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The Old Albanian present and imperfect in *-ën*

Abstract: Whereas the present in 3sg. *-ën* is only used by the verbs *ec*, *hip* and *ik* in Standard Albanian, it is much more frequent in a number of Tosk and Gheg dialects and in Old Albanian texts. There is no agreement as to how this suffix originated. This paper analyzes the distribution of the present and imperfect in *-ën* in Old Albanian. In addition, I will present some considerations which may benefit future investigations into the origin of this class.

1. Topic and aims

The present indicative stems of Old Albanian and of most Albanian dialects fall into two major categories: the ending can contain a nasal consonant *n(j)* in all six persons, or it can lack the nasal. In the latter case, we often find a zero ending in 123sg., though not in all dialects. This basic distinction is acknowledged most clearly in the classification by Schumacher/Matzinger 2013: 29–30:

I: present stem = root, no suffix:

- a. type DI 'knows': vowel-final root
- b. type DJEG 'burns': consonant-final root

II: present stem has *n*-suffix:

- a. type KUJTON, PËLQEN: *n*-suffix after a stem ending in a vowel
- b. type ECËN 'walks': unstressed, syllabic *n*-suffix
- c. type GJËLLIN 'lives': stressed *in*-suffix

III: present stem = root plus stressed *Vt*-suffix

- a. type VRET 'kills': vowel-final root (**vra-ét*)
- b. type PËRKET 'touches': consonant-final root (**prek-ét*)

IV: irregular verbs (*thotë*, *është*, *ka*, etc.)

The *ën*-type is restricted in Standard Albanian to *ecën*, *ikën*, *hipën*. In a majority of Gheg dialects, it has spread to all consonant-final stems, see Genesin 2005b. In Arvanitic Tosk, the *ën*-endings are free variants of consonant-final stems (Sasse 1991: 150-162), but they are compulsory for the three verbs *ec*, *ik*, *hip*, which seems to suggest that there is something historical about the situation in the standard language. Some Arbëreshë

dialects in Italy show a mixture of original zero- and *ën*-endings (Lopuhaä 2014).

A special case is observed in S. Costantino Albanese (Breu 2002), where the switch to *ën*-inflexion is sometimes accompanied by a change in the verb semantics, viz. from an event to a process or from a semelfactive to an iterative:

Table 1: Semantics in S. Costantino Albanese

Event:	Process:
<i>djers</i> 'I break into a sweat'	<i>djersinj</i> 'I am sweating'
<i>gjegj</i> 'I hear'	<i>gjegjënj</i> 'I listen, obey'
<i>sos</i> 'I finish'	<i>sosënj</i> 'I'm about to finish'
<i>vras</i> 'I kill'	<i>vranj</i> 'I hurt'
Semelfactive:	Iterative:
<i>këput</i> 'I break, suddenly remove'	<i>këpunj</i> 'I detach, interrupt'
<i>pies</i> 'I ask, inquire'	<i>pienj</i> 'I query'
<i>shkelj</i> 'I trample'	<i>shkeljënj</i> 'I press grapes (bit by bit)'

An overarching interpretation of the changes in the second column could be as imperfectivization of the original meaning of the verb. It remains to be determined whether this semantic function was developed by the S. Costantino dialect independently, or whether it is the remnant of a phenomenon that used to be more widespread.

The main research questions addressed in the present paper will be:

The distribution of zero and *ën*-suffix in the present tense, viz. (1) among the different OAlb. authors (Buzuku, Budi, Bardhi, Bogdani for Gheg; Matranga, Variboba for Tosk), (2) across the different present stems, (3) between indicative and subjunctive, (4) across the different persons and numbers.

The distribution of zero and *-ën* in the imperfect, viz. (1) among the different OAlb. authors, (2) in comparison with the present tense, (3) across the different persons and numbers

The origin of the *ën*-suffix.

2. Corpus of present forms

Table 2 shows the endings that occur in Buzuku in the present indicative and subjunctive with the *djeg*-conjugation (zero ending in the 3sg.) and the *ecën*-conjugation. The endings can be slightly different in Budi, Bardhi and Bogdani, but the general situation is the same. Both conjugations can be kept apart in five of the six pres.ind. forms (not in the 2pl.), and in the singular of the subjunctive.

	present indicative		present subjunctive	
	<i>djeg</i> -type	<i>ecën</i> -type	<i>djeg</i> -type	<i>ecën</i> -type
1sg.	-∅	-inj (<i>hipnj</i>)	-∅	-inj (<i>ecnj</i>)
2sg.	-∅	-ën	-sh	-njësh
3sg.	-∅	-ën	-ë	-një
1pl.	-më	-njëmë	= pres.indic.	
2pl.	-((ë)n)i	-(ë)ni		
3pl.	-ënë	-njënë		

Genesin 2005b: 31–33 presents a non-exhaustive survey of *ecën*-forms in Buzuku and compares them with the continuants of the *ecën*-type in modern Gheg dialects. In this section I provide a full collection for Old Albanian of present indicative and subjunctive forms of verbs which have at least one *ecën*-form in their paradigm. The Buzuku evidence is based on the concordance in Fiedler 2004: 654–793, the forms from Bardhi on Demiraj 2008, and the evidence from Budi, Bogdani, Matranga and Variboba on Schumacher/Matzinger 2013: 287–963. I have ranked the verbs from A to F according to the number of authors in which they are attested with *ën*-endings. In order to save space, only the phonetic transcription of the forms is given (following Schumacher/Matzinger 2013). Each separate person-number form is given only once per verb; that is, the list enumerates types, not tokens.

A. *ën*-forms attested in six OAlb. authors

(h)ikën ‘go away’: Buzuku 3s.ind. /(h)ikën/, 3p.ind./(h)iknjënë/, 2s.sb. /(h)iknjësh/, 3p.sb. /(h)iknjënë/, 1p.ipv. /(h)iknjëmë/; Budi 3p.ind. /ikënjënë/, 3s.sb. /ikënjë/; Bardhi 3s.ind. /ikën/; Bogdani 3s.sb.

/ikinjë/; Matranga 1p.sb. /ikënjëmë/; Variboba 3s.ind. /ikën/, 2s.sb. /ikënjësh/.

B. *ën*-forms attested in five authors

ecën ‘walk’: Buzuku 3s.ind./ecën/, 1p.ind. /ecnjëmë/, 3p.ind./ecnjënë/, 1s.sb. /ecnj/, 3s.sb. /ecnjë/, 1p.sb. /ecnjëmë/, 2p.sb. /ecëni/, 3p.sb. /ecnjënë/; Budi 3s.ind. /ecën/, 3s.sb. /ecënjë/, 1p.sb. /ecënjëmë/, 3p.sb. /ecënjënë/; Bardhi 3s.ind. /ecën/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ecën/, 1p.ind. /ecimë/, 3p.ind. /ecinë/, 3p.sb. /ecinë/.

lypën ‘seek, demand’: Buzuku 1s.ind. /lypinj/, 2s.ind. /lypën/, 3s.ind. /lypën/, 1p.ind. /lypnjëmë/, 2p.ind. /lypëni/, 3p.ind. /lypnjënë/, 1s.sb. /lypinj/, 2s.sb./lypnjësh/, 3s.sb. /lypnjë/, 1p.sb. /lypnjëmë/, 2p.sb. /lypëni/, 3p.sb. /lypnjënë/. Budi ind. /lypënj/, /lypën/, /lypën/, /lypënjëmë/, /lypënjëne/, sb. /lypënjësh/, /lypënjë/, /lypënjëmë/, /lypëni/, /lypënjënë/. Bogdani ind. /lypinj/, /lypën/, /lypën/, /lypëni/, 3p. /lypinë/, 1p.sb. /lypimë/. Matranga: 1s.ind. /lipënj/, 1p.ind. /lipënjëmë/. Variboba 1s.ind. /lipënj/, 23s.ind. /lipën/.

(n)lidhën ‘connect’: Buzuku 1s.sb. /nlidhinj/, 2s.sb. /nlidhnjësh/; Budi 3s.ind. /lidh/, 3p.ind. /lidhnjënë/, 3s.sb. /lidhnjë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /lidhinj/; Bogdani 2s.sb. /lidhish/, 2p.sb. /lidhëni/; Variboba 1s.ind. /lidhënj/.

mundën ‘be able’: Buzuku 1s.ind. /mundinj/, 2s. /mundën/, 3s. /mundën/, 1p.ind. /mund(ë)njëmë/, 2p.ind. /mundëni/, 3p.ind. /mundnjënë/, 1s.sb. /mundinj/, 2s.sb. /mundnjësh/, 3s.sb. /mundnjë/, 1p.sb. /mundnjëmë/, 2p.sb. /mundëni/, 3p.sb. /mundnjënë/; Budi 1s.ind. /mund/, /mundënj/, 2s.ind. /mundën/, 3s.ind. /mund/, /mundën/, 1p.ind. /mundnjëmë/, 2p.ind. /mundëni/, 3p.ind. /mundnjënë/, 1s.sb. /mundënj/, 2s.sb. /mundnjësh/, 3s.sb. /mundnjë/, 1p.sb. /mundnjëmë/, 2p.sb. /mundni/, 3p.sb. /mundnjënë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /mundinj/, 3s.ind. /mundën/, 3p.ind. /mundnjënë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /mundinj/, 3s. /mundën/, 2p.ind. /mundëni/, 3p.ind. /mundinë/, 2s.sb. /mundish/.

sosën ‘end’: Buzuku 3s.ind./sosën/, 3s.sb./sosnjë/. Budi 3s.ind. /sos/, 3p.ind. /sosnjënë/, 1s.sb. /sos/, 3s.sb. /sosnjë/, 1p.sb. /sosnjëmë/, 3p.ind. /sosnjënë/, 1s.sb. /sosënj/; Bardhi 2s.sb. /sosnjësh/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /sosën/. Matranga 3s.ind. /sosn/.

C. *ën*-forms attested in four authors

mbushën ‘fill’: Buzuku 3s.sb. /nbushnjë/; Budi 123s.ind. /mbush/, 3s.sb. /mbushnjë/, 1p.sb. /mbushnjëmë/, 3p.sb. /mbushnjënë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /mbushinj/; Bogdani 3s.sb. /mbushinjë/.

zditën, (n)dritën 'lighten': Buzuku 1s.sb. /zdrinij/, 3s.sb./zdrinjë/; Budi 3s.ind. /ndritën/, 2s.sb. /ndriç/, 3s.ind. /ndritnjë/; Bardhi 3s.ind. /dritën/; Bogdani 2s.ind. /ndritën/, 3s.ind. /dritën/, /ndritën/, 3p.ind. /ndritinë/, 3s.sb. /ndritnjë/.

ndhezën 'light up': Buzuku 3s.pr. /ndhëzën/; Budi 3p.sb. /ndeznjënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ndezën/, 3p.ind. /ndezinë/; Variboba 2s.ind. /dhezën/, 3s.ind. /dhezën/.

puthën 'kiss': Buzuku 1s.sb. /puthinj/; Budi 3s.ind. /puthën/, 1s.sb. /puth/, 3s.sb. /puthnjë/, 3p. /puthnjënë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /puthinj/, 3s.ind. /puthën/; Variboba 1s.ind. /puthënj/, 2s.ind. /puthën/, 1s.sb. /puthënj/.

pyetën 'ask': Buzuku 2s.ind. /pyetën/, 3s.ind. /pyetën/, 3s.sb./pyesë/; Budi 2s.ind. /pyetën/, 3s.ind. /pyet/, 3s.sb. /pyesë/, 3p.sb. /pyesënë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /pëves/, 3s.ind. /pëvetën/, 3s.sb. /pëvesë/; Variboba 1s.sb. /pienj/.

qeshën 'laugh': Buzuku 1s.ind. /qeshinj/; Budi 3p.ind. /qeshnjënë/, Bogdani 3s.ind. /qeshën/, Variboba 1s.ind. /qeshënj/, 3s.ind. /qeshën/, 2s.sb. /qeshënjësh/, 3p.sb. /qeshënjën/.

nçe/ilën 'open': Buzuku 1s.ind. /nçilinij/, 3s.ind. /nçelën/, 1s.sb. /nçelinj/, 2s.sb. /nçilnjësh/, 3s.sb. /nçelnjë/; Budi 3s.ind. /nçel/ but 1p.ind. /nçelnjëmë/, 3p.ind. /nçelnjënë/, 3s.sb. /nçelnjë/, 1p.sb. /nçelnjëmë/, 3p.sb. /nçelnjënë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /mbërshelinj/, 3s.ind. /mbërshelën/ 'to include'; Variboba 3s.ind. /çelën/ 'ignite'.

(m)bërshelën 'include, close': Buzuku 3s.ind./nbërshelën/, 2s.sb. /nbërshelnjësh/, 2p.sb./nbërshelni/; Budi 3s.ind. /mbërshel/, 3s.sb. /mbërshelnjë/, 3p.sb. /mbërshelnjënë/.

thithën 'suck': Buzuku 3p.ind. /thithnjënë/ and /thëthinjënë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /thithinj/; Bogdani 3p.ind. /thithinë/; Variboba 3p.ind. /thëthinjën/; but Budi 3s.sb. /thëthijë/.

D. *ën*-forms attested in three authors

D.1. Including Buzuku:

mbytën 'kill': Buzuku 3s.ind. /nbytën/; Budi 3s.ind. /mbyt/, 3p.ind. /mbytnjënë/, 3s.sb. /mbytnjë/, 3p.sb. /mbytnjënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /mbytën/, 3s.sb. /mbyesë/.

derdhën 'pour': Buzuku 2p.sb. /derdhni/, 1p.ipv. /derdhnjëmë/; Bardhi 1s.ind. /derdhinj/; Bogdani 3s.sb. /derdhinjë/. But Budi 3p.ind. /dardhënë/.

ndëreqën 'steer, make right': Buzuku 3s.ind. /ndëreqën/, 1s.sb. /ndëreqinj/, 3s.sb. /ndëreqnjë/; Budi 3s.sb. /ndëreqnjë/, 2p.sb. /ndëreqni/, 3p.sb. /ndëreqnjënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ndëreqën/.

nfshehën 'hide': Buzuku 1s.ind. /nfshehinj/; Budi 1s.ind. /mpshef/; Bardhi 3s.ind. /mbshefën/.

ngjallën 'make alive': Buzuku 3s.ind. /ngjallën/, 1s.sb. /ngjallinj/, 2s.sb. /ngjallnjësh/, 3s.sb. /ngjallnjë/; Bogdani 23s.ind. /ngjallën/; Variboba 3s.ind. /ngjall/ and /ngjalln/.

ngjeshën 'gird': Buzuku 3s.sb. /ngjeshnjë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ngjeshën/; Variboba 3s.sb. /ngjeshënj/.

zgjidhën 'release': Buzuku 3s.ind. /zgjidhën/, 2s.sb. /zgjidhnjësh/, 3s.sb. /zgjidhnjë/, 2p.sb. /zgjidhëni/; Budi 3s.ind. /xgjidh/, 1s.sb. /xgjidhënj/, 2s.sb. /xgjidhnjësh/, 3s.sb. /xgjidhnjë/, 3p.sb. /xgjidhnjënë/; Variboba 1s.sb. /zgjidhënj/.

hipën 'ascend': Buzuku 1s.ind. /hipnj/, 1p.sb. /hipnjëmë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /hipinj/, 3s.ind. /hipën/, 3p.ind. /hipinë/; Variboba 1s.sb. /hipënj/.

lutën, lus- 'pray, beg'. Buzuku 1s.ind. /lus/, 1p.ind. /lusmë/, 3p.ind. /lusënë/, 3s.ipf. /lutën/, 3p.ipf. /lusnjinë/, /lutnjinë/; Budi 1s.ind. /lus/, 2s.ind. /lutën/, 3s.ind. /lutën/, 1p.ind. /lusmë/, 3s.sb. /lusë/, 1p.sb. /lusmë/, 3p.ind. /lusënë/; Variboba 1s.sb. /lusënj/. But Bogdani 1s.ind. /lus/.

paditën 'accuse': Buzuku 3s.sb. /paditnjë/; Budi 3s.sb. /paditnjë/; Bogdani 2p.ind. /paditëni/, 3p.ind. /padiënë/, but 3s.sb. /padië/.

qellën 'bring': Buzuku 3p.ind./qellnjënë/; Budi 3s.ind. /qëll/, 3p.ind. /qëllnjënë/; Variboba 1s.ind. /qëll/, 3s.ind. /qëll/, 2s.sb. /qellnjësh/, 3s.sb. /qëll/, 1p.sb. /qellnjëm/, 3p.sb. /qellnjën/.

shëndoshën 'heal': Buzuku 1s.sb./shëndoshinj/, 2s.sb. shëndoshnjësh/, 3s.sb./shëndoshnjë/, 3p.sb./shëndoshnjënë/; Budi 3s.sb. /shëndoshnjë/; Bogdani 2s.ind. /shëndoshën/, 3s.ind. /shëndoshën/, 2s.sb. /shëndoshish/, 3s.sb. /shëndoshinjë/.

nveshën 'clothe', **d-** 'take off': Buzuku 3s.ind. /nveshën/, 3s.sb. /nveshnjë/; Budi 3s.ind. /vesh/, 3s.sb. /veshnjë/, 3p.sb. /veshnjënë/, 3s.ind. /dvesh/, 3s.sb. /dveshnjë/; Matranga 2s.sb. /veshnjësh/.

D.2. Excluding Buzuku:

nderën 'honour': Budi 1p.sb. /ndërnjëmë/; Bardhi 2s.sb. /ndërnjësh/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ndëren/, 2s.sb. /ndërish/.

heshtën 'be silent': Budi 3s.ind. /heshtën/, 3s.sb. /heshtnjë/; Bardhi 3s.ind. /heshtën/; Bogdani 2s.ind. /heshtën/.

prishën 'destroy': Budi 3p.ind. /prishnjënë/.

shprish 'pluck out': Budi 3s.ind. /çprish/, 3s.sb. /çprishnjë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /çprishën/, 3s.sb. /çprishinjë/; Variboba 3s.ipf. /shprishën/.

E. *ën*-forms attested in two OAlb. authors

E.1. In Buzuku and Budi or Buzuku and Bogdani:

dëlrirën 'cleanse': Buzuku 1s.sb. /dëlririnj/, 2s.sb./dërlirnjësh/, 3s.sb. /dëlrirnjë/; Budi 3s.ind. /dëlrir/, 1s.sb. /dëlrir/, 2s.sb. /dëlrirnjësh/, 3s.sb. /dëlrirnjë/.

(n)falën 'give; greet; beg': Buzuku 2p.ind. /nfali/, 3s.sb. /nfalnjë/, 1p.sb. /nfalnjëmë/, 2p.sb. /nfali/, 3p.sb. /nfalnjënë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /falinj/, 3s.ind. /falën/.

grabitën 'rob': Buzuku 3s.ind. /grabitën/, 3p.ind. /grabitnjënë/, 3s.sb. /grabitnjë/; Budi 3p.ind. /grabitnjënë/.

ngjatën 'last', **perglatën** 'prolong': Buzuku 3s.sb. /përglatnjë/; Budi 3s.ind. /ngjat/.

këputën 'destroy': Buzuku 1s.sb. /këputinj/, 2s.sb. /këputnjësh/; Budi 2s.ind. /këput/, 3p.ind. /këputnjënë/, 3s.sb. /këputnjë/, 1p.sb. /këputnjëmë/.

kullotën 'graze': Buzuku 3p.ind. /kullosënë/, /kullozënë/, 1s.sb. /kullo/, 3p.sb. /kullosënë/, /kullozënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /kullotën/.

lagën 'moisten': Buzuku 3s.sb. /lagnjë/; Bogdani 3s.sb. /laginjë/.

prunjën, unj- 'bend': Buzuku 1s.ind. /prunjinj/, 3s.sb. /prunjë/[!]; Budi 3s.ind. /prunj/.

rritën 'set upright; grow': Buzuku 2s.sb. /rritnjësh/; Budi 2p.sb. /rritni/, 3p.sb. /rritnjënë/; but Variboba 2s.ind. /rri-n/.

stripën, zdrip- 'descend': Buzuku 3s.sb. /stripnjë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /zdripën/, 1p.ind. /zdripimë/, 3s.sb. /zdripinjë/.

sheta/itën 'walk': Buzuku 3s.ind. /shetatën/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /shëtitën/.

shkelën 'tread': Buzuku 3s.sb./shkelnjë/, 2p.sb./shkelëni/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /shkelën/; but Budi 3s.ind. /shkel/.

tretën 'liquidify': Buzuku 3s.sb. /tretnjë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /ntretën/, 3s.sb. /ntretinjë/.

ntherën 'butcher, stab': Buzuku 2p.sb. /ntherni/, 3p.sb. /nthernjënë/; Budi 3s.sb. /thërnjë/; but Variboba 3s.ind. /thër/.

vëlizën / lëvizën 'move': Buzuku 3p.ind. /vëliznjënë/; Budi 3s.sb. /lëviznjë/.

E.2. Excluding Buzuku:

In other Gheg authors:

zbardhën 'whiten': Bardhi 1s.ind. /xbardhinj/; Variboba 2s.ind. /zbardhën/, 3s.ind. /zbardhën/, 3s.sb. /zbardhënj/

zbutën 'weaken': Bardhi 1s.ind. /xbutinj/ Bogdani 3s.ind. /xbutën/.

dobit(ën) 'acquire': Budi 3s.ind. /dobit/ and /dobitën/, 3s.sb. /dobitnjë/ Bogdani 3s.ind. /dobitën/.

goditën 'hit, fight; create': Budi 3sg.ind. /godit/ , 2s.sb. /goditnjësh/, 3s.sb. /goditnjë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /goditën/, 3p.ind. /goditnjë/.

hap 'open': Budi 3p.ind. /hapnjënë/, 2s.sb. /hapsh/; Variboba 1s.ind. /hapënj/ and /hap/.

mërzitën 'bore, annoy': Budi 3.ind. /mërzitnjënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /mërzitën/.

ngrohën 'keep warm': Bogdani 3s.ind. /ngrohën/; Variboba 2s.ind. /ngrohën/, 3p.ind. /ngrohën/.

nxitën 'incite': Budi 3s.ind. /nxit/, 3p.ind. /nxitnjënë/, 3s.sb. /nxitnjë/, 3p.sb. /nxitnjënë/; Bogdani 3s.ind. /nxitën/.

porositën 'order': Budi 1s.ind. /porësit/, 3s.sb. /porësitnjë/; Bogdani 1s.ind. /porosis/.

reshën 'it snows': Budi 3s.sb. /reshnjë/, Bogdani 3s.ind. /reshën/.

In Matranga and Variboba:

ftesn 'insult': Matranga 3p.ind. /ftesnjënë/, 1p.sb. /ftesnjëmë/; Variboba 1s.ind. /ftesënj/, 3s.ind. /ftesën/, 1s.sb. /ftesënj/.

parakalesn 'ask': Matranga 2s.ind. /parakalesn/, 3s.ind. /parakalesn/, 3p.ind. /parakalesnjënë/, 2s.sb. /parakalesnësh/, 3p.sb. /parakalesnjënë/; Variboba 1s.ind. /parkalesënj/.

F. *ën*-forms in one author

F.1. In Buzuku:

errën 'obscure': 3p. /ernjënë/.

këqyrën 'regard': 3s.ind. /këqyrën/, 1p.sb. /këqyrnjëmë/.

kuorën 'harvest': 3s.ind. /kuorën/, 3p.ind. /kuornjënë/, 3s.sb. /kuornjë/, 1p.sb. /kuornjëmë/.

kthjellën 'dew over': 3p.sb. /kthjellnjënë/.

lëkondën 'move': 3p.sb. /lëkondnjënë/.

shtrydhën 'tread on': 3s.ind. /shtrydhën/.

shtypën 'press': 3s.ind. /shtypën/.

trembën 'frighten': 3s.sb. /trembnjë/.

tuqeqën 'sadden': 3p.ind. /tuqeqnjënë/.

F.2. In Budi:

ngjitën 'stand, unite': 3s.ind. /ngjit/, 3p.sb. /ngjitnjënë/.

matën 'measure': 1s.ind. /mas/, 2s.ind. /matën/, 1p.ind. /masmë/. But Variboba 1s.sb. /mas/.

mëngjisën 'cure': 3p.ind. /mëngjisnjënë/.

përbuzën 'despise': 3p.ind. /përbuznjënë/.

përmendën 'mention; wake up': 1s.ind. /përmend/, 3p.ind. /përmendnjënë/, 3s.sb. /përmendnjë/, 3p.sb. /përmendnjënë/.

reshtën 'chase away': 3p.ind. /reshtnjënë/.

shko/undën 'shake off': 3s.sb. /shkundnjë/.

shporrën 'remove': 3s.sb. /çporrnjë/.

shqimën 'extinguish': 3p.ind. /shqimbnjë/.

shqitën 'tear off': 3s.sb. /çqitnjë/.

thërret 'call': 1s.ind. /thërresënj/ (in the poems) vs. 3s.ind. /thërret/, 3p.ind. /thërresënë/, 2s.sb. /thërreç/, 3s.sb. /thërresë/, 1p.sb. /thërresmë/, 3p.sb. /thërresënë/.

F.3. In Bardhi:

ftoh 'make cold': 3s.ind. /ftofën/.

lef 'bark': 3s.ind. /lefën/.

maj 'fertilize': 3s.ind. /majën/.

mpref 'sharpen': 3s.ind. /mprefën/.

shqimb 'extinguish': 1s.ind. /shqimbinj/.

tesh 'sneeze': 3s.ind. /teshën/.

uj(i)t 'moisten': 3s.ind. /uj(i)tën/.

F.4. In Bogdani:

avitën 'bring close': 1s.ind. /avitinj/.

cofën 'die, rot away': 3p.ind. /cofinë/.

çartën 'break': 1s.ind. /çartinj/. But Budi 3s.ind. /çart/.

ndalën 'stop (from)': 3s.ind. /ndalën/, 3p.ind. /ndalinë/.

detuerën 'oblige': 3s.ind. /detuerën/.

fik 'extinguish': 3p.ind. /fikinë/.

ngrehën 'build': 3s.ind. /ngrehën/, 3p.ind. /ngrehinë/.

zgjedhën 'choose': Bogd. 3s.ind. /xgedhën/, 3p.ind. /xgedhinë/. But *djeg*-endings in Buzuku and Budi.

nam-, nemën 'curse': 3s.sb. /neminjë/, but Budi 3p.ind. /namënë/.

njuhën 'count, reckon': 3s.ind. /njuhën/, 3p.ind. /njuhinë/.

përgjegjën 'answer': 2s.ind. /përgjegjën/.

pomendën 'remember': 3s.ind. /pomendën/.

qëndisën 'decorate': 3p.ind. /qëndisinë/.

soditën 'look': 3s.ind. /sodit/ and /soditën/, 1p.ind. /sodisëmë/, 3p.ind. /sodisënë/, 2s.sb. /soditish/, 3p.sb. /soditinë/.

shkrepën 'hit, fire': 3s.ind. /çkrepën/, 3p.ind. /çkrepinë/.

shpifën 'invent': 3p.ind. /cpifinë/.

temelitën 'found': 3s.ind. /temelitën/.

F.5. In Matranga:

dhoksiasën 'praise': 1p.ind. /dhoksiasnjëmë/.

fanerosn 'show': 3s.ind. /fanerosn/, 3p.ind. /fanerosnjënë/.

fharistisn 'thank': 1s.ind. /fharistisnj/.

ksemolojisl 'confess': 3p.ind. /ksemolojisljënë/, 3s.sb. /ksemolojisljë/.

leftherosn 'free': 3s.sb. /leftherosnjë/.

llojasn 'think': 1s.ind. /llojasnj/, 1p.ind. /llojasnjëmë/, 3s.sb. /llojasnjë/.

pistepsn 'believe': 1s.ind. /pistepsnj/, 2s.ind. /pistepsn/, 3s.ind. /pistepsn/.

prepsn 'be necessary': 3s.ind. /prepsn/, 3p.ind. /prepsnjënë/.

qeverisn 'govern': 3s.ind. /qeverisn/.

sinodepsn 'visit': 2s.sb. /sinodepsnjësh/.

zilepsn 'wish': 2s.sb. /zilepsnjësh/.

F.6. In Variboba:

adhurārën 'worship': 2s.ind. /adhurār/, 1p.ind. /adhurārnjëm/.

dorrokopsën 'destroy': 3s.ind. /dorrokopsën/.

dhifisën 'weaken': 3s.ind. /dhifisën/.

dhistinārën 'determine': 3s.sb. /dhistinārnj/.

dhjivasën 'read, study': 2s.ind. /dhjivasë/, 3s.ind. /dhjivasën/, 1p.ind. /dhjivasënjëm/.

dhrosisën 'feed': 3s.ind. /dhrosisën/.

gramisën 'throw down': 3s.ind. /gramisën/.

judhikarën 'judge': 3s.sb. /judhikārnj/.

laudharën 'praise': 1s.ind. /laudhārnj/, 1p.ind. /laudārnjëm/, 3p.ind. /laudhārnjën/, 1s.sb. /laudhār/, 3s.sb. /laudhārnj/, 2p.sb. /laudhārni/, 1p.ipt. /laudhārnjëm/.

lipisën 'have pity': 3s.ind. /lipisën/.

ljosën 'melt': 3s.ind. /ljosën/.

ndihën 'help': 3s.ind. /ndihën/, 3s.ipf. /ndihën/.

ngalesën 'indict': 1s.ind. /ngalesënj/, 3s.ind. /ngalesën/, 1s.s.b. /ngalesënj/.

ngul(l)ën 'fix': 3p.ind. /ngulënjën/.

nguç 'be red': 3s.ind. /nguçën/.

nis(ën) 'begin': 3s.ind. /nisën/.

përmbys 'overthrow': 3s.ind. /përmisën/.

rrimārën 'rhyme': 2s.sb. /rrimārnjësh/.

rringraxjārën 'thank': 1s.ind. /rringraxjārnj/, 1p.ind. /rringraxjārnjëm/, 2p.sb. /rringraxjārni/, 1p.ipt. /rringraxjārnjëm/.

sporrisën 'distribute': 2s.ind. /sporrisën/.

shkrifën 'loosen': 1p.ind. /shkrifënjëm/.

tajitën 'nourish': 2s.ind. /tagjisën/, 3s.ind. /tagjisën/.

taksën 'promise': 1s.ind. /taksënj/.

thimatisën 'worship with incense': 2s.ind. /thimatisën/.

varesën 'be bored'. 23s.ind. /varesën/, 1s.sb. /varesënj/.

3. First results

A number of generalizations can be made on the basis of the evidence.

- a. There is a general tendency for *ën*-endings to become more frequent in time: they are least common in Buzuku, more used in Budi, increase in Bogdani, and are especially productive in Variboba's language. The evidence of Matranga is difficult to assess because so few verbs are attested in his text. Still, he regularly uses *-ën* in Greek loanwords, so he is probably closest to Variboba – as his geographic origin would suggest anyhow. Still, there are also deviations from these patterns, e.g. verbs which take *-ën* in Buzuku but not in Budi.
- b. There is no immediately obvious semantic category under which all the *ën*-presents can easily be subsumed. Still, a closer look might reveal some kind of pattern.
- c. Consonant-stems which have the *at/et*-suffix, such as *grëshet* 'to invite', *këlthet* 'to call', are never attested with *ën*-endings.
- d. Monosyllabic consonant-stems with vowel ablaut between the present (usually *e* or *je*) and the aorist (usually *o*) are never attested with *ecën*-endings. The verbs in question are *bjerr*, *del*, *djeg*, *dredh*, *dhemb*, *jep*, *flet*,¹ *glet*, *heq*, *jet/mbet*, *merr*, *mbledh*, *mbjell*, *ndjek*, *nget*, *nxjerr*, *njeh*, *përcjell*, *pjek* 'hit', *pjek* 'cook', *pjell*, *p(ë)ret* 'cut', *pret* 'wait', *qet*, *rej*, *rrjedh*, *sjell*, *sheh*, *shet*, *shqerr*, *shqet*, *shtiell*, *vdes*, *vjedh*, *vjell*, *vjerr*, *vret*.

4. Alternating present stems

The *ën*-endings are mainly found in verbs which use the same stem in the present, imperfect and aorist. It is therefore plausible to regard the spread of the suffix as a way to disambiguate the present and imperfect from the aorist. It will be interesting to see the behaviour of stems with two alternative forms in the present/imperfect system, and with the same stem in the aorist.

¹ With the exception of the hapax 1s.ind. /po folinj/ in Bogdani, which is derived from the aorist stem.

4.1 With *t/s*-alternation

There are ten *t/s*-stems in our corpus, viz. *kullot/s* 'graze', *lut/s* 'pray', *mat/s* 'measure', *mbyt/s* 'kill', *padit/s* 'accuse', *porosit/s* 'order', *pyet/s* 'ask', *sodit/s* 'look', *sheta/it/s* 'walk', and *thërret/s* 'call'. They show a clear tendency to use *ecën*-endings when the stem ends in *-t* (originally, in the 23s.ind., 2p.ind. and 2s.sb.) but *djeg*-endings after *-s*, compare Buz. *pyesë* (3s.sb.) vs. *pyetën* (3s.ind.), Budi *lus*, *mas* (1s.ind.) vs. *lutën*, *matën* (23s.), Bogdani *mbysë* (3s.sb.) vs. *mbytën* (3s.ind.). Here are two complete examples of *s/t*-stems which show that a single author can employ both variants:

Table 3: forms of *mbvt(ën)* 'to kill'

author	type	forms
Buzuku	<i>ecën</i>	3s.ind. /nbytën/
Budi	<i>djeg</i>	3s.ind. /mbyt/
	<i>ecën</i>	3p.ind. /mbytnjëjë/, 3s.sb. /mbytnjë/, 3p.sb. /mbytnjëjë/
Bogdani	<i>djeg</i>	3s.sb. /mbysë/
	<i>ecën</i>	3s.ind. /mbytën/

Table 4: forms of *pvet(ën)* 'to ask'

author	type	forms
Buzuku	<i>djeg</i>	3s.sb. /pyesë/
	<i>ecën</i>	2s.ind. /pyetën/, 3s.ind. /pyetën/
Budi	<i>djeg</i>	3s.ind. /pyet/, 3s.sb. /pyesë/, 3p.sb. /pyesëjë/
	<i>ecën</i>	2s.ind. /pyetën/
Bogdani	<i>djeg</i>	1s.ind. /pëves/, 3s.sb. /pëvesë/
	<i>ecën</i>	3s.ind. /pëvetën/
Variboba	<i>ecën</i>	1s.sb. /pienj/

But *t*-forms with a zero ending also exist (viz. Buzuku *thërret*, Budi 3s.ind. *mbyt*, *pyet*, 1s.ind. *porësit*), as do *s*-forms with *ën*-endings (Variboba 1s.sb. *lus-ënj*, Budi 1s.ind. *thërres-ënj*, Bogdani *sodisëmë*, *sodisëjë*).

Budi's *mbyt* and *pyet* can be regarded as archaisms, whereas Variboba's *lusënj* shows the productivity of the *ecën*-type in this author. Bogdani's *sodisëmë*, *-ënë* show the general tendency of this author to replace original (Slavic) *t* by *s* in these verbs, witness also 1sg. *porosis*.

4.2 With a/e-ablaut

The verbs *derdh*, *dardh* 'to pour' and *nam/nem* 'to curse' have *a/e*-ablaut, with *a* being original and *e* the result of *i*-mutation. Only five forms are attested in our corpus, of which the three *ecën*-type forms occur when the stem has *e*: Buz. 1p. /derdhnjëmë/, Bogd. 3s.sb. /derdhinjë/, 3s.sb. /neminjë/.

4.3 With (j)e/i-ablaut

Seven verbs have *e/i*-ablaut in the present or could have had it: *përgjegj* 'to answer', *zgjedh* 'to choose', *ngjesh* 'to gird', *kthjell* 'to dew over', *njeh* 'to count', *mbërshel* 'to include' + *nçel* 'to close', *vesh* 'to clothe'. No link between the vowel alternation and the type of ending can be discerned. Also, there are only three *i*-forms in the corpus (Buz. 1s.ind. /nçilinj/, 2s.sb. /nçijnjësh/, 2p.sb. /nvishni/) as against ca. forty forms with *e*-ablaut, so that the alternation cannot be investigated reliably.

5. Statistical comparison

I will now compare the occurrence of zero and *ën*-endings in Buzuku, Budi, Bogdani and Variboba. Bardhi and Matranga are excluded because of their small corpus. The graphs are based on a count of *djeg*- versus *ecën*-endings in those four authors, distinguishing person-number forms and the indicative from the subjunctive. The verbs taken into account are all the stems for which an *ecën*-present is attested in one of the OAlb. authors, that is, all the verbs listed in section 2.

Here are the raw numbers which form the input for the figures. The 2p. is not counted as it has no distinctive *ecën*-endings. The verb *thërret* is not counted except for the form *thërresënj*, as it behaves as an invariant *djeg*-verb in all forms but *thërresënj*.

Table 5: raw numbers of the investigation

type	Buzuku (n=126)		Budi (n=150)		Bogdani (n=101)		Variboba (n=47)	
	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.
<i>djeg</i>	5	3	35	11	7	3	7	2
<i>ecën</i>	47	71	37	67	71	20	25	13

Table 6: Percentages of the investigation

in %	Buzuku (n=126)		Budi (n=150)		Bogdani (n=101)		Variboba (n=47)	
	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.	ind.	sb.
<i>djeg</i>	4	2	23	7	7	3	15	4
<i>ecën</i>	37	56	25	45	70	20	53	28

5.1 Zero versus *-ën* in indicative and subjunctive

Figure 1: ind. and sb. zero vs. *en* in 4. OAlb authors

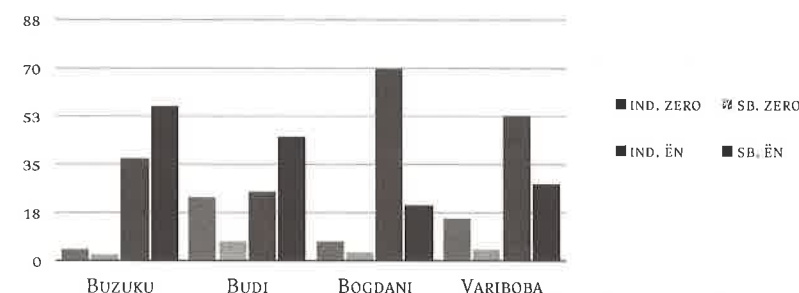


Figure 1 represents the percentage of both kind of endings for each author. That is, for instance, all the forms from Buzuku make up 100%. Buzuku is represented in the graph by four columns, which refer to – from left to right – ind. zero, sb. zero, ind. *-ën*, and sb. *-ën*.

The figure provides information on several aspects of the statistics. Firstly, in all authors, there are more *ecën*-forms than *djeg*-forms. Buzuku (6%) and Bogdani (10%) have the lowest proportion of *djeg*-forms, followed by Variboba (19%) and Budi (30%).

Secondly, comparing columns 1+2 and 3+4 of each author, we see that, among the *djeg*-forms, there are more indicative than subjunctive forms in all authors. For the *ecën*-forms, the same is true for Bogdani and Variboba (viz. the ending is more frequent in the indicative) but not for Buzuku and Budi, where the subjunctive outnumbers the indicative to a significant degree.

Thirdly, comparing columns 1+3 and 2+4 of each author, it emerges that the *ën*-ending outnumbers the zero ending in all authors in the indicative (slightly in Budi, clearly elsewhere) as well as the subjunctive (clearly everywhere).

5.2 Zero versus *ën* in indicative and subjunctive (split out)

Figure 2: Zero vs. *ën* in indicative and subjunctive

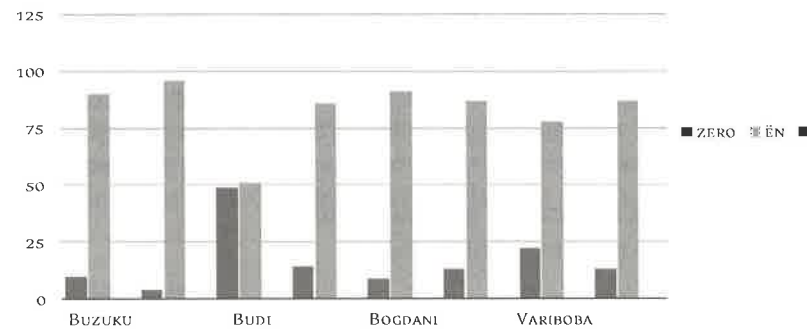


Figure 2 is based on the same numeric data as the previous one, but now, each of the verbal moods (indicative and subjunctive) of each author is counted as 100%. Thus, for Buzuku, 10% of the pres.ind. forms of the relevant verbs has a *djeg*-ending whereas 90% has a *ecën*-ending. These percentages are based on a collection of 52 tokens (see table 5). Each author is represented by two pair of columns, one for the indicative (on the left) and one for the subjunctive (on the right).

The figure shows that the *ecën*-endings are more frequent in all categories in all authors, but there is an interesting difference between Budi and the other authors. Only Budi displays a different behaviour of the indicative and the subjunctive. In his indicative, *djeg*- and *ecën*-endings are almost on equal footing, but in the subjunctive, the *ecën*-ending are just as dominant as with the other authors. It follows that, only for Budi, we can conclude that the *ën*-endings are significantly more frequent in the subjunctive than in the indicative.

This statistical finding is confirmed by individual verbal stems, some of which have zero in the indicative but *-ën* in the subjunctive, particularly in the 3sg. For instance, *dëllir* 'to clean' has 3s.ind. *dëllir*, 3p. *dëllirënë* with *djeg*-endings versus 2s.sb. *dëllirnjësh*, 3s. *dëllirnjë* with *ecën*-endings. A similar difference is attested in Budi for the verbs *godit*, *mbush*, *nçel*, *nxit*, and *vesh*. In theory, of course, this situation may still be coincidental, but it must be signalled.

If the subjunctive did indeed behave differently from the indicative as regards the presence or absence of *-ën*, this may either be an ancient trait or have developed secondarily. For the Arbëreshë dialect of Frascineto, Glaser (1991: 52–53) notes that the *ën*-presents normally have the same ending */-enj/* in the 1sg.present indicative and the 3.sg. present

subjunctive (because of the loss of final schwa in the latter form), e.g., *foljenj* 'I speak' and 'that he speak', *kapirenj* 'I understand' and 'that he understand'. But she also notes a few exceptions, viz. verbs in which */-enj/* is only found in the subjunctive form, e.g., *njoh* 'I know' and 'that he know', *njohenj* 'that he know', *shkas* 'I slip', 'that he slip', *shkasenj* 'that he slip'. We would need more data to say whether this pattern is significant.

5.3 Percentage of *ecën*-endings per person/number

Figure 3: Percentage of *ën*-forms per person/number

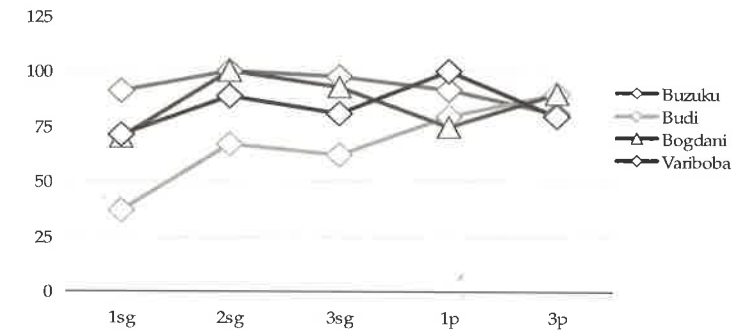


Figure 3 gives per person-number combination the percentage of *ecën*-endings as opposed to *djeg*-endings, taking indicative and subjunctive together. For instance, in the 1sg., the *ecën*-ending makes up 91% of the tokens in Buzuku, 71% in Variboba, 70% in Bogdani, and 37% in Budi. Note that Budi's 1sg. is the outlier in general, as all other percentages of *ecën*-forms are higher than 60%. Observe also that Budi is in general more reluctant in using the *ën*-endings in the singular. Finally, it must be said that these statistics are more reliable for the 1sg., 3sg. and 3pl., as they are on average based on more tokens (as many as 66 for 3sg. in Budi) than the percentages for 2sg. and 1pl. (as few as 4 tokens in the 1pl. for Bogdani and 3 for Variboba).

6. The imperfect

A nasal element is also found in the endings of the imperfect. A comparison of the relatively archaic imperfect endings in the Tosk Arvanitic dialect shows that the element */n(j)/* was originally part of the wordformational suffix of certain present stems, and not in itself an imperfect marker (Schumacher/Matzinger 2013: 132–140):

Table 7: Endings of the active imperfect in Arvanitic Tosk

	<i>djeg</i> -endings	<i>ecën</i> -endings	<i>kujton</i> -endings	<i>di</i> -endings
1s.	-ë	-ënj-ë	-onj-ë	-jë
2s.	-e	-ënj-e	-onj-e	-je
3s.	-Ø	-ën	-on	-j
1p.	-ëmë	-ënj-ëmë	-onj-ëmë	-jëmë
2p.	-ëtë	-ënj-ëtë	-onj-ëtë	-jëtë
3p.	-(i)në	-ëj-në	-oj-në / -oninë	-jnë

However, the element /nj/ was metanalyzed as forming part of the imperfect ending in a number of persons, notably the 2sg. and the three plural forms. In the Old Gheg texts, this is already largely the case. Table 8 gives the imperfect endings of the *djeg*-class and the *ecën*-class found in Buzuku and Budi. As *ecën*-class I have defined all verbs of which the present or the imperfect displays distinctive *ën*-endings in the Old Albanian authors.

The only endings that allow to distinguish between the *djeg*-class and the *ecën*-class in the imperfect are those of the 1sg., the 3sg., and, partly, the 3pl. Wherever *nj* had already spread to the *djeg*-class, the endings are uninformative.²

Table 8: Imperfect endings in Buzuku and Budi				
	Ind. + sb. in Buzuku		Ind. + sb. in Budi	
	<i>djeg</i> -stems	<i>ecën</i> -stems	<i>djeg</i> -stems	<i>ecën</i> -stems
1sg.	-ë	-nj-ë	unattested	-inj-ë (?)
2sg.	-nj-e(j)	-nj-e(j)	-nje	unattested

2 In the 3pl., /nj/ has not yet spread to all *djeg*-verbs, which may imply that /nj/ spread to this form more recently. This hypothesis receives support from the OAlb. imperfect of *ka* 'to have': *kesh-ë*, *kish-nje*, *kish-Ø*, *kish-njim*, *kish-njitë*, *kish-në*.

Table 8: Imperfect endings in Buzuku and Budi

	-Ø	-ën	-Ø -te	-ën -ën-te -te
3sg.				
1pl.	-nj-īm	-nj-īm	-nj-īmë	
2pl.	-nj-itë	-nj-itë	-nj-itë	unattested
3pl.	-në -nj-inë	-nj-inë	-në -nj-inë	unattested

A similar situation, to a large extent, exists in Bogdani, though the endings partly have a different aspect. In Variboba, the inherited 2sg. ending zero is still in place in the *djeg*-class. The 1pl. and 2pl. are not attested well enough to include in table 9:

Table 9: Imperfect in Bogdani and Variboba

	Bogdani		Variboba	
	<i>djeg</i> -endings	<i>ecën</i> -endings	<i>djeg</i> -endings	<i>ecën</i> -endings
1s.	-ë	-injë		
2s.	-nje		-Ø	-nj-e
3s.	-Ø -te, -tej -e(j) -ke	-ën -ën-te	-Ø	-ën
3p.	-në -ënë -inë	-inë	-jin	-ënj-in -nj-in (2x)

The aim of the next subsections is to determine the spread of the *ën*-endings in the imperfect, and, in particular, their relationship to the *ën*-endings in the present. The investigation is based on the concordances in Fiedler 2004 and Schumacher/Matzinger 2013.

6.1 The imperfect in Buzuku

Eleven stems that have a distinctive *ën*-imperfect form are also attested with an *ën*-present in Buzuku, viz. *dëllir*, *ec*, *lyp*, *mund*, *nçel*, *nfal*, *ngjall*, *pyet*, *sos*, *shëndosh*, *zdrit*. Examples of imperfect forms are 3s. /dëllirën/ 'cleaned', 1s. /nçelnjë/ 'opened', 3s. /pyetën/ 'asked'. One stem has an *ën*-ipf. but a zero present, viz. *lut* 'ask' (3s.ipf. /lutën/). Another verb has an *ën*-ipf. and no attested present, viz. *brit* 'to call' (1s.ipf. /britnjë/). Four stems in Buzuku have an *ën*-present but only ambiguous ipf. endings: (*h*)*ik* 'to leave': 3p. /(*h*)iknjinë/; *ndhez* 'to ignite': 3p. /ndheznjinë/; *nlihdh* 'to connect': 1p. /nlihdhnjim/; *qell* 'to mock': 3p. /qellnjinë/.

In Buzuku, the 3p. ending *-në* only occurs if no *ecën*-forms are found in the 1s. or 3s. of the imperfect, though *ën*-forms in the present may occur. Conversely, the existence of a distinctive *ecën*-form in the imperfect means that the 3p. will be in *-njinë* only. The synchronic vacillation in 3p. endings is shown e.g. by *merr* 'to take', which has 3p. /merrnë/ (2x) and /merrnjinë/ (1x).

6.2 The imperfect in Budi

In Budi, the number of distinctive forms which allow us to positively identify the *ecën*-conjugation is extremely low. Only two verbs are certainly attested as *ën*-imperfects, viz. *lyp* 'to ask' (3s. *lypën*, with which 3s. /lypënte/ and 1p. /lypënjimë/ are not in conflict) and *mund* 'to be able' (3s. /mundën/ and /mundënte/). Budi is the first author who uses the ending *-te/*. The co-occurrence in Budi of forms such as 3s.ipf.ind. /kalonte/, /delte/ beside 3s.ipf.sb. /kalon/, /del/, seems to show that the addition of *-te/* started in the indicative, and spread to the subjunctive later (Schumacher/Matzinger 2013: 136 and fn. 42 on p. 58).

Some of the explicit zero-forms in 3s.ipf. are attested with an *ën*-present in Budi, viz. *nçel*, *dëllir*, *lut*, *mbush*, *ngjit*, *nxit*, *thërres* (once), and *vesh*. Note that, in many of these cases, Budi has *ën*-endings in the present subjunctive rather than the indicative, at least as far as the 3s. is concerned. Also, the 3s.ipf. is sometimes distinguished by vowel alternation, as in *nçil* 'opened' (sb.), *dridh* 'turned' (sb.), *vish* 'wore', and *derdh* 'poured'.

6.3 The imperfect in Bogdani

A distinctive 3s. ending *-ën* is restricted to a few verbs, viz. *mundën* 'could', *ndritën* 'shone', *soditën* 'watched', *shëndoshën* 'healed', *stolisën* 'decorated', *thurën* 'wove (a fence)', and *xbardhën* 'to lighten', of which the first four are also attested as *ën*-present in Bogdani.

Great productivity has been reached by the novel 3s. ending *-ënte*, as in /ikënte/ 'went', /heshtënte/ 'was silent', /hipënte/ 'went up', /pëvetënte/ 'asked', etc. Altogether, it is found with 32 stems in Bogdani. Most of these stems have the usual features of *ën*-presents, such as identity of present and aorist stem, polysyllabicity, or a stem-final *t/s*-alternation. An exception is the 3s.ipf.ind. /ndiq/ beside /ndiqënte/ 'followed' to *ndjek* (aor. in Bogdani /ndoq/).

6.4 The imperfect in Variboba

In Variboba, there are three different persons that can distinguish between the *djeg*-forms and the *ecën*-forms, but the evidence yields no great surprises. Of the inherited verbs, *ec* 'to go', *lidh* 'to tie', *lut* 'to ask' (3p.ind. /lusënjin/), *ndih* 'to help', *puth* 'to kiss', *zgjdh* 'to untie' and *shprish* 'to pour out' have a recognizable *ën*-imperfect, and all but the last of them are also attested with an *ecën*-present. Otherwise, the *ën*-imperfect is found in a few recent loanwords which also have an *ecën*-present.

7. Summary

We have found twenty-four *ën*-presents which are attested in Buzuku and at least two other OAlb. authors:

dvesh 'denude', *ec* 'walk', (*h*)*ik* 'flee', *hip* 'ascend', *lidh* 'tie together', *lyp* 'seek', *mund* 'be able', *nbush* 'fill', *nbyt* 'kill', *nçel* 'open', *ndëreq* 'straighten', *ndhez* 'kindle', *ngjall* 'make alive', *ngjesh* 'gird', *nvesh* 'clothe', *puth* 'kiss', *pyet* 'ask', *qell* 'bring (to)', *qesh* 'laugh at', *sos* 'end', *shëndosh* 'heal', *thith* 'suck', *n/zdrit* 'lighten'.

They share no phonological features that allow us to regard them as a separate class in which the suffix could have spread. They do, however, – and this goes for nearly all of the *ën*-presents and imperfects attested in Old Gheg – share a morphological feature, viz. the identity of the stem vocalism in the present/imperfect, on the one hand, and in the aorist, on the other. Furthermore, if the present stem displays a stem-final *t/s*-alternation, or internal *e/i*-ablaut, the suffix is normally added to the basic variants in *-t* or with *-e*. If the aorist has different vocalism from the present, the *ën*-endings do not appear. Thus, it seems possible to explain the spread of *-ën* as an attempt to disambiguate the present from the aorist stem.

The twenty-four presents listed above also do not share a single semantic trait. Most of the verbs are transitive, but *ec*, *hik*, *hip*, and *mund* are intransitive. A tentative aspectual classification of the verbs is the following:

- activities of spatial movement from or to X: walk, flee, ascend
- achievements that change the state of the object: kindle, tie together, fill, straighten, heal, lighten, open, make alive, kill, gird, bring, clothe, denude
- others: ask, seek/demand, laugh at, kiss, suck, end
- For the origin of *mund* as **mun* 'is able' plus the subjunctive particle *të*, see Schumacher 2005.

8. Hypotheses

It has become clear that the *ën*-suffix was not restricted to *ec*, (*h*)*ik*, *hip* in Old Gheg or Tosk, as it is in Arvanitic Tosk and in Standard Albanian. Thus, it seems unlikely that the restriction of *ën*-endings to these three verbs was inherited from Proto-Albanian. One of the main questions is whether the restriction to *ec*, (*h*)*ik*, *hip* represents something old, or whether it can be seen as a Tosk reduction of an earlier stage at which the suffix could be more widely used.

The origin of the suffix has not been discussed extensively in the literature. Klingenschmitt (2000: 12) has argued that the suffix might continue a PIE sequence of vocalic nasal plus the **i̯e/o*-suffix, i.e. **-n̥-i̯e/o-*, which developed into PALb. **-anje/o-* and would have given the attested Old Albanian endings. Klingenschmitt does not explicitly say whether he thinks that the suffix conglomerate was inherited from PIE or was formed anew in a prestage of Albanian. Genesin (2005a: 173–177, 2005b: 40) declines to speculate on the etymology, but argues that the *ën*-suffix spread in order to distinguish the 1sg. from the 23sg., in particular, in verbs of the structure (C)CVC. According to Genesin (2005b: 41), *hip* would have been the starting point for the spread, initially to (*h*)*ik* and *ec*, then onto other verbs.

It will be clear that the subject has been far from exhausted. Particular consideration should be given to the chronology of the spread of the suffix and to its possible semantics. Below I will provide one tentative scenario for a relatively recent rise of the suffix, and another one that would place the origin in Proto-Albanian or before.

8.1 The *ën*-suffix as the result of metanalysis

An important observation is that the *ën*-suffix was first suffixed to CVC-verbs without ablaut or consonant alternation within the stem or between present and imperfect. Also, the increase in productivity of the suffix during the OAlb. period renders it possible (though of course not compelling) that the suffix started in a limited amount of verbs. Budi's many retentions of *djeg*-ending in 3sg.pres.ind. forms as opposed to his

use of *-ën* in the imperfect could point to the imperfect as being the first category to adopt the ending, rather than the present. This had already been supposed on structural grounds by Boretzky (2000: 3–5).

So why the imperfect? The oldest person-number forms which all have an *ën*-ipf. are the 2sg., the 1pl. and the 2pl. If we compare the ipf. endings of these persons with those of the aorist, it appears that, without the nasal suffix, the endings of imperfect and aorist would have been the same or nearly the same if there was no vowel ablaut or stem-final consonant alternation. The oldest imperfect endings were probably 1sg. -*ë*, 2sg. -*e*, 3sg. -*Ø* and -*j*, 1p. -*më*, 2p. -*të*, 3p. -*në* (cf. Schumacher/Matzinger 2013: 134), whereas for the aorist we find 1sg. -*a*, 2sg. -*e*, 3sg. -*i*, 1p. -*m*, 2p. -*të*, 3p. -*në*. Hence, it would be perfectly understandable if new endings were created to distinguish the imperfect from the aorist. The endings of the nasal presents, such as in *-on* and *-en*, belonged to the most productive category, and were in addition readily analyzable. Compare again the paradigm of the active imperfect in Buzuku: 1s. /*kujtonjë*/, 2s. /*kujtonje*/, 3s. /*kujton*/, 1p. /*kujtonjëm*/, 2p. /*kujtonjëtë*/, 3p. /*kujtonjinë*/ and /*kujtojnë*/ . The element /*nj*/ could easily be reanalyzed as part of the ending, as has indeed been assumed by all scholars, thus facilitating the spread of *nj*-endings such as 2s.ipf. -/nje/ to other verb classes. But the reanalysis of the 3sg. -/n-Ø/ as an ending of its own led to its syllabification as /*ën*/ after consonant-final roots. Thus, the new imperfect would have been 1s. **-një*, 2s. **-nje*, 3s. **-ën*, 1p. **-njim*, 2p. **-njitë*, 3p. **-njinë*. The addition of the nasal endings -*nj*, -*njinë* to the stem-final consonant without intervening vowel, as in /*ecnjë*/, etc., (that is, without prop vowel /*ë*/) makes most sense if *kujton-* was indeed reanalyzed as a vowel-final stem *kujto-* plus the nasal endings. Buzuku's present forms 1s.pr. /*hip-nj*/, 1s.sb. /*ec-nj*/, which contrast with the productive 1s.pr. ending -/inj/ in all later texts (Fiedler 2004: 95), could be old remnants of this initial stage.

From the imperfect, the suffix then spread to the present, most likely on the basis of the 3sg. form, which was identical in the present and imperfect in all *n*-stem presents.

This theory explains why the grammaticalization of *nj* is advanced further in the imperfect (where the nasal endings are inflectional and are found in all dialects) than in the present (where the *ën*-class remains derivational or, at most, became aspectual). Also, the imperfective semantics of the *ën*-present in the Arbëreshë of S. Costantino Albanese could simply have rubbed off from its original source category, the imperfect tense.

8.2 The *ën*-suffix from Proto-Albanian *-anje/o-

A different hypothesis would be that the *ën*-suffix already existed in Proto-Albanian. It may have had the form *-anje/o- as surmised by Klingenschmitt 2000. The formal implications of this solution would be especially interesting for the intransitive trio *ecën*, *hipën*, *ikën*, which were found to be the most frequent presents with the suffix in all dialects. One option is to regard these as the three most original presents with this suffix (as done by Genesin 2005b), and to suppose that the suffix started its productivity from this basis. Against this solution would speak the relatively long period between PALb. and Buzuku, in which the suffix apparently remained in use with just a few verbs, only to suddenly accelerate its spread shortly before the written transmission set in. Another possibility is to regard *ecën*, *ikën*, *hipën* as the logical, last stronghold of this suffix, which may once have been much more widespread – as the PIE etymology proposed by Klingenschmitt would suggest. In this case, the recent, renewed productivity of the suffix at the start of the Old Albanian period would be less problematic to incorporate into the theory.

In either case, we must try to explain the semantics of the suffix, such as the earlier grammaticalization of *-ën(j)*- in the imperfect, the predilection (at least in Budi) for present subjunctives rather than indicatives, and the imperfective usage of the suffix in S. Costantino Albanese. In view of the possible ways in which verbal imperfectivity can develop, and seeing that the three most frequent *ën*-verbs indicate movements ('walk', 'go away', 'go up'), it is conceivable that the PALb. meaning of the suffix was inchoative. For more on this hypothesis, and a possible parallel with the spread of the Latin suffix *-ēscere* to transitive verbs in Romance, I refer to Lopuhaä 2014.

9. Conclusion

The first main contribution of this article is the survey of *ecën*-presents in Buzuku, Budi, Bardhi, Bogdani, Matranga and Variboba. It shows that the suffix was not restricted in Old Gheg to *ec*, (*h*)*ik*, *hip*, but it mainly attached to verbs of which the present and aorist had the same basic form. The verb (*h*)*ikën* is attested in all six authors, the verbs *ecën*, *lypën*, *lidhën*, *mundën* and *sosën* in five of them, nine verbs are found in four different authors, and so on. In Budi, we find a significant preponderance of *ecën*-forms in the subjunctive as opposed to the indicative, and Budi in general seems to be the author where the suffix was slowest to spread. The investigation of *ën*-imperfects shows a great deal of overlap between *ecën*-presents and explicitly marked *ecën*-imperfects from Buzu-

ku on. Finally, two different scenarios were presented for the rise of the *ën*-endings. One option is to see their origin in the imperfect of nasal stems, e.g. in *-on*, from which the nasal plus the ipf. ending were detached and suffixed to CVC roots. Another solution would be to assume a separate PALb. suffix *-anje-, which survived in verbs of motion and became productive in Old Albanian.

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Albanian presents in *-oj* and *-uaj*¹

1. Introduction

One of the more prominent present classes in modern Albanian is that of the nasal present in *-oj*, which goes back to Old Albanian /-oń/. This conjugational type must have been productive early, as it is the regular class into which Romance verbs are borrowed, e.g. *pëshktoj* 'to fish' ← Lat. *pscāre*.² As is described by Genesin [2005b], the most probable origin of this conjugation is from a combination of a causative or factitive nasal suffix and the factitive or denominative suffix **-eh₂-*, so that we may reconstruct pseudo-PIE³ **-eh₂-n-ie/o-*. This would then develop into Proto-Albanian⁴ **-ānje/a-*, where *ā* denotes the product of late PIE **ā* and **ē* that developed into Albanian *o*.

There is a sound law stating that before a resonant stressed Proto-Albanian **ā* in a final syllable gets lengthened and subsequently diphthongised to OAlb. *uo*, Geg *ue*, Tosk *ua*. A good example for this is *duaj* 'sheaf', cognate to Skt. *dhānyā* 'grain', *dhānyā* 'grain' and Lith. *dúona* 'bread', for which we may reconstruct PIE **dheh₂n-ió-*. This diphthon-

1 This paper is based on a BA thesis [Lopuhaä, 2012] written at Leiden University under the supervision of De Vaan, who has provided valuable input.

2 In this article the symbol ← will be used to denote loanwords.

3 The term 'pseudo-PIE' is used here because it is not clear whether this concatenation of suffixes was used as a present formation in PIE already. For a possible cognate in Vedic verbs in *-anyā-* and Hittite verbs in *-annÖe-*, see [Oettinger, 1992].

4 Because the exact point of divergence of the different Albanian dialects is difficult to establish, the language stage in the prehistory of Albanian that is used as Proto-Albanian in this article is the stage of which the reconstruction sheds the most light on the prehistory of the verbs ending in *-uaj* and *-yej*. In concrete terms I have chosen the stage directly after the development of the inherited difference in vowel quantity (**a* vs **ā*) to a difference in quality (**a* vs **ā*, which develops into the opposition of *a* vs *o*). Since some Latin loanwords share this development, e.g. *mollë* 'apple' ← Lat. *mālum* 'id.', while others do not, e.g. *shtratë* 'bed' ← *strātus* 'spread', my Proto-Albanian would be dated around the Roman era. It would then be placed slightly after Early Proto-Albanian as reconstructed by Orel [2000], and around Late Proto-Albanian as reconstructed by Schumacher and Matzinger [2013].