

Pavia Indo-European Summer School (September 2013)

Introduction to Albanian

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Day 4: *Echoes of Indo-European Cultural Semantics in Albanian: Eyes, Ears, Mouths, Teeth ...*

I. Ideologies of “Us Versus Them” and Language Clarity

RE: Etymology of Albanian ethnonym *shqip*

1. PIE marking of linguistic separation of ‘us’ from ‘them’: *barbaro-

- a PIE form *barbaro- is reconstructible based on Greek βάρβαρος ‘unintelligible, non-Greek’, Sanskrit *barbara-* ‘stammering’, Latin *baburrus* ‘foolish’ (late Latin, Origenus, so maybe not relevant here). Likely related forms show *-l-, e.g. Lat. *balbus* ‘stammering, lisping’, Skt. *balbalá* (*kar-*) ‘(to make) a stammering’; with Slavic cognates for both -r- and -l- forms (e.g. Serbian *brboljiti* ‘chatter’).
 - this appears to be an onomatopoeic formation, mimicking – or attempting to represent – the perception of what unintelligible speech sounds like; note the iconicity in rare sounds (*b, *a) and reduplication in a word indicating something linguistically unusual
 - one can interpret the unusual sounds in the word as lending it an ‘alien’ feel even in PIE and thus the meaning in PIE, in referring to garbled speech, may actually have been something like ‘alien -- or marginal -- to our linguistic norms’
 - impeded speech would have been one type of speech outside of PIE norms, but so too would the speech of outsiders; thus the non-impeded-speech meaning one finds in Greek, where βάρβαρος refers to language that is ‘non-Greek’ need not be a Greek innovation per se but could rather be reflecting the PIE meaning of ‘outside of our linguistic norms; outside of our usual speech’ (admittedly, the meaning ‘non-Greek’ may be somewhat late within Greek, as it does not occur in Homeric Greek in this exact form, though βαρβαρο-φῶνος ‘speaking in a foreign tongue’ does occur in the Iliad (2.867); note also forms showing the language-specifying derivational patterns of Greek: βαρβαρίζω ‘speak like a barbarian, speak broken Greek’ and βαρβαριστί ‘in barbarian or foreign language’ occur, but also (maybe primarily) with non-language meaning, ‘behave like a barbarian’ and ‘in barbarous fashion’)
 - in this view, then, this reconstructible lexical item for PIE has a distinctly ideological tinge to it, as takes a PIE-centric view of how to divide up the world linguistically, basically ‘us’ versus ‘non-us’
2. Not all linguistic differences were such as to lead to labels of βαρβαρισμός; the Homeric distinction between “language of men” vs. “language of gods” (e.g. Iliad 1.403-4: ὃν Βριαρέων καλέουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δέ τε πάντες / Αἰγαίων ‘whom the gods call Briareus, but all men (call) Aegaeon’) was, according to Colvin (1999: 44) “an example of recognized linguistic diversity” for the Greeks. Moreover, it seems to have been an acceptable type of “variation” in PIE (cf. Watkins 1970):

- echoes of this distinction are found not only in Greek but also Sanskrit, Hittite, Old Norse, and Irish (Watkins 1970)
 - Watkins suggests that since the Irish version of this distinction is embedded in a tradition that recognizes different types of *berla* ‘language’ “we have to deal here in Irish with a genuine inheritance from an Indo-European poetic doctrine, a doctrine of the nature of poetic language and its relation to ordinary language” (p. 16)
 - arguably, therefore, this is an element of IE (folk) linguistic ideology but not of the βαρβαριστί type (presumably because the gods were part of “us” within the PIE world-view)
3. “us” versus “them” linguistic ideology was particularly well-developed in ancient India; cf. Cardona 1990: “From early Vedic times, Indo-Aryans had an awareness of themselves as opposed to peoples with whom they came into contact and conflict. This awareness involved cultural and racial factors, including language ... Āryas ... against non-Āryas ... The contrast ultimately developed into one between idealized speakers of a language that was culturally and ritually pure (*samskṛtam*) ... and barbaric speakers (*mlecchāḥ*)” (p. 1). Further:
- re language of humans and nonhumans, cf. Śatapathabrāhmaṇa 3.2.1.22-24 on the use by demons (*asuras*) of *vācam ... upajijñāsyām* ‘indistinct speech’ (“speech ... to-be-found-out/enigmatic”), further identified as *mlecchas* (and further identified as non-Brāhmanic behavior: *na brāhmaṇo mlecchet* ‘a Brāhman is not to utter barbaric speech’)
 - thus, nonhuman language = alien/muddled/unclear
 - note iconicity of rareness (and thus “unclarity”) of #ml- cluster in Sanskrit and alien character of *l-* in general in Sanskrit (as also with sound structure of *barbaro-).
4. Thus, the (presumably PIE) ideology that emerges from this (among other characterizations): ‘speak (as we do)’ vs. ‘speak some other way’ = ‘speak clearly’ vs. ‘speak muddledly’
5. Re clarity and us vs. them, cf. etymology of *shqip*, the Albanian word for ‘Albanian’ (so Hamp 1999):
- ultimately from Latin *excipāre*, but in its use it is, among other things, an adverb (e.g. *Flas shqip!* ‘Speak Albanian!’) but interestingly never **shqipisht*, using the adverbial *-isht* (thus, unlike other language-adverbs, e.g. *anglisht, turqisht, frëngisht, and greqisht*)
 - note also the verb *shqiptoj* ‘to enunciate’
 - all this is best taken as a borrowing of Latin *excipāre* (a derivative of *excipere* ‘to pull or tease out’ < *ex* + *capere*), that is “take-out/in meaning” (cf. use of *gather* in English for ‘understand’), possibly with some influence (in meaning and maybe in form) from other Latin words with *ex-k..p-* or *ex-p...k-*, such as *explicāre* ‘to explicate’ or *excerptum*
 - thus, *shqip* is at its roots ‘speak clearly’ i.e. ‘speak understandably’, and, presumably since it came to be the autonym for the language, ‘speak my/our language’, and thus not, *sensu stricto*, an ethnic label per se, but rather an ethnolinguistic one
6. Other Balkan echoes
- a. A Modern Greek parallel: the language autonym *roméika* ‘(Modern) Greek’ (based on associations between Eastern Orthodox (“Holy Roman”) Empire and Hellenism), while not uncommon is found especially in the phrase (*ðen*) *katalavénis roméika* ‘do(n’t) you understand

what I am saying’ (literally, “Do(n’t) you understand Romaic (= Greek)?”, that is, “Do(n’t) you understand plain language?”), equating “our” language with clarity of understanding and intelligibility.

- b. East South Slavic autonymic reference to East South Slavic: *naš* -- the usual linguistic autonym in Macedonian and on a more limited basis in Bulgarian involves the possessive pronoun *naš* ‘our’
- in Macedonian the substantival use of the possessive pronoun *naš*, i.e. simply *naš*, means ‘Macedonian language’ (note, for instance, the example from Finn (1996: 34): *ajde be zboruvaš na makedonski – taa znae naš* ‘C’mon, you (can) speak Macedonian – she knows our (language)’).
 - in Macedonian, the most usual form found is the adjectival *našinski* ‘ours’ (= ‘our language’; *naški* also occurs) or the adverbials *po-naše* (dialectal, cf. Hill 1990: 209) / *po-našinski* (standard) ‘in ours’ (= ‘in our language’), in each case thus with ‘language’ understood
 - in Bulgarian, the expression *po-našenski* occurs meaning ‘in Bulgarian’ (literally, “in ours”) though it usually refers to dialectal or regional speech
- c. All this is the overt expression, with considerable emphasis on ‘us’ linguistically, of what Cardona (1990: 2) says: “If people thus refer to themselves and their language in a particular way, they certainly are aware of a contrast between themselves and others, both as a people and with respect to the languages they speak.”

II. Language as ‘Tongue’

RE: Albanian *gjuhë* ‘language; tongue’

1. ‘language’ as ‘tongue’ in various Indo-European languages (following Buck 1949: §18.24) – the Latin, Germanic, Slavic, and Tocharian forms (and others not shown here) are true cognates, though the reconstruction is tricky – the Lithuanian form seems to belong with them too even if it has been re-shaped by association with the verb ‘lick’ (*liežiù*), as maybe also in Latin (cf. verb *lingere*):

Greek	γλῶσσα
Latin	<i>lingua</i> (and all over Romance)
English	<i>tongue</i> (and elsewhere in Germanic)
OCS	<i>językŭ</i> (and elsewhere in South Slavic, with representation in West Slavic and at least some of East Slavic (e.g. Russian))
Tocharian A	<i>käntu</i>
Lithuanian	<i>liežuvis</i>
Latvian	<i>mēle</i>
Anatolian	Hittite <i>lala-</i> ‘tongue’ but also ‘speech’, especially ‘bad speech; slander’ but not ‘language’ per se. Hieroglyphic Luvian has ‘language’ as a derivative of ‘tongue’ (<i>lala(n)ti-</i>) and the occurrence of ‘tongue’ as <i>lali-</i> is fairly secure for that language.

2. ‘language’ as something other than ‘tongue’ (“nontongue”) (again, following Buck):

Old Irish	<i>berla</i> (from *bherH- ‘speak’, cf. Hamp 2005 on Slavic reflexes of this, e.g. Macedonian <i>zbor</i> ‘word’) (vs. Mod Irish <i>teanga</i> ‘tongue’), or metathesis from <i>belra</i> ‘lips’??
Lithuanian	<i>kalba</i> (from <i>kalbėti</i> ‘speak’)
Latvian	<i>valoda</i> (from the root seen in Polish <i>wolać</i> ‘call’)
Sanskrit	<i>bhāṣā</i> (from root *bhol-, seen in Serbian <i>brboljiti</i> ‘chatter’)

Slavic

Ukr. *mová* (from ‘speak’, perhaps (cognates in West Slavic))

3. What to reconstruct? PIE as a ‘tongue’ or ‘nontongue’ language? Albanian as archaic in this regard or as sharing in an innovation with other languages?
 - a. Widespread occurrence of ‘language’ as ‘tongue’ (cf. (1)) would make reconstructing PIE as a ‘tongue’ language seemingly quite straightforward — Slavic would then be retentive/conservative, and the Baltic forms in (2) would presumably be historically prior to those in (3), even if the ‘nontongue’ forms are ousting the ‘tongue’ forms
 - b. But, the dialectology of ‘nontongue’ IE languages might suggest PIE as ‘nontongue’, in two ways:
 - i. ‘nontongue’ occurring in peripheral areas (Celtic and Indo-Iranian) as archaic, with ‘tongue’ languages constituting an innovative core area (and Tocharian forming part of the core here, aligning with western languages, as in other respects) – Baltic and Slavic ‘tongue’ forms would then be part of the innovative core, or else independent innovations based on a fairly natural sort of connection (it could be argued)
 - ii. taking Baltic ‘tongue’ forms as secondary, as Buck suggests, and Slavic ‘tongue’ forms as innovative too (see below), would mean that Balto-Slavic and Indo-Iranian ‘nontongue’ status could accord with other ways in which the two groups have been thought to form a larger grouping within IE (namely the so-called “satem” innovations of merging velar and labiovelar stops and the fricative outcomes of the palatal stops of PIE, and the *ruki* retraction); there would be no reason to privilege the ‘tongue’ languages as a basis for a PIE reconstruction — they could all have developed the connection on their own, just as, in this interpretation, part of Baltic did, and maybe Slavic.
 - c. Following up on (b), PIE might show ‘language’ as deriving from a verb ‘speak’, as in Sanskrit and as in Lithuanian, and Irish; Slavic would then be innovative, away from an original (Balto-Slavic) situation seen still in Baltic (and it is interesting that the verbs used in each of those languages have cognate forms in Slavic — might Slavic then have started with a word for ‘language’ like one of them?)
4. How then might Slavic have gotten the ‘tongue’ forms?
 - a. if it is a natural connection, Slavic (and any of the languages!) could have developed it on its own, of course
 - b. but given that at least some early Slavs were in contact with two groups of speakers in the Balkans that *do* have the tongue/language connection, and that even have it with cognate material, namely Greek and Albanian with γλώσσα/*g(l)juhë*, one has to wonder if the tongue/language connection in Slavic is due to Greek influence, maybe a South Slavicism that filtered into the rest of Slavic or else due to contact at an early enough stage to be part of Common Slavic.
5. Forms in (1) *could* be cognate, if from *dlnġ^wh- or the like (even for Greek and Alb – note other evidence for *dl > *gl* in Alb, e.g. ‘long’ forms: Grk. *dolikhos* (showing *d-*) / Alb. *gjatë* (dialectally (Arvanítika), *gljatë*)
6. Perhaps instructive here, though fraught with potential problems, is the intriguing convergence on at least one technical term involving organs of speech (and thus related to language) between Greek and Slavic, namely the term for ‘palate’: Greek οὐρανίσκος, Russian *něbo*. The Greek form is a diminutive (suffix -ισκος, as in παιδ-ίσκος ‘little child’) of οὐρανός ‘sky, heaven’, just as the Russian form is related to IE words for ‘sky, heaven, heavenly object’ (Hittite *nepis* ‘sky’, Greek νέφος ‘cloud’—note the doublet Russian *nebo* ‘sky, heaven’, though it is a borrowing from Church Slavic), so that both draw on the metaphorical connection of (natural/external) ‘sky’ with “sky” (i.e. ‘ceiling, upper part’) of the (internal/corporal) mouth. The Greek usage dates to Hellenistic times (2nd century AD is one early attestation) --

admittedly, the connection seems a rather natural one so each language could have innovated this on its own, and even if a (conceptual) borrowing (more a calque or loan translation, actually) from Greek into Slavic, it may have been more in the realm of anatomy (the early Greek usage) and medicine than language-related per se. But, it is suggestive

7. Another angle on ‘tongue’/‘nontongue’ languages — whatever the reconstruction, the connection, or lack thereof, is a reflection of early *linguistic/language ideology* (= the collective beliefs that ordinary speakers hold about their language, its structure and its history and its use, as they perceive it, and more broadly, about language in general). At issue here would be ‘language’ as ‘tongue’ as characterizing language in terms of its visible means of production, vs. ‘language’ as ‘speech’ as characterizing language in terms of its most obvious product or output modality — in either case, it would be a reflection of a folk taxonomy showing a view of what a “language” is

III. PIE Concern for Source of Information (“Evidentiality”)

RE: Albanian *marr vesh* ‘understand’

1. evidentiality = indication of the **source** of a speaker’s **information**, the **modality** by which that information was **gained**, and/or the speaker’s **stance** (i.e., **attitude**) towards the **truth** of the information
2. Two roots that give the meaning ‘know’ in the various languages can be reconstructed safely for PIE: *g’neH₃- and *weyd- (‘erkennen’ vs. ‘erblicken’, in the definitions given in Rix 2001), e.g. Sanskrit √jñā- vs. √vid-; Greek (γ)γνώσκω vs. (F)οἶδ-α English *know* vs. *wit*, OCS *znati* vs. *vidēti*, etc.) – some relevant observations:
 - a. for most of the languages, the derivatives show some differentiation in meaning/use pertaining to *type* of knowledge (e.g. knowing/being-familiar-with people or things versus knowing facts, as more or less with German *kennen* vs. *wissen*)
 - b. but there otherwise seems to be little or no significant semantic difference especially as to modality; such is the case for Sanskrit (e.g., Monier-Williams gives the meanings for both as ‘know, have knowledge, become acquainted, perceive, apprehend’)
 - c. still, while the ranges of meaning for each of the Greek cognates overlap considerably, the main source for Greek lexical information (Liddell-Scott-Jones) gives the following distinction: (F)oid-a = ‘know by reflection’ whereas (γ)γνώσκω = ‘know by observation’, suggesting a **witnessed** knowledge vs. **inferred** knowledge lexical distinction -- if not a matter of a secondary differentiation within Greek (as can happen with near-synonyms) this might point to a preservation of a PIE distinction. Perfect-system origin of (F)οἶδ-α (like a preterito-present) and the fact that an aorist and a (synchronic) perfect for (F)οἶδ-α are usually supplied by (γ)γνώσκω are reminiscent of tense restrictions on evidentiality marking in some languages (e.g. in Finno-Ugric) Also relevant is why PIE would have two essentially synonymous roots, so that we might well expect some possibly subtle differentiation in usage or some nuance of meaning
 - d. a caveat: the root *weyd- that (F)οἶδ-α comes from means ‘see’ in other tenses (cf. Latin *vidēre*, for instance) and usual account of semantics is simply ‘I have seen’ —> ‘I know’. Given association with ‘see’, one might expect (F)οἶδ-α to have the nuance of ‘know by observation’ not ‘know by reflection’. So maybe the distinction reported in LSJ is really just a secondary differentiation within Greek (what is needed is textual evidence beyond the dictionary evidence (still in the works ...)).
3. Still, there is at least one other instance within IE in which derivatives of the same root show meanings of ‘know’ and ‘see’ (or the like):

*k^weyt- ‘bemerken, erkennen’ (in Rix 2001)

 - ‘recognize, realize’ (as in Avestan *čit-*)
 - ‘count, honor, read’ (as in Slavic *čit-*)

- 'see' (as in Sanskrit derivative *citana-* 'coming into appearance')

Is this therefore originally 'know' through visual evidence (thus Slavic 'read', since sight is involved in reading)?

4. A cautionary note: other metaphors apparently were involved in the development of 'know' meanings within IE – note e.g. Latin *scio* / Hittite *sekk-/sakk-* 'know', possibly from a root *sekH- (Rix 2001: 524), originally meaning 'cut; distinguish' (seen in Latin *secō* 'cut; mow')
5. Evidence of a cultural concern for knowledge-source and veracity: derivatives of *H₁es- 'be'
 - a. within context of IE legal language (cf. Watkins 1967, 1970, 1987), derivatives of *H₁es- 'be' come to have meanings tied to matters of evidence (in a legal sense), especially Sanskrit *satya-* 'true; truth', Latin *sons* 'guilty', Old Icelandic *sannr* 'true; guilty', Hittite *asan* '(it) is (so)' (in public confession)
 - b. does this mean that 'be' at least in legal context could mean 'must be' or 'be evident', with 'truth' as one side of what the evidence shows things to be and 'guilty' as the other (cf. Benveniste 1960 re 'be' as originally 'really, actually be, exist')?
 - c. might this modal value be interpreted as an indication about the information-source for or likely veracity of an assertion, and in any case, can we infer from an evidence-related meaning for 'be' that the system – or the cultural milieu – in which it was embedded was one in which speakers had to make some statement about the information-source or the likely truth of an assertion, i.e. a evidentiality system (or at least a pervasive set of evidential strategies)? Note Watkins 1967: 407 on *H₁es- in "ritual public profession of guilt or innocence" in PIE society.
6. Also: is Indic distinction relevant here, made between *śruti-* and *smṛti-* (*śruti-* described by Monier-Williams (1899: s.v.) as 'sacred knowledge orally [and thus aurally/BDJ] transmitted by the Brāhmins from generation to generation ... and so differing from *smṛti-* or what is remembered and handed down in writing by human authors') and thus roughly 'authoritative knowledge that has been heard' vs. 'authoritative knowledge handed down (in other ways)', as a further indication that source of knowledge was culturally significant? If so for ancient Indo-Aryans, was it also so for Proto-Indo-Europeans?
7. Finally, then, within the scope of a concern for evidentiality and knowledge source, does the Albanian idiom for 'understand', *marr vesh*, a combination of *marr* 'take' and *vesh*, the word for 'ear' (so that this is literally "take ear"), show an echo of a more ancient importance placed on 'hearing' for knowledge (cf. Indic distinction in (6)), that is, that heard knowledge in this cultural context is the key to (true) understanding.

IV. Longevity (and more)

1. Albanian *as-* 'no-, not (in compounds)' = Greek οὐ (Joseph 2002b, from a Cowgillian (1960) *(ne) ... Hoyu k^wid 'not ever; not on your (long) life'), thus on a phraseological level showing that both Albanian and Greek share an ancient metaphor involving 'long life' in negation. Note other echoes and extensions of IE 'long life' phraseology can be found in the present-day Balkans, centering on Albanian; cf. the four cases in (2) – (5) below
2. First case: Albanian *jetë* 'life'
 - a. a loan-word from Latin *aetas* (with some reanalysis (Hamp 1968))
 - b. it reflects (and renews) the ancient "long life" semantics in the phrase *përjetë* 'forever' (literally "for life") and the derivative *përjetësi* 'eternity' (though admittedly some "naturalness" of semantic extension might be involved, cf. German *fur's Leben* with similar composition and similar semantics)
3. Second case: Albanian *për (në) jetë të jetëve* 'for eternity'
 - a. literally = "for life(time) of lifetimes" (repeated lexeme in different cases, acc + gen (pl))
 - b. reminiscent structurally of Old Persian "king of kings" phraseology (but also biblical usage (cf. Revelations 17:14))

- c. provides a link to this use of "long life" in negation (**(ne) ... Hoyu k'id*) via the emphatic 'ever'-based Albanian negation *kurrën e kurrës* 'never at all; not in a million years' (literally "never/ACC of a-never/GEN")
- d. the phrase in (c) thus semantically matches Modern Greek ποτέ τών ποτών (*poté ton potón*) 'never at all', which is literally "never of-the nevers/GEN.PL") and which thus itself structurally matches *për (në) jetë të jetëve*, in its repetition of the 'never' word, in its use of the genitive (though here plural), and in the order (ACC – GEN)
- e. the synchronically odd nominalization of the adverbs Albanian *kurrë* and Greek ποτέ in these apparently linked phrases ties in with 'ever' and **Hoyu* in another way besides the ACC-GEN(PL) structure:

- Hamp 1983 draws attention to the grammatical oddity in English of *for ever* (note *ever* is based on **Hoyu-*) with *for* apparently as a preposition and *ever* as a noun -- the OED talks about a "quasisubstantive" *ever* and there is some evidence that it could be a noun (via the reanalysis of *for ever and ay* as *for ever and a day*, where both *ever* and *day* would be nouns if coordination is between like categories).
- Is the Balkan nominalization process picking up on an old property of **Hoyu*, as seen in English (quasisubstantive) *ever* (or just the result of a playful nonce formation – note the effect of the Albanian and Greek phrases is stylistically like English *never in a million years*)? Note that there are adverbials from case forms of **Hoyu-*, e.g. Aeolic Greek αἰέν (from locative) and from case forms of derivatives of **Hoyu*, e.g. αἰεί (from an *s*-stem form, **He/oy-w-es-i*), but no clear evidence of an adverbial use of **Hoyu* directly, e.g. in Vedic, though quite speculatively, might some instances of Greek αὖ, adverb of 'repeated action', possibly be from **Hoyu* or **Heyu* where the meaning 'again, anew, further' might be construed as from 'continued/sustained activity' (of the sort associated with longevity)??
- One can wonder too about Sanskrit *jātu* 'at all' as a parallel for a bare *u*-stem (admittedly a *-tu*-stem) neuter used adverbially, and especially with the (tantalizing) gloss of 'ever' given by Monier-Williams and uses with *na* meaning 'never' (e.g., in Śatapathabrāhmaṇa, though most likely not with that meaning in its one Rīgvedic use (10.27.11), is a suggestion of an (unattested) adverbial *āyu** (note common semantics of 'life' and 'birth', if *jātu* is from √*jan-*) out of the question?

4. Third case: Modern Greek greeting γεια σου (*ja su*)

- a. literally, "health to-you" (or "(to) your health")
- b. γεια is from Ancient Greek ὑγιαῖαν 'health/ACC', and thus is connected (ultimately) to ὑ-γιής 'long-lived; healthy'; thus (indirectly) to the 'long life' nexus (cf. Weiss 1994).
- c. note: also used as a drinking toast

5. Fourth case: the Albanian greeting *tungjatjeta* 'hello'

- a. literally "*të u ngjattë jeta*" (= 'May be-lengthened life-the', with modal marker *të*, past nonactive marker *u* (from old reflexive), 3SG of optative of causative/factitive verb *ngjat-* 'lengthen' derived from *gjatë* 'long, broad', and definite form of *jetë* 'life')
- b. thus shows, by overt juxtaposition of 'long' and 'life', a union of the semantics of the pieces in the metaphor underlying *as-* in the account given in (1).
- c. also used dialectally as a toast in drinking (hence functionally with the exact same range as Greek γεια σου, suggesting a persistent (millennia-old??) Balkan interest in 'long life' (admittedly a likely universal, though not always expressed this way – cf. Vedic *śatam śarādas* with a different trope, 'hundred autumns') – and note Mark Southern's work (MSS 2004) on Vedic *śam yoh* as a drinking toast (with *yoh* relatable to base of *āyu*, and thus to Grk. οὖ and ὑγιαῖα, but also Alb. *as*)

V. (From drinking to ...) Eating

1. Albanian *ha* ‘eat’ with suppletive participle *ngrënë*: *ha* from preverb *Ho- + root *ed- (as in *eat*, *ed-ible*, etc.) and *ngrënë* from preverb *en- + root *g^wrō- (as in Latin *vor-ō* ‘swallow’, *vor-ax*, Greek βι-βρω-σχω ‘devour’)
2. Suppletion here may reflect different aspect or other nuance of what eating involves; given the meanings associated in Greek and Latin with *g^wrō-, *ngrënë* may reflect some sort of completed aspect, swallowing to complete the act of eating or taking in a large quantity or mass as a whole, leaving *ha* to some other dimension of the act
3. Suggestion: originally *ha* was something like ‘take a bite’, either as a momentary aspectual sort of thing or referring to the biting part of eating.
4. This can be motivated by the connection between *ed- and the word for ‘tooth’ as a present participle (cf. Greek variant ἔδοντ- for ‘tooth’) with ‘tooth’ as “the biting (thing, par excellence)”, and other connections such as with ‘pain’ words (cf. Schindler on this, e.g. Greek ὀδύνη, ὠδιν- for ‘pain’, ‘birth pangs’, and cf. German metaphorical *es beisst* (literally “it bites”) for ‘it stings’ or ‘it is painful’)
5. In that case, then, even though *ha* and *ngrënë* do not preserve the original semantics, since both mean simply ‘eat’, the suppletion would reflect a trace (or “echo”) of an original semantic distinction between the roots involved.

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