

# Pavia Indo-European Summer School (September 2013)

## Introduction to Albanian

Brian D. Joseph (The Ohio State University)

### Day 1: *On the Ethnonym albanian*

#### 1. Forms:

Albanian	<i>arban-</i> (Geg, as in the place name <i>Arbanasi</i> ) <i>arbër-</i> (Tosk, as in the designation for the Albanian of southern Italy, <i>arbëresh</i> ) <i>lab-</i> (the basis for the designation <i>Labëria</i> for a part of southwestern Albania, and forms related to that such as <i>labërisht</i> ‘(in) the dialect of Labëria’)
Greek	<i>arvan-</i> (in the Albanian dialect name <i>arvanítika</i> , spoken by <i>arvanítes</i> )
Latin	<i>alban-</i>

Proto-form for ethnonym: \**alban* (ultimate origin “simply obscure” (Hamp 1994a: 66).

#### 2. Relevant phonology to give above forms (i.e., sound changes characteristic of various neighboring languages, affecting ethnonym (borrowed and then returned, so to speak):

*lab-*: Slavic-like phonology acting on an original *alb-*, in that metathesis of \**alC-* to *laC-* is regular in Slavic (“ART-metathesis”); thus \**alb-* was borrowed into Slavic and then back into Albanian after the metathesis to give *Labëria*, etc.).

*n/r* difference in Geg form vs. Tosk form (including *Labër-*): reflects Tosk rhotacism (\**n* > *r* /V\_\_V), *Shqipnia* (Geg) vs. *Shqipëria* (Tosk) ‘Albania’, *vënë* (G) vs. *verë* (T) ‘wine’ (cf. Latin *vinum*), etc. (note also denasalization of vowels, as in ‘wine’, a sound change that was probably connected with the rhotacism (viewing rhotacism as essentially a denasalization)

*arvan-*: reflects Middle Greek delateralization before a consonant as in ἀδελφός ‘brother’ (Ancient Greek ἀδελφός), and early post-Classical change of earlier *b* > *v*; thus \**alban-* > *arban-*, which was borrowed back into Albanian (cf. *Arbanasi*) and via the Tosk denasalization/rhotacism gave *arbër-*, then later > *arvan-* in Greek

(NB: discussion of *shqip-* ethnonym to come later)