GEOADRIA

First-hand observation and compilation: André Thevet's textual descriptions of the eastern Adriatic, 1554–1586

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This paper analyses the textual descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands in three works by the French royal cosmographer André Thevet: Cosmographie de Levant (1554), La Cosmographie universelle (1575), and the manuscript Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage (1586). The research aims to determine the content and characteristics of these descriptions, to identify continuities, differences, and instances of textual borrowing through comparative analysis, and to distinguish information based on the author's first-hand observation from that derived from earlier written and cartographic sources. The study is grounded in historical-geographical and comparative textual analysis, the critical evaluation of geographical information, and their comparison with classical sources and contemporary historical-geographical scholarship. Particular attention is devoted to toponymy, geographical descriptions, and the relationship between the textual and cartographic layers of Thevet's oeuvre. The results demonstrate that all three works combine direct observation, compilation, and Renaissance cosmographical modes of interpretation, although the relative contribution of each varies according to the genre and date of composition

of the individual work. Numerous verbatim borrowings between the texts were identified, together with substantial differences in content, spatial coverage, and the reliability of individual data. Ultimately, the analysis confirms that Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage is not merely a pilot book but a multi-layered geographical work which, alongside Thevet's other writings, constitutes a valuable source for investigating the formation of the European image of the eastern Adriatic during the second half of the sixteenth century.

Keywords: André Thevet; historical geography; eastern Adriatic; Renaissance; cosmography; isolario

INTRODUCTION

The opening decades of the Early Modern period, marked by the Renaissance, the great geographical discoveries, and the intensive interplay of science, technology, and the arts, literally and symbolically broadened European horizons. This intellectual momentum was expressed most vividly in geography and cartography, disciplines that played a pivotal role in the creation, organisation, and dissemination of geographical knowledge. Within them, a complex body of spatial knowledge was developed, ranging from local, regional, and state-level information applicable to territorial administration, governance, military affairs, navigation, and education, to continental and global conceptions that enabled an increasingly comprehensive understanding of the then-known world. Among the constellation of Renaissance European cosmographers and geographers, whose research and interpretative frameworks were largely grounded in Ptolemy's Geography, a prominent place belongs to the French royal cosmographer André Thevet.

Thevet was born in Angoulême in 1516. He was initially a Franciscan friar, later chaplain to Queen Catherine de' Medici, and subsequently royal cosmographer to the last Valois monarchs – Henry II, Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III. He died in Paris in 1592 (Lestringant, 1994, 2003). Although he received no formal academic training in geography or cartography, he sought through his own work to contribute to the highly topical endeavour of his age to comprehend and represent the world as a coherent spatial whole. To this end, he undertook several journeys: first to the eastern Mediterranean, following the traditional pilgrimage route to the Holy Land, and later across the Atlantic, particularly along the coast of Brazil, where France sought to establish its colonial presence. Alongside his valuable first-hand observations, however, he frequently compiled historical and geographical sources in an insufficiently critical

manner. Consequently, he acquired, already among his contemporaries, the reputation of an author prone to exaggeration and was often accused of plagiarism and the falsification of sources (Destombes, 1972; Lestringant, 1991, 2003; Silveira Cardozo, 1944; Tolias, 2007; Van den Abbeele, 1992). This reception long overshadowed his oeuvre, yet it does not diminish its scholarly value. On the contrary, later research confirmed that the information Thevet recorded about places he personally visited is, to a considerable extent, reliable (Lestringant, 1994; 2003).

The eastern Adriatic region that today forms part of Croatia is described in three of Thevet's works, produced over a period of more than three decades and representing distinct yet related epistemological and generic layers. The earliest is Cosmographie de Levant (1554), a travel-cosmographical work compiled shortly after his Levantine journey (1549–1554), in which his impressions of sailing through the Adriatic were still relatively fresh (Thevet, 1554; Van den Abbeele, 1992). This was followed by the monumental two-volume La Cosmographie universelle (1575), a universal cosmography conceived as the French counterpart to the works of Sebastian Münster and François de Belleforest, in which the eastern Adriatic is discussed within the chapters devoted to Sclavonia and Dubrovnik (Lestringant, 1991; Thevet, 1575). Finally, Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage, a manuscript completed in 1586 and never published, contains both textual descriptions and cartographic representations of the Croatian coast and islands.

These three works belong to three distinct, yet closely related and intertwined, genres of Renaissance geographical culture. During the Early Modern period, geography was understood as an integral component of cosmography, and knowledge of the Earth was disseminated primarily through three categories of works – cosmographical treatises, maps (including those published in isolarii), and travel accounts – which constantly interacted and drew upon three principal sources of knowledge: Classical antiquity, the Christian tradition, and the discoveries generated by the great voyages of exploration (Cattaneo, 2016; Doré, 2022; Mayhew, 2011). Thevet's oeuvre fits almost paradigmatically within this intellectual triangle. Cosmographie de Levant is fundamentally a travel narrative with a cosmographical orientation; La Cosmographie universelle represents a comprehensive universal cosmography; while Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage belongs to the tradition of the isolario (island book) and the pilot book. Consequently, comparing the Croatian descriptions contained in these three works is not merely a comparison of three texts by the same author, but also of three generic models through which Renaissance Europe perceived and represented geographical space.

In their study, Faričić et al. (2020) analysed the cartographic component of Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage, focusing on seven maps of the Croatian islands (Krk, Pag, Ugljan and Pašman, Čiovo, Brač, Hvar, and Korčula). These maps were compared, both in terms of their cartographic characteristics and the geographical features they depict, with representations of the same area in the isolarii of Giovanni Francesco Camocio, Antonio Millo, and Giuseppe Rosaccio. The comparison demonstrated that Thevet's maps differ substantially from those produced by his contemporaries. They reflect not only the author's personal cartographic competence but also the French perception of the geographical reality of the eastern Adriatic during the Renaissance. Since the maps in Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage form an integral functional unit with the accompanying text, the natural continuation of that research is to direct attention to the second, hitherto unexplored layer – the text itself.

The subject of the present study is Thevet's textual descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands in Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage, compared with his descriptions of the same region in Cosmographie de Levant and La Cosmographie universelle. The section devoted to geographical coordinates constitutes an exception in terms of the research sample, since, in addition to the textual evidence, it also draws upon Thevet's maps from Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage. The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to determine the content and principal characteristics of Thevet's descriptions of the eastern Adriatic islands and coastline in Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage; (2) to identify, through comparison of the three works, continuities, verbatim repetitions, additions, and contradictions, while distinguishing information based on direct observation (autoptic observation) from that derived through compilation; and (3) to assess the geographical reliability of Thevet's statements in the light of Classical sources and contemporary historical-geographical scholarship. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first comprehensive study devoted to Thevet's textual descriptions of the eastern Adriatic and to their systematic comparison across his three principal works.

The article is structured as follows. Following a review of previous scholarship, the next chapter is devoted to sixteenth-century French travel writers and the eastern Adriatic, situating Thevet's work within the broader context of French travel culture. Subsequent sections outline the sources and methodology, provide an analysis of the descriptions of individual islands and coastal regions, and, finally, offer concluding remarks.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

After a prolonged period of marginalisation – driven primarily by controversies surrounding the reliability of his writings – Thevet's oeuvre became the subject of systematic research during the second half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, particularly within French philological and historical-geographical scholarship. A central position in this body of research belongs to Frank Lestringant, editor of the critical edition of Cosmographie de Levant (Thevet, 1554 /1985) and author of the fundamental studies of Thevet as cosmographer to the last French kings of the Valois dynasty (Lestringant, 1991, 2003), as well as of influential works on the Renaissance geographical imagination and the isolarii tradition (island books) (Lestringant, 1994, 2002). Lestringant also compiled the catalogue of the maps contained in Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage (Lestringant, 1984), which remains the indispensable point of departure for research on this manuscript.

Earlier contributions to the understanding of Thevet's work were made by M. da Silveira Cardozo (1944) and M. Destombes (1972), the latter evaluating his contribution to cartography and oceanography. For the Adriatic in particular, F. W. Hasluck's (1914) study of Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage and Thevet's Levantine travels remains especially important, since it sheds light on the origin of the material collected along the pilgrimage route that followed the eastern Adriatic coast. The literary-critical and epistemological dimensions of Cosmographie de Levant were examined by G. Van den Abbeele (1992); Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage as an iconographic work of the sixteenth century was analysed by E. Dumotier-Sigwalt (2002); while the broader context of French navigation to the Levant during the Early Modern period was investigated by J. P. Farganel (2006).

In terms of its content, Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage closely corresponds to the tradition of island books (isolarii), cartographic or cosmographical encyclopaedias devoted to islands, which constituted one of the most characteristic artefacts of Early Modern geographical culture. Although the genre originated in Florence, where Cristoforo Buondelmonti prepared the pioneering Liber insularum Archipelagi around 1420, it reached its fullest development in Venice (Tolias, 2007, 2013). During the sixteenth century, the genre underwent a marked methodological standardisation, to which the works of Benedetto Bordone, Tommaso Porcacchi, Giovanni Francesco Camocio, Giuseppe Rosaccio, and others made a decisive contribution (Stouraiti, 2013). Perhaps the most concise definition of the genre was provided by Rosaccio himself on the title page of his account of the voyage from Venice to Constantinople and the Holy Land (Viaggio da Venetia a Constantinopoli..., Venice, 1606), where he states that the work contains

concise geographical descriptions of cities, fortresses, harbours, bays, islands, mountains, rivers, and seas, accompanied by maps, and that it was intended for merchants, mariners, and students of geography.

Although Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage may be classified among the isolarii based on its content, Thevet's oeuvre as a whole cannot be properly understood without considering the broader generic framework of cosmography. In the sixteenth century, cosmography was regarded as the overarching discipline that comprised three levels of terrestrial representation: cosmography, geography, and chorography. According to Peter Apian's influential classification, these levels were distinguished by the scale and spatial extent of their subject matter (Mayhew, 2011). As a synthesis of astronomical, geographical, and ethnographical knowledge, cosmography sought to embrace the created world in its entirety, drawing upon Classical antiquity (above all Ptolemy's Geography), the Christian tradition, and the new knowledge acquired through overseas exploration (Baldasso, 2022; Cattaneo, 2016; Milanesi, 1994). It was during the second half of the sixteenth century that the genre entered a period of crisis, as the ever-growing volume of new, and often contradictory, information rendered it increasingly difficult to sustain cosmography as a coherent and comprehensive representation of the world (Lestringant, 1991, 2003). Within this context, Thevet's cosmographical epistemology has recently been interpreted as consciously unfinished and provisional – that is, as a form of 'knowledge in transit' that acknowledges both the mutability and the elusiveness of its subject (Frisch, 2014).

Over recent decades, isolarii have become a major field of scholarly inquiry. Researchers have traced their development from Buondelmonti's manuscript through the printed works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, interpreting them not merely as a distinctive form of cartographic-textual encyclopaedia but also as a medium through which perceptions of the Mediterranean and the overseas world were constructed and disseminated (Conley, 1996; Donattini, 1994; Stouraiti, 2013; Tolias, 2013; Turner, 1987; Wilson, 2013). Attention has been devoted to the content of isolarii as an expression of contemporary interest in the Mediterranean. This focus highlights a period marked by intense political, military, and commercial interaction – as well as conflict – between the Ottoman Empire and the Mediterranean states of Europe in the Early Modern period. Equally important are the informational networks through which knowledge about the regions described and mapped in these works was collected, transmitted, and circulated (Coleman, 2024; Coman, 2015). For the eastern Adriatic, this material has been systematically examined in a series of studies by M. Pavić dealing with navigation

routes and the spatial perception of the eastern Adriatic islands in isolarii and other geographical manuals of the Early Modern period (Pavić, 2000, 2003, 2012, 2013, 2025), as well as in his study of pilgrimage voyages from Venice to the Holy Land (Pavić, 2007). Additional contributions include A. Kisić's (2005) study of the isolarii of Camocio and Rosaccio, and the analysis by I. Kljajić and M. Razum (2016) of Antonio Millo's isolarii. The most recent contribution to this field is the study of the Adriatic islands in the General Isolario of All the Islands of the World by the Sevillian cosmographer Alonso de Santa Cruz, a manuscript compiled in the mid-sixteenth century (Faričić and Lončar, 2024). The representation of the Croatian lands on old maps published in isolarii has likewise been systematically addressed in the foundational Croatian literature on the history of cartography, above all in the syntheses by M. Marković (1993) and M. Kozličić (1995).

A third genre to which Thevet's works belong is the travel narrative (récit de voyage), which gradually evolved during the Early Modern period from diverse pilgrimage, diplomatic, and commercial accounts into a recognisable literary and epistemological form (Carey and Jowitt, 2009; Rubiés, 2000, 2016, 2023). Within sixteenth-century French travel culture, the travel narrative had not yet become a fully autonomous genre. Nevertheless, Renaissance travellers, unlike those who merely imitated Classical models, sought to supplement – and, where necessary, correct – the inherited body of knowledge through new observations (Wolfzettel, 1996). Their writings combine empirical observation, the reception of Classical and biblical traditions, and the distinctive Renaissance geographical imagination (Bacci, 2022; Dimopoulou, 2020). In Italian and French travel literature of the sixteenth century, the eastern Adriatic generally appeared as a stage on the route to the Levant, but at the same time as a region of encounter, danger, and curiosity (Bakić, 2024). Since Thevet's writings belong simultaneously to cosmography, the isolario, and the travel narrative, their treatment of the Croatian coast can be fully understood only at the intersection of these traditions. More broadly, this generic hybridity reflects the fact that the sixteenth-century travellers became collaborators of the learned, while scholars, in turn, increasingly contrasted firsthand travel experience with inherited knowledge. Within this intellectual framework, Wolfzettel argues that André Thevet represents perhaps the fullest embodiment of this tendency, a traveller celebrated by the poets of the Pléiade as a new Jason (Wolfzettel, 1996).

Thevet's textual descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands have remained almost entirely unexplored in Croatian scholarship. His description of Croatia in *Cosmographie de Le-*

vant was briefly noted by P. Matković (1882: 76–77, note 2), while M. Kandido-Rožman discussed Thevet's descriptions of the territory of present-day Croatia in both *Cosmographie de Levant* and *La Cosmographie universelle* in her study of Dalmatia in French travel literature. Among other matters, she referred to – but did not transliterate – Thevet's record of the Croatian version of the Lord's Prayer (Kandido-Rožman, 1990). In the same study, she also mentioned that Thevet had written chapters on Zadar and the island of Čiovo in *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage*, later published in *Recueil de voyages et documents pour servir à l'histoire de la géographie* (Paris, 1890) (Kandido-Rožman, 1990: 1172, note 17). However, she provided no further information about these chapters. It is highly likely that she never consulted the original manuscript itself, as may be inferred from the fact that she made no mention of Thevet's other chapters devoted to the Croatian islands. In addition to these studies, it should be noted that T. Valčić-Bulić (2006; 2007) examined Thevet's descriptions of parts of south-eastern Europe. The results of the first systematic investigation of *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage* were published in the previously mentioned study of Thevet's maps of the Croatian islands (Faričić *et al.*, 2020), upon which the present research directly builds.

Given that Thevet's descriptions are rich in references to Classical and Early Christian heritage, their critical evaluation necessarily requires a broader historical-geographical framework. The Classical conception of the eastern Adriatic rests primarily upon Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* (Pliny the Elder, 2004; Čače, 2001) and Ptolemy's *Geography* (Kozličić, 1990a), while numerous other ancient sources are likewise of considerable relevance (Kozličić, 1990b). Naturally, many issues relating to ancient topography remain unresolved or continue to be the subject of scholarly debate, including the identification of Stridon, the birthplace of St Jerome (Bulić, 1920; Suić, 1986; Margetić, 2002; Faričić, 2023). Thevet himself addresses this question, identifying Stridon with Sidrona and thereby falling into the trap of a simplified localisation derived from Renaissance versions of Ptolemy's Fifth Map of Europe. For the historical-geographical contextualisation and identification of the individual islands and coastal localities described by Thevet, a number of specialised scholarly monographs are also indispensable, including studies of Hvar (Duboković-Nadalini, 1962; Gabelić, 1988), Brač (Cvitanić, 1984), and Pag (Hilje, 2011), the study of the Early Medieval monuments on Majsan (Fisković, 1981), as well as broader syntheses dealing with the medieval and Early Modern eastern Adriatic (Matković, 1882; Raukar, 1997).

SOURCES AND METHODS

The present study is concerned with Thevet's textual descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands as contained in three of his works. Particular emphasis is placed on the manuscript Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage (1586), which includes textual descriptions and accompanying maps of the islands of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea, among them the Croatian islands (Krk, Pag, Ugljan and Pašman – treated jointly by Thevet as the 'Island of Zadar' – Čiovo, Brač, Hvar, and Korčula), together with the adjacent mainland coast. The manuscript is preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits; the second volume, which contains the descriptions of the Croatian islands and coast, bears the shelfmark Français 15453. The manuscript consists of two volumes (413 and 230 double-sided folios respectively), comprising a total of 1,234 pages of text and 87 maps. Some maps are bound together with their corresponding chapters, whereas others are dispersed among different institutions or have been lost. According to Thevet's own testimony, the work was compiled based on information gathered from numerous earlier pilot books (Destombes, 1972; Lestringant, 2003). These descriptions are compared with the sections on Istria and Sclavonia contained in Chapters IV–VII, together with the reference to Dubrovnik in Chapter VIII of Cosmographie de Levant, published in Lyon in 1554 and preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département Réserve des livres rares (shelfmark RES-G-1410), as well as with the descriptions of Sclavonia, Dubrovnik, and the present-day Montenegrin coast contained in Chapters III and IIII (IV) of the second volume of La Cosmographie universelle, published in Paris in 1575 and preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département Société de Géographie (shelfmark FOL-SG BON B-2 [2 RES]). The analytical corpus comprises all sections of these works in which Thevet directly or indirectly refers to the eastern Adriatic islands and coastline (Table 1). Digital facsimiles of the original editions available through the Gallica digital collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France were used for each work. Throughout the comparative analysis, the following abbreviations are employed: GIP for Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage, CL for Cosmographie de Levant, and CU for La Cosmographie universelle.

Tablica 1. Raspored tekstova koji se odnose na hrvatski prostor u Thevetovim djelima (r – recto; v – verso)

Table 1 *Distribution of texts relating to the Croatian territory in Thevet's works (r – recto; v – verso)*

Tema / *Topic*	**Naslov poglavlja / *Chapter title***	**Stranice / *Pages***
Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage (1586)		
Pag	*Isle de Pago*	33 r – 34 v
Krk	*Isle de Veggia*	42 r – 43 v
Korčula	*Isle de Cursole*	60 v – 61 v
Ugljan i Pašman / *Ugljan and Pašman*	*Isle de Zarre*	65 v – 68 r
Čiovo	*Isle de Bua*	68 v – 69 v
Hvar	*Isle de Liesene*	84 r – 85 r
Brač	*Brazze*	93 r – 93 v
Cosmographie de Levant (1554)		
Sklavonija	*Du païs d'ESCLAVONIE, & antiquitez d'iceluy. CHAP. III.*	777v – 780v
Dubrovnik i jugoistočni Jadran / *Dubrovnik and the southeastern Adriatic*	*De la Seigneurie & ville de Rhagouze, & autres forteresses remarquables, tirant la coste de la marine. CHAP. IIII.*	780v – 783r
La Cosmographie universelle (1575)		
Istra i Sklavonija / *Istra and Slavonia*	*De Istrie & Esclauonie. CHAP. IIII.*	22–24
O vukovima / *On wolves*	*Des Loups qui sont au pais d'Esclauonie. CHAP. V.*	24–27
O preobrazbama / *On transformations*	*Des transformations. CHAP. VI.*	27–29
O medvjedima / *On bears*	*Des Ours. CHAP. VII.*	29–32
Dubrovnik i jugoistočni Jadran / *Dubrovnik and the southeastern Adriatic*	*De l'assaut & combat que nous eumes sur Mer par les Turqs. CHAP. VIII.*	32–34

The methodological framework of this study is grounded in the historical-geographical analysis of spatial representations, the comparative analysis of geographical texts, and the critical evaluation of the geographical knowledge they contain. The underlying premise is that Thevet's descriptions of the eastern Adriatic should not be understood merely as descriptive accounts but as multi-layered geographical representations in which direct observation, material compiled from earlier written and cartographic sources, and interpretative patterns characteristic of Renaissance European cosmography are continuously intertwined. Since the same geographical region is examined across three works produced over a period of almost three decades, the research possesses a pronounced diachronic dimension, making it possible to trace changes in the construction of the geographical image of the eastern Adriatic and, more broadly, the evolution of Thevet's geographical perception of the region. The sole methodological exception concerns the analysis of the geographical coordinates contained in GIP and CU, which is fundamentally quantitative in nature. This analysis incorporates a broader examination of the spatial arrangement of localities and of the accuracy of the coordinates presented both in the text and on the accompanying maps in GIP, following their implementation within a Geographic Information System (GIS).

After translating and critically reading the original texts, their main thematic components – physical-geographical features, economic activities, population data, and geographical names – were identified and compared to analyse how the same geographical space is represented across the three works. Particular attention was paid to verbatim repetitions, correspondences, inconsistencies, and complementarities between the texts. All quotations are cited according to the English translations of the original texts, accompanied by the abbreviated title of the work from which they are taken. This analytical procedure makes it possible to identify both continuities and changes in Thevet's construction of the geographical image of the eastern Adriatic, to distinguish information derived from the author's own experience from that obtained through compilation, and to evaluate the processes through which geographical knowledge was created, transmitted, and supplemented within the intellectual culture of Early Modern Europe. Emphasis is placed on distinguishing information resulting from the author's own travels from that borrowed from earlier written and cartographic sources, one of the central methodological issues in research on Thevet's oeuvre (Lestringant, 1991, 2003; Van den Abbeele, 1992). Within this analytical framework, toponymy occupies a privileged position, since geographical names constitute the most enduring layer of geographical representations and provide an effective means of assessing the author's familiarity with the region, identifying possible information

sources, and reconstructing the informational networks through which geographical knowledge circulated among the principal intellectual and cultural centres of Europe. Consequently, the geographical reliability of Thevet's statements concerning the location, size, and names of islands, as well as their cultural heritage, is evaluated through comparison with Classical sources (Čače, 2001; Pliny the Elder, 2004) and with the findings of previous historical-geographical research (Kozličić, 1990a, 1990b, 1995). Thus, for example, in the chapter devoted to Čiovo, Thevet records the toponymic form Cinchio, noting that it had formerly been called Piguncio. This form may be associated with the ancient Peguntium (Pliny the Elder) or Pituntium (Ptolemy), whose location is generally identified by historians with present-day Podstrana (cf. Čače, 2001; Kozličić, 1990a).

Finally, the textual layer is examined in conjunction with the cartographic one. The cartometric analysis of Thevet's maps of the Croatian islands – including vectorisation of the coastline and the visual overlay (georeferencing) of digital facsimiles onto a modern cartographic base using Helmert's four-parameter planar transformation – was carried out in the complementary study by Faričić et al. (2020). Accordingly, the present article concentrates primarily on Thevet's texts, while the results obtained from the analysis of both the textual and cartographic layers are treated as mutually complementary, together providing a more comprehensive understanding of Thevet's perception of the eastern Adriatic during the Renaissance. In order to present this perspective as completely as possible, the article also reproduces selected examples of Thevet's cartographic work: an excerpt from his map of Europe (1581) (Fig. 1) together with his maps of the Croatian islands (Figs. 2 and 3).



Slika 1. A. Thevet, L'Europe et selon qu'elle est de présent divisée, Paris, 1581. – isječak (Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE D-11989)[1]

Figure 1 *A. Thevet, L'Europe et selon qu'elle est de présent divisée, Paris, 1581 – detail (Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE D-11989)*

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH TRAVEL WRITERS AND THE EASTERN ADRIATIC

Thevet's descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands emerged within the broader context of journeys undertaken by French explorers, pilgrims, and diplomats to the Levant, a phenom-

[1] In the title cartouche of the map, André Thevet identifies himself as Royal Cosmographer and writes: ESTANT l'Europe, tant par ses richesses, q̃ pour estre la plus peuplée de toutes les autres parties de l'vniuers, son nō & description par moy si bien exprimée en mō histoire cosmographiq̃, il ne me restoit pl^{9} qu'à vo^{9} la representer par ceste Carte eōme elle est diuisée de l'Asie vers l'Orient, p̃ le destroit Thracien, & fleuue Tanais, & le reste p̃ les mers Major, Oceane & Mediterranée. ('Since Europe, both by virtue of its wealth and because it is the most populous of all the parts of the world, has already had its name and description adequately set forth by me in my cosmographical history, nothing remained but to present it to you by means of this map, showing it as it is separated from Asia to the east by the Thracian Strait and the River Tanais, and elsewhere bounded by the Great Sea, the Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea.').

enon that expanded rapidly during the sixteenth century. Following the establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations between France and the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Francis I, the "gateway to the Levant" was effectively opened to pilgrims, envoys, merchants, and travel writers, for whom the eastern Adriatic coast became the customary and, according to contemporary opinion, the safest stage of the journey (Kandido-Rožman, 1990; Matković, 1882). Contemporaries distinguished four principal routes to the Orient – by sea, through 'Sclavonia', via Hungary, and through Greece – of which the so-called "Ragusan route" was considered the safest, although the maritime voyage from Venice to Dubrovnik was by no means either comfortable or easy (Kandido-Rožman, 1990). In her survey of French travel accounts relating to Dalmatia, M. Kandido-Rožman (1990) identifies around ten travellers active during the sixteenth century, among them Denis Possot, Jean Chesneau, Jacques Gassot, André Thevet, François de Belleforest, Nicolas de Nicolay, Philippe du Fresne-Canaye, Pierre Lescalopier, Jean Palerne, and Villamont. Although their narratives vary considerably in quality and scope, taken together they illuminate the French perception of the Dalmatian cities and islands. Most of these travellers followed the same coastal route, stopping at the same places – Zadar, Šibenik, Split, Hvar, Korčula, and Dubrovnik – so that their accounts collectively form a characteristic itinerary of the eastern Adriatic.

Within this corpus, Thevet occupies a distinctive position. Unlike most of his contemporaries, who approached the eastern Adriatic primarily as pilgrims, Thevet regarded it through the eyes of a cosmographer. He was not content merely describing holy places and relics; instead, drawing upon both his own observations and earlier written authorities, he sought to present the geographical position, appearance, and significance of its towns and islands. He also provided geographical coordinates for many islands and major settlements. M. Kandido-Rožman (1990) has already observed that Thevet was among the first French authors of the sixteenth century to provide extensive descriptions of what is today the Croatian littoral, paying particular attention to Dubrovnik. It should further be emphasised that Thevet was the only French traveller of the period to complement these descriptions with cartographic representations of Croatian islands.

The way Thevet represents geographical space must be understood within the broader framework of French travel culture and the evolution of sixteenth-century travel writing. Like the literary authors of his age, the Renaissance traveller sought inspiration from Classical writers and cartographers; however, unlike those who merely imitated their predecessors, he endeavoured to supplement and, where necessary, correct inherited knowledge through personal

experience and new discoveries (Wolfzettel, 1996). In Thevet's writings this engagement with Classical antiquity manifests itself in two complementary ways: first, through explicit references to ancient authorities such as Strabo, Pliny, and Ptolemy; and second, via encounters with learned individuals familiar with the Classical tradition. It was precisely in the field of geography that sixteenth-century French travel literature made its most substantial contribution. Consequently, although *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage* was conceived primarily as a practical pilot book, Thevet's descriptions repeatedly transcend their immediate navigational purpose.

Where documentary discourse reaches its limits, space opens for the distinctive Renaissance fashioning of the travelled landscape, allowing the traveller to construct a heroic narrative of the self. An important role in this process is played by the myth of Odysseus. In *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage*, Thevet invokes Odysseus in connection with Cephalonia Minor, and, as Wolfzettel (1996) observed, appears to present himself as a new Odysseus. In *Cosmographie de Levant* he declares: 'I ventured upon the perilous sea and the raging winds in order to learn these things through my own experience.' (Thevet, 1554 [1985], *Cosmographie de Levant*, ed. Lestringant, 1985: 4). Equally characteristic of the Renaissance imagination is the Arcadian-Edenic narrative, according to which nature abundantly yields its fruits without human labour, as exemplified in Ronsard's *Les Isles fortunées*, published in 1555 (Dubois, 1985). Traces of this conception are also discernible in Thevet's writings. Although the New World had already been discovered, the Levant continued for a long time to be perceived as an earthly paradise, while the Adriatic remained merely one stage along the route leading towards it. Sixteenth-century travel accounts thus continued to draw upon the long tradition of pilgrimage and upon a mythical-religious cosmography (Pederin, 2009). Accordingly, Thevet concludes his account of the conflict between the inhabitants of Hvar and the Ottomans by asserting that God showed mercy to His people and drove away the infidels – an interpretation which, together with the calamities previously inflicted upon the Ottoman army, recalls the miracle narratives of the Middle Ages. At times, Thevet also appears to follow Montaigne's principle that imagination should neither be indulged without restraint nor altogether resisted (Dubois, 1985; Vinja, 2007).

The fundamental characteristics of sixteenth-century travel discourse are the discovery of the Other and the affirmation of the self (*connaissance de l'Autre et affirmation de soi*) (Wolfzettel, 1996), while the Renaissance traveller sought above all to gain knowledge of foreign peoples and cultures (Pederin, 2009). The inconsistencies found in Thevet's geographical information may therefore be interpreted in two complementary ways: on the one hand, as reflections of the mythical-religious conception of geographical space characteristic of his age,

and, on the other, as consequences of the excessively ambitious encyclopaedic scope of a work whose original conception ultimately exceeded the author's ability to realise it in full. Unlike the seventeenth-century Classical traveller, who states clearly in his preface which branch of learning he privileges and why he cannot treat every topic – as Jacob Spon does in the introduction to his *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce et du Levant* (Spon, 1679), thereby establishing an explicit 'contract with the reader' – Thevet offers no comparable methodological statement. In the preface to his travel account, Spon explicitly declares that he intends to present only material relevant to geography, and to do so 'in the most accurate and faithful manner possible', thereby defining in advance both the scope and the limits of his work (Spon, 1679). Thevet's narrative, by contrast, is best understood within the developmental trajectory of French Renaissance travel writing, situated between the imaginative world of the Renaissance and the emerging 'discourse of order' characteristic of the seventeenth century (Wolfzettel, 1996), and, more broadly, within the previously discussed crisis of cosmography as a scholarly genre.

THEVET'S DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CROATIAN COAST AND ISLANDS

Sources of Information

Thevet's descriptions are founded upon three readily identifiable sources of knowledge characteristic of Renaissance cosmography: the legacy of Classical antiquity, contemporary written and cartographic sources, and the author's own observations. These three layers are continuously interwoven throughout the text, and distinguishing between them is essential for assessing the reliability of individual statements.

Alongside the contemporary names of numerous geographical features, Thevet frequently records what he regarded as their Classical antecedents, thereby demonstrating his ambition to verify and supplement inherited knowledge. In the chapter devoted to Korčula, he explicitly refers to several ancient names for the island: 'The island of Korčula, to which the ancient writers gave various names, sometimes calling it Curcura, at other times Melana, and finally Corcyra Nigra [...] in order to distinguish it from Corfu' (GIP). Similarly, in the chapter on Krk he invokes both Pliny and Strabo in his discussion of the island's waters. Krk, he writes, 'was called Illyride by the ancient authors, as though it were one of the principal islands of Illyria,' while the phenomenon of the intermittent lake is associated with Strabo's Lugeus palus (GIP). In Cosmographie de Levant, Istria is described 'according to Pliny, Solinus, and Ovid,' whereas

the origin of the name Illyricum is explained in two different ways: 'according to Appian, after the son of Polyphemus, and according to Eustathius, after Illyrios, the son of Cadmus' (CL). The chapters dealing with wolves and transformations contain successive references to Theocritus, Virgil, Pliny, Solinus, Galen, Zoroaster, and Horus, while the discussion of bears invokes Pliny, Solinus, Martial, and Juvenal (CL). On occasion, Thevet even defends the authority of Classical writers through rhetorical argument: 'Why should we doubt what Theocritus, Virgil, Pliny, Solinus, and so many other distinguished authors have written concerning the wolf?' (CL).

In addition to ancient authorities, Thevet also relies upon the writings of contemporary scholars and upon cartographic sources. In the chapter on Krk he mentions the humanist János Zsámboky, better known under his Latinised name Johannes Sambucus, together with Sambucus's map of Pannonia, on which the island appears 'under the name Velger' (GIP). Likewise, Thevet's description of the intermittent Lake Cerknica corresponds almost verbatim to Abraham Ortelius's account of the same hydrological phenomenon in the French edition of the Theatrum orbis terrarum[2], although Ortelius himself is not cited explicitly. Nevertheless, since Ortelius's Theatrum includes maps by various cartographers that feature many of the geographical names found in Thevet's descriptions of the eastern Adriatic – alongside brief descriptions of Illyricum, Istria, and Zadar and Šibenik regions – this provides further evidence of Ortelius's influence on Thevet's work. For example, Thevet's Cigola (Lošinj) was almost certainly adopted from Wolfgang Lazius's map Goritiae, Karstii, Chaczeolae, Carniolae, Histriae, Et Windorum Marchae Descriptio, published by Ortelius alongside the section devoted to these regions of the northern Adriatic and its hinterland. Likewise, the toponym Monte maior on Pietro Coppo's map Histriae tabula, reproduced by Ortelius with the accompanying text on Istria, may readily be recognised in Thevet's monts d'Arse & de Marone, referring to Učka mountain range. When discussing the Kastrioti fortresses on Krk, Thevet refers readers to his own History of Illustrious Men, while for his explanation of the planetary system he cites his own La Cosmographie universelle (GIP). A considerable proportion of the material, however,

[2] The French editions of Ortelius's work, published under the title Théatre de l'univers, contenant les cartes de tout le monde (1587 and 1588), are available on the Gallica portal of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (without a specific shelfmark). In both copies, however, the maps are difficult to read, and the Latin edition of the Theatrum of 1575 (Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole – Médiathèque centrale Emile Zola, 00815RES) was therefore also consulted in order to verify the toponyms.

derives directly from pilot books. According to his own statement, Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage was compiled from 'Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, Italian, Turkish, Arabic, and Persian pilot books.' The compilation of this material resulted in an exceptionally detailed navigational description of the Istrian, Kvarner, and northern Dalmatian coasts. Thevet also acknowledges that he acquired several of the island maps during his travels:

'While I was in the city of Venice [...] a certain Greek from Crete gave me the draft of a map of several islands of this sea'(GIP). He repeats essentially the same remark in the chapter on Brač, noting that the map 'was given to me in the city of Venice' (GIP).

The most valuable layer of information is that which derives directly from Thevet's Levantine journey (1549–1554). Cosmographie de Levant is written almost entirely in the first person and follows the structure of an itinerary: 'Having loaded a large quantity of ship's biscuit before departing from Venice [...] we set sail two hours after midnight' (CL).

Direct observation is recognisable through the author's precise dating of events, his personal impressions, and his accounts of physical hardship: 'I myself fell gravely ill, as did many others in our company, so greatly were we afflicted by that sea, turbulent and foul-smelling' (CL). In CU Thevet likewise confirms that he personally visited the region: 'In the year 1547, when I departed from Venice with my companions, we enjoyed favourable winds that enabled us to visit the towns situated along the coast under Venetian rule.' Notably, the date of the journey differs between the two works (1549 in CL, 1547 in CU). Thevet also claims to have witnessed pirate attacks first hand. Referring to the Bay of Tanarit (probably the Kvarner Gulf), he writes that it is 'a very long and broad gulf where pirates and corsairs are almost always to be found; and I know this from my own experience [...] for the Turks attacked us on three occasions, and I myself received several of their arrows' (CU). In GIP, direct observation appears primarily in autobiographical anecdotes, such as the episode describing his captivity on Malta, from which he states he was rescued by 'two wealthy merchants from the island of Krk.'

The Regional Framework: Sclavonia, Dalmatia, Illyricum, and Liburnia

In all three works, Thevet subsumes the eastern Adriatic under the overarching choronym Sclavonia (Esclauonie). His definition is formulated in almost identical terms in GIP and CU, constituting one of the clearest examples of verbatim textual borrowing between the two works. In the chapter on Pag in GIP, he states that Sclavonia 'now comprises three provinces: first, that which is properly called Sclavonia and extends westwards; second, Dalmatia, situated to the south; and third, Albania, which faces entirely towards the east.' He further explains that under

this name he also includes 'Croatian Carniola [...] Illyricum, the territory governed by the Count of Zadar (Comté de Zare), Liburnia, Dalmatia, and the territory inhabited by the people of Dubrovnik' (GIP). In CU, he writes in almost identical terms: 'This region, which I call Sclavonia, was formerly included under the name Illyria, neighbouring Pannonia, and today comprises three provinces: namely, that properly called Sclavonia, extending westwards; Dalmatia to the south; and Albania, which lies entirely towards the east.'

Thevet defines the boundaries of Sclavonia in identical terms in both works. To the east it is bounded by the River Drina (Drine), 'which flows beyond Dubrovnik'; to the west by the River Raša (Arse), separating it from Istria; to the south by the Adriatic Sea; and to the north by 'the mountains of Croatia.' The dimensions likewise correspond. In both works its length is given as 'one hundred and twenty leagues,' while in CU Thevet additionally specifies its width as 'only thirty [leagues] from the rivers of the Adriatic Sea to the aforementioned mountains of Croatia.' In GIP the spatial conception of Sclavonia is further complicated through its association with a more broadly conceived Dalmatia (in the chapter on Čiovo), which 'comprises several kingdoms and provinces, such as Carniola, Croatia, Illyricum, the County of Zadar, and others,' extending for 'some one hundred and twenty leagues inland' (GIP). Significantly, the same measurement is assigned in one instance to Sclavonia and in another to Dalmatia, illustrating Thevet's inconsistency in defining the territorial extent of these regional concepts.

Within Sclavonia, Thevet clearly recognises the political fragmentation of the region. The coastal towns, he notes, belonged to Venice; the inland territories were largely under Ottoman rule; while 'that which lies between Senj and the city of Trieste is subject to the King of the Romans,' that is, the Habsburgs (CU). Dubrovnik, by contrast, is described as an independent republic paying tribute to the Ottoman Sultan while remaining 'dependent upon no one but itself' (CU). This fourfold political division – Venetian, Ottoman, Habsburg, and Ragusan – is presented consistently throughout Thevet's later works and accurately reflects the geopolitical fragmentation of the eastern Adriatic during the Early Modern period.

Therefore, by the name Sclavonia (Esclavonie), Thevet does not refer to medieval or Early Modern Slavonia in the sense or territorial extent associated with that name today. Rather, he uses the term in its broader contemporary meaning to denote the eastern Adriatic coast inhabited predominantly by Slavic, and above all Croatian, populations. Like most sixteenth-century French geographers, Thevet adopted the already established Venetian geographical nomenclature (together with its cognate forms used throughout much of the Italian Peninsula), so that his

form Esclavonie is essentially the French adaptation of the Venetian, or Italian, name Schiavonia. It is therefore not an original regionalisation devised by Thevet, but rather his acceptance of the geographical terminology that had become dominant in contemporary European representations of the eastern Adriatic region (Čoralić, 2001; Deanović, 1962; Pitteri, 2010). The term represents an ethnogeographical rather than a political-territorial designation, as its meaning derives from the perception of the eastern Adriatic littoral as the shared cultural and linguistic space. Consistent with this understanding, European geographers, cartographers, and travel writers regularly referred to the inhabitants of this region as Schiavoni, a designation that did not denote membership in a single political community but rather the Slavic population of the eastern Adriatic coast, predominantly Croats (Čoralić, 2001; Deanović, 1962; Prijatelj Pavičić, 2018). This spatial definition is explicitly confirmed by Giuseppe Rosaccio, who in his isolario Viaggio da Venetia a Costantinopoli (1606) states that Schiavonia extends 'dal fiume Arsa fino al fiume Drino' ('from Raša River to Drina River'), bounded by the Adriatic Sea to the south and the mountains of Croatia to the north, while referring to the islands along this coast as Isole della Schiavonia (Pavić, 2000; Rosaccio, 1606). Similarly, Alonso de Santa Cruz, in his Islario general de todas las islas del mundo ('General Isolario of All the Islands of the World'), designated the same islands as Yslas junto a la Esclavonia ('Islands adjacent to Sclavonia') (Faričić and Lončar, 2024). In this sense, Thevet's Esclavonie should likewise be understood as a geographical designation for the Croatian and neighbouring eastern Adriatic lands, rather than as the name of any specific state or administrative entity.



Slika 2. Thevetove karte hrvatskih otoka: a) Pag, b) Krk, c) Korčula, d) Zadarski otok (Ugljan i Pašman)
(British Library, K.Top.113.43, K.Top.113.44, K.Top.113.46 i BL, K.Top.113.47)

Figure 2 *Thevet's maps of Croatian islands: a) Pag, b) Krk, c) Korčula, and d) Zadar Island (Ugljan and Pašman) (British Library, K.Top.113.43, K.Top.113.44, K.Top.113.46, and K.Top.113.47)*



Slika 3. Thevetove karte hrvatskih otoka: e) Čiovo, f) Hvar i g) Brač (British Library, K.Top.113.48, K.Top.113.49, BL, K.Top.113.50)

Figure 3. *Thevet's maps of Croatian islands: e) Čiovo, f) Hvar, and g) Brač (British Library, K.Top.113.48, K.Top.113.49, and K.Top.113.50)*

Geographical Coordinates of Selected Geographical Features

Unlike the authors of most contemporary isolarii, Thevet provides geographical coordinates for a considerable number of islands and coastal settlements. Furthermore, on the maps of the islands included in GIP, he records within the map frames the coordinates of their approximate geometric centres, which he also gives in the accompanying text. The only exception is his map of Ugljan and Pašman, which he mistakenly depicted as a single Island of Zadar and within whose map frame he omitted the coordinates, although the reference marks indicating its centre are present (Fig. 2d). The values of longitude and latitude were, in all probability, expressed according to the Ptolemaic system, with the prime meridian passing through the Fortunate Islands, that is, the Canary Islands (the meridian of the Canary Island of Ferro, which for

centuries served as the standard reference meridian, lies 17°40′ west of Greenwich). For the islands, Thevet also regularly records the climatic zone, the parallel, and the duration of the longest day, thereby demonstrating that GIP and CU are directly rooted in the tradition of Ptolemy's Geography. Geographical coordinates are provided for selected geographical features in two of the works (GIP and CU), whereas CL, being a travel narrative, contains no geographical coordinates (Table 2).

Thevet does not indicate the cardinal directions accompanying the values of latitude and longitude, evidently if all latitudes refer to the Northern Hemisphere. At the time, moreover, longitudes were commonly not divided into eastern and western values; instead, they were expressed on a scale from 0° to 360° eastwards from the prime meridian. The average eastward displacement of the longitudes recorded in Thevet's works amounts to 25°41′, approximately 1.45 times greater than the actual longitudinal difference between the Canary Islands meridian and Greenwich. This discrepancy, however, is entirely understandable when account is taken of Ptolemy's erroneous estimate of the Earth's circumference, which is approximately 1.4 times smaller than its true value (Berggren and Jones, 2000; Keuning, 1955; Snyder, 1993; Tupikova, 2022). In Classical antiquity, the geographical longitudes of localities were determined indirectly from longitudinal differences measured relative to the reference meridian established by Ptolemy at Alexandria. These longitudinal differences were calculated by dividing the west–east distance between two localities by the circumference of the approximate mean parallel passing through them, while the circumferences of the parallels themselves were derived from tables of the chord (chorda) function of the great circle (that is, the Equator or any meridian together with its antimeridian on the Earth approximated as a sphere). The calculated longitudinal differences relative to the reference meridian ($\Delta\lambda$) were subsequently converted into absolute longitude values (λ) relative to the prime meridian situated at the extreme western limit of the ecumene, so that all longitudes were expressed as eastward values (Martínek and Létal, 2023; Newton, 1979; Tupikova, 2014, 2022). Since Ptolemy's assumed circumference of the Earth – and consequently of all parallels – was smaller than the actual value, and because these values appear in the denominator of the calculation, the resulting longitudinal differences inevitably became significantly exaggerated, exceeding the true values by approximately a factor of 1.4.

Tablica 2. Geografske koordinate istočnojadranskih otoka, naselja i hidrografskih objekata u Thevetovim opisima i na Thevetovim kartama (λ – geografska dužina; φ – geografska širina; vrijednosti prema hrvatskim prijevodima izvornika)
Table 2 *Geographical Coordinates of Eastern Adriatic Islands, Settlements, and Hydrographic Features in Thevet's Descriptions and on His Maps (λ – longitude; φ – latitude; values based on Croatian translations of the original texts)*

Lokalitet (Thevetov toponimski lik) / *Location (Thevet's toponymic form)*	**Djelo / *Work***	**λ**	**φ**	**Najdulji dan (uz napomene) / *Longest day (with notes)***
Otok / *Island*				
Krk (*Isle de Veggia*)	GIP karta / *map*	39°30'	45°30'	–
Krk (*Isle de Veggia*)	GIP	45°30′	39°30′	15 h 30 min (zamijenjene su vrijednosti λ i φ) / *(λ and φ values are reversed)*
Pag (*Isle de Pago*)	GIP karta / *map*	40°30'	45°00'	–
Korčula (*Isle de Cursole*)	GIP karta / *map*	43°00′	42°45′	–
Korčula (*Isle de Cursole*)	GIP	43°00′	42°45′	–
Ugljan i Pašman (*Isle de Zarre*)* / *Ugljan and Pašman (Isle de Zarre)**	GIP karta / *map*	[42°00′]	[43°14′]	–
Ugljan i Pašman (*Isle de Zarre*) / *Ugljan and Pašman (Isle de Zarre)*	GIP	49°00′	34°14′	–
Hvar (*Isle de Liesene*)	GIP karta / *map*	43°00′	43°15′	-
Hvar (*Isle de Liesene*)	GIP	43°15′	43°00′	(zamijenjene su vrijednosti λ i φ)
Hvar (*Pharos*)	CU	43°00′	42°45′	15 h
Čiovo (*Isle de Bua*)	GIP karta / *map*	42°30'	44°00'	
Čiovo (*Isle de Bua*)	GIP	44°00′	40°30′	14 h 35 min (φ s karte je unesena u tekst kao λ; λ s karte je vjerojatno unesena kao φ, no s pogreškom u pisanju)
Brač (*Brazze*)	GIP karta / *map*	43°45′	42°30′	-
Brač (*Brazze*)	GIP	43°45′	42°30′	15 h
Rab (*Arbe*)	GIP	41°00′	43°30′	–
Lošinj (*Assorro*)	GIP	36°40′	44°30′	–

Lokalitet (Thevetov toponimski lik) / *Location (Thevet's toponymic form)*	**Djelo / *Work***	**λ**	**φ**	**Najdulji dan (uz napomene) / *Longest day (with notes)***
Mljet (*Melede / Meligene*)	GIP	44°10′	41°20′	–
Naselje / *Settlement*				
Zadar (*Zarre / Jadera*)	GIP	42°00′	43°45′	–
Zadar (*Jader*)	CU	42°00′	43°45′	–
Nin (*None*)	CU	41°30′	44°00′	–
Senj (*Segna / Senia*)	GIP	39°00′	44°40′	15 h 30 min
Senj (*Segna*)	CU	39°00′	45°00′	–
Labin (*Albone / Aluona*)	GIP	36°50′	45°00′	15 h 30 min
Plomin (*Fianona / Flauona*)	GIP	37°00′	44°45′	15 h 25 min
Stinica (*Ortopula / Ortopla*)	GIP	40°00′	44°30′	15 h 30 min
Bakar (*Bocharin / Volcere*)	GIP	38°30′	44°45′	15 h 30 min
Skradin (*Scardone*)	GIP	42°40′	43°20′	15 h 30 min
Split (*Spalate / Exetio*)	GIP	43°40′	43°00′	–
Stridon (*Strigo / Sidrona*)	GIP	43°30′	44°30′	15 h 25 min
Podstrana (*Cinchio / Piguncio*)	GIP	44°00′	42°45′	15 h 25 min
Gabela (*Gabella*)	GIP	44°20′	42°45′	15 h 30 min
Gabela (*Naron / Neretva*)	CU	44°00′	42°20′	–
Kotor (*Cataro / Aseruio*)	GIP	44°45′	42°00′	15 h 30 min
Budva (*Budoa / Bulua*)	GIP	45°00′	41°45′	15 h 25 min
Budva (*Bude*)	CU	45°00′	41°45′	–
Lješ (*Alexio / Lisso*)	GIP	44°45′	41°10′	15 h 30 min
Dubrovnik (*Araguse / Ragouse*)	CU	44°40′	42°20′	–
Ušće rijeke / *River mouth*				
Krka (*Varieche / Cherca*)	GIP	42°20′	43°20′	–
Krka (*Cherca*)	CU	42°20′	43°20′	–
Krka kod Skradina (*Scardona*) / *Krka near Skradin (Scardona)*	CU	42°40′	43°20′	–
*Karta Ugljana i Pašmana ne sadrži koordinate i vrijednosti bliske koordinatama susjednog Zadra su arbitrarno dodane; kompasna ruža na toj karti zarotirana je pogreškom za +90°; detaljnije objašnjenje nalazi se u tekstu. / *The map of Ugljan and Pašman does not contain geographical coordinates. Values approximating the coordinates of nearby Zadar have therefore been added arbitrarily. The compass rose on this map is incorrectly rotated by +90°. A more detailed explanation is provided in the text.*				

The accuracy of Thevet's coordinates cannot readily be assessed, primarily because of the inconsistency of the data – not only between his two works (GIP and CU), but also within GIP itself, where the coordinates given in the text do not always correspond to those shown on the

accompanying maps (Table 2). For the purposes of the present study, and specifically for positioning localities within a GIS environment, whenever Thevet assigns two or more different positions to the same locality (either in different works or both in the text and on the maps), the coordinates selected were those closest to the actual geographical position of the locality.

Although certain localities appearing in both works – for example Zadar, the mouth of Krka River, and Budva – are assigned identical coordinates, inconsistencies occur in the cases of Senj (the latitude differs by 20′ between GIP and CU) and Gabela ($\lambda = 44°20'$, $\varphi = 42°45'$ in GIP, compared with $\lambda = 44°00'$, $\varphi = 42°20'$ in CU). It was also established that Thevet was not sufficiently careful when transcribing coordinates from his maps into the accompanying text, since in three instances (the islands of Krk, Čiovo, and Hvar; see Table 2) he interchanged the values of longitude and latitude, thereby introducing less accurate coordinates into the textual descriptions.

When employing Ptolemaic spherical coordinates, the numerical values of latitude and longitude for many localities along the eastern Adriatic coast are remarkably similar, being concentrated around the value of 40. It is therefore conceivable that Thevet – far less concerned with the precision of spatial data than modern standards would require – accidentally interchanged individual coordinate values and subsequently failed to verify their internal consistency throughout GIP as a whole.

Apart from these cases, two further exceptions deserve attention. The first concerns the town of Stridon; since its definitive location has not been established, the margin of error in Thevet's coordinates cannot be retrospectively calculated. The second concerns the arbitrary assignment of the coordinates $\lambda = 42°00'$ (E) and $\varphi = 43°14'$ (N) to the *Island of Zadar*, that is, Ugljan and Pašman, whose textual coordinates, together with the corresponding cartographic representation – which itself contains no coordinates – are affected by numerous inaccuracies. On the one hand, the latitude of $\varphi = 34°14'$ and the corrected longitude of $\lambda = 23°19'$ (obtained by subtracting the mean eastward displacement of 25°41′ from Thevet's value of 49°00′) place the island in the Mediterranean Sea, approximately 150 km south-west of Crete. Such values cannot be attributed merely to imprecise spatial measurements; rather, they clearly result from an inadvertent error committed while recording the numerical values. On the other hand, the map of the *Island of Zadar*, although lacking coordinates, is oriented with east at the top of the sheet. However, on the compass rose Thevet mistakenly placed the direction of north (*T*, *Tramontana*) where east should be, rotating the entire compass rose by +90°. Since Thevet inadvertently transposed numerical values in the latitude and longitude of the islands in the three

cases discussed above, it is entirely possible that a similar oversight occurred here. Accordingly, to evaluate the positional accuracy of Ugljan and Pašman, coordinates closely approximating those assigned by Thevet to Zadar were selected as a baseline.

Once modern reference coordinates and Thevet's coordinates had been assigned to the localities and islands, it became possible to correct for the mean eastward displacement, position them within a GIS environment, and calculate the average accuracy of both the latitudes and the corrected longitudes (Marelić, 2025). The actual longitudinal span between the extreme localities – from Lješ in the east to Labin in the west – is 5°31′, whereas the corresponding latitudinal extent – from Bakar in the north to Lješ in the south – is 3°30′. According to Thevet's data, however, the longitudinal range amounts to 8°19′, almost three degrees greater than the actual value, while the latitudinal range is 4°19′, approximately half a degree greater than reality. When these differences are converted into kilometres along the approximate mean parallel of the Adriatic Sea ($\varphi = 42°40'$) and the corresponding meridian, assuming a spherical Earth with a radius of 6,371 km, Thevet's east–west and north–south extents exceed the actual values by 229 km and 91 km, respectively.3 These discrepancies result from the exceptionally low average accuracy of his longitude values, whose mean error is 1°10′ (93.7 km), while the corresponding mean error of the latitude values is 0°31′ (56.7 km). It should also be noted that the directions of these errors display a systematic pattern. In the northern Adriatic, longitude errors show a westward displacement, whereas in the central and southern Adriatic they are displaced eastwards. Conversely, latitudes are comparatively accurate in the northern Adriatic but become progressively displaced towards the south in the central and southern sectors (Fig. 4). This distribution of errors is characteristic of the coordinates contained in Ptolemy's *Geography* and remained common on geographical maps long after Thevet's lifetime, since geographical longitude could not be determined with high precision until the widespread introduction of the marine chronometer in the late eighteenth century. Geographical maps of the Adriatic and its surrounding regions whose longitudes remained rooted in the Ptolemaic tradition include those produced by Giacomo Gastaldi in 1570 and Vincenzo Maria Coronelli in 1688. By contrast, printed nautical charts of the same period were copied from manuscript portolan charts and were therefore visually more compressed than contemporary geographical maps, while at the

[3] Approximating the Earth as a sphere with a radius of 6,371 km, the length of an arc of 1° along the parallel of 42°40′ is 81.7 km and along a meridian 111.1 km. The actual mean east–west extent is therefore 450 km, as against Thevet's 679 km, while the actual north–south extent is 389 km, as against Thevet's 480 km.

same time preserving substantially more accurate longitude values throughout the entire chart field (Marelić, 2023).



* Thevetove koordinate lokaliteta pomaknute su na zapad za njihov prosječni istočni otklon geografskih dužina od 25°41' zbog razlike u početnim meridijanima
** Thevet's coordinates of localities were shifted westward for their average easterly longitude displacement of 25°41' due to prime meridian discrepancies*

Slika 4. Položaj Thevetovih koordinata lokaliteta naspram njihovih stvarnih (referentnih) vrijednosti. Geografske dužine Thevetovih koordinata korigirane su tako da su pomaknute zapadno za iznos njihova prosječnoga istočnog otklona od 25°41'

Figure 4 *Locations derived from Thevet's coordinates compared with their actual (reference) positions. Thevet's longitudes were corrected by shifting them westward by their mean eastward deviation of 25°41'.*

Izvor / *Source*: Marine Regions (Claus i sur., 2017); digitalni model visina EU-DEM, verzija 1.1 (European Environment Agency, 2016) / *Marine Regions (Claus et al., 2017); EU-DEM digital elevation model, version 1.1 (European Environment Agency, 2016).*

Thevet's data on the duration of the longest day (that is, the interval between sunrise and sunset) at individual localities are consistent with his latitude values. Indeed, the longest day at any location in the Northern Hemisphere occurs at the summer solstice, when the Sun reaches its maximum declination (equal to the angle between the plane of the Equator and that of the ecliptic), which most commonly falls on 21 June. If atmospheric refraction and the apparent

diameter of the Sun are disregarded – as was the case in Thevet's time – the astronomical calculation is based on geographical latitude as the principal variable together with the Sun's declination, itself determined by the inclination of the Earth's axis relative to the plane of the ecliptic:

$$D = (2 \div 15°) \times \arccos(-\tan\varphi \times \tan\delta), \quad (1)$$

where D denotes the length of the day, φ the geographical latitude, and δ the Sun's declination (Meeus, 1998). At a latitude of 45°, with a solar declination of 23°27′, the longest day (from sunrise to sunset on the day of the summer solstice) lasts 15 h 40 min; consequently, Thevet's values are relatively accurate.

In addition to the inconsistencies and discrepancies in the recording of geographical coordinates, Thevet's texts frequently lack a coherent geographical sequence in their descriptions of individual parts of Istria, Kvarner region, and Dalmatia. The course of the narrative is repeatedly interrupted by unexpected digressions, followed by returns to the original subject, making it difficult to follow the exposition according to any geographical order. The descriptions of the Croatian islands in GIP follow a sequence unrelated to any geographical logic: Pag, Krk, Korčula, the *Island of Zadar* (Ugljan and Pašman), Čiovo, Hvar, and Brač. Even within these descriptions there are numerous excursions into regions to which the islands themselves do not belong, so that the intellectual journey becomes even more intricate than the confusion created by the erroneous geographical coordinates. Thus, in the chapter on the island of Pag, Thevet discusses the area between Pag and the islet of Arkanđel, west of Trogir; in the chapter on Krk, he lists many of the larger islands extending from Krk to Dubrovnik; while in the chapter on Korčula, after describing that island and mentioning neighbouring islands and islets, he concludes his account of Dalmatia ('I now leave the lands and provinces ending in this Gulf of Venice, such as Dalmatia, which was for the most part converted to Christianity by St Jerome, who was born in that country and died in Bethlehem, as I myself saw and learned when visiting his tomb, which still exists today'), proceeds to enumerate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and then returns once again to the description of the coast from the Bay of Kotor to the Morea (the Peloponnese). In the chapter on Čiovo, while describing the regions of Trogir and Split, he defines the territorial extent of Sclavonia and provides geographical coordinates for numerous settlements along the eastern Adriatic coast. In the chapter on Hvar, he focuses largely on describing the island and its neighbours, whereas in the chapter on Brač, after examining that island, he returns once more to Zadar and to the sailing route from Zadar to Split.

Thevet's Representation of Physical-Geographical Characteristics

Thevet emphasises the pronounced vertical dissection of the relief of the eastern Adriatic islands and coastline: 'these regions are very mountainous, especially in the provinces of Carinthia and Croatia and other neighbouring parts of Dalmatia, which the Venetians have usurped' (GIP). Pag is described as 'fairly mountainous,' Krk as 'high in some places and low in others,' while Čiovo is said to be 'as mountainous as, or even more mountainous than, any other island in the Adriatic Sea' (GIP). In CU, the whole of Sclavonia is characterised as 'entirely mountainous, especially Carinthia,' while the area around Trogir is described as possessing 'the most mountainous terrain in the whole of Dalmatia' (CU) – an evident reference to Mount Kozjak, which dominates the landscape from the hinterland. Thevet also describes the coastal relief from a functional, pilot-book perspective. In the chapter on Krk he writes: 'The land is high in some places and low in others, with numerous capes and peninsulas projecting into the sea, where many captains and sailors have frequently been deceived into believing that they had found islands.' In the chapter on Korčula he warns mariners about the topography in the approaches to Lastovo: 'it is rather difficult to approach, being surrounded by small islets and very dangerous reefs' (GIP).

Thevet also records hydrological features. In addition to mentioning rivers (Raša, Rječina, Krka, Cetina, Žrnovnica, Neretva, Drim, and Trebišnjica), he describes two particularly noteworthy natural phenomena. The first is the intermittent Lake Cerknica, discussed in the chapter on Krk with unusual attention: 'When these cavities become so filled with water that they can no longer contain it [...] they discharge it in such quantity and with such force that a man on horseback [...] could scarcely flee swiftly enough to escape the torrent of these waters [...] After the lake has dried up, the crops that had previously been sown are harvested, and then the fields are sown once again before the waters return' (GIP). The second phenomenon concerns thermal springs. Thevet believed that such springs had once existed on Krk but had disappeared 'as the island became more densely inhabited [...] and increasingly cultivated,' rejecting as fictitious the contemporary accounts of a 'boiling spring' at Baška (GIP). Nevertheless, Thevet's understanding of the hydrographical system of the eastern Adriatic was far from complete. Thus, in CU he records Krka River twice under different names and with different geographical coordinates (once as *Cherca* and *Varieche*, and again as *Scardona*), while he incorrectly states that the sinking river Trebišnjica flows into the sea near Ston (CU).

Thevet's descriptions of vegetation most frequently serve the Arcadian-Edenic narrative of abundance. Pag possesses 'very beautiful fruit trees and other trees, fertile fields for sowing

grain, and many other advantages.' Krk is "richly covered with trees." Despite its mountainous terrain, Čiovo is 'productive in wheat, timber, and excellent pasture,' while near Split stretches 'a nearby plain full of fruit trees' (GIP). His most detailed description of vegetation concerns Brač, where particular plant species are explicitly associated with the exceptional quality of the meat of goats and sheep: 'In the fields one sees and smells rosemary, sage, thyme, wild marjoram, and many other herbs which remain green throughout the year; all this contributes to producing the finest meat in the world' (GIP). Describing Hvar, Thevet remarks: 'It is not nearly as barren as many have wrongly claimed, asserting that it produces no grain whatsoever – a manifest absurdity – for although the island is very mountainous, there are places where the pasture is excellent enough to sustain many kinds of livestock' (GIP).

Thevet discusses the animal world on two distinct levels. Along the coast and on the islands, he records domestic animals and birds. Murter is described as 'inhabited by birds and animals,' while Brač is renowned for its hawks: 'above rise the mountains that bear the name of these hawks, since such birds are reared there' (GIP). In the hinterland of Sclavonia, however, the emphasis shifts to large wild animals – wolves and bears – to which CL devotes no fewer than three chapters and CU an extensive excursus. Wolves, Thevet asserts, are 'more numerous than in any region I have ever seen,' while bears are hunted 'by digging pits' (CU). His zoological observations are closely interwoven with both Classical learning and popular tradition, particularly in connection with lycanthropy, that is, the widespread popular belief in the transformation of human beings into werewolves in the Dinaric region.

Thevet's Description of Economic Characteristics

Thevet's portrayal of the economy is not uniform. For some islands he provides specific information, whereas for others he merely repeats the Arcadian formula of abundance without referring to economic activities. In the case of Brač, for example, he enumerates the island's fertility and livestock but says nothing about its economic pursuits. By contrast, his descriptions of Korčula and Zadar contain significantly more detailed insights into local economic life.

Regarding agriculture, Thevet most frequently mentions cereals, vineyards, olive groves, and fruit. The inhabitants of Krk 'have sufficient grain, wine, and other resources to meet their needs.' The island of Rab is 'rich in good pasture and densely populated.' The plain surrounding Old Zadar (Ravni Kotari region) produces 'excellent wheat growing upon the hills,' while Čiovo yields 'wheat, timber, and good pasture' (GIP). The people of Korčula are described as 'highly devoted to agriculture, and especially to horticulture, in which they take great pleasure'

(GIP). According to CU, Mljet is characterised as ‘productive in fine vineyards, olive oil, herbs, and many other advantages,’ while Hvar is described as ‘very prosperous and well populated’ (CU). In some instances, crop cultivation is associated with a distinctive seasonal rhythm, as exemplified by sowing and harvesting adapted to the intermittent flooding of Lake Cerknica (GIP).

Fishing is described most extensively in connection with Lake Cerknica, where, as the waters recede, fish ‘begin to be caught,’ not merely ‘for pleasure but also for considerable profit, since, once salted, they are transported and sold in large quantities throughout the neighbouring regions’ (GIP). Elsewhere, on the islands and along the Adriatic coast, Thevet refers to fishing only incidentally (for example, the fishermen near Karlobag in CU), although his frequent references to numerous bays and anchorages testify to an active maritime economy.

One particularly distinctive economic motif in GIP is the trade in birds of prey from Brač, exported far beyond the borders of Sclavonia: ‘I was told that people come here to purchase these birds from places far beyond Sclavonia, including Transylvania and other regions, in order to present them as gifts to the Turkish ruler and his pashas’ (GIP).

In CU, Thevet also mentions the trade in animal pelts, noting that bear skins ‘are highly valued among merchants, driving a lucrative trade’ (CU).

According to Thevet, commerce, together with navigation, constituted the most important branch of the economy of Sclavonia. Describing Korčula, he writes that it is ‘the seat of a bishopric, possessing many churches and very handsome houses inhabited by merchants who are exceedingly wealthy and trade throughout many parts of Greece, Albania, and Italy. They possess very fine ships and vessels, on which they frequently sail to Alexandria in Egypt, to Tripoli and Beirut in Syria, and occasionally to Constantinople’ (GIP). The inhabitants of Zadar are described as ‘prosperous, both because of their trade and because of the abundance of their livestock’ (GIP). In CU, the people of Sclavonia are portrayed as ‘artisans, engaged in agriculture and maritime commerce, especially those of Dubrovnik, who, travelling to the Levant, trade above all in textiles.’ Murter is identified as a place ‘where sweet wine and olive oil are traded on a large scale’ (GIP). Thevet places particular emphasis on the economic prosperity of Dubrovnik, describing the city as ‘incredibly wealthy,’ while its citizens ‘concern themselves with nothing other than increasing the power of their republic and the extent of their wealth’ (CU).

Navigation constitutes the functional backbone of GIP as a pilot book. Along almost every section of the coast, Thevet records distances (expressed in marine leagues and nautical miles),

depths (in fathoms), the characteristics of the seabed, the locations of anchorages and small harbours, together with the dangers posed by reefs and winds. A representative example occurs in the chapter on Pag, where the author explicitly explains the purpose of his account: 'It has been my pleasure to describe this sailing route for you […] in order to assist experienced pilots as well as novice mariners, so that they may avoid the dangers in which many have perished and in which numerous large and small vessels have been lost' (GIP).

Thevet distinguishes between different types of anchorages and harbours, while warning of the 'marvellously capricious' winds of Kvarner region, clearly referring to the unpredictable and gusty bora wind. In his brief description of the island of Rab, he notes: 'it has very fine harbours in which it is good to anchor; it is true that sails must often be lowered for fear of being caught unawares by a sudden gust of strong wind, for the winds here are extraordinarily changeable and particularly dangerous for small vessels' (GIP). He also provides precise anchoring instructions. Thus, in the chapter on Korčula he recommends the anchorage between the island and the islet of Majsan, adding that it is 'a good harbour for every kind of vessel; you should bring the bows towards the cape and keep your anchors short, for the harbour is broad, its bottom coarse and extensive, and beneath the surface lies a shoal' (GIP). Navigation is also linked with the maritime heritage of the Liburnians. In CU, Thevet recalls that the Romans 'called their lightest vessels *liburnae*, constructing them after the fashion of those used by the people of Sclavonia.'

Thevet likewise shows considerable interest in political circumstances insofar as they influenced socio-economic development. In the case of Zadar, he describes the triennial rotation of the *podestà*, the *camerlengo*, and the captains of the fortresses (GIP; CU). For Dubrovnik he provides a detailed account of the monthly election of the Rector, the Senate (*Pregadi*), the Minor Council, the Major Council, and the daily selection of military commanders by lot (CU). In the chapter on Hvar, he records the conflict between the nobility and the commoners. The island, he observes, was 'divided into two estates […] so completely separated that the two factions would sometimes suddenly rise against one another' (GIP). This undoubtedly refers to the well-known uprising of the Hvar commoners. Describing the region around Šibenik, he notes the proximity of the Ottoman frontier and the constant danger of Ottoman incursions and plundering, adding that 'this is the reason why the plain lies entirely deserted, burdened by the curse of living in the neighbourhood of those circumcised people' (GIP).

Population: Ethnic Affiliation and Ethnographic and Linguistic Characteristics

Thevet refers to the inhabitants of the eastern Adriatic as Sclavons (*Esclauons*) and explicitly associates them with the broader Slavic community. In CU, he explains that the name *Sclavon* derives 'from a certain northern people, from the regions of Bohemia,' adding that the same language is spoken by 'the Bohemians, Poles, Bulgarians, Russians, and those of Bosnia' (CU). At the same time, he distinguishes the inhabitants of Zadar as pre-eminent among 'the other Sclavons' (GIP).

In CL and CU, Thevet presents a relatively consistent ethnographic portrait. The Slavs are described as 'people of tall stature [...] of very fair complexion, and so perfectly proportioned that one could scarcely wish to see a more handsome man' (CU), their height being attributed to the cold climate and their diet. In CL, he supplements this favourable portrayal with a less complimentary characteristic: 'they are exceedingly prone to gluttony and drunkenness, with the result that they sometimes [...] imagine they see two objects instead of one' (CL). Women, by contrast, are described as being of smaller stature and more moderate in their habits: 'they dress more lightly and do not become intoxicated so readily' (CL). Thevet also presents the bravery of the Sclavons as one of their defining and enduring characteristics: they are 'a people so courageous that the Roman emperors who defeated them gloried in the title of Illyrian' (CU), adding that for this reason the Ottomans were particularly eager to recruit them as Janissaries.

Thevet associates dress with both climate and social status. Owing to the cold weather and the abundance of game, the Sclavons 'clothe themselves in the furs' of wolves, bears, and other animals (CL; CU). The inhabitants of Zadar, however, are singled out for their splendour: 'They dress more magnificently than the other Croats, except those of Dubrovnik' (GIP; almost identically in CU). The inhabitants of the island of Krk, by contrast, 'dress in the same manner as those on the mainland' (GIP).

Diet is mentioned primarily in connection with livestock husbandry and hunting (including the consumption of wolf and bear meat in CU). In the chapter devoted to Hvar, Thevet inserts an extended digression on moderation in eating, supporting his argument by invoking Hippocrates and the long-lived Demetrius: 'When in company, one should eat in order to live, and not live in order to eat' (GIP).

Thevet devotes particular attention to the language of the population of the eastern Adriatic, especially in CU, where he includes a transliterated Croatian version of the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary, accompanied by the remark that the inhabitants pray 'in their own vernacular language and not in Latin' (CU):

„OTSSE NASS, KI YESSI NA NEBESSI, SSVETISSE IME TVOIE:
PRIDI KRALYEVSSTVO TVOIE. BVDI VOLIA TVOIA, KAKO NA NEBV I
NA ZEMLII. KRVHA NASSEGA SSAGDANIEGA DAI NAMGA DANASS, I
ODPVSCIAINAM DVGHE NASSE, KAKO I MI ODPVSCIANO DVSVIKON
NASSIIM, I NEPELIAI NATS V NAPAST, DA IZBAVI NATS OD
NEPRIAZNI, AMEN.
ZDRAVA MARIO MILOSTI PVNA, GOSPODIN STOBOM BLASENA TIMEV
SENAMI, I BLASEN TSAD VTROBE TVOYE IESVS KRISTVS.
SVETA DIVO MARIO, MAIKO BOSIA, MOLI ZANATS GRISNICHE TSADA.
I V VRIME SMERTI NASSE, AMEN. “

This transcription constitutes a valuable testimony to the Croatian Chakavian vernacular as perceived and recorded by a French cosmographer. At the same time, Thevet recognises the language of the Slavic (Croatian) population of the eastern Adriatic as the lingua franca of the Slavic regions of Europe: ‘This language is the most necessary [...] for anyone wishing to travel throughout the whole of the Levant and the northern countries [...] because the Bohemians, Poles, Bulgarians, Russians, and the people of Bosnia speak the same language as the Sclavons,’ adding that ‘the Venetian authorities have their children taught this language’ (CU). Thevet’s assertion that Croatian was understood by all Slavs was neither isolated nor unusual, but reflected a belief widely held in European humanist and ecclesiastical circles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: that all Slavs spoke a single language, differing from one people to another only at the dialectal level, and that the idiom of the Dalmatian Croats represented its oldest, purest and most beautiful form. Almost contemporaneously with Thevet, the Polish cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, in his treatise De sacro vernaculo legendo (1573), maintained that there was scarcely any language under the sun more widely spoken than Slavonic, since it was used by more than a quarter of Europe – by Czechs, Moravians, Kashubians, Russians, Dalmatians, Bosnians, Croats, Bulgarians and Serbs – and that the lingua Sclavorum aut Dalmatarum was considerably more beautiful even than Polish, and should therefore be the language into which prayers and sacred readings were translated (Krasić, 1997). This conviction also had practical consequences. In response to a survey circulated in 1599 by Claudio Acquaviva, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, among the rectors of Jesuit colleges concerning which Slavic language should be taught at the Roman College, the Slovak Jesuit and polyglot Teofil Kristek

replied that it should be Croatian (lingua croatica). He argued that it was spoken throughout the lands under Ottoman rule, not only by the common people but also by learned men and diplomats; that it was the 'mother and root' of the other Slavic languages; that its pronunciation was the most beautiful; and that it was the closest to the Old Church Slavonic model (Krasić, 2009). In the same year, the Academy of the Illyrian Language was established in Rome, while decrees issued by Gregory XV (6 December 1622) and Urban VIII (16 October 1623) prescribed the teaching of 'Illyrian+ at some of Europe's most prestigious universities, from Bologna and Padua to Paris, Vienna and Salamanca (Krasić, 1997, 2009). This clearly demonstrates that Thevet's formulation aligned with the conception of the Croatian language that was widely accepted in Europe at the time. In CL, however, his assessment of the Sclavonic language is considerably less complimentary. According to Thevet, it is 'very harsh and difficult to understand' (CL). Speaking of the inhabitants of Dubrovnik, he notes in CU that they 'attempt to speak Italian, but very corruptly, because of the barbarity of their own language' (CU). He also records a few individual words, such as Mieduechi for 'bears' (CU), which is most probably a typographical corruption introduced during the preparation of the printed edition, deriving from a distorted rendering of the Croatian word medvjedi.

Superlatives and the Particular Emphasis Given to Individual Localities

One of the characteristic features of Thevet's style is his tendency to emphasise the exceptional qualities of places, frequently using superlatives belonging to the Arcadian-Edenic imaginary. Writing about Korčula, he observes: 'Moreover, on the island of Korčula there is the finest air in the world, and its inhabitants are kind and approachable' (GIP). He expresses a similar opinion of Brač, where 'the air is salubrious' and the meat of domestic animals is 'the finest in the world' (GIP). He was particularly impressed by the inhabitants of Zadar, to whom he attributes an almost unique virtue: 'They take great pleasure in showing kindness to strangers and displaying their possessions to them, possessing within themselves I know not what innocent goodness that is to be found in no other nation, especially no maritime nation' (GIP; almost identically in CU).

The description of the mainland likewise abounds in superlatives. Beyond Korčula extends 'the finest land in Europe' (GIP); Šibenik possesses 'the finest and largest harbour in the whole region' (CU); while Dubrovnik is described as a city 'dependent upon no one but itself' and 'incredibly wealthy' (CU). These superlatives are not merely ornamental. They reflect the

Renaissance perception of the Levant as an earthly paradise, while simultaneously enhancing the rhetorical persuasiveness of Thevet's testimony.

Digressions on Astronomy and Astrology

As a cosmographer, Thevet also incorporates astronomical and astrological excursuses into his pilot-book and chorographical text, justifying them by their practical value for mariners. The most extensive of these occurs at the end of the chapter devoted to Pag, where he announces that he will 'describe in due order the movements of the planets [...] which may prove useful to novice pilots' (GIP). He then lists the orbital periods of the Moon and the planets, the structure of the celestial spheres, and the entry of the Sun into each sign of the zodiac according to the Julian calendar, that is, before the reform introduced by Pope Gregory XIII: 'On the eleventh day of March the Sun enters the sign of Aries. On the tenth day of April the Sun enters the sign of Taurus [...] Each of these signs contains thirty degrees, making a total of three hundred and sixty' (GIP).

To this astronomical framework Thevet adds an astrological interpretation, asserting that from the movements of the planets 'there proceed so many different influences [...] causing now drought, now moisture, at one time famine, at another mortality, war, and disease, according to their positions and mutual proximity' (GIP). He concludes with a practical exposition on the reckoning of time – months, weeks, hours, tides, and the phases of the Moon throughout the year – which every pilot must master 'if they wish in future to be esteemed as accomplished pilots and mariners' (GIP). Astronomical reasoning is likewise reflected in his system of geographical coordinates. The indication of the climatic zone, parallel, and length of the longest day for each island (see Table 2) represents a direct application of the Ptolemaic system of climata. Thus, although GIP was conceived primarily as a practical pilot book, these passages clearly reveal its cosmographical character.

Repetitions, Correspondences, Inconsistencies, and the Complementarity of the Three Works

A comparison of the three works reveals a complex relationship of continuity, self-borrowing, contradiction, and mutual complementarity. Verbatim repetitions and close correspondences are particularly numerous between GIP and CU. The definition of Sclavonia, comprising its three provinces, its boundaries (Drina –Raša – the Adriatic – the mountains of Croatia), and its length of 120 leagues, is almost identical in both works. Likewise, the description

of New Zadar – including Attila's destruction of old town of Zadar, the Italian rebuilding of the city, the miraculously preserved unembalmed body of St Simeon the Just, the inscriptions in the churches of St Donatus and St Chrysogonus, and the triennial rotation of the civic administration – is transferred from CU to GIP almost word for word. Similarly, several sets of geographical coordinates (new town of Zadar, Krka River, and Budva) are numerically identical in the two works. Such close correspondence confirms that GIP is the later work and that it relies heavily upon CU, often with the author explicitly referring the reader to his own *La Cosmographie universelle*.

Inconsistencies and internal contradictions, however, occur both within individual works and between them. Mention has already been made of the discrepancies in the geographical coordinates assigned to Hvar, Senj, and Gabela, together with the major errors affecting the latitudes of Krk, Čiovo, and especially the *Island of Zadar*. The chronology of Thevet's journey is likewise inconsistent: 1549 in CL, but 1547 in CU. Particularly striking is Thevet's tendency to announce subjects that he subsequently fails to develop. In the chapter on Brač, for example, he promises to discuss the 'exceptional men whom [the island] has produced,' yet proceeds to mention only a single individual, the learned Branckelmus, whom he describes as an author who wrote on Aristotle and on the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey. The identity of this Late Antique writer remains unknown, although Thevet places him quite precisely during the reign of the Emperor Theodosius II.

Thevet's extensive catalogue of Classical place names and promised antiquities likewise frequently remains without further elaboration. Such inconsistencies may be interpreted in two complementary ways: first, as the consequence of an excessively ambitious encyclopaedic project that the author ultimately failed to complete; and second, as the result of a compilatory method in which materials drawn from disparate sources were mechanically combined without being fully harmonised.

Conversely, the degree of complementarity between the three works is considerable and constitutes the principal reason why only a comparative reading can provide a comprehensive understanding of Thevet's conception of the Croatian coastal and insular landscape. CL contains vivid travel narratives and ethnographic episodes – storms, seasickness, encounters with pirates, local customs, drunkenness, bear hunting, and popular beliefs in werewolves – that are absent from the other two works. CU provides the broadest regional as well as historical-political framework. Finally, GIP offers by far the most detailed analysis of navigation and coastal toponymy, supplemented by geographical coordinates and cartographic illustrations, thereby

combining the characteristics of a travel account, a cosmography, and a pilot book within a single work. The three works are therefore not three versions of the same text but rather three generically distinct, occasionally contradictory, yet ultimately complementary layers of a single body of geographical knowledge concerning the eastern Adriatic.

Geographical Names

Thevet records many geographical names. Most of them could readily be associated with geographical features along the eastern Adriatic coast and its immediate hinterland, particularly where comparison was possible with the toponyms appearing on sixteenth-century geographical and nautical charts. Thus, for example, Thevet's Girafleur was identified as Crna punta in Istria, while Cap de Quarner was identified as either Cape Pernat or Cape Zaglav on Cres Peninsula, where the settlement of Pernat is situated, on the basis of comparison with the toponyms P.o Giraflor and Capo del Quarner on Scolari's chart of the northern Adriatic.4 In other instances, identification was possible from Thevet's description of the surrounding geographical setting (for example, the small river Sutorina, near Herceg Novi, is designated in CU by the hydronyms Brotine and Brotinienne). Some of the toponyms recorded by Thevet, however, cannot be associated with any known geographical feature, or can only be interpreted tentatively. For instance, based on Thevet's text alone it is not entirely clear which mountain range is denoted by the expression monts d'Arse & de Marone. In connection with these names, he adds that 'they are uninhabited because of the great cold that prevails there; and for this reason, the inhabitants of that country clothe themselves in furs, of which there is an abundance.' However, Ortelius published Coppo's map of Istria in his *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, on which the oronym Monte maior is inscribed at the location of Mount Učka. Since Thevet demonstrably used Ortelius's work, it is highly probable that his monts de Marone conceals Coppo's Monte maior, that is, Mount Učka. Equally enigmatic is the large Bay of Tanarit, described in CU as a refuge for corsairs and pirates and mentioned in the account of Istria and the Kvarner region. It is most likely identical to the Kvarner Gulf, or with one of its constituent bays. This identification, however, cannot be established with certainty, because Kvarner itself is explicitly mentioned elsewhere in Thevet's works in GIP as Carnier, and in CU as Carner. A similar case concerns the six small islands named Lyrcones in GIP. These can only be identified with the

[4] Stefano Scolari's map of the northern Adriatic, dating from the late sixteenth century, is preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE C-11342.

Pakleni Islands, although no other historical or cartographic evidence confirms Thevet's toponymic form for this small archipelago lying west of the town of Hvar. Moreover, on his own map of Hvar Thevet designates them Les Isles de Liesena, a form that corresponds closely to their modern vernacular Croatian name, Hvarski škoji.

The forms of the eastern Adriatic geographical names occurring in Thevet's works are predominantly of Italian – more specifically Venetian – origin, occasionally adapted into French, for example Veggia (Krk), Cursole (Korčula), Liesene (Hvar), Brazze (Brač), Zarre (Zadar), Sebenic (Šibenik), and Escardonne / Scardone (Skradin). This clearly demonstrates Venice's mediation of geographical knowledge. Alongside the contemporary forms, Thevet very frequently records their Classical equivalents: Curcura / Melana / Corcyra Nigra for Korčula; Pharia / Paria for Hvar (CU: Pharos); Braitia / Braycia for Brač; Aluona for Labin; Volcere for Bakar; Ortopla for Stinica; Narona for Gabela; and Meligene / Melegina for Mljet. Some of these pairs are historically well-founded and appear in the works of Classical authors cited by Thevet (for example Pharos → Hvar), while others seem to be adopted from one of the Renaissance versions of Ptolemy's Fifth Map of Europe (for example, the identification of Bakar with the Classical Volcere).

In GIP, Thevet provides a far more detailed breakdown of the coastline than in his other two works, and this is reflected in the substantially larger number of recorded toponyms (Table 3). In the chapter on Zadar – which in fact describes the entire Istrian and Kvarner coastal region – he lists several dozen Istrian place names, including Cap d'Istrie (Koper), Piran, Saluori (Cape Savudrija), Parense (Poreč), bouche de Lime (Lim Channel), Pole (Pula), Polmontore (Premantura), Fianone (Plomin), and many others that do not appear in either CL or CU. This density of toponymic information confirms the pilot-book origin of the material incorporated into GIP.

At the same time, several errors and uncertainties of identification occur. For example, in listing Elaphiti Islands, after Šipan and Lopud Thevet mentions Malfe. During the Early Modern period this name referred to the settlement and bay of Zaton, opposite which lies the island of Koločep. Similarly, in his enumeration of the Kvarner Islands in CU, Thevet lists, among others, Cres (*Cherzo*), Lošinj (*Cigola*), and Osor (*Osaro*). Wolfgang Lazius, on his map of the northern Adriatic and its hinterland published by Ortelius in the *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, designates Lošinj by the nesonym Cigola, a form likewise adopted by Thevet. On later maps, however, the toponym Cigola was applied to Čikat Bay on Lošinj. In GIP, Thevet writes: '*...to the west lies the island of Cres (Isle de Kherscher). To the south are the islands of Osor (Osero) and Lošinj (Lezin).'* It is evident that the complex toponomastic situation of Kvarner Islands

was not fully understood by Thevet, who identifies three insular units where there are, in reality, only two islands. Even today, the toponymic situation remains complex: Osor is the name both of the settlement on Cres and of the cape at the extreme north-western tip of Lošinj, below Mount Osoršćica.

For the Adriatic Sea Thevet employs two names – mer Adriatique and goulphe Venitien. Like many other European geographers of his time, he thus combines the conventional name with the Venetian designation of the sea, a name through which Venice sought to assert its political and economic supremacy over this part of the Mediterranean (Faričić *et al.*, 2023).

With regard to toponymy, the three works display a high degree of correspondence wherever they describe the same geographical area, while differences arise whenever different regions are treated. Thus, certain geographical names occur in all three works (Sclavonia, Dalmatia, Illyricum, Dubrovnik, Raša, and Drina), whereas others appear only in individual works. The place names of the Bay of Kotor – Odolie, Ozie, Risan, and Thietine – occur exclusively in CU, while the names of numerous smaller geographical features in Istria and the Kvarner region are recorded only in GIP (bouche de Lime, Vescolique, Fayane, Figarole, Dreuenik, and others). In this respect, the three works complement one another, together forming the most comprehensive French representation of the toponymy of the eastern Adriatic produced during the sixteenth century.

Tablica 3. Geografska imena istočnojadranskoga prostora u Thevetovim djelima i njihove identifikacije

Table 3 *Geographical names of the Eastern Adriatic region in Thevet's works and their identifications*

Thevetov toponimski lik / *Thevet's Toponymic Form*	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage		
(goulfe) Rizonico	Boka kotorska	Bay of Kotor
Abreon / Greoni	Mali i Veli Brijun	Mali and Veli Brijun
Albanie	Albanija	Albania
Albone / Albonne	Labin (ant. Aluona)	Labin (ancient Aluona)
Alexio / Lisso	Lješ	Lješ
Almise	Omiš	Omiš
Andrea	Sv. Andrija	St Andrija
Antiuari	Bar	Bar
Araguse / Ragouse / Arragouse	Dubrovnik	Dubrovnik
Arbe / Arbi	Rab	Rab

Thevetov toponimski lik / *Thevet's Toponymic Form*	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Arse / Arsia / Larse	Raša	Raša
Augustini	Lastovnjaci	Lastovnjaci
Bescha	Baška	Baška
Biline	Biline (u Bukovici)	Biline (in Bukovica)
Boccari / Bocharin	Bakar (ant. Volcere)	Bakar (ancient Volcere)
Bojane	Bojana	Bojana River
bouche de Lime	Limski zaljev	Lim Bay
Braitia / Braycia	Brač (antičko ime)	Brač (ancient name)
Brancorse	Brankoras (rt)	Brankoras (cape)
Broaze	Obrovac	Obrovac
Budua	Budva (ant. Bulua)	Budva (ancient Bulua)
Buxe	Biševo	Biševo
canal de Spalate	Splitski kanal	Split Channel
Cap de Bossine	Vrh Bosne / Vrhrika / Vrlika (Vrelo Cetine)	Cape of Bosnia / Vrhrika / Vrlika (Vrelo Cetine)
Cap de Carner	Rt Pernat (Cres)	Cape Pernat (Cres)
Cap de Girafleur	Crna punta	Crna punta
Cap de Sabiocelle	rt Lovišće (Pelješac)	Cape Lovišće (Pelješac)
Cap d'Istrie	Koper	Koper
Carnier	Kvarner	Kvarner Gulf
Carnje	Kranjska	Carniola
Catairo / Cattor / Cataro / Aseruio	Kotor	Kotor
Charinthie Croatic / Carinthie	hrvatska Koruška	Croatian Carinthia
Chasteau-neuf / Castel noue	Herceg Novi	Herceg Novi
Cherso / Kherscher	Cres	Cres
Cinchio / Piguncio	Podstrana (ant. Peguntium/Pituntium)	Podstrana (ancient Peguntium/Pituntium)
Citta noua / Ville neufve	Novigrad	Novigrad
Conté de Zarre / Comté de Zare	Zadarska kneževina	County of Zadar
Corphou	Krf	Corfu
Croatie	Hrvatska (planine Hrvatske)	Croatia (the mountains of Croatia)
Cursole / Curcura / Melana / Corcira Nigra	Korčula	Korčula
Czyrcknitz	Cerknica	Cerknica
Czyrcknitzerse / Lac de Corniche	Cerkniško jezero	Lake Cerknica
Dalmatie	Dalmacija	Dalmatia
Do-seror / Doseror	Dvije sestrice	Dvije sestrice
Dreuenik	Sv. Grgur	St Grgur

Thevetov toponimski lik / ***Thevet's Toponymic Form***	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Drine	Drina	Drina River
Dulcine	Ulcinj	Ulcinj
Escardonne / Scardone / Scardona	Skradin	Skradin
Esclauonie / Esclavonie	Sklavonija (istočnojadranski prostor)	Sclavonia (the eastern Adriatic)
Faraxine	Porozina	Porozina
Fayane	Fažana	Fažana
Fianone / Fianona	Plomin (ant. Flanona)	Plomin (ancient Flanona)
Figarole	Figarola	Figarola
Gabella / Narona	Gabela (Neretva)	Gabela (Neretva)
goulphe Dalmatien	Dalmatinski zaljev	Bay of Dalmatia
goulphe Venitien	Mletački zaljev	Gulf of Venice
Histrie	Istra	Istria
Illyride	Krk (antičko ime)	Krk (ancient name)
Illyrie	Ilirik	Illyricum
Isle Auguste / l'Aguste	Lastovo	Lastovo
Isle de Zarre	Ugljan i Pašman	Ugljan and Pašman
Isles de Sal	Šoltansko otočje	Šolta Archipelago
Julienne	Žuljana	Žuljana
la Brazze / Brasse / Brachia	Brač	Brač
Lac de Scutari	Skadarsko jezero	Lake Skadar
Lauranje / Vrane	Vrana / otočići Vrane	Vrana / the Vrana islets
Lezin	Lošinj	Lošinj
Liburnie	Liburnija	Liburnia
Liesene / Lyesene / Pharia / Paria	Hvar	Hvar
Lissa	Vis	Vis
Lugeus palus / Palus de Lugea	Cerkniško jezero	Lake Cerknica
Lyrcones	Paklinski otočići pred Hvarom	Paklinski islets near Hvar
Malfe	Zaton / Koločep	Zaton / Koločep
Medolin	Medulin	Medulin
Melade	Molat	Molat
Mellede / Melede	Mljet (ant. Meligene)	Mljet (ancient Meligene)
Merliere	Marlera	Marlera
Mezo	Lopud	Lopud
Mortare / Mortier / Moutier	Murter	Murter
Narente	Neretva (kraj)	Neretva (region)
Nia	Unije	Unije
Olme / Olmiselle	Volme / Valmižeja	Volme / Valmižeja

Thevetov toponimski lik / ***Thevet's Toponymic Form***	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Ortopula / Ortopla	Stinica	Stinica
Osero / Ossero / Assorro	Osor / Lošinj	Osor / Lošinj
Pago	Pag	Pag
Parane	nepoznati lokalitet (spomenut s Bilinama)	unknown locality (mentioned with Biline)
Parense	Poreč	Poreč
petit Carnero / Carnier	Kvarnerić	Kvarnerić
Pflaum	Rječina	Rječina
Piran	Piran	Piran
pointe de Saluori	Rt Savudrija	Cape Savudrija
Pole / Polle	Pula	Pula
Polmontore(s)	Premantura / pulski rt	Premantura / the Pula cape
port Bardo / Bado	luka Budava	Budava Bay
Port Royal	Kraljevica	Kraljevica
porte de Tenin	Kninska vrata	Kninska vrata
Preuit / Preuique	Prvić	Prvić
promontoire de Ceste / cap de Sexte	Primošten	Primošten
Quiete	Mirna	Mirna River
Rovigne	Rovinj	Rovinj
S. Archange	luka Sv. Arkanđel	St Arkanđel Bay
S. Michel	Sv. Mihovil (Ugljan)	St Mihovil (Ugljan)
S. Sego	Susak	Susak
S. Veit ampflaum	Rijeka	Rijeka
Sainct Maximien / S. Maxime	Majsan	Majsan
Salonne	Salona	Salona
Sambioncelle / Sabiocelle	Pelješac / rt Lovišće	Pelješac / Cape Lovišće
Save	Sava	Sava River
Scarde	Šar-planina	Šar-planina
Sebenic / Sebenique / Sabenique	Šibenik	Šibenik
Segna	Senj (ant. Senia)	Senj (ancient Senia)
Spala / Spalate / Spallate	Split (ant. Exetio)	Split (ancient Exetio)
Stagne	Ston	Ston
Strigo / Sidiona	Stridon	Stridon
Stroviz	Ostrovica	Ostrovica
Torrete	Turanj	Turanj
Tour de Rolland	Orlandova kula	Orlando's Tower
Trao / Trau	Trogir	Trogir

Thevetov toponimski lik / *Thevet's Toponymic Form*	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Trapan	Krapanj	Krapanj
Traue	Zemun	Zemun
Umago	Umag	Umag
Veggia / Velger / Velhie	Krk	Krk
Venise	Venecija	Venice
Verbenique	Vrbnik	Vrbnik
Vergade	Vrgada	Vrgada
Verude	Veruda	Veruda
Vescolique	Veli i Mali Školj ispred Červar Porta	Veli and Mali Školj near Červar Porat
vieille Zarre	Biograd / stari Zadar	Biograd / Old Zadar
Xernonise	Žrnovnica	Žrnovnica
Zare / Zarre / Jadaire / Jadera	Zadar / Jadera	Zadar / Jadera
Zetine	Cetina	Cetina River
Zupana	Šipan	Šipan
Cosmographie de Levant		
Acroceraunia	Akrokeraunsko gorje	Acroceraunian Mountains
Corfou	Krf	Corfu
Esclauonie	Sklavonija	Sclavonia
Hongrie	Ugarska	Hungary
Illyris	Ilirik	Illyricum
Ister	Dunav (zbog pogrešne etimologije Istre)	Danube River (owing to the erroneous etymology of Istria)
Istrie	Istra	Istria
Parence	Poreč	Poreč
Pindus	Pind	Pindus
Rhaguse	Dubrovnik	Dubrovnik
Venise	Venecija	Venice
La Cosmographie universelle		
Absyrtides	Apsirtidi (kvarnerski otoci)	Absyrtides (the Kvarner Islands)
Albanie	Albanija	Albania
Almise	Omiš	Omiš
Antibari	Bar	Bar
Arbi	Rab	Rab
Arse	Raša	Raša
Auguste	Lastovo	Lastovo
Azuri	Žirje (i Kaprije)	Žirje (and Kaprije)
Beglise	Bileća	Bileća

Thevetov toponimski lik / *Thevet's Toponymic Form*	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Bocharin / Volcere	Bakar	Bakar
Brasee / Brazze	Brač	Brač
Broaze	Obrovac	Obrovac
Brotine / Brotinienne	Sutorina	Sutorina
Bua	Čiovo	Čiovo
Bude	Budva	Budva
Cam	Kom	Kom
Cap de Bossine	Vrh Bosne / Vrhrika / Vrlika (Vrelo Cetine)	Cape of Bosnia / Vrhrika / Vrlika (Vrelo Cetine)
Cap de Dune / Promontoire de Dune	Vir (zacijelo od Puntadura)	Vir (most probably referring to Puntadura)
Caraniosse	Gruž	Gruž
Carnaro	Kvarner	Kvarner Gulf
Castel neuf	Herceg Novi	Herceg Novi
Casuane	nepoznati lokalitet pokraj Risna	unknown locality near Risan
Catarre / Catare	Kotor	Kotor
Chafteau de Sainct Nicolas	utvrda Sv. Nikole (Šibenik)	St Nikola Fortress (Šibenik)
Cherca / Varieche	Krka	Krka River
Cherzo	Cres	Cres
Cigola	Lošinj	Lošinj
Clisse / Alexio	Lješ	Lješ
Cocone / Isle aux Boeufs	Kakan	Kakan
Comté de Zare	Zadarska kneževina	County of Zadar
Corfou	Krf	Corfu
Isocarize	Krnica	Krnica
Crouatie	Hrvatska	Croatia
Curzole / Cocrire noire	Korčula	Korčula
Dalmatie	Dalmacija	Dalmatia
Danube	Dunav	Danube River
Delminie	Delminium	Delminium
Draue	Drava	Drava River
Drilon	Drim	Drim River
Drine	Drina	Drina River
Dulcine	Ulcinj	Ulcinj
Epidaurus	Epidaur (Cavtat)	Epidaur (Cavtat)
Esclauonie	Sklavonija	Sclavonia
Gabelle	Gabela	Gabela
Goufle de Marlachi	Morlački (Velebitski) kanal	Morlach (Velebit) Channel

Thevetov toponimski lik / ***Thevet's Toponymic Form***	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
goufle Tanarit	Kvarner (?)	Kvarner (?)
gouſle Rissanique, qui eſt dit de Cataro	Boka kotorska	Bay of Kotor
Hironia	Lokrum	Lokrum
Honorante	nepoznati lokalitet u Boki kotorskoj	unknown locality in the Bay of Kotor
Illyrie	Ilirik	Illyricum
Istrie	Istra	Istria
Julia	Žuljana	Žuljana
Lauranie	Vrana	Vrana
Lezime / Lesine / Para	Hvar	Hvar
Liburnie	Liburnija	Liburnia
Lissa	Vis	Vis
Macariſque / Rhatonee	Makarska	Makarska
Marguaritin	Margariti	Margariti
Melede / Melegina	Mljet	Mljet
mer Adriatique	Jadransko more	Adriatic Sea
monts d'Arse & de Marone	Učka	Učka
Morter	Murter	Murter
Naron / Narente	Neretva	Neretva
Neuf-Chastel	Novi Vinodolski	Novi Vinodolski
Nome	Nin	Nin
nouuelle Zare / Jader	Zadar / Jadera	Zadar / Jadera
vielle Zare	Biograd	Biograd
Odolie	Odoljenšćica (Liješnica)	Odoljenšćica (Liješnica)
Odrie	Hadra	Hadra
Ortepol	Stinica	Stinica
Osaro	Osor	Osor
Ozie	nepoznata rječica u Boki kotorskoj	unknown stream in the Bay of Kotor
Pague / Pag	Pag	Pag
Pannonies	Panonije	Pannonia
Pelegose	Palagruža	Palagruža
Port du Palais	Polače	Polače
Promontoire Adrie / Cap Ceste	Primošten	Primošten
Promontoire de Cumene / Cap de Cumene	rt Lovišće	Cape Lovišće
Pyrane	Piran	Piran

Thevetov toponimski lik / ***Thevet's Toponymic Form***	**Identifikacija**	***Identification***
Rhagouse / Rhaguse	Dubrovnik	Dubrovnik
Risan	Risan	Risan
Sainct Michel / Islle de Zare	Ugljan	Ugljan
Sabiocelle / Saint Bienville	Pelješac	Pelješac
Sainct Archange	Sv. Arkanđel (otočić)	St Arkanđel (islet)
Salone	Salona	Salona
Sausiron	Stobreč (Epetion)	Stobreč (Epetion)
Scadre	Skadar	Skadar
Scardona	Skradin	Skradin
Scardus	Šar-planina	Šar-planina
Segne	Senj	Senj
Sibenique	Šibenik	Šibenik
Sidrone	Sidrona	Sidrona
Socol / Castel Falcon	Sokol	Sokol
Solinchize	Jadro	Jadro
Sopate	Sopot	Sopot
Spalato / Spalatre	Split	Split
Stagne / Stateline	Ston	Ston
Strouiz	Ostrovica	Ostrovica
Subsige	nepoznati lokalitet podno Rilića	unknown locality below Rilić
Suonige	Zvonigrad	Zvonigrad
Thietine	nepoznata rječica u Boki kotorskoj	unknown stream in the Bay of Kotor
Torrete	Turanj	Turanj
Tragurie / Trau	Trogir	Trogir
Trapan	Krapanj	Krapanj
Tribigne / Trebin	Trebišnjica	Trebišnjica
Trieste	Trst	Trst
Veggie	Krk	Krk
Vestie	Vegium (Karlobag)	Vegium (Karlobag)
Xernonize	Žrnovnica	Žrnovnica
Zeminiche	Zemunik	Zemunik
Zetime	Cetina	Cetina River

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of André Thevet's three works – *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage* (GIP), *Cosmographie de Levant* (CL), and *La Cosmographie universelle* (CU) – demonstrates that the textual descriptions of the Croatian coast and islands should not be regarded as interchangeable versions of the same content, but rather as complementary geographical representations shaped within different generic and epistemological frameworks. Although the three works contain numerous verbatim borrowings, each establishes its own relationship between the author's personal observations, the compilation of earlier sources, and the cosmographical interpretation of geographical space. This confirms that Thevet's construction of the geographical image of the eastern Adriatic was a dynamic process in which experiential knowledge, the Classical tradition, and contemporary information networks continually interacted and complemented one another.

The findings further demonstrate that the most reliable elements of Thevet's descriptions are those deriving from his direct personal experience, whereas the greatest inconsistencies occur where diverse written and cartographic sources were combined without critical evaluation. This pattern is particularly evident in the geographical coordinates, the delineation of regional spatial extent, and certain topographical data. These shortcomings, however, do not diminish the value of Thevet's oeuvre. On the contrary, it is precisely the differences among the three works that make it possible to reconstruct the ways in which geographical information was collected, verified, adapted, and transmitted within the European cosmographical tradition of the sixteenth century.

The study also demonstrates that the textual and cartographic components of *Le Grand Insulaire et Pilotage* should be interpreted as an integrated whole. Considered together with previous cartometric analyses of Thevet's maps of the Croatian islands, the textual descriptions provide a substantially more comprehensive insight into the French perception of the eastern Adriatic than could be achieved through the analysis of either source independently. This confirms that Thevet's oeuvre is relevant not only to the history of travel literature and Renaissance cosmography, but also to historical geography, the history of cartography, and the study of the processes through which geographical knowledge was produced and transmitted during the Early Modern period.

More broadly, this study demonstrates that comparing different versions of descriptions of the same geographical space within a single author's oeuvre is an effective methodological

approach. It allows researchers to distinguish empirically grounded observations from compilatory layers and to reconstruct the information networks that shaped European perceptions of the eastern Adriatic coast. This constitutes the principal contribution of the present research, while also opening the way for comparable analyses of other Renaissance cosmographies and travelogues devoted to the Croatian lands and the wider Mediterranean region.

Author Contributions:

J.F.: Conceptualization, methodology, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

Đ. Š.-D.: Translation of original French texts, writing – original draft.

T.M.: Methodology, software, visualization, validation, writing – review and editing.

P.L.: Investigation, resources, writing – original draft.

Conflicts of Interest:

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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