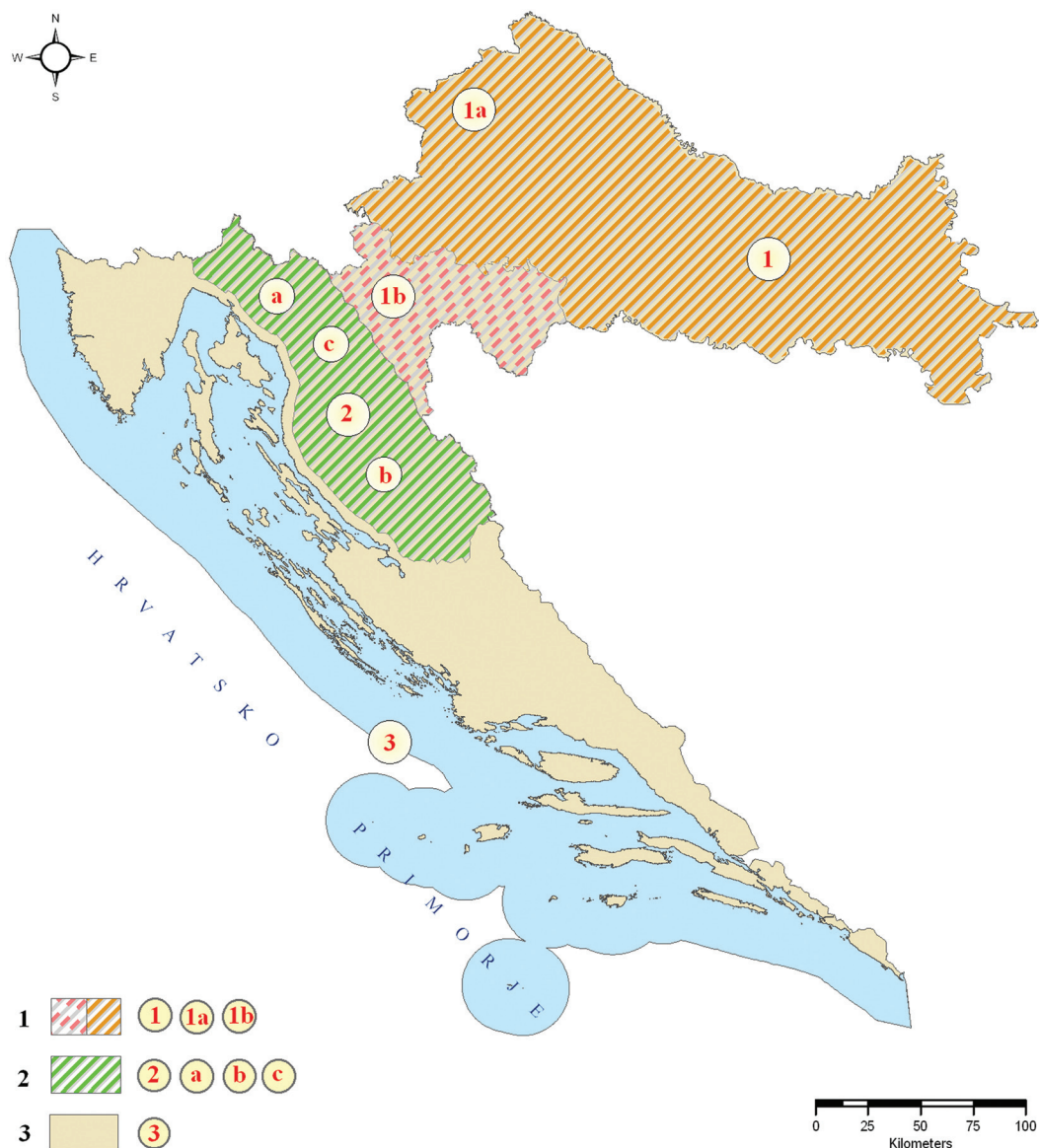
4 – The Zagreb region – new nucleus of the region of the Croatian sovereignty, which was completely established in 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> c. In relation to the rest of the Croatian ethnic, the central *location* of this space, which develops into the central *position*, is important, because the Zagreb region gets its significantly connecting meaning and central functions. The old littoral regional centre of Croatia loses importance, because it has no opportunity to rally about itself all the rest of the Croatian ethnic, and besides that, it comes under foreign domination (Venice), whereas in economic sense the possibilities in Pannonia are bigger due to land possession as base of feudalism.

5 – The Mountainous depression region of Croatia has, really, a central location and connecting meaning, but due to smaller life possibilities could not also develop the central functions as regards the rest of Croatia. However, it is also important that its traffic/transit/intersectional meaning was revealed too late, because of which, it could not impair already established relations in which the prevail of the Zagreb region is indisputable.

6 – (1), (2), (3) The Mountainous depression of Croatia as the link and connection with Istria, Slavonia (Pannonia and peri-Pannonia), and the rest of the Croatian Littoral.

7 – In the historical-geographical sense one of the most interesting parts of Croatia, the real contact and centre of our geopolitical misfortunes, the space of *Threefold border* between Austria (A), Venice (V) and Turkey (T).





Slika 3. Regionalni sastav Hrvatske  
Figure 3 Regional structure of Croatia

Imajući navedeno u vidu, temeljna regionalna raščlamba Hrvatske u ovom prilogu uključuje (bez ulaženja u detalje) standardnu prostornu raščlambu, ali s novim nazivima i dodatcima u definiciji:

1. **Hrvatsko međurječje** – taj toponim bolje definira smještaj tog prostora nego naziv Panonija i peripanonija koje postoje i u Mađarskoj, Srbiji i Rumunjskoj. Za prostornu definiciju međurječja ključno značenje imaju tokovi Kupe, Save (jednim kraćim dijelom i Une), zatim Mure, Drave i Dunava. Hrvatskom međurječju pripadaju i dijelovi peripanonije (1a i 1b).

Having in mind the above mentioned, fundamental regional analysis of Croatia in this paper includes (without going into details) the standard spatial analysis, but with the new names and supplements in definition:

1. **The Croatian space between the rivers** – that toponym better defines the location of that space than the names Pannonia and peri-Pannonia, which also exist in Hungary, Serbia and Romania. For the spatial definition of the space between the rivers the crucial meaning have the flows of the Kupa river, the Sava, (also a shorter part of Una), then the Mura, the Drava and the Danub. Some parts of the peri-Pannonia also belong to the Croatian space between the rivers (1a i 1b).

2. **Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska** (uključujući i prijelaznu Ogulinsko-plašćansku submontanu udolinu). Za razliku od Gorske Hrvatske to je prošireni naziv, jer ona ne zauzima samo viši gorski dio (a – Gorski kotar) nego i *najveći i najizrazitiji kotlinski prostor u Hrvatskoj* a to je Lika (b), koju se ne može zanemariti kao posebnost i zato se ne može podrediti pojmu Gorske Hrvatske, tako da je naziv *Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska mnogo bolji i potpunije izražava zemljopisnu stvarnost.*

3. **Sredozemna Hrvatska** ili *Hrvatsko primorje* sa svojim trojstvom: zagora, obala i otoci. Pojam Sredozemna Hrvatska je geografski sadržajiniji i specifičniji od onog Primorske Hrvatske ili Hrvatskog primorja (od Savudrije do Prevlake), jer u sebi uključuje i određene klimatske, povijesne i civilizacijske sadržaje, dok je pojam "primorska" posve bezličan i bez ikakvih drugih odrednica osim smještaja uz more. Zbog posebnih političkih i geopolitičkih razloga ipak treba inzistirati i na današnjoj političkoj stvarnosti, tj. na terminu Hrvatsko primorje koje zauzima sav prostor od Savudrije do Prevlake, za razliku od povijesnog pojma Hrvatskog primorja koje se odnosi samo na prostor od približno Bakra do Novog Vinodolskog. Shvaćanje čitavoga našeg primorskog prostora kao Hrvatskog primorja ima naglašeno političko i geopolitičko značenje i izraz je novih odnosa nastalih sa suvremenom hrvatskom državom. Svim navedenim uzima se u obzir **trojni makroregionalni sastav Hrvatske**, tj.:

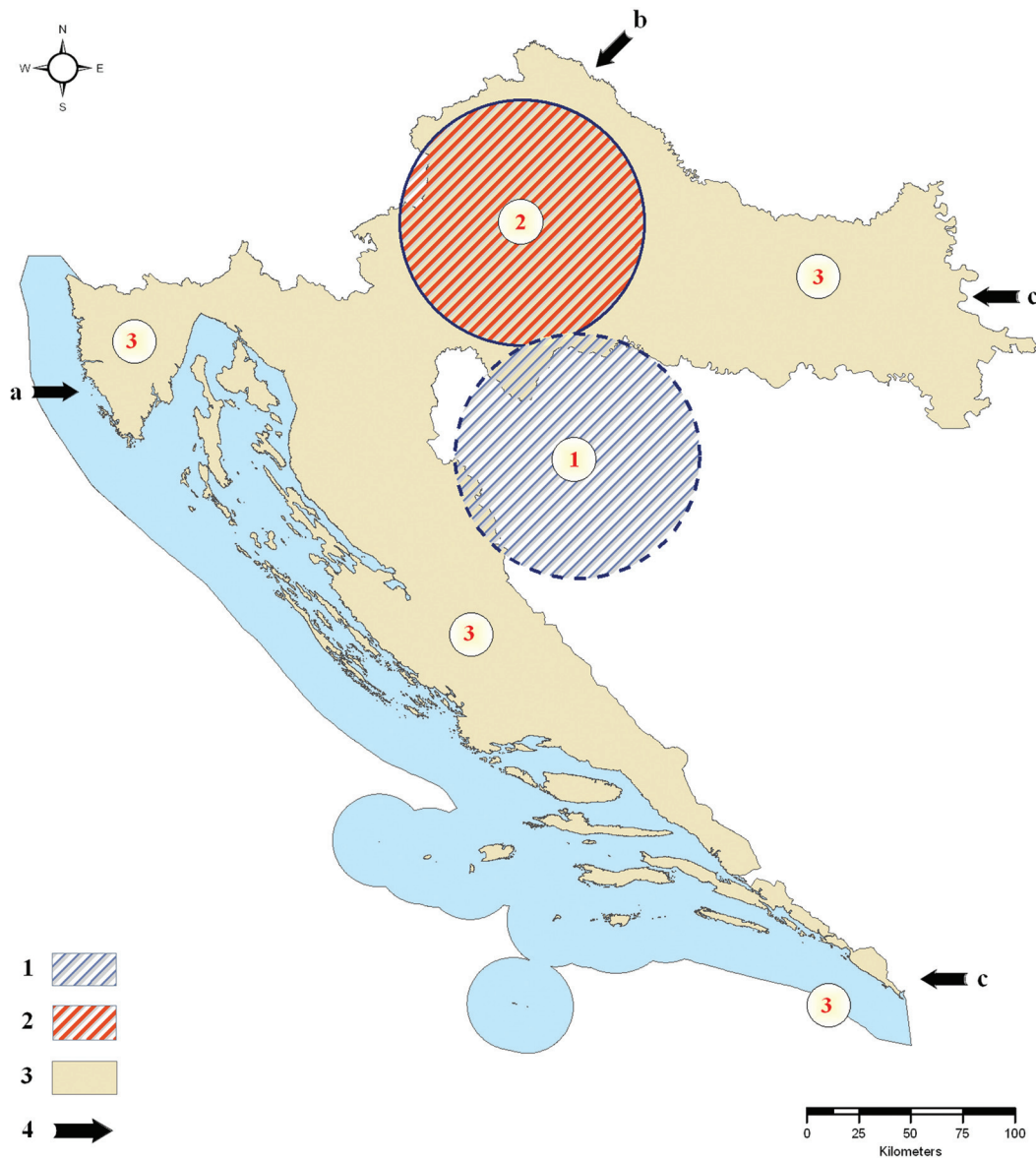
- 1 – Hrvatsko međurječje s peripanonskim rubovima (l a, 1 b)
- 2 – Gorsko-kotlinska Hrvatska koja se sastoji od Gorskoga kotara (a), Like (b) i Ogulinsko-plašćanske submontane udoline (c)
- 3 – Hrvatsko primorje između Savudrije i Prevlake koje kao nadregionalni pojam uključuje nekoliko mezoregija.

2. **The Mountain depression of Croatia** (including also the transitional Ogulin-Plaški submountain valley). Unlike the Mountainous Croatia, this is the expanded name, because it does not only occupy the higher mountainous part (a - Gorski Kotar), but also *the largest and the most outstanding depression space in Croatia* and that is Lika (b), which can not be neglected as particularity, and therefore, it can not be subordinated to the name Mountainous Croatia, thus the name *the Mountain depression of Croatia is far better and it reflects the geographic reality more thoroughly.*

3. **Mediterranean Croatia** or *The Croatian Littoral* with its triplicity: tramontane region, coast and islands. The concept Mediterranean Croatia is geographically more content-related and specific from that of Maritime Croatia, or the Croatian Littoral (from Savudrija to Prevlaka), as it also includes particular climatic, historical and civilizational contents, whereas the concept "maritime" is entirely featureless and without any other guidelines except location by the sea. Due to particular political and geopolitical reasons, still, it should be insisted on the present-day political reality i.e. expression the Croatian Littoral, which covers the entire area from Savudrija to Prevlaka, unlike the historical concept of the Croatian Littoral referring only to the space approximately from Bakar to Novi Vinodolski. Understanding our entire maritime area, as the Croatian Littoral, has an outstanding political and geopolitical meaning, and the reflection of new relations which arose with modern Croatian state. To all mentioned **triple macroregional structure of Croatia** is taken into consideration:

i.e.:

- 1 – The Croatian space between the rivers with peri-Pannonian margins (l a, 1 b)
- 2 – The Mountain depression of Croatia which consists of Gorski Kotar (a), Lika (b) and Ogulin-Plaški submountain valley (c)
- 3 – The Croatian Littoral, between Savudrija and Prevlaka, which, as supraregional concept includes several mesoregions.



Slika 4. Dodatna funkcionalna raščlamba hrvatskog prostora  
Figure 4 Additional functional analysis of the Croatian space

Osim uobičajene funkcionalne raščlambe geografska stvarnost Hrvatske nameće potrebu uvođenja još nekih pojmova, a to su: 1) *Središnja i periferična* i 2) *Spojna/križišna Hrvatska*.

#### *Središnja i periferična Hrvatska*

Ti pojmovi središnje i periferične Hrvatske nikako nisu oznaka važnosti pojedinih regija, nisu vrijednosni sudovi, nego tek izraz smještaja, ali (dijelom) jesu geopolitička i geostrateška definicija s obzirom na (veliko)slovenske, (veliko)talijanske

Apart from ordinary functional analysis, the geographical reality of Croatia imposes the need to introduce some more concepts, such as: 1) *Central and peripheral* and 2) *Connecting/intersectional Croatia*.

#### *Central and peripheral Croatia*

Those concepts of central and peripheral Croatia are not in any way important characteristics of particular regions, they are not value judgements, but just the reflection of location, and they are (partly) geopolitical and geostrategic definition as

i velikosrpske pretenzije. Jasno se može uočiti da većina Hrvatske pripada periferiji (Istra, Dalmacija, istočna Slavonija, Međimurje), tj. da Hrvatska nema svoj središnje locirani etnikumski prostor kakav je nekada zauzimala Turska Hrvatska između Une i Vrbasa: s obzirom na smještaj to je geografski zaista bila središnja Hrvatska.

1 – (1) Povijesni središnji hrvatski etnikum po svom smještaju je prostor između Une, Save i Vrbasa koji ulazi i u južno gorsko zaleđe i ispunjava dio međuprostora između Panonije i primorja. Takva je lokacija logična jer je jasno da se *pri doseljavanju Hrvati nisu izvorno naseljavali i raspoređivali u obliku potkove, nego u teritorijalnom kontinuitetu koji je zauzimao i dio Bosne i Hercegovine*, a koji je kontinuitet narušen kasnijim starijim vojno-političkim osvajanjima (Osmanlije). To je u povijesnom smislu zaista središnja Hrvatska, koja je definitivno izgubljena, ali je kartografski očuvana u osmanlijskom nazivu Turska Hrvatska.

2 – (2) Današnja središnja Hrvatska po svom položaju i središnjim funkcijama prostor je približno podjednako udaljen (oko 60-65 km) i od slovenske, mađarske i bosansko-hercegovačke granice i zapravo se poklapa s funkcionalnim pojmom Zagrebačke regije (središte ovog kruga nalazi se nešto sjeverozapadnije od Čazme).

3 – (3) Sva ostala Hrvatska pripada periferijskoj Hrvatskoj. U cjelini sve sačinjava hrvatsku *geopolitičku potkovu*.

4 – Vazno je naglasiti da su i u daljoj, ali i bližoj povijesti praktički svi dijelovi Hrvatske (osim onih koje su zauzeli Osmanlije) bili u okviru interesnih/osvajачkih strategema i Italije (a), i Mađarske (b) i Srbije i Crne Gore (c). Jedini trajno sigurni prostor bila je Zagrebačka regija sa spojnicom prema Riječkom zaljevu, ali je i ta sigurnost narušavana.

regards (the Great) Slovene, (the Great) Italian and the Great-Serbian pretensions. It is clearly visible that most part of Croatia appertains to the periphery (Istria, Dalmatia, Eastern Slavonia, Međimurje), i.e. that Croatia has not its centrally located ethnic space as the one occupied long ago by the Turkish Croatia between the rivers Una and Vrbas: in terms of location it was really in a geographical sense central Croatia.

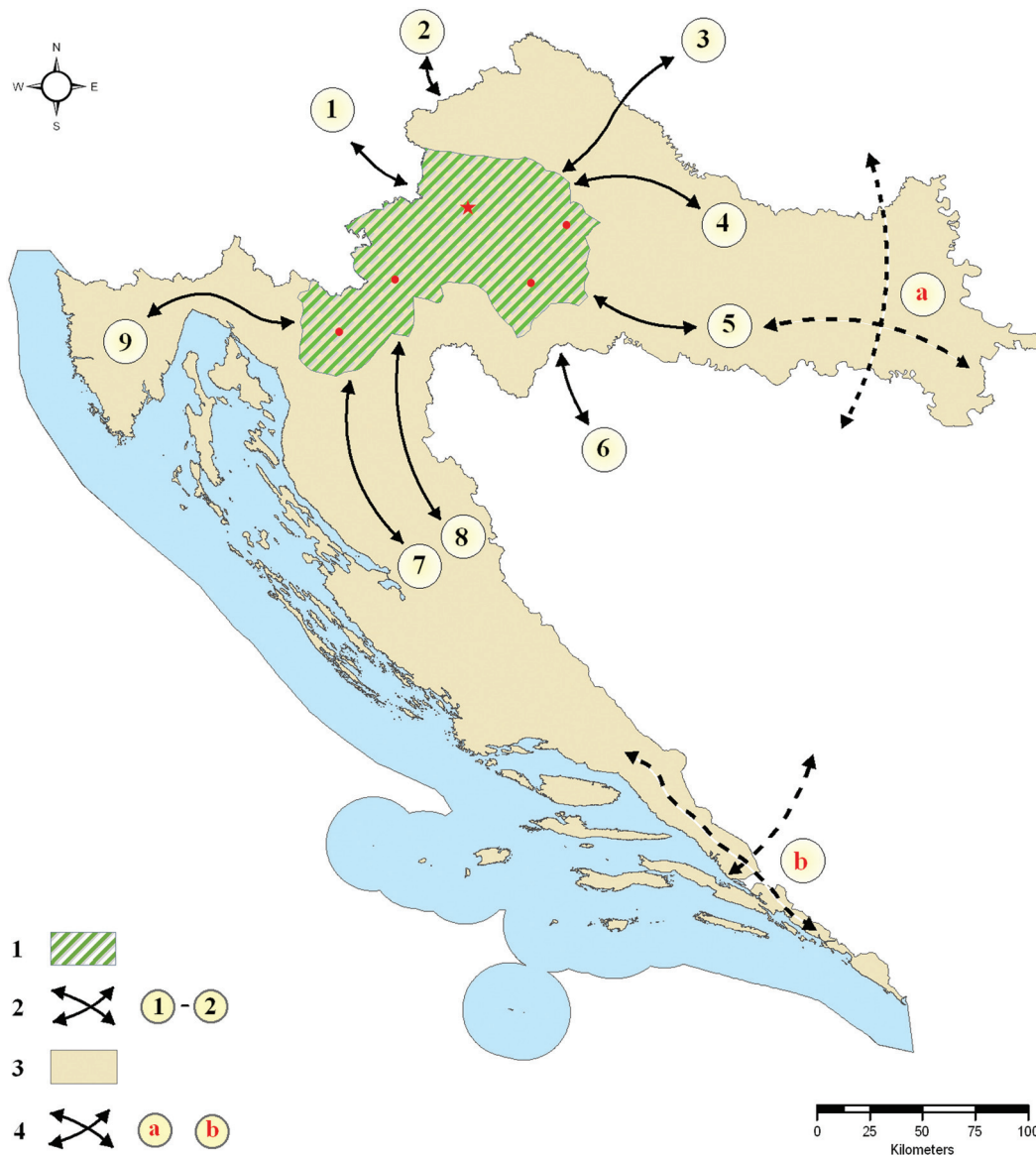
1 – (1) The historical central Croatian ethnic according to its location is the space between the rivers Una, Sava and Vrbas, which enters also into the southern mountain hinterland and fills the interspace between Pannonia and the maritime region. Such location is logical because it is clear that *during immigration the Croatians were not originally inhabited and disposed in the form of a horseshoe, but in the territorial continuity which covered also the part of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, and which was later on disrupted by older military/political conquests (Ottomans). In historical sense, this is in fact central Croatia which is definitely lost, but cartographically preserved in the Ottoman name of the Turkish Croatia.

2 – (2) The present-day Croatia is, according to its position and central functional space, approximately equally distanced (around 60-65 km) also from the Slovene, Hungarian and Bosnian-Herzegovian border, it, in fact, overlaps with the functional concept of the Zagreb region (centre of this circle is somewhat more towards the north-west of Čazma).

3 – (3) All the rest of Croatia belongs to the peripheral Croatia. As a whole, it all forms the part of the Croatian *geopolitical horseshoe*

4 – It is important to emphasize that in more remote, and near history practically all parts of Croatia (except those conquered by the Ottomans) were within the framework of interest/conquering strategies of Italy (a), Hungary (b) Serbia and Montenegro (c). The only permanently safe space was the Zagreb region with the link towards the Gulf of Rijeka, but that safety was also being disrupted.





Slika 5. Spojna/križišna i tranzitna Hrvatska  
Figure 5 Connecting/intersectional and transit Croatia

Izrazito funkcionalnog (prometnog/poveznog) značenja ovaj je aspekt od iznimne važnosti, jer se u Hrvatskoj jedan njezin dio odlikuje osobito naglašenom spojno/križišnom ulogom. Iako je jasno da je središnja Hrvatska dijelom ujedno i spojna Hrvatska, treba izdvojiti i posebnu *spojnu Hrvatsku* koja obuhvaća i nešto širi prostor, tj. i onaj zagrebački, karlovački, sisački, bosiljevački, ogulinsko-plašćanski, što je spojnica svih hrvatskih regija.

Po svom položaju prostor spojne-križišne Hrvatske je također dijelom lokacijski periferičan u odnosu na ostali teritorij Hrvatske s obzirom

This peculiarly functional (traffic/linking) aspect is of outstanding importance, because one part in Croatia is especially distinguished by emphasized connecting/intersectional function. Although it is clear that the Central Croatia is at the same time partly connecting Croatia, special *connecting Croatia* which covers somewhat wider space i.e. the Zagreb one, Karlovac, Sisak, Bosiljevo, Ogulin-Plaški, which is the link of all Croatian regions, should be separated.

According to its position the space of the connecting intersectional Croatia is also partly peripheral as regards the remaining territory of

na isturene krakove Slavonije, Istre i Dalmacije, a također se ne nalazi u središtu hrvatskog etnikuma, nego uz slovensku i mađarsku granicu, ali ujedno ima izrazito funkcionalno koncentracijsko značenje spram i nacionalnih i međunarodnih prometnih pravaca, i to sve u području između Zagreba i Ogulina (oko 83,5 km) i slovenske i bosanske granice (oko 45 km). Spojna Hrvatska tako ima zapravo koridorski karakter sa stalnim sukobom prometnih nužnosti i izloženosti osmanlijskim pritiscima s jugoistoka.

1 – Spojna/križišna Hrvatska (sa Zagrebom, Siskom, Karlovcem, Bosiljevom i Ogulinom) odgovarajućeg geoprometnog značenja

2 – (1-9) Glavni spojno-križišni pravci: 1 – slovenski, 2 – zagorski i slovenski, 3 – mađarski, 4 – podravski, 5 – posavski, 6 – bosanski, 7 i 8 – dalmatinski, 9 – istarski.

3 – Sva ostala Hrvatska može se nazvati tranzitnom Hrvatskom.

4 – Međutim, u toj tranzitnoj Hrvatskoj izdvajaju se ipak dva prostora sa spojno-križišnom ulogom, a to su istočna Slavonija (a) i prostor neretvanskog ušća (b). Važno je uočiti da je značenje ovih potonjih sporednih spojno/križišnih prostora relativno novijeg datuma, tako da se na mjestima križišta nisu mogla razviti veća naselja starijeg datuma, što je ovisilo o drugačijim čimbenicima.

Croatia considering the protruded extensions of Slavonia, Istria and Dalmatia, and it is not located in the centre of the Croatian ethnic, but along the Slovene and Hungarian border, but at the same time it has particularly functional concentrational importance towards national and international traffic directions and all that in the area between Zagreb and Ogulin (about 83.5 km), and Slovene and Bosnian border (about 45 km). The connecting Croatia has, in fact, the character of a corridor with permanent conflict of traffic necessities and exposed position to the Ottoman pressures from the south-east.

1 – Connecting/intersectional Croatia (with Zagreb, Sisak, Karlovac, Bosiljevo and Ogulin) of appropriate geotrafic meaning

2 – (1-9) Main connecting/intersectional directions: 1 – Slovene, 2 – Zagorje (Tramontane) and Slovene 3 – Hungarian, 4 – Podravina, 5 – Posavina, 6 – Bosnian, 7 i 8 – Dalmatian, 9 – Istrian.

3 – All the rest of Croatia can be called transit Croatia.

4 – However, in that transit Croatia there are still two spaces separated by the connecting/intersectional function, and they are Eastern Slavonia (a) and the space of the Neretva river mouth (b). It is important to notice that the meaning of these latter ones, secondary connecting/intersectional spaces, are of relatively more recent times, so that at the intersectional points bigger settlements could not have been developed, which depended on different factors.