

## ЭКРЕМ ЧАБЕЈ О НАЗВАНИИ АЛБАНСКОГО НАРОДА

Научная статья

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## Аннотация

Для определения истоков языка или истоков нации очень важно знать название народа и то, как оно изменялось с древнейших времён по настоящий момент. Несомненно для албанцев и албанского языка изучение названия народа так же актуально, как и научные споры о том, изменялось ли оно на протяжении веков. Как зарубежные, так и албанские учёные изучали происхождение и дальнейшее развитие названия албанского народа, на основе упоминания Птолемеем племени *албанои* [*Albanoi*] и города *Албанополис* [*Albanopolis*] во втором веке н.э. Та территория, которая сейчас населена албанцами, была территорией древних иллирийцев, и учёные изучают эту преемственность и сопоставимость названий *албаной-Албанополис* [*Albanoi-Albanopolis*]. По мнению некоторых учёных они могут иметь отношение к этническому названию арберор-Арбери [*arbëror-Arbëri*], или даже происходить от него напрямую. Однако другие учёные по-прежнему не разделяют это мнение. Согласно другой группе учёных, взаимосвязи между древним названием *албаной* [*albanoi*] и современным *арбер* [*arbër*] не существует, потому что албанцы, даже будучи пришельцами в этой местности могли перенять это название от древних местных жителей, иллирийцев, как это случилось с некоторыми другими народами.

**Ключевые слова:** автохтония, албанский язык, название народа «arber», название «albanoi».

## EQREM ÇABEJ ON THE NATIONAL ALBANIAN NAME

Research article

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## Abstract

To determine the origins of a language or the origin of a nation, it is of great relevance to know about its national title and its continuation from ancient times to our days. Undoubtedly, for Albanians and their language, a study of national name is relevant, together with scientific arguments on whether there is continuation through many centuries. Foreign and Albanian scholars engaged in a study of origin or the continuation of the national name of Albanians based on the fact that Ptolemy had mentioned the tribe *Albanoi* and the city of *Albanopolis* since the 2nd Century AD. This was in the territory of the ancient Illyrians, the territory which is today inhabited by Albanians, and they study this continuity of territorial inhabitation and this comparison of the names *Albanoi-Albanopolis*. According to some scholars, there may be some points of approximation with the ethnicity name *arbëror-Arbëri*, or there may be some direct descent. There are still scholars who do not support such a thesis. According to the second group of scholars, the relation of the ancient name *albanoi* and the name of today's *arbër* does not exist, because Albanians, even being newcomers to the place, could have inherited the name from the ancient residents, the Illyrians, as has happened with several other peoples.

**Keywords:** autochthony, Albanian language, national name arber, name albanoi.

In determining the origin of a nation and its language, a huge point of interest is its national name and its continuity from ancient times until nowadays. Undoubtedly, also for Albanians and their language, it is with great interest that we observe the trace of the old national name, *arbën/arbër*, and the developments it has gone through throughout the centuries. We think that it is important to know if we have continuity of this name through the centuries or not.

Albanians are known to be one of the few European nations that have two national names. They call themselves: *arbën/arbër*, *arbëresh/arbëresh*, *arbënuer/arbëror*, and in these last centuries: *shqiptari* while their homeland is called: *Arbëni/Arbëri*, a place name, and recently *Shqipëri*. [4, P.62]

Foreign and Albanian scholars engaged in the study of the origin or continuity of the national name of the Albanians, relying on the fact that, since the 18th century. e II to e. s., Ptolemy mentioned the *Albanoi* tribe and the town of *Albanopolis* in the territory where the ancient Illyrians were, in which territory the Albanians live today. They study the continuity of territory and the comparison of the ancient name of *Albanoi-Albanopolis*. According to some, there should be points of approach by the ethnic name *arbëror-Arbëri*, or better yet, we have a direct continuation of this name from ancient times to this day. It is important for the history of the Albanian people and their autochthony. The name *Arbën* continues to remain indivisible from *Albanoi* of Ptolomeu, not only as a name on its own but also as determination of a place [4, P.66]. In addition to being used by the Illyrians to the Arbërs, this name is also explained through the phonetic laws of the Albanian language.

Researcher Norbert Jokli sees a pre-Indo-European name in the national name of the Albanian people, while researcher Tomaschek brings this name to some ancient names of the Western Balkans, as well as the name of the *Arbe (Rab)* island of the northern Adriatic. Sufflay thought the same, also. As per the pre-Indo-European origin from an *alb-*, the same is also thought by Trombetti, Tagliavini, Popovic, etc. [4, P.62]

The opinion of Henrik Baric, which is just a continuation of the opinion of Norbert Jokl, Trombetti, Bertold, Taliavin, Hubsehmmd, Popovic, etc., puts forth that the root of **alb**, **arb**, etc., should be of pre-Indo-European heritage. This was opposed by Eqrem Çabej. Based on this, Çabej concluded that, "From this name the **Arben/Arbër** of Albanian are regularly derived, a testimony among other things, that Albanians are biased, indigenous to today's settlements and that there is a continuity, a language comprehension at least from antiquity." [5, P.69]

Regarding the question posed earlier by scholars as to which of the two forms was primary (**arb**— or **alb**-), we can say that it has been thought that the proper form of this name originally was **arb**-. This opinion was supported by G. Meyer and Pedersen, as well as other scholars. [4, P.66] In regard to this issue, Eqrem Çabej and Shaban Demiraj think that there are difficulties in determining what the primary form can be and what its source was. Çabej thinks we will agree with G. Mayer and Pedersen that the proper form of the name has been with the **arb**. [4, P.66]

Regarding the issue of the source form from which the name **Arb-ën(ë)/Arb-ër(ë)** is formed, Shaban Demiraj thinks there is still a lot of uncertainty about the issue. He says that if we rely on the form used by Albanians, then we can say that the primary form is / **-r- /**: **Arb**-, and not / **-l- /**, **Alb**-, which appears in Latin documents. While the Slavic form of **Arëban**-as and **Raban** is thought to prove that the Balkan Slavs, in contact with the ancestors of today's Albanians, heard this name with / **-r-** /, but also in Greek historical documents, the form / **-r-** /: **Arvan**-on is proven, as well. On the other hand, the earliest documented topic is the one with / **-l-** /, used by Ptolemy, **Alban-oi** and **Alban-o-polis**. Therefore, it remains to be considered which of these forms was the source. [6, P.182]

Naming on the basis of **alb-** / **arb**— is the oldest method and has served to name Albanians by their neighbors for centuries. Therefore, we have the Latin form of **arbanenses** or **albanenses**, the Italian Albanian form **albanese**, the Greek form of **arvanitis**, the Slavic form **arbanas** apo **Raban** dhe **Rabënëski**, and the Turkish form of **arnaut-arnavut**. According to Shaban Demiraj, the Turkish form (**arnaut-arnavut**) was created on the basis of the Greek form of **arvanite**-, through consonants metathesis, **n.v.** [6, P.175] Greeks used the name for Albanians from the base **arbanë**, which was a general form until the time of the operation of rotacism / nasalism, which ceased to operate before the stabilization of the Slavs in the Balkans. Rexhep Ismajli said, "It is precisely the Greek form of the Albanian national name that indicates that they have been in close proximity to at least the end of Antiquity. Arbanon, Arbanites, Albanon reflects only the Albanian form before the dialectal division, before the rotacism, i.e. before. V-VI, otherwise we would have to have the rotated **toske** form. With this, also fall all the speculations about the late arrival of Albanian language in the area where it is spoken today." [10, P.97]

Regarding the question of the two meanings of **arbën/arbër-it** (name of the place, nation's name) and which may have come first, Eqrem Çabej stated that, at the top of it was the name of the place. This is proved by the use of the name in our old literature, where **Arbën** appears only as a name of a place, and ethnic names are served by **Arbëneshtë e Arbënor**. [4, P.66] Jorgji Gjinari said, "This shows that the Arbëresh as an ethnic integrity were beginning to be recognized by foreigners since the last centuries of the first millennium AD. Even the southern variant with rotacism (**arbër**, **arbëresh**) shows that this name was extended to all provinces at least before the process of rotacization in the southern Albanian dialect ceased to operate." [9, P.215-228]

Meanwhile, regarding the use and spatial expansion of this name, it can be said that, according to both the internal and external evidences with general summary, it results that the early name of the Albanian people and its country is **arbën/arbër** with its variations. That has prevailed in Albania until the first centuries of the Ottoman rule. [5, P.69]

According to scholars, it is thought that the Albanian national name, **alban**, and its later appearance as **arbër**, apparently incurred metathesis (**l-r**). Many thinkers thought that Ptolemy did this vocalic shift, but this supposition cannot be proved with certainty due to the fact that he compiled his work based on Hellenic geography scholar Eratosten and Martin Tiri (B.C). Pedersen thinks that this change was made by the Greeks according to a vague association with geographical names, and this opinion was accepted by many researches/scholars. [13, P.631]

Petar Skoku thought that such a change from **alb** to **arb** was done according to the Greek phonetic laws, such as the word **abelfor** for **abelfos**. [14, P.54] It is well known that Greek and Byzantine writers used both forms of this name. One was taught **ALBANOS-ALBANIA**. On the contrary, the Latin called the people **Arbanenses** and their country **Arbana**. [13, P.631] From the Latin and Roman form, the Slavic name **Arbanas** was created. It has an old **Raban** form with Slavic metathesis, and even today, this name is preserved on the **Rab** island.

Despite the fact that many scholars supported the continuation of the national name of Albanians through the centuries, from **albanoi** to **arbër**, there were still other scholars who did not support such a thing. According to scholars of the second group, the connection between the ancient name **albanoi** and the name of today's **arbërve** does not have any significance. This is because Albanians, as the newcomers, could have inherited this name from the ancient inhabitants — the Illyrians — as has happened with some other nations, also. As settlers, other peoples have received the national names they found from the indigenous people. [2, P. 31]

### Expansion of the name: **arbën/arbër**

The questions arises, is **arbën/arbër** a word that has a limited expansion, or does it belong to the whole language?

Kristo Frasheri said, "In this case, it should be noted that the Albanian or Arbanite appellations were called only the Albanians living in the narrow Arbanon province centered on Kruja, which included approximately the present-day districts of Tirana, Kruja, Mat and Kurbi, but not all Albanian-speaking provinces. This means that in the century XI Alban or Arbanite name was a provincial and non-ethnic appellation and that Arbanoni represented a close province and not the entire homeland of the Albanians page." [7, P.239] He also said, "The spread of the name Albanon, Arbanum, Albania in the later centuries is of interest. The extension of this name beyond the borders of historic Arbanon can be well explained by the inclusion of these provinces in the political and religious community of the Arbanite's state, which was formed by the merging of the fourteen provincial communities." [8, P.241]

Kole Luka said, "The arb- and alb- roots, with the predominance of the first one, are everywhere and give some historical support points. The space element coincides with this dimension, because the name is present both outside the Dukati of Durrës and Arbër, and in the areas under Slavic occupation. It is also found in all the officials of Serbian, Rashian kings, etc. Today it can be said with certainty that the name was not only used as the bearer of the Dukati of Durrës and Arbër, in that extent as it appears in 1204, but in all Arberian areas, including those that were under Slavic occupation. [11, P. 292] He also said, "The name of Arbër has a well-defined time of its development, a dimension of the XI-XII centuries, which is the time when historiography accepts the formation of the Arbëresh nationality. The name, with its expansion, reaches to a certain period which stops two or three centuries ago (XVII-XVIII centuries), and the replacement with the new name Albania, Albanian." [12, P.281]

Skender Anamali said, "Based on these data, our archeology concluded that the Koman culture is a local culture and was developed on the basis of an older, also local culture. As such, it is understood that its bearers are none other than the descendants of the old Illyrian population, who in the middle Ages came up with the name Arber, a continuation of the name of the Albans of Ptolemy (Ptolemeut). The culture of Koman flourished there at the end of the centuries VI-VII, at a time when the process of formation of the Albanian people had begun to develop. Therefore it is related to the Arbers — early Albanians." [1, P.337-355]

The name **Arbën/Arbër** is an ancient name of a nation and people and is even older than the names **shqip, shqiptar, Shqipëri, and Shqipni**, which dominate today. In Albania, this name is alive from the South to the North.

Regarding the expansion of the national name, it can be said that this name had an expansion of geographical use in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is thought that this name was expanded all over the country since the Skenderbeu era, by evolving from a tribe or province's name to a national name of the country. This name was also taken by those who were ousted to Greece and Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, who did not recognize the name **shqiptar, Shqipni/Shqipëri**, etc., which is seen to be younger and born or generalized in Albania after their displacement. [4, P.65]

Given the fact that this national name "*has survived to this day in various provinces of the country, it appears that it has been used in national proportions throughout the Albanian language territory.*" [5, P.69]

There were also various debates about changing the national name of Albanians. The question was often asked whether this phenomenon has happened to other people, as well. We can say that this phenomenon is not only encountered by Albanians, as seen by the change of the national name and their homeland over the centuries, but it has also occurred to different peoples, such as the Greeks and Germans.

This can be observed in regard to the Germans who call themselves **Deutsch**, while they are called different names by foreigners. The Romans called them **German** because of the name of a tribe of Germans, and it is believed that, through the Romans, this name was spread to other peoples, such as the Italians, Englishmen, etc. The French have called them **allemande** (s) due to the name of the Western Germans, the allemans, with whom they have had more frequent contact. The Russians, on the other hand, have called them **nemecki**, or "mute", meaning "they do not speak our language". The Germans have been called this by other Slavic people, in general. [6, P.176-177]

Similar to the Albanian national name and the changes that it has undergone, there is the process of passing the name of the tribe "**frank**" into the name of the territory of "**Francia**" and the **French** as the name of the inhabitants of a limited territory, although they were not Franks. [3, P.174-175]

In conclusion, we can say that Eqrem Çabej has summarized with great clarity and in a very complete way the various etymological hypotheses about the name **Arbën/Arbër**, and according to him, the writing of the old name among the foreigners' shows that it oscillates between the forms **Alb-** and **Arb-**. Çabej mentions Ptolemy (2nd century AD), Michael Attaliates (1072), Anna Komnena (1079), and Georg Akropolita. According to him, the old name is preserved even among Albanians in the form **Arb-**; e.g., the Albanians of southern Italy and Sicily, descendants of the displaced, who left Albania in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries call themselves and the people of their old homeland **arbëresh** while they call the homeland **Arbër, Arbëri**. These names are still used today by the descendants of Albanians who moved in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries from Albania to Greece, **arbëresh** for **Albanian**, **arbërishte** for the **Albanian language**. [5, P. 68] These data are also consistent with the notes found in the documents of the old authors. Gjon Buzuku (1555) (who mentions "**nde Arbanit**"), Budi (1621), Bardhi (1636), Bogdani (1685), and the Assembly of Arbën (1706). [5, P. 70]

According to Çabej, even today in Albania, **Arbën- e Arbër**— is alive from the North to the South. We encounter **Arbëri**, although more rarely, as a name of place and **Arbëresh, Arbër** as a tribe name. Traces of the old name are found even today in the toponymastics of Albania, such as **Arbona** or **Arbana** (a village between Tirana and Petrela) and **Arbëneshe** (a village of Kraja). This is also testified in **Arbereshi** in Borgo Erizzo, near the city of Zara (Dalmatia), which was founded in the first half of the 18th century. [4, P. 64]

Regarding which form is the oldest, whether **Alb-** or **Arb-**, Eqrem Çabej expresses the opinion that the form **Arb**— is older than **Alb-**. According to Çabej, it is likely that **Arban** was the first name of the Albanians, but he rightly adds that the final verdict cannot be given on this difficult issue, especially when we face the old forms of **Albanoi** by Ptolemy and the **Albions** by Strabon.

Looking at both the internal and external evidence with a summary point of view, it turns out that **arben, arbër** (the early national name of the Albanian people and this country) prevailed in Albania with its variations until the first centuries of Ottoman rule. This name derives its roots from ancient times. From this name is derived **Arbën, Arbër** of Albanian language, which proves, among other things, that Albanians are autochthonous in today's settlements and that there is a continuity, a language confirmation, at least since antiquity.

Historically, based on the testimony of Ptolemy, medieval sources from different countries, and the extension of this name in Albania today, this name was first used in central Albania, and then this name was generalized to a national name throughout the place since the time before Skanderbeg. [5, P. 70]

**Конфликт интересов**

Не указан.

**Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

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