

***Descriptio Oeconomiae* – Early Modern Age Cartographic Representations of Economic Activities on the Croatian Coast**

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Abstract

Natural resources such as the sea (source of life and communication medium), inland waters, rocks, land, plants, animals and climate characteristics have been evaluated economically in the Mediterranean-Dinara area of the north-eastern Adriatic coast for centuries. The Croatian coastal region was politically fragmented among several European forces during the early Modern Age. It developed on its peripheries, according to their economic interests and existential needs of local and regional communities. Olive growing, viticulture, cattle breeding, fishing, salt production and various crafts composed the core of economic production on the Croatian coast and islands, while transport and commerce were the basis for goods and services exchange, enabling Istria, Kvarner and Dalmatia to join the commerce structures of the Mediterranean and neighbouring regions. Maps are especially important sources for studying history of the early Modern Age on the Croatian coast. Prior to systematical and scientific surveys, spatial data, including those on economic activities, were collected by direct field observations and partial geodetic procedures, and data were also obtained by compiling various cartographic and written (geographic, administrative, military, etc.) sources. There was no intention to comprehensively thematically represent economic content or a unique approach and methodology of collecting, analyzing and visualizing such data. In addition, Croatian coast was represented from 16th to 19th century on geographic, maritime and topographic-cadastral maps of various geographic coverage and scale. Differences in methodologies and content aside, old maps still provide insight into numerous economic activities of the population of Istria, Kvarner and Dalmatia. In combination with archival sources and material remnants, they contribute to historiographic and geographic interpretations of the social-economic development of the region and its influence in changes of environment.

Key words: map, cartography, economy, Croatia, Mediterranean, early Modern Age