

# Expression of regional identity in urban toponymy of major Kosovar cities

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## ABSTRACT

This paper presents the model of identity research using the street names from five major Kosovar cities. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the fact that identity in the urban environment can be determined through the analysis of street names, to uncover the difference in the presence of honyms that express regional identity from those that express national identity, and to investigate the presence of urban toponyms of international importance. This paper also aims to examine the relationship between regional identity and ethnic and religious structure, as well as to identify the role of historical-political circumstances at the level of the manifestation of regional identity. We found that the regional identity has been expressed more deeply compared to the national and international honyms, which have a lower representation. Although regional honyms dominated in all cities that were analyzed, there were differences in the representation of regional honyms which were related to personalities, events, or geographical objects that belong to the respective city or surroundings.

## KEYWORDS

identity; region; names; streets; geography

Received: 1 October 2021

Accepted: 20 February 2022

Published: 4 March 2022

Ejupi, A. (2022): Expression of regional identity in urban toponymy of major Kosovar cities. *AUC Geographica* 57(1), 31–38  
<https://doi.org/10.14712/23361980.2022.3>

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## 1. Introduction

Identity is a set of characteristics that determine the particularity of an individual or group, especially in relation to similarities or differences with other individuals or groups. The sense of belonging to a society within a region is formed when a significant portion of inhabitants share symbols, values, and aspirations and create a regional identity and cultural system (Giménez 2005). Individual and group identification has always preoccupied both individuals and small groups, as well as society as a whole. The reason is not just the desire to prove the identity and the community to which they belong. But also because of the series of the consequences that such identification can cause, and which is directly or indirectly, expressed in certain geographical space.

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the geographical understanding of spatial identity through the reading of symbolism in the toponymy of five major Kosovar cities. What role will personalities have on the naming of the streets? What meaning do geographical toponyms have in the hierarchy of the cities' urban toponymy? Which identity will dominate? These are research questions addressed in this article.

In the case of Kosovo, regional identity is a lower scale identity than the Albanian identity. Although Kosovo is a small territory, it has very diverse natural conditions which are reflected in regional differences. The Dukagjini plain, Kosovo plain, Rugova, Anamorava, and Drenica are some of the regions that are distinguished not just by natural conditions, but also according to social, demographic, and economic features. The expression of identity in the toponymy of Kosovar cities can be examined through quantitative and qualitative analysis of street names. In the next phase are determined the differences in the participation of hodonyms (names of streets) that express regional identity from those, that express national and international identity. The analysis includes five major cities in Kosovo which are the largest in terms of demographic size, functions and gravitational area. These are Prishtina, which has the status of the capital city; Prizren, which is the second largest city in terms of population; Gjilan, which is the largest city in eastern Kosovo; Peja, which is the largest urban center in western Kosovo; and Gjakova, another large urban center in western Kosovo.

## 2. Theoretical background

Identity can be divided into individual and group identity. Group or social identity can be shaped by gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, nation, and region, among others. Most people contain multiple identities stemming from their simultaneous belonging to different groups, such as linguistic,

professional, and regional groups (for example: Dukagjinas, Kosovar, European).

Besides the development of theoretical and geographical knowledge on identities, an important part of research in cultural geography is a perceptive understanding of the region based on research of the various forms of identities that have formed or are forming certain regions (Leighly 1978; Raitz 1973; Zelinsky 1988).

The individuality of each region, except natural, social and economic factors, is influenced by the behavior and attitude of each individual towards the region, or recognition of the environment as their own (local environment), the role and position of the individual in society, etc. This is studied as the affiliation (individual perception of geographical space) that any individual or even wider social groups (collective consciousness of regional affiliation) can have (Šabić and Pavlović 2007). In this way, by adding socio psychological attitudes of the population towards regional identity to the geographical criteria, the individuality of the geographical region is pointed out even more.

The sense of belonging to a society within a region, formed when a significant part of inhabitants shares symbols, values and aspirations creates regional identity and an own cultural system (Giménez 2005). Since the region is principally the study object for geographers, it is not surprising that there have been a large number of contributions to the geographical scientific literature that deal with regional identities and their spatial expression.

At the same time, the region is defined as a complex set of relations between population groups and certain territories (Crljenko 2008). These reports are based on the awareness of members of the regions about the common culture and diversity vis-a-vis other groups. The region is therefore symbolically defined as being part of such a unit (Vresk 1997). Anssi Paasi (2002) emphasizes that regional identity is the main factor affecting the process of institutionalization of regions. The boundaries of their extent may or may not necessarily coincide with territorial administrative units within a given space (as in the case of national identity). In the absence of such an agreement, regional identity can become a constitutive element of regional resistance and can lead to extreme regionalism, which can later be used for political purposes and even for attempts to redefine national borders, potentially causing conflicts.

Regional identity is approached from two aspects. One is the identity of the region based on the many elements that make it up, such as nature, landscape, built environment, culture, ethnicity, dialect, economic success, center-periphery relations, marginalization, stereotypes about people and community (Paasi 2003). The identity of a region is represented by the characteristics of nature and culture, but also by the people who use them in discourses and classifications of science, politics, cultural activism, regional

marketing, administration and political or religious regionalization to distinguish one region from another (Paasi 2003).

Regional identity has been recognized as a key element in the making of regions as social and political spaces, but it is difficult to elucidate what this identity consists of and how it affects collective action and politics (Keating 1998). The crucial question is how political passions are regionalized, and here institutions constitutive of region-building (economy, governance, language, media, and literature) and inherent power relations are significant (Paasi 2003). In the case of Kosovo, historical and political circumstances had a significant impact in the formation of a new identity.

According to Crang (1998), identity can be expressed through the system of symbols through which values, beliefs, and ideologies of the population are displayed. These symbols can be a state, region, or city flag, or dialectical linguistic features (local and regional identities), as well as visible elements of the landscape such as monumental heritage, architectural style, graffiti, and urban toponymy (Sakaja 2003).

Site names have special importance in shaping territories and territorial identities (Azaryahu 2001). The same applies to the names of streets, squares, and crossings which reference the territory and symbolically indicate the ownership and importance of the territory (Culcasi 2011). Naming the streets is of crucial importance in manipulating and managing the social construction of identity (Wanjiru and Kosuke 2014). Streets, squares, and buildings can be named after personalities of national importance, commemorate important events, or serve as reminders of some traditional customs (Drozdowski 2014). Some authors define the city as text (also known as a city-text) as a conglomeration of signs that are written, deleted, and reinstalled, consisting of existing markers that are visible in space, as well as in memory and photographs from the past. Azaryahu (1986) sees city-text as a system of symbols that transfer official history and identity to the urban semiosphere – a system which primarily consists of street names and other names in public spaces that reveal the past and the dominant value system in the society. Recent work that deals with the study of toponyms emphasizes the need for attention to the process of forming names of streets, i.e. determining the cultural and political events and institutions that participated in their establishment (Bucher et al. 2013).

In terms of identity, after the war and especially after the declaration of independence, according to Albertini (2012), Kosovo is perceived as the place where two main discursive forms clash. The first one concerns the historical struggle for defending a national and Albanian identity during the long age of Serbian sovereignty over this province – a discourse which pivots on a narrative of a century-long conflict between the Serbian and Albanian ethnic groups, overstuffed by examples, memories, and practices

confirming their impossibility to live together in the same state. The second discourse is much wider than the first. It portrays the often conniving international interests and the profitable power relations established in Kosovo following the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and United Nations' administration of the province. The only way to understand what kind of identity is going to be forged in Kosovo, then, is to track and identify these global–local relations that emerge through the different scapes that shape culture and society. The relationship between these discourses defines the consequences on the people, at the same time actor and target of the new identities and lifestyles (Albertini 2012).

### 3. Research methods and study area

In this paper street names were analyzed using statistical methods for the quantitative portion of the analysis and the meanings of street names were analyzed using interpretive methods for the qualitative portion. It was used Location Quotient (LQ) which is often an applicable indicator in geographical analyzes because it defines precisely enough the relation of smaller and larger unit. In order to obtain sustainable results, in addition to regional and national hodonoms, whether they are double or not, were taken also hodonoms that express exclusively a unique identity (regional or national). In addition, a comparative method has been used to determine the differences in the expression of different levels of spatial identity, from regional to international. The main source of data is the city plans from which a total of 539 hodonoms were analyzed, and the population data for the cities was obtained from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics. For the purposes



Fig. 1 Kosovo with its five major cities.

of this paper, street names were analyzed from five major Kosovar cities.

After identification of the toponyms, we have divide them by scale into the different groups. Regional identity is associated with the wider region of studying city. To this category belong historical dates, geographical names and personalities. The last ones by their activity helped in the development of culture, art, political self-determination or they helped economic development of the region. For example, the city of Gjakova in the Dukagjini region has many street names of regional importance such as Besim Bokshi, Ganimete Terbeshi, Emin Duraku etc.

National identity is bound to a state. This group of toponyms should reflect the names of streets and squares that have national meaning. For example, Mother Teresa, Beselidhja, Gjeravica, Berlin Congress etc. International hodonyms that are connected with the people and events or concepts outside of Kosovo and have international importance (e.g. Justinian Emperor, Constantine The Great, Bill Clinton, Johan V. Hahn, etc.).

Among cities that were chosen to be analyzed are Prishtina as a capital city which is relatively new settlement, but due to the decision to be declared the capital, has faced a rapid urban, demographic and territorial development. Now it has a population of more than 350,000 inhabitants (Settlements of Kosova 2018). Prizren is the largest city in the entire Dukagjini region with more than 100,000 thousands inhabitants. It has played an important role in the history of the Albanian people. In Prizren in 1878, the political organization named the League of Prizren was founded (Kosova, a monographic survey 2011). Prizren is the center of Turkophone Albanians (Guy 2008), that's why we'll make attempts to throw light on how much this fact determines the emergence of regional identity. On the other hand, the city of Gjakova in western Kosovo is surrounded by a religious minority of Catholic Albanians. After the Second World War, the massification of education in Kosovo began, which led to the reduction of illiteracy rates and cultural emancipation in general. The population began to attend secondary and higher education, primarily in cities. Among them, it is important to mention especially Gjakova, where many young people begin to attend higher education in university centers of the former Yugoslavia, such as Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo and in other European countries. After graduation, they returned to Kosovo and were positioned as the leaders of the main leading political and academic institutions.

The fourth city being analyzed is Peja, the largest city in western Kosovo. It is located at the exit of the Rugova Gorge in the Dukagjini Plain. It is known for its long craft and trade tradition as well as many years of resistance and efforts for the freedom of the Albanian people in Kosovo. Gjilan, the final city, is the largest city in eastern Kosovo. Compared to other cities, it is

newer and has a more diverse ethnic structure, especially in its surroundings, where a community of ethnic Serbs lives.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1 Hodonyms according to spatial identity

Through the quantitative analysis of urban toponymy in all selected cities, it is clear that all three levels of spatial identity (regional, national, and international) have been expressed, but regional hodonyms are most present, and only a few have international importance. The high share of regional and local hodonyms, which make up more than half of all hodonyms, is understandable. As a matter of fact, these hodonyms, in the best way, show the desire of the inhabitants to preserve the local names which bring attention to the importance of a person, historical event, meaning, or locality which has significantly affected the development of the city or the surrounding area.

Similar results emerge through the analysis of the distribution of hodonyms by city. From the beginning, it is noticeable that the participation of some hodonyms differs from one city to another. This is a result of the specific historical, geographical and political development of certain cities, their functional importance, and political status. However, the consistency can be detected by dominance of regional hodonyms compared to national or international ones.

To determine whether there is a difference in the representation of regional and national toponyms in the analyzed cities we have used location quotient which determined the degree of regional and national toponyms representation. From table 1 we can see that the location quotient is changing significantly from one city to another. In Prizren, Prishtina and Gjilan it is seen that national and international toponyms are more represented compared to regional toponyms while in Gjakova and Peja regional identity is more represented than national identity.

Deviating cases are the result of specific conditions of development of an individual city. For example, in the analysis of all toponyms that express spatial

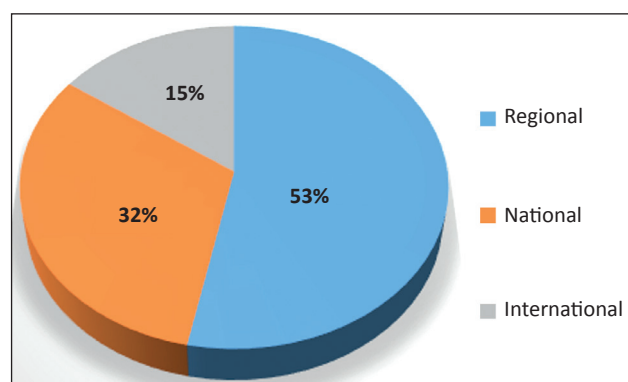


Fig. 2 Expression of identity in the urban toponymy of all cities.

**Tab. 1** Location quotient of expression of regional and national identity in urban toponomy.

City	All toponyms that express		Toponyms that express exclusively	
	regional identity	national identity	regional identity	national identity
Prishtina	0.92	1.18	0.86	2.15
Prizreni	0.79	1.22	0.81	2.28
Peja	1.38	0.71	1.18	0.47
Gjakova	1.45	0.63	1.22	0.39
Gjilani	0.85	1.21	0.59	0.91
Total	1.08	0.99	0.93	1.24

identity (regional or national) the largest representation of regional hodonoms in Gjakova is explained by the multitude of doubled regional-national hodonoms. Most of streets and squares are named after people from Gjakova such as Pajazit Nushi, Emin Duraku, Esat Stavileci that has both regional and national importance. Analysis of street toponyms that express a unique regional identity highlight other specific issues. The largest deviation of regional hodonoms was recorded in Gjilan. Lower representation of regional toponyms in Gjilan compared to other Kosovar cities is partly the result of the greater presence of local hodonoms because of more diversified ethnic structure. These statistical indicators actually point out that the assumption of a more pronounced regional identity in Gjakova and Peja is the result of the presence of street nomenclature which is linked with names of personalities, those of geographical character and important historical dates that in one or another way are linked with the above mentioned cities and their surroundings.

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, each of the newly formed states began to build new state identity, reinterpret and revise history, and establish new national symbols. The same happened after the change of political regime in 1989 in Czechoslovakia, where is evident the revision of historic facts, mostly those that formed part of modern history (Bucher et al. 2013). Changing the names of institutions, streets, and squares and erecting monuments to previously neglected personalities from national history is one of the results of this process. Today's Kosovo makes no exception from the rest of the former Yugoslavia. From 1999 onwards, in Kosovo, there have been many attempts to establish a new Kosovo identity. After the end of the war, and especially after the declaration of independence in 2008, through political decisions of municipal bodies, many streets of Kosovar cities have been renamed to be connected to the recent history of Kosovo and its efforts for independence. It was done by replacing the street names bearing the names of the fighters of the national liberation war. During this time were also renamed those streets dating from the

period when the municipal leadership was controlled by Serbs, bearing the names of various Serbian historical personalities that reflects ethnically diversified structure of cities in Kosovo. In Prishtina, for example, the street that once held the name of the Yugoslav communist Djuro Djakovic has been renamed Justinian Street. The street that once was named after Miladin Popovic, a Yugoslav partisan and the organizer of the partisan fighting in Kosovo, is now named after Ganimete Tërbeshi, a Kosovar fighter of the national liberation war. The street in Prishtina that today bears the name of Agim Ramadani, one of the most prominent fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army was originally named after the Serbian emperor, Tsar Dushani. At the same time, the municipal leadership of Prishtina (which consisted of Serbs since the Albanians were at that time expelled from state institutions) had given way to the name of Sejdo Bajramovic, who was appointed as a representative of Kosovo in the presidency of the Yugoslav federation.

Prishtina, as a capital city, has the largest percentage of hodonoms of international character. Within the analyzed urban space of Prishtina, eighteen names express international identity. Some of the streets in Prishtina that reference international figures hold the names of Johann Georg Von Han, the Austrian diplomat, philologist, and albanologist; Byzantine emperor Justinian, who was born in the vicinity of Lebane, part of dardanian empire; Garibaldi, the famous Italian military official, who is given credit for the unification of Italy; Gustav Meyer, the German writer and albanologist; Lord Byron, the English guide and writer who visited Albania; Dimitrije Tucovic, the Serbian politician; and Henri Dunant, the humanist and Swiss businessman. In other cities, although less prevalent, there are a few toponyms that express international identity. In Prizren, a street holds the name of the Scottish microbiologist and physicist Alexander Fleming; in Gjilan, a street has the name of one of the most famous victims of the Holocaust, Anne Frank; and another humanist and human rights activist Eva Brandy that was expelled from Kosovo by Milosevic regime, etc.

As a sign of salutation and honour for the help that the international community has given for the liberation of the country, several streets have been named after politicians, primarily American ones. This the case of Bill Clinton Square, named after the US President who ordered the bombing campaign against Serbian military and police targets in Kosovo and Serbia; George W. Bush, former US President; and Robert Doll, US Republican congressman. In Gjilan, a street is named after Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State in the administration of President Bill Clinton. In Peja, one street is named after US Army General Wesley Clark, and another is named after William Walker, the American diplomat who incited the NATO bombing. In Prizren, a street is named Rambouillet after the small town on the periphery of Paris, where an

international peace conference was held, prior to the NATO bombing campaign against Serbia.

In 1947, Prishtina was declared a capital city, and it began to expand territorially while taking on various functions. In addition to these processes, Prishtina had a rapid increase of population, from 19,000 inhabitants in the 1948 census to 108,000 inhabitants in 1981, and today it has around 300,000 inhabitants. Prior to the entry of NATO troops, there were about 30,000 Serbs and Montenegrins in Prishtina who made up about 18% of the city's population. This was also evident in urban toponymy where many streets held the names of Serbs and other non-Albanians. Immediately after the war, the streets that held these names were renamed. However, even today, some streets have the names of Serbs and non-Albanians. Some examples of non-Albanians who are namesakes for streets in Kosovo include the founder of the Social Democratic movement in Serbia, Dimitrije Tucovic; the Serbian physicist and philanthropist who lived and worked in the US, Mihajlo Pupin; Serbian journalist, politician, and professor, Kosta Novakovic; Serbian poet from Kosovo, Lazar Vuckovic; Croatian linguist, Henrik Baric, known as a founder of Department of Albanian Language in the University of Belgrade in 1921; Serbian academician Vojislav Dancetovic, who was one of the first professors of this chair; and the Montenegrin writer Radovan Zogovic, among others.

Prizren has the highest participation of national hodonoms, due to the fact that it has been an important political and administrative center since the time of the Ottoman Empire. The headquarters of the League of Prizren was there, which represented the most important political and military organization of Albanians at the end of the 19th century.

On the eve of the Congress of Berlin and the Treaty of St. Stephen, representatives of all regions of Albania met in Prizren. In this assembly, 300 delegates from all different Albanian lands established the Albanian Assembly known as the League of Prizren. One of the approved documents that derived from this meeting was the Memorandum of Independence of Albania which would include the territories of the Vilayet of Kosovo, Bitola, Shkodra, and Ioannina. Today, Prizren is the most famous tourist center of Kosovo. The main monuments of cultural heritage are the League of Prizren Complex, the Mosque of Sinan Pasha, the Hammam of Gazi Mehmet Pasha, and the church of Levishka from the Orthodox religious heritage, which is on the list of protected monuments by UNESCO.

National hodonoms are mostly dominated by the names of personalities including writers, patriots, scientists, academics, and others. Some of them were founders of the League of Prizren, as in the case of Sami Frashëri, while others were the most prominent representatives of the national renaissance such as Gjergj Fishta, Ndre Mjeda, and Selman Riza. National hodonoms of a geographical character are less common. This includes Gjeravica, which is the highest

mountain peak in Kosovo at 2,656 m; Ulqini and Ohri, cities within the Albanian geospace; and Bojnik, a settlement in the Toplica area, which before the Berlin Congress, was inhabited by a significant number of Albanians.

The expression of regional identity is related to the ethnic, but also religious, structure of the population. Before the last war, Prizren was known for its ethnic structure, where in addition to Albanians as the largest ethnic community, lived Serbs, Turks, Roma, and others. According to the 1981 census in Prizren, there were 63.7% Albanians, 12.4% Serbs, and 9.2% Turks. During the withdrawal of Yugoslav army and police troops, most Serb residents also left Prizren.

Because of this, in Prizren there are some streets that are named after different Turkish personalities, such as Emin Pasha Street, after an Ottoman scientist of Jewish origin; Evlia Çelebi, Suzi Çelebi and Yunus Emre, Ottoman writers; and Nysret Seharsaroj, Turkish writer.

## 4.2 Structure of regional hodonoms

From the analysis of the distribution of hodonoms according to the spatial level in observed cities, there is the largest presence of regional hodonoms. In this regard, their structure was analyzed in order to see how they are named. The table shows that in most cases, the names belong to persons who have played an important role in the development of the city or region. Out of a total of 539 hodonoms, 387 of them (or 71.8%) are named after personalities. Since Kosovo emerged from an armed war only two decades ago, this is consequently expressed by the large number of urban toponyms devoted to regional warriors of the recent war. This happened especially after the end of the war, when by municipal decision, the streets were renamed which had been previously named after warriors of World War Two. The exception is the city of Gjakova where even today, thirteen streets are named after warriors of World War Two, born mainly in the city of Gjakova (Tefik Çanga, Ganimete Tërbeshi, and Emin Duraku, for example).

Out of all cities that are part of the research, the regional identity is most expressed in the city of Gjakova, where out of 105 streets, 82 of them are named after personalities, while only 38 streets hold the names of personalities that are from Gjakova. The important fact is that among the personalities, apart from the warriors of the last war and the Second World War, many streets are named after academics, including scientists and university professors such as Fehmi Agani, Besim Bokshi, Pajazit Nushi, and Esat Stavileci.

Regional identity, while less than in other cities, is still expressed in the city of Gjilan, where from the total of 105 hodonoms, 48 of them are regional, and only 8 of them are named after individuals who were born in Gjilan. One street is named after Halim Orana,

**Tab. 2** Structure of hodonyms of all spatial levels.

City	Personality		Geography		Event		Other	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Prishtina	76	67.8	23	20.1	10	8.9	3	2.3
Gjakova	82	78.1	5	4.8	13	12.4	5	4.7
Prizreni	69	61.6	22	19.6	17	15.2	4	3.6
Peja	81	77.1	8	7.6	13	12.4	3	2.9
Gjilani	79	75.2	9	8.6	12	11.4	5	4.8
Total	387		67		65		20	

a patriot from Gjilan, another has the name of university professor Sadulla Brestovci, and another holds the name of the last warrior, Shaban Ukshini. Other hodonyms that express regional identity but are related to events or geographical objects have been also identified. These include the streets: Gjilan War, June 15, which is marked as the day of the liberation of the city, “Besëlidhja”, “Gjinollët”, a rich family of Gjilan. Regional hodonyms are also those that have geographical character as in the case of a street named Preveza, a city in the Albanian territory of Chameria which is now inside political borders of Greece; Tivari, a city in Montenegro that was previously inhabited by Albanians; Pashtriku, some mountains in Kosovo; and Butrint, a settlement and archeological site in southern Albania.

Out of 105 streets in the city of Peja, 81 of them express regional identity, and over half of them are named after personalities. Among them are warriors of the last war, such as Gazmend Berisha, Remzi Husaj, Mikel Marku, and Mustafë Kelmendi. Regional hodonyms of a geographical character appear nine times, mostly on roads, such as Dukagjini, Presheva, Tepelena, and Lezha. In the city of Peja, national identity is expressed in 18 different hodonyms. This includes the streets Mother Teresa, Mbreti Zog, Naim Frashëri, Çajupi, Hasan Prishtina, and Adem Jashari. International identity is expressed in the names of the streets named after Bucharest, Eliot Engell, Constantine the Great, Emperor Justinian, and American General Wesley Clark.

## 5. Conclusion

Symbolism satisfies a number of functions during the process of regional formation. It contributes to shaping the image, highlighting the values, and building the relationships of the inhabitants with the region in which they live. The collective identity of the urban population can be understood by observing street names which can be analyzed by statistical (quantitative) and interpretation (qualitative) methods. From the analysis of the expression of identity in the hodonyms of the five major Kosovar cities, the regional

identity is much more widely expressed, compared to the national and international hodonyms, which have a smaller representation. Although regional hodonyms dominate in all cities that were analyzed, there are differences in the representation of regional hodonyms which are related to personalities, events, or geographical objects related to the respective city or surroundings. In this sense, regional identity is more evident in Gjakova and less in Gjilan. The functional status of the city, the historical-political processes, as well as the ethnic and religious structure influence of the hodonyms. Consequently, in Prishtina, in addition to regional hodonyms, there is a higher participation of national and international hodonyms. In contrast Prizren, due to its role in numerous historical-political developments, there is a slightly higher representation of hodonyms that express national identity, while regional hodonyms also express a heterogeneous ethnic structure with some toponyms named after Turkish personalities. In all cities the most common hodonyms are named after individuals, mainly after warriors of the last war, then scientists, artists, religious leaders, and others.

Regional identity is also conditioned by ethnic and religious structure. Thus, for example, in cities with a more heterogeneous ethnic structure, such as Prizren, in addition to streets that are named after historical Albanian figures, there are also streets bearing the names of Turks, or as in Prishtina, Serbs. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, began to build new state identities, by reinterpreting and revising history, and establishing new national symbols. Changing the names of institutions, streets, and squares and erecting monuments to previously neglected personalities from national history is one of the results of this process. From 1999 onwards, in Kosovo, there is attempts of establishing a new Kosovo identity. After the end of the war and especially after the declaration of independence in 2008 through political decisions of municipal bodies many streets of Kosovar cities have been renamed by naming them connected to the recent history of Kosovo and its efforts for independence. This has been made clear while highlighting the regional differences in the use of street names in major Kosovar cities.

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