

# The Albanian presents in *-uaj* and *-yej*

Milan Lopuhaä

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Mathematics, Leiden University

<sup>2</sup>Leiden University Center for Linguistics

<sup>3</sup>Institute of Mathematics, Astrophysics and Particle Physics,  
Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen (from 1-9-2014)

5. Deutsch-Albanische Kulturwissenschaftliche Tagung  
June 6, 2014

# The problem

In Albanian there is a productive verbal conjugation in *-oj*, and a limited (15) class of verbs in *-uaj*.

The concensus is that the first of these goes back to a PAIb. suffix *\*-ǎnj-* < PIE *\*-eh<sub>2</sub>-n-ie/o-*.

# The problem

Also, there is a sound law stating that PIE \**a* gets lengthened before a resonant and diphthongises to *ua*, as in *duaj* 'sheaf' < PAIb. \**d̥anja-* < PIE \**d<sup>h</sup>eh<sub>2</sub>n-io-*, cf. Skt. *dhānyá-* 'grain', *dhānyá-* 'grain', Lith. *dúona* 'bread'.

# The problem

Thus we have the following questions:

- Why did this sound law not apply to (most verbs of) the conjugation in *-oj*?

# The problem

Thus we have the following questions:

- Why did this sound law not apply to (most verbs of) the conjugation in *-oj*?
- If this did not happen, how can we explain a present class in *-uaj*?

# The problem

Thus we have the following questions:

- Why did this sound law not apply to (most verbs of) the conjugation in *-oj*?
- If this did not happen, how can we explain a present class in *-uaj*?
- In what way is this parallel to verbs in *-ej*, *-yej*?

## Lengthening before resonants

It is important to note that this sound law only took place word-finally (or at least what was word-finally at some stage); this explains pairs such as sg *dorë*, pl *duar*.

These words can be reconstructed as PAIb. *\*dârâ*, *\*dârâi*, which shows that the sound law took place after the reduction of word-final syllables.

The same lengthening took place in PAIb. *\*ö* (which regularly develops into *e*); thus we have sg *derë*, pl *dyer*.

# Reconstruction

We can reconstruct the conjugation in *-oj* in Proto-Albanian and PIE:

Modern	PAIb.	PIE
<i>-oj</i>	*- <i>ānjā</i>	*- <i>eh<sub>2</sub>nioH</i>
<i>-on</i>	*- <i>ānis</i>	*- <i>eh<sub>2</sub>nies</i>
<i>-on</i>	*- <i>ānit</i>	*- <i>eh<sub>2</sub>niet</i>
<i>-ojmë</i>	*- <i>ānjame(s)</i>	*- <i>eh<sub>2</sub>niome(s)</i>
<i>-oni</i>	*- <i>ānis ny</i>	
<i>-ojnë</i>	*- <i>ānjanti</i>	*- <i>eh<sub>2</sub>nionti</i>



# Reconstruction

These Proto-Albanian endings would yield the following in Albanian:

PAIb.	after reduction	expected endings
*- <i>anjá</i>	*- <i>anj</i>	**- <i>uj</i>
*- <i>anis</i>	*- <i>an</i>	**- <i>uan</i>
*- <i>anit</i>	*- <i>an</i>	**- <i>uan</i>
*- <i>anjame(s)</i>	*- <i>anjëmë</i>	- <i>ojmë</i>
*- <i>anis ny</i>	*- <i>ani</i>	- <i>oni</i>
*- <i>anjanti</i>	*- <i>anjënë</i>	- <i>ojnë</i>

# Analogy

So we see that Albanian has generalised the vocalism of the plural to the singular.

This is unexpected, but this is probably due to the fact that the plural vocalism was also prevalent in other tenses and moods (such as the aorist and the imperative).

Exactly the same happened with verbs in  $-ej < *-\text{j}\grave{\text{a}}\text{n}\text{j}-$ .

## Verbs in -uaj

The next question is where the verbs in -uaj (and -yej) come from. Some known examples:

Alb.	PAIb.	Lat.
<i>shkruaj</i> 'to write'	* <i>skriwānj-</i>	<i>scribō</i> 'to write'
<i>vuaj</i> 'to suffer'	* <i>wiwānj-</i>	<i>vivō</i> 'to live'
<i>truaj</i> 'to dedicate'	* <i>tradānj-</i>	<i>tradō</i> 'to hand over'
<i>rruaj</i> 'to shave'	* <i>rradānj-</i>	<i>rādō</i> 'to shave'
<i>luaj</i> 'to play'	* <i>ludānj-</i>	<i>lūdō</i> 'to play'

# Contraction

Verbs in *-uaj* are the result of vowel contractions after the loss of intervocalic PAIb. consonants.

This contraction must have taken place after the restoration of the *o* in verbs in *-oj* in the singular (because otherwise they could have been made into verbs in *-uaj*).

## More etymologies

- *shuaj* 'to extinguish' < Lat. *sedō* 'to calm' (*flammam sedō* 'to extinguish a flame');

## More etymologies

- *shuaj* 'to extinguish' < Lat. *sedō* 'to calm' (*flammam sedō* 'to extinguish a flame');
- *pruaj* 'to guard, to plunder' < Lat. *praedor* 'to plunder';

## More etymologies

- *shuaj* 'to extinguish' < Lat. *sedō* 'to calm' (*flammam sedō* 'to extinguish a flame');
- *pruaj* 'to guard, to plunder' < Lat. *praedor* 'to plunder';
- *paguaj* 'to pay' < It. *pagare* 'to pay' (Olt. pret. *-áo*, Sic. *-au*);

## More etymologies

- *shuaj* 'to extinguish' < Lat. *sedō* 'to calm' (*flammam sedō* 'to extinguish a flame');
- *pruaj* 'to guard, to plunder' < Lat. *praedor* 'to plunder';
- *paguaj* 'to pay' < It. *pagare* 'to pay' (Olt. pret. *-áo*, Sic. *-au*);
- *gatuaj* 'to prepare' < PALb. *\*gatawãnj-* (Slav. *\*gotovъ*);



## More etymologies

- *shuaj* 'to extinguish' < Lat. *sedō* 'to calm' (*flammam sedō* 'to extinguish a flame');
- *pruaj* 'to guard, to plunder' < Lat. *praedor* 'to plunder';
- *paguaj* 'to pay' < It. *pagare* 'to pay' (Olt. pret. *-áo*, Sic. *-au*);
- *gatuaj* 'to prepare' < PALb. *\*gatawânj-* (Slav. *\*gotovъ*);
- *quaj* 'to call' < PALb. *\*klewânj-*, denominative of *\*klewa-* < PIE *\*kléuos* 'fame'.

## More etymologies

- *bluaj* 'to grind' and *druaj* 'to fear' continue Old Albanian 1sg *bluo*, 2/3sg *blo* and *druo/dro*; these were reformed to fit the verbal conjugation in *-uaj*;

## More etymologies

- *bluaj* 'to grind' and *druaj* 'to fear' continue Old Albanian 1sg *bluo*, 2/3sg *blo* and *druo/dro*; these were reformed to fit the verbal conjugation in *-uaj*;
- *gjuaj* 'to hunt' < *\*gjahoj*, derivative of *gjah* 'hunt' < PIE *\*sh<sub>2</sub>g-so-* (Lat. *sāgiō* 'to perceive', Goth. *sokjan* 'to seek') or PIE *\*iog<sup>h</sup>-so-* (OHD *jagōn* 'to hunt');

## More etymologies

- *bluaj* 'to grind' and *druaj* 'to fear' continue Old Albanian 1sg *bluo*, 2/3sg *blo* and *druo/dro*; these were reformed to fit the verbal conjugation in *-uaj*;
- *gjuaj* 'to hunt' < *\*gjahoj*, derivative of *gjah* 'hunt' < PIE *\*sh<sub>2</sub>g-so-* (Lat. *sāgiō* 'to perceive', Goth. *sokjan* 'to seek') or PIE *\*iog<sup>h</sup>-so-* (OHD *jagōn* 'to hunt');
- *ruaj* 'to guard, to wait' < PIE *\*h<sub>1</sub>roh<sub>1</sub>-u-eh<sub>2</sub>* 'rest' (Gr. *ἔρωή*, OHD *ruowa*, ON *ró*)?


## More etymologies

- *bluaj* 'to grind' and *druaj* 'to fear' continue Old Albanian 1sg *bluo*, 2/3sg *blo* and *druo/dro*; these were reformed to fit the verbal conjugation in *-uaj*;
- *gjuaj* 'to hunt' < *\*gjahoj*, derivative of *gjah* 'hunt' < PIE *\*sh<sub>2</sub>g-so-* (Lat. *sāgiō* 'to perceive', Goth. *sokjan* 'to seek') or PIE *\*iog<sup>h</sup>-so-* (OHD *jagōn* 'to hunt');
- *ruaj* 'to guard, to wait' < PIE *\*h<sub>1</sub>roh<sub>1</sub>-u-eh<sub>2</sub>* 'rest' (Gr. *ἔρωή*, OHD *ruowa*, ON *ró*)?
- *kruaj* < ? (onomatopoesis)

## Verbs in -yej

One would expect these verbs to come from contractions of roots  $*C_1VC_2önj-$  <  $*C_1VC_2jånj-$ , but in practice we find that  $*C_2$  is not always lost in this position (e.g. *mërzej* < Lat. *meridiō*).

---

<sup>1</sup>Buz. *fëjenj* 'to sin' is probably an independent denominative of *faj* 'guilt, sin'. 


## Verbs in -yej

One would expect these verbs to come from contractions of roots  $*C_1VC_2önj-$  <  $*C_1VC_2jånj-$ , but in practice we find that  $*C_2$  is not always lost in this position (e.g. *mërzej* < Lat. *meridiō*).

We do find it in the case of the cluster  $*lj$ :

- *vyej* 'to be worth' <  $*waljånj-$  < Lat. *valeō*;

---

<sup>1</sup>Buz. *fëjenj* 'to sin' is probably an independent denominative of *faj* 'guilt, sin'. 


## Verbs in -yej

One would expect these verbs to come from contractions of roots  $*C_1VC_2önj-$  <  $*C_1VC_2jånj-$ , but in practice we find that  $*C_2$  is not always lost in this position (e.g. *mërzej* < Lat. *meridiō*).

We do find it in the case of the cluster  $*lj$ :

- *vyej* 'to be worth' <  $*waljånj-$  < Lat. *valeō*;
- *fyej* 'to insult' <  $*faljånj-$  < Rom.  $*falliō$  (Lat. *fallō*);<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Buz. *fëjenj* 'to sin' is probably an independent denominative of *faj* 'guilt, sin'. 



## Verbs in -yej

One would expect these verbs to come from contractions of roots  $*C_1VC_2önj-$  <  $*C_1VC_2jånj-$ , but in practice we find that  $*C_2$  is not always lost in this position (e.g. *mërzej* < Lat. *meridiō*).

We do find it in the case of the cluster  $*lj$ :

- *vyej* 'to be worth' <  $*waljånj-$  < Lat. *valeō*;
- *fyej* 'to insult' <  $*faljånj-$  < Rom.  $*falliō$  (Lat. *fallō*);<sup>1</sup>
- *yej* 'to wake' <  $*ewiljånj-$  Rom.  $*ēviglō$  (Lat. *ēvigilō*).

---

<sup>1</sup>Buz. *fëjenj* 'to sin' is probably an independent denominative of *faj* 'guilt, sin'. 

## More etymologies

- *lyej* 'to smear' < \**elaiwānj-* < Gr. ἔλαιον;

## More etymologies

- *lyej* 'to smear' < \**elaiwānj-* < Gr. *ἔλαιον*;
- *zhyej* 'to smear' < \**zhuljoj?* (*zhul* 'dirt');

## More etymologies

- *lyej* 'to smear' < \**elaiwānj-* < Gr. ἔλαιον;
- *zhyej* 'to smear' < \**zhuljoj?* (*zhul* 'dirt');
- *kryej* 'to reach' < *krye* 'head' < PAIb. *krōna*;

## More etymologies

- *lyej* 'to smear' < \**elaiwānj-* < Gr. ἔλαινον;
- *zhyej* 'to smear' < \**zhuljoj?* (*zhul* 'dirt');
- *kryej* 'to reach' < *krye* 'head' < PAIb. *krōna*;
- *ngjyey* 'to paint' < Lat. *unguō* 'to smear'. Would regularly yield \*\**ngoj*, so perhaps derived from \**unguālia*?

## More etymologies

- *lyej* 'to smear' < \**elaiwānj-* < Gr. *ἔλαιον*;
- *zhyej* 'to smear' < \**zhuljoj?* (*zhul* 'dirt');
- *kryej* 'to reach' < *krye* 'head' < PAIb. *krōna*;
- *ngjyey* 'to paint' < Lat. *unguō* 'to smear'. Would regularly yield \*\**ngoj*, so perhaps derived from \**unguālia*?
- *trushkyej* 'to steal from a holy place' < Rom. \**triumphiscō*; same problem.

## More etymologies

- Buz. *refuegn* 'to tell' (ModAlb. *rrëfej*) < \**wrečösanj-* < PIE \**keHs-* (Ved. *śāsti* 'to instruct'). Problem: what are the conditions for \**k*' > *f*?

## More etymologies

- Buz. *refuegn* 'to tell' (ModAlb. *rrëfej*) < \**wrečösanj-* < PIE \**keHs-* (Ved. *śāsti* 'to instruct'). Problem: what are the conditions for \**k* > *f*?
- *thyej*, *shqyej* 'to break' (OAlb. *skluej*) < \**kelH-* (Lat. *percellō* 'to hit', Lith. *kalù* 'to hit') as follows:
  - ▶ \**kelH-*, \**klH-* became PAlb. \**čel*, \**kl*;
  - ▶ remade into \**čel*, \**klel*;
  - ▶ yod presents \**iščelj-*, \**klelj-*;
  - ▶ with suffix \**-anj-* became *shqyej*, *thyej*.



## More etymologies

- Buz. *refuegn* 'to tell' (ModAlb. *rrëfej*) < \**wrečösanj-* < PIE \**keHs-* (Ved. *śāsti* 'to instruct'). Problem: what are the conditions for \**k* > *f*?
- *thyej*, *shqyej* 'to break' (OAlb. *skluej*) < \**kelH-* (Lat. *percellō* 'to hit', Lith. *kalù* 'to hit') as follows:
  - ▶ \**kelH-*, \**klH-* became PAlb. \**čel*, \**kl*;
  - ▶ remade into \**čel*, \**klel*;
  - ▶ yod presents \**iščelj-*, \**klelj-*;
  - ▶ with suffix \**-anj-* became *shqyej*, *thyej*.
- *gërryej* 'to scratch', *ryej* 'to suffer' < ?

# Conclusion

- Verbs in *-oj* should by sound law have ended in *-uaj* in the singular, but this was restored from the plural;

# Conclusion

- Verbs in *-oj* should by sound law have ended in *-uaj* in the singular, but this was restored from the plural;
- The verbs in *-uaj* came either from contractions or from verbs in *-uo*;

# Conclusion

- Verbs in *-oj* should by sound law have ended in *-uaj* in the singular, but this was restored from the plural;
- The verbs in *-uaj* came either from contractions or from verbs in *-uo*;
- The verbs in *-yej* can come from contractions from *\*-lj-*, but perhaps also from other sources?

# Conclusion

- Verbs in *-oj* should by sound law have ended in *-uaj* in the singular, but this was restored from the plural;
- The verbs in *-uaj* came either from contractions or from verbs in *-uo*;
- The verbs in *-yej* can come from contractions from *\*-lj-*, but perhaps also from other sources?
- Some verbs (*kruaj*, *gërryej*, *ryej*) still need an etymology.

# Conclusion

- Verbs in *-oj* should by sound law have ended in *-uaj* in the singular, but this was restored from the plural;
- The verbs in *-uaj* came either from contractions or from verbs in *-uo*;
- The verbs in *-yej* can come from contractions from *\*-lj-*, but perhaps also from other sources?
- Some verbs (*kruaj*, *gërryej*, *ryej*) still need an etymology.
- *rrëfej* < *refuegn* and *arnoj* 'to repair' for expected *\*\*arnuaj* < Lat. *renovō* 'to renew' show that words may change conjugation; how and why did this happen?