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Old Albanian

Phonology – Segmental phonology and writing



Roadmap

- Phonology and spelling of the modern standard language
- Phonology of the modern dialects
- Phonology of Old Geg and Old Tosk

Phonology of the modern standard

7 simple vowels:

	front		central	back
	unrounded	rounded	unrounded	rounded
high	i	y		u
mid	e		ë	o
low			a	

Vowels

7 simple vowels in IPA:

	front		central	back
	unrounded	rounded	unrounded	rounded
high	i [i]	y [y]		u [u]
mid	e [e]		ë [ə]	o [o]
low			a [a]	

Vowel features

All 7 simple vowels:

- may be stressed or unstressed.
- have no phonemic length distinction.

There is no phonemic nasalization.

Lexical stress is not bound to syllable count.

Diphthongs

Four diphthongs:

ie

ye

ue
ua

Obstruents

	voice:	labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
stops:	– +	p b	t d	q gj	k g	
fricatives:	– +	f v	th dh			h
affricates:	– +		c x	ç xh		
sibilants:	– +		s z	sh zh		

Obstruents in IPA

	voice:	labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
stops:	– +	p [p] b [b]	t [t] d [d]	q [c] gj [ɟ]	k [k] g [g]	
fricatives:	– +	f [f] v [v]	th [θ] dh [ð]		h [x]/[h]	
affricates:	– +		c [ts] x [dz]	ç [tʃ] xh [dʒ]		
sibilants:	– +		s [s] z [z]	sh [ʃ] zh [ʒ]		

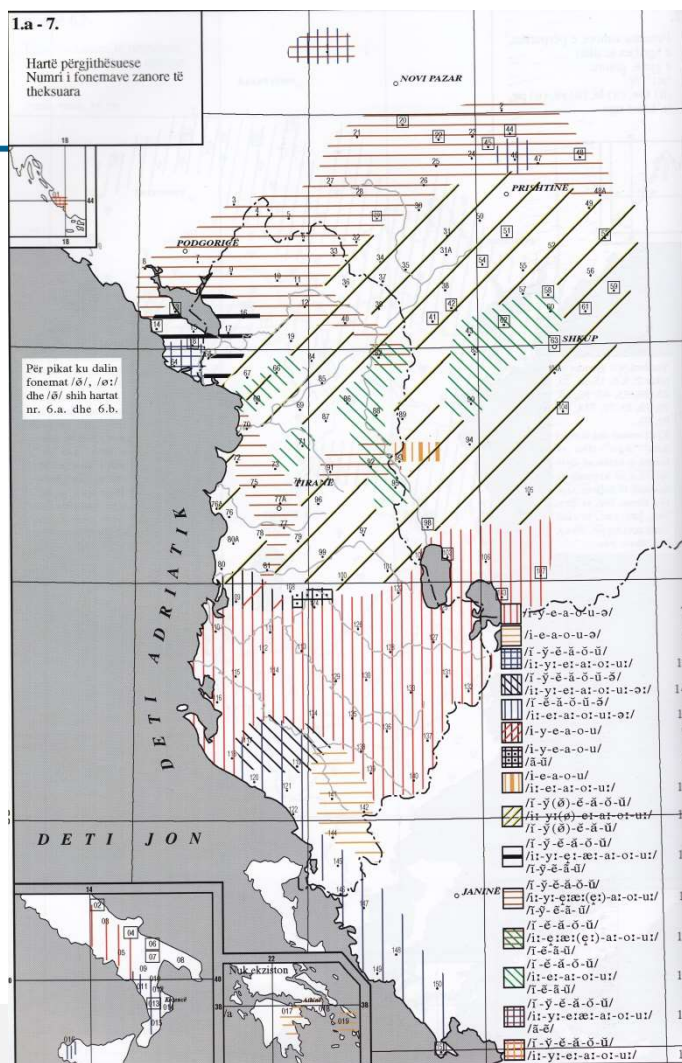
Approximants, nasals, liquid

	labial	dental	palatal
approximant:			j [j]
nasals:	m [m]	n [n]	nj [ɲ]
rhotics:		r [r], [ɹ], [ɻ] rr [r]	
laterals:		l [l] ll [ɭ]	

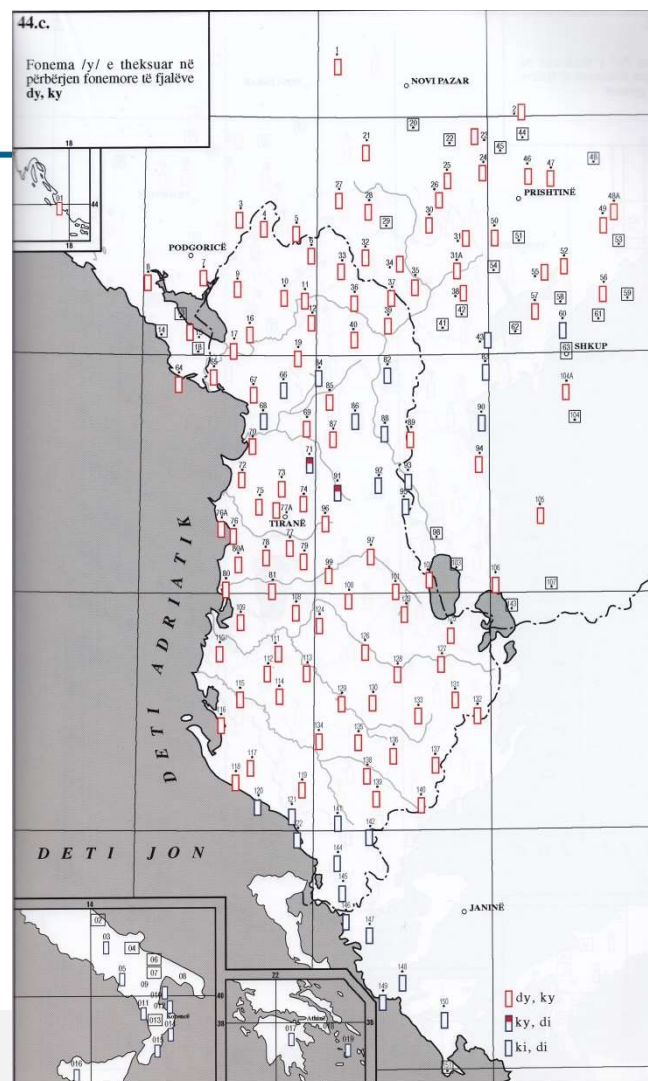
Phonology of modern dialects

- Some major trends (relevant for OAlb.):
 - number of vowel phonemes
 - unrounding of /y/
 - additional phoneme /æ:/
 - groups kl, gl

Vowel systems in modern dialects



Unrounding of /y/



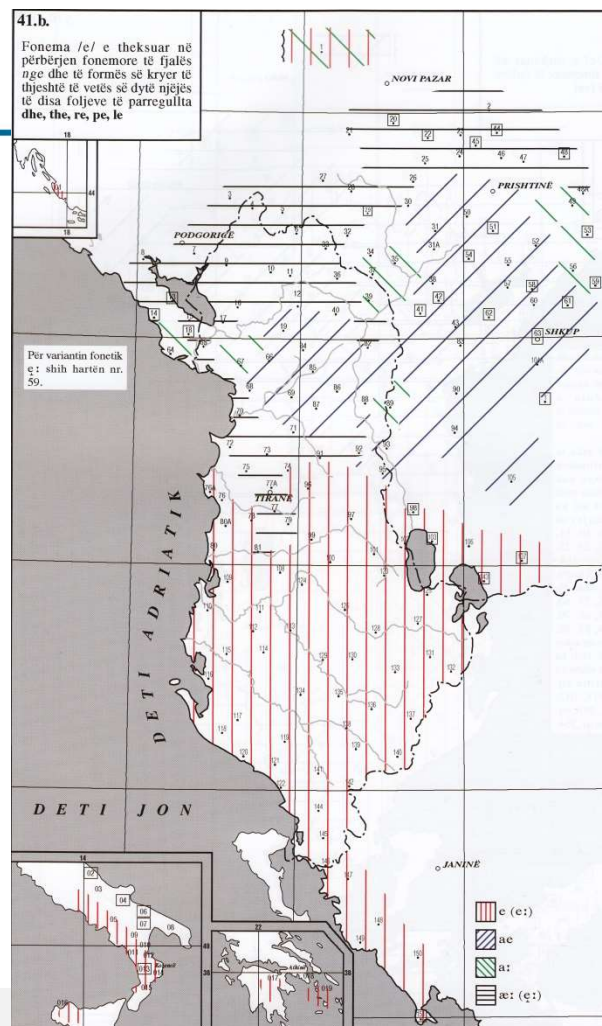
Additional phoneme /æ:/

Uncontracted 2sg. aorist forms in Old Geg: *thae* ‘you said’, *pāe* ‘you saw’; *ngae-shimë* ‘free (time)’

Contraction to /e:/ in Old Tosk: Variboba *pē* ‘you saw’, *dhē* ‘you gave’.

In Geg dialects, /ae/ was retained or contracted to /æ:/ or /a:/.

Additional phoneme /æ:/



The clusters /kl/ and /gl/

Old Albanian /kl/ and /gl/ > palatal stops /c/ and /ɟ/:

Old Geg

kle

kluon

glatë

gluhë

Old Tosk

kle

kluan

glatë

gluhë

MoAlb.

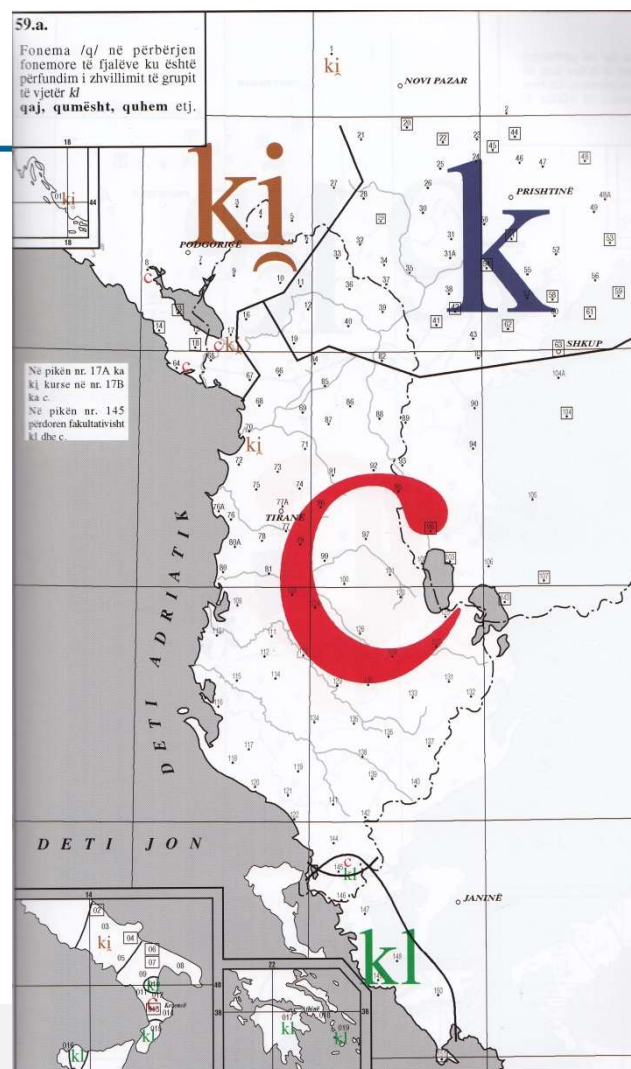
qe ‘was’ 3SG.AOR

quan ‘call’

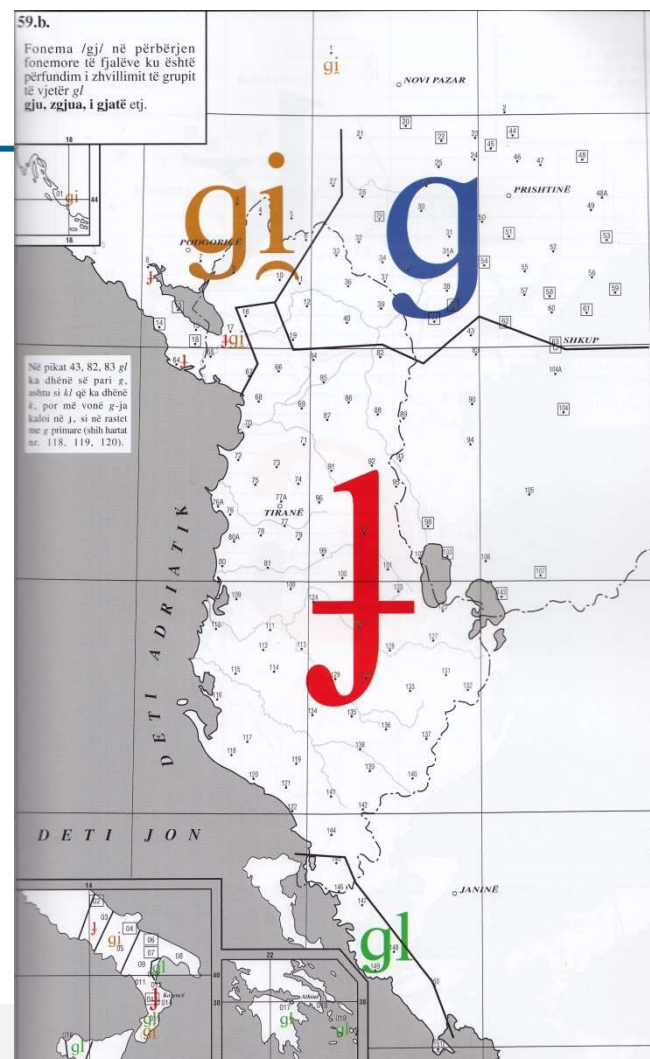
gjatë ‘long’

gjuhë ‘tongue, language’

The cluster /kl/



The cluster /gl/



Phonology of Old Geg and Old Tosk

■ Consonants

- few differences with Modern Albanian
- OAlb. *kl, gl* among the sources of MoAlb. *q, gj* (see above)
- sometimes *h > f* in Old Geg:
 - OGeg *njoh, njeh* ‘know’, but *njofsh* ‘that you know’
 - OTosk *ftohetë* ‘cools’, MoAlb. *ftohetë* ‘cold’ but OGeg *ftofëte* ‘cold’
- palatal *q, gj, nj* simplified to *j* before consonant:
 - Buzuku pl. *zogj* ‘birds’, *zoj-të* ‘the birds’

Phonology of Old Geg

Vowels of Old Geg

- short and long vowels
- oral and nasal vowels

oral vowels Old Geg			
i ī	y ŷ		u ū
e ē	ë		o ō
a ā			

nasal vowels Old Geg			
ĩ î	ỹ ŷ̃		ũ û
ẽ ê			
ã â			

Phonology of Old Tosk

Vowels of Old Tosk in Italo-Albanian:

- short and long vowels
- no nasal vowels
- no front rounded vowel

oral vowels Old Tosk		
i ī		u ū
e ē	ë ě	o ō
a ā		

Faleminderit për vëmendjen tuaj!

Thank you for your attention!