

Stressed Vowels and their Characteristics in the Dialect of the Rahovec Area



Linguistics

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The vowel *a*

In the dialect of the Rahovec area, as in many other dialects of Kosova and the dialects of the northeast and northwest, the **a** is articulated as an **a** of moderate labialized pitch, as in the “Karadak dialect”, studied by M. Halimi³¹, “The Shalë e Bajgorës dialect”, studied by Latif Mulaku³², “The Has dialect”, studied by Imri Badallaj³³. But even in the studies of the other northwestern Gheg dialects such as: “The dialect of Anës së Malit”, studied by Mehmet Ahmetaj³⁴, “The dialect of Kelmend”, and “The dialect of Rranxave të Mbishkodrës” studied by Gjovalin Shkurtaj³⁵, “The dialect of Çerem dhe Valbona” (Tropoja area)³⁶ studied by Xh. Gusturani, where this vowel timbre appears oral and nasal. In the dialect of the Rahovec area, as in that of Karadak, the vowel **a** is articulated as a short oral **ã**, long oral **a:**, as well as short nasal **ã̃** and long nasal **ã̃:**.³⁷

The long vowel *a*

In the areals of Rahovec and Ratkoc, these phonemes are identified by the following oppositions:³⁸:

/a:/-/a/ /pla:k/-/plak/, /pa:sh/-/pash/ (njësi matëse një pash, dy pash), /bina:k/(sh)-/binak/(nj).

/ã/-/ã:/ /ha:n/(han bukë) -/hã:n/ (hana), /vãth/-/vã:th-t/.

/a/ -/e/ /lash/-/lesh/, /dash/-/desh/, /jam/-/je/.

/a:/-/u:/ /a:r/-/u:r/, /lak/-/luk/, /a:n/-/u:n/, /sha:rr/-/shu:rr/, /ba:b/-/bu:b/.

/a/-/y/ /fat/-/fyt/, /mat/-/myt/, /shat/-/shyt/.

Whereas in the areal of Krusha e Madhe and its surrounding villages, in each word, the duration of the vowel **ã:** is longer:³⁹ *pla::k, pa::sh, bina::k, ha::n, vã::th, fa::t, ma::t, la::sh, fa::t, sha::t*, etc. The long oral vowel **a**, appears throughout the entire northeastern Gheg-speaking area and beyond, such as in the northwestern and central areas. The nasal vowel **a** appears at the beginning, the middle and the end of the word. At the beginning: *a:ra, a:rra, anmik, argat, artan, arta*; in the

³¹ See: M. Halimi, *The Dialect of Karadak*, IAP, Prishtinë 2008.

³² See: L. Mulaku, *The Dialect of Shalë e Bajgorës*, IAP, Prishtinë 2005.

³³ See: I. Badallaj, *The Dialect of Has*, Prishtinë 2001.

³⁴ See: M. Ahmetaj, *The Dialect of Anë e Malit*, IAP, Prishtinë 2006.

³⁵ See: Gj. Shkurtaj, *The Dialect of Rranxave të Mbishkodrës*, D.Shqiptare, ASHSH, Tiranë 1982, pp. 144-279.

³⁶ See: Xh. Gusturani, *The Dialect of Çerem and Valbonë* (Tropojë area), D. Shqiptare IV, ASHSH, Tiranë 1982, pp. 279-345.

³⁷ **Note:** In the village of *Krushë* and the surrounding area issues related to vowel length must use equivalents since there are no other examples in any other Gheg subdialects, therefore we must rely on two (and sometimes three) examples, one for Ratkoc, another for Rahovec (city) and a third for Krusha.

³⁸ See: Map number 1.

³⁹ See: Map number 1.

middle: *dra:pen, da:sh, da:rdh, da:rdhisht, ga:rdh, gardhiçe sha:rr, sha:rrit, sa:kic, sa:rrnisht, ta:llisht, fa:r, fa:risht*, etc. In these types of words variations occur in the Rahovec area. This is a result of the transformation of the trill consonants **rr** and **r**, in opposite forms: *dr̄ra:pen, sha:r, sha:rit, sa:rnisht, fa:rr*. Whereas in this dialect the noun *gjarpen* has transformed the vowel **a** into an **e** (*gjarpen-gjerpen*). And at the end of the word: *ka:*⁴⁰, *tra:*, *tha:*, *u tha:*, *vlla:*, *me pa:*, *u vr:a, me da:*, *ra:*, *kala:*, *sevda:*, *shka:*, *tra:*, *hata:*, *bela:*, *kaza:*, *sefa:*, *sevda:*, *hava:*, *dyja:*, *fukara:*, etc. This change also occurs in cases when it appears at the end,: *kala:- kale:*, *sevda:-sevde:*, *hata:-hate:*, *bela:-bele:*, *dyja:- dyje:*, *fukara:-fukare:*, etc.

The nasal vowel ã

As noted by other scholars, in the northeastern dialects, which includes Rahovec and its surrounding area, there are two sets of nasal vowels. Long and short nasal. But, here also, the areal of Krusha differs from the other two: that of Ratkoc and of Rahovec. In the areal of Krusha the length is always articulated, whereas in Ratkoc it creates phonological opposition⁴¹, while in Krusha's areal it does not. In the areal of Ratkoc the noun *hëna* /*hã:n*/ and the verb *ha*, in the third person singular /*hãn*/ creates phonological opposition:

/*hã:n*/(*hëna*) -/*hãn*/(*ai han folje në veten e tretë*)

/*zã:n*/ *zëri* - /*zãn*/ *zënë* (*peshk*) *folje*

The nasal vowel ã, of lower pitch, appears in front of the nasal consonants **m**, **n**, **j**, or before the groups of reduced consonants **ŋ** and **ñ**, e.g.: *hãna, nãna, rrãj, kãna, kãm, dhãner, cãjel, dhãm*. The nasal vowel ã of lower pitch, as in the other northeastern dialects e.g.: "Karadak dialect"⁴² in the dialect of Rahovec, in the three areals, appears in all positions:

At the beginning of the word: *ãn, ãm* (*ãma e bletes*)⁴³, *ãñerr, ãmel*, etc. When **a** appears at the beginning of the word there are no differences between the areals, whereas in the middle of the word: *rrã:z, mã:z, fllã:z, fã:ll, mã:ll, hã:jr*, etc, differences emerge between the areal of Krusha and the other two. Differences also exist, when **a** appears at the end of the word: *zã:, lã:, thã:, dhã:, kã:, atã:., ktã:., xhã:, bã*, etc⁴⁴.

There are cases in which the same word is pronounced differently by the residents of two neighboring villages, one pronouncing it as an oral vowel the other as a nasal vowel. E.g. the villages of Pataqan and Drenoc, pronounce the thematic vowel **a** in the word *bastán*, as an oral. Whereas the villages of Palluzhe, Ratkoc and all the villages that stretch on the left side of White Drin, nasalize this vowel, e.g. *bastân*. Nasality is more evident with ending vowels. A greater nasalization of the same vowel can be heard in the areal of Krusha: *bastân*. *Zã:ni i tina ushto::jke*. The long nasal vowel *ã:*. As in the other northeastern dialects, short and long nasal

⁴⁰ *Ka* word for bull, but also as the verb *have* in the third person singular.

⁴¹ Shih: Harta numër 1.

⁴² See: M Halimi, *The Dialect of Karadak*, IAP, Prishtinë 2008, pp.112.

⁴³ See: *Legjendën Ama e Bletës* te tekstet dialektore.

⁴⁴ **Note:** The phonemes /ã/ and /ã:/ in the *Dialectological Atlas of Modern Albanian* (volume I) is presented in point 35 in Xërxë⁴⁴, Rahovec, but fails to accurately indicate the measure of their use in the areas in question (see point 35 of DAMA). In the dialect of the Rahovec area the vowel **a** appears in various positions and is oral and nasal.

vowels are distinguishable in the Rahovec area. An exception is the areal of Krusha, where, as has already been noted, names are invariably pronounced with long nasal vowels, especially by the older generations, e.g. *Artan-Artâ::n*, *Dardâ::n*, *Mâmu::t*, *Hasâ::n*, *Albâ::n*, *Irfâ::n*, *Fidâ::n*, *Destâ::n*, *Sulltâ::n*, *Bajrâ::m*, *Ardiâ::n*.

The alteration of the vowel a with other vowels

Sound changes are a common occurrence in this, as in any other, dialect. This often becomes evident while pronouncing some nouns in which there is a shift of the vowel *a* through metaphony, the vowel *a* shifts to *e* in a number of nouns that in the singular have a thematic *a*, whereas in the plural have an *e*. e.g.: *plak-pleç*, *kulaç-kuleç*, *lak-leçe*, *nat-net*, *dash-desh*, *shtalb-shtelba*. The *a* has shifted to *e* in some verbs that undergo metaphony in the second person, e.g.: *del*, *merr*, *kelb* (*qelb*), *lerg*, *sej*, *dejre*, *hejr* etc (*dal*, *marr*, *kalb*, *larg*, *saj*, *dajre*, *hajr*). In certain cases, in the areal of Krusha *e* Madhe *a* shifts to an *a* that resembles *e*, and is pronounced as *ae*: *næl* (*ndal*), *nælt* (*lart*) *klæs* (*klas*). *A kæl* *bastani*, *Hin n'klæs*, *Næl çaty!* *Kræjk* (*Kraj*), etc. This phoneme is widely used in the dialect of Has, but is sporadically heard in Krusha as well. The thematic *a* in some nouns is pronounced as *ie*. This shift does not occur throughout the Rahovec area. This phonetic feature appears only in the areal of Retkoc, especially in the villages of Dejë, Pataçan i Ultë, Pataçan i Epërm, Drenoc, Senoc: *fjal-fjel*. *Mos ban fiel!* *je ka lyp fiel*. The shift of the vowel *a* into *i* appears in the verb *lavroj*, ex.: *ta lavroj aren iher bre burrë!* *Çou bre Din shiloma atin* (*shaloma*). The shift of *a* to *u*. This feature appears in some villages from the areal of Ratkoc, e.g. Xërxe: *kum* (*kam*), *kum than ban*. In the last example an unconditional nasalization and elongated vowel is evident. The shift from *a* to *o* occurs in the village of Xërxe since the village is closely linked to the city of Gjakova by trade, education (most of the teachers are from Gjakova) and other ties to the city. In many cases the *â* of the Gheg dialect spoken in Gjakova has shifted to *o*, as in the words: *osht*, *âsht* (*është*), *kôm*, *kâm* (*kam*), *bôj*, *bâj*, (*běj*) *nona* (*nëna*), *koma* (*këmba*) *osht vôn tani*⁴⁵. In Kramovik it appears as *bollicë- ballicë*. But there are cases in which *o* shifts to *a*, e.g.: *vonu- vanu*, *kajshi-kojshi*.

The vowel e

In the dialect of the Rahovec area, the vowel *e* is articulated by slightly opening the mouth, without using the lips. The lips are also not rounded or slanted sideways. The tongue shifts forward, as for the vowel *i*, i.e. the pharynx is expanded. The tip of the tongue is lowered and touches the bottom teeth; the part of the hard palate is raised slightly⁴⁶. The vowel *e*, as in the all Gheg dialects, especially those of the northeast, as well as the Rahovec area appears as oral and nasal⁴⁷. It is nasal in some common nouns which are followed with a single nasal consonant or when groups of consonants stood beside it, such as *mb*, *nd*, *ng*, which have now been reduced to the first consonants: *m̃*, *ñ*, *ŋ*, as in: *zëmer*, *fëmen* *ëm/e/n*, *ë:n*, *shëj*, *shënja*, *shëmell*, *pëm*, *rrëm*, *mëj*, *ferkëm*, *sëj*, *mrëja* *etj*. *Zëmra ke tuj m`lshu*. The vowel *ë* is also nasal in those cases where

⁴⁵ See: H. Agani, *Kujunxhiç's Dictionary*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 66.

⁴⁶ See: A. Dodi, *Phonetics and Phonology of Modern Albanian*, ASHSH, Tiranë 2004, pp. 44.

⁴⁷ See: H. Agani, *Kujunxhiç's Dictionary*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981 pp. 67.

the nasal consonant is exempted, as well as in the open syllables, and in some words of Turkish or Arabic origin⁴⁸: *rixhë, belë, dyjë, fukarë, kalë, hatë* etc., or in the aorist of some verbs: *prë, lë, dhë, rë, thë* etc.⁴⁹.

The oral vowel e

Similarly, there are no differences in the articulation of the oral vowel *e* between the dialect of the Rahovec area and the neighboring dialects and beyond⁵⁰. It appears at the beginning, the middle and at the end of the word, in the open syllables⁵¹. At the beginning of the word: *ë:r, ë:lb, ëshk, ërdh, ërrt*, etc.; in the middle: *theken, vesh, tel, terr, keq, grep, merr, çeth, lesh, kesh, delme, a ter, a hjek, a dek*, etc, and at the end in the open syllables: *pe:, pre:, fle:, fe:, re:, re: (re-ret e qiellit), e re:, le: Po t'baj be*. In the dialect of the villages of Krushë e Madhe, Brestoc, Hoçë e Vogël and Zaçist, the *e* is elongated in personal nouns: *Ylbe::r, Hyse::n, Kame::r, Haze::r, Sefe::r, Xhafe::r*, etc. But also in other words such as: *m'u prish ke::rri, e kam mush ke::rrin, spe::c* etc⁵². The *e* shifts to *i*. In this dialect, the use of the vowel *i* instead of *e* is common; this primarily occurs in some nouns and the verbs *kam (to have)* and *jam (to be)* in the second person singular. E.g. *Miritë (Meritë), Fitah (Fetah), shiçer (sheqer), a ki (ke) brisk, ku jii(je) kon, a ka tjerë a jini(jeni) viç ju*, etc. There is no major variation in the positions between the areals. However, it should be noted that in the areal of Krusha the vowel *i*, which has replaced the thematic vowel *e*, is longer than in that of Ratkoc, but this is not a unique feature of the the dialect of this area, but rather of all Gheg dialects, e.g.: *dhimt (dhembje), vish (vesh teshat), lini (leni), mil (mjel), piç shtalba (pjek misër), mlidh (mledh molla), nič (njek), dridhe ni sihare (dredh thupra), çith (çeth dhjet), tir (ter, nuk â tir toka- Krushë)*. The *e* also shifts to *i* in the correlative conjunctions **veç**: *viç mos e pafsha, viç mos e zafsha, viç mos ardht, viç ni herë, viç mi thân, viç me pae*, etc.

The vowel o

To articulate the vowel *o*, the tongue does not move, whereas the lips are extended forward rather than expanded⁵³. The vowel *o* in the dialect of the Rahovec area falls under the same phonological description as in all other dialects of the Albanian language. In the entire territory of Rahovec, as in all other dialects of Albanian, the vowel *o* is not nasal. K. Topalli writes about the non-nasality of the vowel *o* noting that "...the vowel *o* is also non nasal, which when positioned at the end, as in front of liquid consonants, appears at the vowel cluster. In this case, when the vowel was positioned at the end, it is followed by the nasal consonant *-n*, which means that this vowel was also subject to the process of nasality as all other vowels, but which later became non nasal, and subsequently diffracted into a diphthong. The reason for the loss of nasality seems to have been in

⁴⁸ See: R. Mulaku, *Hulumtime dialektologjike dhe onomastike*, IAP Prishtinë 2005, pp. 21.

⁴⁹ **Note**: In the *Dialectological Atlas of Albanian*, the presence of the nasal vowel *ë* in the area Rahovec is presented in point 35, but there is no data on this vowel in dialect of the areal of Krushë, which have an extended duration. *Teme::l, ëmen, ë::n, shë::j, shë::ja, shë::mell, pë::m, rrë::m, më::ñ, ferkë::m, së::ñ, byre::k etj.*

⁵⁰ See: N. Pajaziti, *The Dialect of Anadrin*, IAP, Prishtinë 2008, pp. 53.

⁵¹ See: Gj. Shkurtaj, *Modern Albanian*, UFO-Pres, Tiranë 2010, pp 162.

⁵² **Note**: The shifting of *e* to other vowels. In the villages of the areal of Krusha appears as an *e*, which stands between *e-ës* and *a-s*⁵², which is denoted by a /æ/: E. g.: *næ* (ne), *æj* (ai). *klæs* (klasë), *çæj*, hadje pim *çæj*. *Næ* punojm shum. (Krushë e Madhe), *æj* qi ka pare (ai që ka para), *Klæsa* jon dallon (klasa jonë). This feature is similar to *a-në*. Half could be a and half *e*.

⁵³ See: K. Cipo, *Fonetika*, ASHSH, Tiranë 2003, f. 13.

its unification with the articles *-i*, *-u* to form the definite article, where with the shift of the articles into the half vowel *a*, a diphthong was created. However, since Albanian does not have nasal diphthongs, the half vowel with oral characteristics has influenced the loss of nasality of the vowel *o* and its transformation into an oral vowel⁵⁴. In the dialect of Rahovec, as in all other northeastern dialects, the vowel *o* has two series. It appears in oral positions⁵⁵, long and short⁵⁶⁻⁵⁷. The vowel *o* is also present in some noun groups, which in the Tosk dialect appear as the vowel cluster *ua*, whereas in the Gheg dialect appear as *ue* or *u*. In this dialect, nouns such as: *ftue*, *krue*, *prue*, *thue*, *patkue*, *lañue*, etc. transform the vowel cluster *ue* into *o* and take on the first inflection suffix *i*: (*ftoni*, *kroni*, *proni*, *thoni*, *patkoni*, *lañoni*)⁵⁸. These, as well as other words, change the vowel cluster *ue* into *u*: *ftu*, *kru*, *pru*, *thu*, *patku*, *lañu*, *maru*, *shkumu*, *shkurtu*, *shkallmu*, *coptu*, etc. In some verbs in the imperative mood the long vowel *o* is also articulated at the end, in open syllables: *puno:*, *dëgjo:*, *kño:*, *lexo:* etc. The vowel *o* is longer in the middle of some personal and common nouns in the areal of Krusha: (*Brezto:vc*, *Dreno:vc*, *Drejto:r*); in some common nouns, such as: *lo::t*, *lo::p*, *punto::r*. It should be noted that because of extended duration, the areal of Krusha does not create phonological opposition to distinguish the singular from the plural, whereas in the same words in the areal of Ratkoc the phoneme *o* has preserved its phonological value, and distinguishes the singular *lõp* from the plural *lo:p*. In the dialect of the Rahovec area the vowel *o* is short in these words: *zõg*, *lõt*, *shkõp*, *mõrr*, *mõr*, *kõsh*, *kõs*. In the areal of Krusha these words are pronounced with a long *o*: *zo::g*, *lo::t*, *shko::p*, *mo::r*, *ko::sh*, *ko::s*.

The change of the vowel o into other vowels

The vowel *o* changes into *a* in negation particles *ja*, *mas* (*jo*, *mos*), in some nouns such as: *katalik*, *Zaçisht*, *aborr*, *daktor* (katolik, Zoçisht, oborr, doktor), as in some verbs: *vanohem*, *captohem* (vonohem, copëtohem). The change from *o* to *u*, appears in words such as: *laknur*, *hamshur*, *kullem*, *kumunist*, *gumë*, *cupil*, *trull* etc. (laknor, hamshor, kollitem, komunist, gomë, kopil, troll).

The vowel i

In this dialect, the vowel *i*, as in many other dialects of northeastern Gheg, is a nasal and oral vowel and it is articulated in two series: long and short. A. Dodi describes the articulation of the vowel *i* thus: the vowel *i* is articulated by slightly opening of the mouth. The tongue root is pushed forward, it is retracted, so that a wide resonance chamber is formed in the pharyngeal cavity. The front and the middle of the back of the tongue are raised toward the hard palate, so that a small

⁵⁴ See: K.Topalli, *Për historinë e hundorësisë së zanorëve në gjuhën shqipe*, ASHSH, Tiranë1996, f. 119

⁵⁵ See: Gj. Shkurtaj, *Shqipja e sotme*, UFO-Pres, Tiranë 2010, f.162

⁵⁶ See: N. Pajaziti, *E folmja e Anadrinit*, IAP, Prishtinë 2008, f.55.

⁵⁷ **Note:** Edhe në këtë pikë, areali i Krushës bën përfshirje. Zanorja *o* në të gjitha rastet është zanore e gjatë e cila, ashtu si dhe zanoret e tjera, në raport me arealin e Ratkocit, shkon deri në dyfishim apo hipërgjatësi. Një dukuri të tillë të gjatësisë së zanores *o* në këtë shkallë, nuk e pasqyrojnë as ADGJSH. Aty janë pasqyruar vetëm dy seri zanore *o* e gjatë dhe e shkurtër⁵⁷. Në të folmen e Krushës së Madhe, gjatësia e zanores *o* është më e madhe se në çdo të folme tjetër p.sh: *flo::k*, *shko::p*, *co::p*, *so::rr*, *ko::p*, *plõ::t*, *ftõ::ft*, *i ho::ll*, *bo::ll*, p.sh: po ha buk e *ko::s*, po kositi me *ko::s*, ni pikë *lo::t*, po edhe derdhi shumë *lo::t* etj, ndërsa në arealin e Ratkocit dëgjohej: *flo:k*, *shko:p*, *co:p*, *so:rr*, *ko:p*, *plõ:t*, *flo:ft*, *i ho:ll* etj. Zanoren *o* të gjatë e dëgjojmë edhe në pozicionin nistor të saj: *o:k*, *o:r*, *o:d*, *o:jna*. Në mes të fjalës: *do:r*, *bo:r*, *ho:r*, *bo:ll*, *lo:p*, *mo:ll*, *mo:s*. Te disa fjalë që në arealin e Ratkocit dëgjohej me *o* të shkurtër, në arealin e Krushës dëgjohej me *o* të gjatë si: *gjo:l*, *so:d*, *fo:rt*, *fo:l*. *zo:g* por edhe *bo:ll* (*mjaft*). Madje te fjalët *so::d* (*sot*) dhe *so::d* (*sodë detergent*), *bo::ll* (*mjaft*) dhe *bo:ll* (*bolla- gjitar*) nuk krijohen kundërvënje fonologjike.

⁵⁸ See: Gj. Shkurtaj, *Modern Albanian*, Ufo University Pres, Tiranë 2010, pp. 128.

opening is formed between the tongue and hard palate. The sides of the tongue are raised and rest on the hard palate more than in any other vowel. The tip of the tongue is lowered and touches the bottom teeth. The lips are not involved in the articulation of this vowel: they are not rounded or retracted⁵⁹. In “The Dialectological Atlas of Albanian” the linguistic map shows three series of vowels for the dialects of southern Albania. The oral vowel *i* in the dialect of the north, northwest and northeast is long and short. In the areal of Ratkoc, the vowel *i* is nearly the same, or has minor differences compared to the other northeastern dialects. The nearest point in the “The Dialectological Atlas of Albanian” which is representative of that dialect, point 35 (the village of Xerrxe)⁶⁰, does not provide a complete description of the state of this particular vowel for the entire dialect of the Rahovec area. The duration of the vowel *i* in the areal of Krusha, as other vowels, is extended, which is distinguished by outsiders; therefore a differentiation from normal duration. The vowel *i*, as in many other Gheg dialects, appears at different positions in the word; the beginning, middle and at the end. The vowel *i* has a raised, moderate and lower pitch. It is oral and nasal. As the other vowels, the duration of the *i* is doubled in the pronunciation of most word in the linguistic areal of the villages of Krusha e madhe; Nagac, Hoçë e Vogël, Brestoc, Zaçisht, Ritijë, Apterushë and in some villages from the municipality of Theranda and Prizren. The long duration of the vowel is apparent in all personal masculine and in some feminine nouns: *Bedri::*, *Beki::m*, *Bleri::m*, *Bashki::m*, *Valmi::r*, *Ili::r*, *Fadi::l*, *Vahi::t*, *Zai::m*, *Bahri::*, *Hami::t*, *Feri::t*, *Erbli::n*, *Sheri::f*, *Ermir::r*, *Rasi::m*, *Fatmi::r*, *Sami::r*, *Xhavi::t*, *Dami::r*, *Besi::m*, *Sadi::k*, *Sani::*, *Lavdi::* etc. In common nouns one-syllabic nouns: *vi::ç*, *bri::sk*, *msi::t*, *li::s*, *pli::s*, *pi::s*, *bi::sht*, *thi::k*, etc. But also in two-syllabic nouns names such as as: *kepeni::k*, *reseni::k*, *simi::t* etc. Whereas in other villages such as Drenoc, Palluzhe, Cifllak, Celine, etc. which are part of the areal of Ratkoc, the vowel *i* appears with normal values as in the entire northeastern Gheg. The long vowel *i* also appears in the city of Rahovec, mainly in cases where *i* has replaced by *y*. In the second person singular pronoun in the dative case: *ti::*, *si::*, *kri::*, *kli::sh*, *msi::sh* (ty, sy, krye, klysh, msysh), interrogative pronoun: *qi::sh* (qysh) etc. Numerals: *di*: (dy), *di*: burra, *di*: gra, pronouns: *perti::p* (përty), *permbi::s* (përmbys)⁶¹.

The vowel y

Scholars have differing opinions about the vowel *y*. It is addressed both from the historical aspect and from the place of its formation in the vocal apparatus. Anastas Dodi has this to say about the articulation of the vowel *y* “the vowel *y* is articulated with a slight opening of the mouth. The lips play an important part in its articulation, they are extended and rounded more than in any other labialized vowel. The tongue root shifts forward, whereas the pharyngeal cavity is expanded. The

⁵⁹ See: A. Dodi, Albanian Phonetics and Phonology, ASHSH, Tiranë 2004, pp. 41.

⁶⁰ Shih: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, f. 71.

⁶¹ **Note:** Fonema *i* e dhënë në hartën 1.c në ADGJSH⁶¹ për pikën 35, që është brenda të folmes së arealit të Ratkocit, është paraqitur me vlerë fonologjike si /i/ dhe /i:/ *dy dit*, *ni di::t*. Prandaj po e theksojmë përsëri se pika 35 nuk e mbulon arealin e Krushës, as të Rahovecit (për arsytet që u thanë më lartë), sepse aty kemi hipërgjatësi, njëjësi dhe shumësi i emrit *ditë* dallohet vetëm atëherë kur shoqërohet me numërorin. Në hartat 42. a. Fjalët *dhi*, *mik*, *mirë*, *mulli*, *shi*, *hi*, dhe *rrit*, siç dhe janë paraqitur në ADGJSH⁶¹ edhe në të folmen e Rahovecit, shqiptohen me zanoren *i* të theksuar, madje në arealin e Krushes fonema *i* shkon deri në hipërgjatësi. Fjalët *lis*, *gji*, *i ri*, *brinjë*, *viç*, *fik-fiq* në hartën numër 42.b.⁶¹ edhe këto fjalë, në këtë të folme janë ashtu siç janë dhënë në ADGJSH, edhe te këto fjalë areali i Krushes paraqitet me dukurinë karakteristike të zgjatimit të zanores *i*. Fonema *i* e theksuar me variantet fonematike në përbërjen fonemore të fjalëve, ku në një formë të caktuar, *i*-ja vjen nga ndërrimi me fonemën *e* *shisja*, *vidhja* etj. Në këtë të folme dalin siç janë paraqitur në hartën 42c⁶¹ *shitsha* dhe *vidhsha* (por edhe *vidhshna*). Te fjalët: *kripë*, *krimb* të dhëna në hartën 43.a fonema *i* ka kaluar në *y*, dëgjohej si: *kryp*, *krym* /*kryp p'r turshi*, *kryp p'r jemek*, *i ka ra krymi pemve*, etj.

end and middle part of the back of the tongue is raised towards the hard palate, but not as high as for the vowel *i*⁶². In general, this type of *y* is labialized, frontal of raised pitch. From the historical aspect, K. Topalli, emphasizes: “.....the old Indoeuropean language did not have the sound /y/ in its vowel system; as a result, it has been an internal development of the languages in which it has appeared. This was the case with the Greek, French, German and other languages. In the Albanian language, the sound /y/, appeared in a later period, and was an internal development of the language”. However, although it was formed later than the other sounds, the vowel *y* is very old in the Albanian language. In addition to this, ancient sources, which are linked to uncertain etymology, later developments that this vowel had in particular dialects, as well as its appearance in the works of medieval authors, especially Buzuku, with (polyvalent graphs)”, Topalli continues, emphasizing that “the history of the formation of the vowel /y/⁶³ has drawn the attention of many linguists such as: Mayer, Pedersen, La Piana, Jokli, Cabej, etc. According to Cabej, the vowel *y* is derived from the vowel clusters *ui* and *ei* that shifted to *uj* and later to *y*, which occurred in the last three hundred years⁶⁴. This may be the reason the *y* is absent from the dialects of the Arberesh in Italy, since they immigrated to Italy before the development of *y*. In the dialect of Rahovec, the vowel *y* appears in the song of Ezer Forici (Hazir Girici):⁶⁵:

Mulla Hasan, kqyr defterin,
dy në ven dy t'plague.⁶⁶

I. Ajeti also writes about this feature in his study on *The Divan* by Sheh Maliqi, in which he finds the following:⁶⁷

Aj pa shybhe gjon lezet
.....
Hup dynjan e ahiret⁶⁸.

The transformation of y into i and u

In the dialect of Rahovec the vowel *y* appears in different forms and is in line with its developments in the entire Albanian language. The problem of the transformation of *y* into *i* appears in the dialects of the Arberesh in Italy, in the southernmost part of Albania (Gjirokaster, Bregdeti i Poshtem), but this also occurs in the dialect of Rahovec. This phenomenon was studied by E. Cabej, whereas Francesco Altimari and Gjovalin Shkurtaj have also written about its development. F. Altimari writes: “...the only common feature that unites all of the Arberesh dialects in the phonetic system, moving them away from the literary norm, is the absence of the phoneme *y*, which was palatalized, into *i*, e.g. *di*, for *dy*, *si* for *sy* etc. This phenomenon, which is an apparent deviation from the norm, can be accepted since it extends throughout all of the

⁶² See: A. Dodi, *Fonetika dhe Fonologjia e gjuhës shqipe*, f. 42.

⁶³ See: K. Topalli, *Shendrimet historike në sistemin zanor të gjuhës shqipe*, Toena, Tiranë 2000, f. 81.

⁶⁴ See: E. Cabej, *Studime Gjuhësore III*, Rilindja, Prishtinë .1976, f. 114.

⁶⁵ Siç duket, gjatë mbledhjes së materialit, folkloristi e ka shënuar gabim emrin e “heroit” të këngës, ngase bëhet fjalë për Hazir (Hazer) Goriqin, nga fshati Guriq i Malishevës, këngë e cila edhe sot këndohet me mjaft përkushtim dhe ëndje nga rapsodët e kësaj ane.

⁶⁶ Shih: Kënga për *E Foriçin*. Botuar te “Bleta Shqiptare” 1881.

⁶⁷ Shih: I. Ajeti, *Mbi gjuhës e Divanit të Sheh Maliqit*, Studime gjuhësore, IAP, Prishtinë 1978.

⁶⁸ See: Hilmi Maliqi, *Divani*, kënga 37.

Arberesh dialects, as new variation of correct pronunciation in the Arbershë milieu⁶⁹. Whereas, Gj. Shkurtaç writes: “The dialect of San Marcano, as far as its vocal system is concerned, could be said is comparable to the dialects of the southernmost part of Albania, such as Gjirokastrë and Bregdet i Poshtëm etc. where the phoneme *y* is absent. In all of the words in which the *y* is present in standard Albanian, in the dialect of San Marcano, as in all the Arbëresh dialects, it is pronounced as *i*: *si* for *sy*, *di* for *dy*, *bith* for *byth*, *krija* for *kryja*, *griken* for *gryken*, *qi* for *ky*, *lip* for *lyp*...”⁷⁰. Naturally, it is difficult to say for certain how this development came about, but it could be based on an analogue development, just as in the other Albanian dialects, or maybe even due to the influence of Slavic languages. In this particular dialect both options are possible. But what makes this vowel even more outstanding is its transformation into *u*. Although Cabej’s views on the formation of *y* are clear, in the dialect of Rahovec we encounter the usage of *u* instead of *y*. Hilmi Agani writes: “...we think that in this case we are dealing with an arbitrary usage of *u* similar to the Serbo-Croatian form: *duke*, *dushek* etj”⁷¹. Moreover, Agani, referring to N. Jokli, according to whom the appearance of *u* instead of *y* has been apparent in the dialect of the Arberesh of Zara since 1940, links it to some highland dialects, especially with the dialect of the Albanians of Kosova, and notes cases in which the *y* shifts to *u*, such as in: *kruq* for *kryq*, *qush* for *qysh*, *drushkt* for *ndryshk*⁷². Even in Kujuncic’s Dictionary, a range of words are written with the vowel *u* instead of *y*: *babaxhush*, *çush*, *çumur*, *xhule*, *çurk*, *dushek*, *xhuzlluk*⁷³ etc. In his dictionary, Lubumir Kujunxhi would also write: *bilmet*, *izmet*, *imit*, *çilim*⁷⁴ for: (bylmet, hyzmet, ymyd, qylym), e.g. *me lip izmet* pi plakit, (me hyzmet prej plakut), *me shim zjemin s’ndezet ma, e ka maru ni qilim kuq e zi* etc. It is certain that the transformation of *y* into *u* is the result of the influence of Slavic languages. This was confirmed by an 80-year-old man from Kukes, who pronounced the word *Bytyc* as *Butuq*, as in “*edhe na jemi me fis butuq*”. Even now, in the dialect of Rahovec, as in some dialects of southern Albania and Arbereshë in Italy⁷⁵, the vowel *y* is absent, and is always replaced by *i*. In the biography “*Flamurtari i Kosoves- Isa Boletini*” by S. Haxhiaj, we find the vowel *i* replacing the *y*, in cases in which in all villages the *y* is articulated:

“Zot i madh! Ai kjoftë *livdue*,
Tu Ali Pasha në kjoftë *gjikue*...”⁷⁶.

This phenomenon is apparent even in the speech of the older generation teachers in Rahovec. The teacher tells the pupil: *pa mbi:lli ni:sh ti* (po ta mbylli njësh ty). Moreover, in Rahovec it is quite common for the older generations to replace the vowel *y* with *i*. In the areal of Ratkoc, the vowel *y* appears as in the other northeastern Gheg dialects. *Byma* ni kashore buk, *bylmet*, *hyzmet*, *fyll*, *yll*,

⁶⁹ See: F. Altimari, “*Në Studime mbi leksikon dhe mbi formimin e fjalëve në gjuhën shqipe*” III, ASHSH. Tiranë 1989, pp. 186.

⁷⁰ See: Gjovalin Shkurtaç, *Ligjërimet arbëreshe*, Julvin, Tiranë, 2006, pp. 160.

⁷¹ See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 94.

⁷² See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 95.

⁷³ See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 94.

⁷⁴ See: F. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 93.

⁷⁵ See: J. Gjinari, Gj. Shkurtaç, *Dialektologjia*, SHBLU, Tiranë 2007, pp. 181.

⁷⁶ See: S. Haxhiaj, *Flamurtari i Kosovës Isa Boletini*, München 1967, pp. 72.

etc. In the areal of Krusha the stressed vowel *y* is clearly articulated and usually has a longer duration just as other vowels. E.g.: *by::k*, *py::k*, *my::k*, *ymy::d* etc⁷⁷.

The vowels *u* /*ü*/ and /*u*/

The vowel *u* has also been preserved in this dialect. In some villages of this area, as in the Krusha e Madhe area, the duration of *u* is doubled: *shu::m*, *Shku::p*, *rru::sh*, *kru::shk*, *lÛ::g*. In the other two areals, it is in line with the data presented in “The Dialectological Atlas of the Albanian”⁷⁸.

/kum mar tpi:nin n'sabah heret e kam çit me tu:ñ/

The vowel *u* is subject to nasalization when it is preceded or followed by a nasal consonant: *mulli*, *mulla*, *kñus*, *mushkë*, *muñi* (mund), *muzat*. In this dialect, the root of the unstressed vowel *u*, is apparant in some common nouns, such as: *lepri*, *petlla*, *kumlla*, *vetlla*, *flutra etj.* (*lepuri*, *petulla*, *kumbulla*, *vetulla*, *flutura*).

/kum mar tpi:nin n'sabah heret e kam çit me tu:ñ/

The shift of *u* to other vowels

In the villages of Pataqan i Ulet, Sopniq, Fortese, Nashpal, Drenoc, Senoc, Pastasel, the unstressed vowel *u* of the final syllable shifts to *e*, e.g.: *fluter*, *petell*, *kumell*, *vetell*, *heker*, *sjetell* (*flutur*, *petull*, *kumull*, *vetull*, *hekur*, *sjetull*).

In the dialect of the Rahovec area we may encounter a shift from the vowel *u* to *vi*, e.g.: *kavi*, *vllavi*, *shkavi*, *thivi*, *lavi*, whereas in other Albanian dialects, but often in the areal of Krusha also, the vowel cluster *au*, has been preserved, e.g.: *kau*, *vllau*, *shkau*, *lau*.

The vowel *ë*

As demonstrated by H. Agani in his study on the dictionary of Lubomir Kujuncic, in the dialect of the Rahovec area, the vowel *ë* has been replaced with other vowels⁷⁹ such as: *e*, *u*, *a*, *o*. Earlier A. Çetta had also noted that in the absence of *ë* in the cyrillic alphabet, L. Kujuncic omitted the vowel altogether: *greshont*, *ferkem*⁸⁰, etc. However, Kujuncic did use apostrophes, e.g.: *p'r*, *n'r*, *mot'r*, *lund'r* etc., which means that he used the apostrophes to denote the vowel *ë*, when it appeared in front of the trill consonant *r*⁸¹. On this matter, H. Agani writes: “...if, in addition to the data that a scientific dialectological atlas would provide, we would take into account the core issue, which emerges from the studies that have been done about this sound, and from the detailed studies in

⁷⁷ Note: Në ADGJSH, gjendja e fonemës y për pikën 35 në hartën numër 1.ç te fjalët *byk-by:k*, *pyk-py:k* është paraqitur me kundërvënie. Mendojmë se kjo është e pranueshme për pikën 35 që është brenda arealit të Ratkocit, kurse në qytetin e Rahovecit kjo zanore te brezi i vjetër nuk dëgjohej në vend të saj dëgjohej fonema i: p.sh: *bi:k*, *pi:k*, *gi:p*, *kri:p*, *bi:k*, *pi:k* etj. Në qytet ndodh të dëgjohej zanorja y në familjet që kanë lidhje martesore me fshatrat e dy arealeve p.sh: *gy:p*, *ky:p*, *by:k*, *py:k*. Ndërsa në arealin e Krushës zanorja y është në kushtet e hipërgjatësisë p.sh: *gy::p*, *kry::p*, *by::k*, *py::k* etj. Edhe fjalët *sy* dhe *yll* të dhëna në hartat numër 44.a. fjalët *atyre*, *qymyr* në hartën 44.b, fjalët *dy* dhe *ky* në hartën 44.c. fjalët *gjysh* dhe *gjysmë* në hartën numër 44.ç. dhe fjala *lyp* në hartën 44.ç/2⁷⁷ në të folmet në arealit Ratkoc dhe Krushe y-ja dëgjohej si gjithkund në të folmet verilindore. Në Krushë dëgjohej me zanore me të gjatë se zakonisht që dëgjohej në të folmet e tjera. Ndërsa në arealin e Rahovecit , siç e kemi thënë më lartë, nuk ka përputhje gjithmonë, në vend të zanores y dëgjohej zanorja i p.sh: *ill*, *atine*, *qilim*, *di*, *ki*, *si*, *gjish*, *gjism* etj .

⁷⁸ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 73.

⁷⁹ See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 75.

⁸⁰ See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 75.

⁸¹ See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 75.

particular, it becomes evident that in a range of cases, the issue of this sound would be treated differently in Albanian spelling⁸². R. Memushaj also favors a reduction of the unstressed vowel *ë* in his study “The Phonetics of Standard Albanian” in which he writes: “...as a central vowel, articulated with a neutral positioning of the tongue, half as long as a stressed (*ë*), it is reduced in various degrees, even reaching zero”⁸³ e.g.: *dimni, ermir, pun, njerz* (dimër, erëmir, punë, njerëz) etc. The vowel *ë*, as in all northeastern Gheg, has been dropped in every position, in the first and last syllables, e.g.: *kshill* (këshill), *gzhoja* (gëzhoja), *shpin* (shhtëpinë)⁸⁴.

Vowel clusters ue, ye, ie

The monophthongization of the diphthongs *ue, ye, ie*, as in many other areas, is present in the northern dialect and throughout the dialect of this study. E.g. The particles of the verbs: *me shku, me punu, me lexu*, or in nouns such as: *dur, patku*. Many scholars note that the Albanian language has inherited the diphthongs from the Indoeuropean language. In his study “The Historical Development of diphthongs of Albanian”, K. Topalli has outlined the path that the diphthongs have passed through in the history of the Albanian language⁸⁵. In his study, Topalli notes: the Indoeuropean language, from which the Albanian language has derived, had in its phonetic system short and long vowels, and as a result, short and long diphthongs. They are generally characterized by their reduction into one simple vowel. However, linguists’ opinions on the type of the vowel differ. The time when this process took place is also hard to determine because the historical borrowings, that may have helped this case, have taken different directions, which are different from those of the inherited diphthongs. The Albanian dialects went into different direction when Indoeuropean vowels were dissolved. Thus the Indoeuropean vowel *o* in the southern dialect was transformed into *ua*, whereas in the northern dialect into *ue*⁸⁶. If, in addition to having series of short and long vowels, Albanian also had short and long diphthongs, then the duration of the vowels in the dialect of the Krusha e Madhe area, is a very old feature of the Albanian language.

The vowel cluster ue

In the dialect of Rahovec, as in many other dialects, and as many dialectologists have noted: “...in the Gheg dialect between Drin and Mat, in Malesia e Madhe and in some Kosova dialects, Tropoja and Kukes, these clusters appear only in the open syllables at the end of the word, but, as was previously the case in all Gheg dialects, the cluster *ua* is replaced by *ue*, e.g.: *grue, mue, thue* etc.”⁸⁷. In other northern Gheg dialects (especially those of the northwest and northeast) and all other southern Gheg dialects, words with the cluster *ue* have only one vowel in their phonemic composition: *u* in words where the Tosk dialect has *ua*: *gru-grua, bull-buall, bluj-bluj* etc. The old vowel cluster *uo* in this dialect, as in all the other Gheg dialects, has followed a similar path of

⁸² See: H. Agani, *Fjalori i Kujunxhiçit*, Rilindja, Prishtinë 1981, pp. 75.

⁸³ See: R. Memushaj, *Fonetika e shqipes standarde*, Toena, Tiranë 2010, pp. 59.

⁸⁴ **Note:** fjalët e hartave me numër 46, 47.a/1, 47.a/2, 47.a/3, 47.b, 48.b, 48.c, 48.ç, 49.a, 49.b, 50.a, 50.b, 50.c, ashtu siç janë dhënë në ADGJSH, ë-ja, nuk dëgjohet në të folmen e Rahovecit dhe arealet e tij si: *lopes, lopt, likur*, këtu ë-ja zëvendësohet me zanoren *i, mzat, mshtjerr, n'rrug, gzim, kpuc, prru, t'marr, puntor, trimni, burri, buk, pul*.

⁸⁵ See: K. Topalli, *Zhvillimi historik i diftongjeve të shqipes*, ASHSH, Tiranë 1998 pp. 29.

⁸⁶ See: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.* pp. 29-30.

⁸⁷ See: J. Gjinari- Gj. Shkurtaj, *Dialektologjia*, SHBLU, Tiranë 2003, pp. 214.

development. K. Topalli divides into two groups the words that have in their composition the cluster **ue**, noting that: the first group is comprised of a small number of old Albanian words, inherited from its native glossary, such as the nouns *grua*, plural *gra*, *duaj*: Indoeuropean *de*. In these words the vowel cluster of the vowel **o** is produced by phonetic means, and the consonant **n** could be an internal element of the Albanian language. It may be an inflectional suffix inherited from the Indoeuropean language, which has left its mark on some words. The accusative case suffix could be more acceptable, which in thematic vowels was a simple **n**⁸⁸. The second group is comprised of some later borrowings, which at their roots had the vowel **o** but not the consonant **n**, examples include words derived from Slavic languages: *patkua* / *patkue* (Serbian) *potkova*, (Bulgarian) *potkova*; *virua- prrua* / *prurre*, sll. *virove*, *torrua* etc⁸⁹. Therefore, K. Topalli explains the transformation of the Indoeuropean **o** into the Tosk **ua** and Gheg **ue**, in the following words as well: *muaj/muej*, *duaj/ duej*, *ruaj/ ruej*, *shuaj/ shuej*, *i huaj/ i huej*, *juaj, juej* etc⁹⁰. Meanwhile, H. Agani notes that this vowel cluster is rarely encountered in Kujuncic's dictionary. He has explained that along with *me knu*, there is also *me knue*, *kom pas kujtue*, *mue*, etc. Whereas in other cases the second vowel has assimilated into **u** and is the dominant form of that vowel in that dictionary⁹¹. This feature in point 35 (which represents Xerxa, the point which is in the dialect being reviewed), in map number 4 of the *Atlas*, the vowel cluster **ue** is represented as monophthongized, but which is rarely articulated⁹². In S. Hashiaj's biography "Flamurtari i Kosoves – Isa Boletini", which represents the Rahovec area, the vowel cluster **ue** is preserved:

“tash tye zânë **due** me t'kall**xue**,
 Diku lag une kishna flutur**ue**,
 Ushqym zogjvet per me i pr**ue**”⁹³.
 “ç'kanë mend**ue** krenët e Serbis
 Th**ue** se ka dek Pasha i Gucis”.
 “Bukën para me iua shtr**ue**”

The vowel cluster **ue** is monophthongized in all the villages of the municipality of Rahovec and at all positions with the exception of the villages of Vrajak, Bratanin and Pataqan i Ulet, where the older generations continue to use this vowel cluster: *patkue*, *punue*, *gatue*, *pastue*. The monophthongization of the vowel cluster **ue** to **u**, is articulated in all three areals, with the exception of the aforementioned villages, in the words: *dur* (*duer*), *patku* (*patkue*), and in the participle of the verbs which is a common feature of the northern dialect: *punu* (*punue*), *gatu* (*gatue*), *pastru* (*pastue*). An exception are cases in which in the last syllables, the vowel cluster **ue** in the villages of Ratkoc and Vrajak and their surroundings, is sporadically articulated: *Ka shkue me punue*. *Ka shkue me livrue*. *Mu çue se u bâ von*, *mu çue lemza* etc. When the cluster **ua** appears in closed end syllables as in: *duar*, *muaj* and *buall*, which are shown on map number 51.a

⁸⁸ See: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.*, pp. 135.

⁸⁹ See: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.*, pp. 135.

⁹⁰ See: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.*, pp.138.

⁹¹ See: H. Agani, *vep. cit.*, pp. 96.

⁹² See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 82.

⁹³ Shih:S. Haxhiaj, *vep. cit.*, f. 45.

of the *Atlas*⁹⁴, it is monophthongized into *u* in all three areals. In open end syllables, in words such as *grua*, *ftua*, *dua*, shown on map number 51.b, as presented in the *Atlas*⁹⁵ this group of vowels is reduced to *u* and in a few cases is articulated as *ue*, e.g.: *grue*, *ftue*, *due*. The data presented in maps 51.c and 52 for the words: *gruaja*, *bualli*, *shkruaja*, *mësues*, *sulmues*, in all three areals the diphthongs *ue* are reduced to *u*: *gru*, *bull*, *shkrujsha*, *msus*, *sulmus* etc. Finally, as other scholars have noted, H. Agani in Kujunxhiç's Dictionary and in the historical review by K. Topalli, etc. the vowel cluster *ue* has followed the same path as other northeastern Gheg dialects. The vowel cluster *ue* has been monophthongized, and is rarely articulated as *ue*, in the aforementioned villages.

Vowel cluster -ye

The vowel cluster *ye* is not unique in dialect of Rahovec. In the *Atlas*, the state of the cluster is presented in point 35, map number 53.a; the vowel cluster *ye* and its phonetic variants in the phonemic composition of the words in which it appears at the closed end syllables *dyer*, *thyer*, the cluster is presented in a monophthongized *y*⁹⁶, which means that the process that was underway at the time of Sheh Maliqi's *Divan* and the time of L. Kujuncic, had ended. Map 53.b shows the state of the vowel cluster *ye* and its phonetic variants in the phonemic composition of the words where it appears in open end syllables: *u thye*, *u lye*, *kthye* etc. The *Atlas* provides a monophthongized *ye*: *u thy*, *u ly*, *kthy* etj⁹⁷. If we refer to H. Agani's "Kujunxhiç's Dictionary", the vowel cluster *ye* has assimilated to *y*, except in some rare cases in the verbal form *kthye*, which Kujuncic's often wrote as *kthy*⁹⁸. Therefore, it is possible that in the beginning of the 20th century, the vowel cluster *ye* was in its developing stage of monophthongization. In this regard, Profesor Kolec Topalli, after acknowledging that the vowel cluster *ye* is among the lesser studied diphthongs and presenting the views of other linguists which have studied the cluster, concludes that we are dealing with a complicated problem, which requires further clarification. The difficulty of the problem becomes obvious once we consider that the sources of the cluster have been sought in phonetic changes as well as in morphological causes. By linking this process to the Indoeuropean language, old Albanian, and even later dialectic changes⁹⁹. The presentation of the vowel cluster *ye* in map 53.b of the *Atlas* on point 35. The words *thyej*, *u thye*, *u lye*, *u krye*, *u shkye*, (especially the passive voice form), etc., which the *Atlas* shows as monophthongized, in the villages of Pataqan i Ulët, Pataqan i Epërm, Sopniq, Nashpalle and particularly Vrajak and Bratanin, the vowel cluster *ye* is articulated, e.g.: *m'u thye n'dor*, *u thye mashtrapa*, *u krye pa pare*, *u shkye maica*. It appears unmonophthongized in the infinitive form as well: *me krye*, *me shkye*, *me lye*, *me thye*, etc. Map 53.c where the vowel cluster *ye* and its phonetic variants in the phonemic composition of the words where it appears in the internal open syllables, e.g.: *fyelli*, *lyeja*, etc. The *Atlas*, on point 35, shows the vowel cluster *ye* monophthongized into *y*¹⁰⁰ e.g.: *fyelli*, *lyeja*, (*lyja varren me iñyr*) etc.

⁹⁴ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 166.

⁹⁵ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 169.

⁹⁶ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 172.

⁹⁷ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 173.

⁹⁸ See: H. Agani, *vep. cit.*, pp. 96.

⁹⁹ See: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.* pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁰ Shih:ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, f. 174.

The monophthongization of the vowel cluster *ye* into *y* as shown in the *Atlas*, is also present in some nouns and verbs, nearly in every position where the diphthongs are placed¹⁰¹.

The monophthongized *ye* is articulated in the middle of the word: *Fyll, pyll, dyll, ngjyj, thyhem, lyj (lyej), fyj (fyej), fys (fyes)*,

Qabani e shtini fyllin n`çant dhe i lshoj dhet.

Msus nije qysh pom fyn Agimi.

Qoe qiko djalin m`i fry te plaka.

Expect in a few cases of the noun *krye* (kokë, head), which in some cases, not only retains the cluster *ye*, but is also articulated in the feminine *kryeja*, which is likely a very old form¹⁰².

E ka *kryet* e fort, nuk ja nin.

Shka i ungj *krye* veñit.

Ka ble kapuç p`r *kryen*.

E ka *kryen* e fort (in Zaçisht area).

While in all of the villages of the Ratkoc area the vowel cluster *ye* is monophthongized into *y*, in the villages of Vrajak, Bratanin, Noshpall, Sopniq, Pataqani i Ulët and Pataqan i Epërm, the vowel cluster *ye* just as *ue*, is articulated in a number of verbs with open syllables, e.g.: *u krye* (kryer, mbaru), *kthye* (kthyer nga pazari), *kapërcye, kcye, frye, âsht frye* viçi n`janxh etc. In conclusion, the vowel cluster *ye* shown in the *Atlas*, specifically in map 53.b, are not consistent with the facts on the ground. In the villages of Vrajakë, Bratatin, Drenoc, Pataqan i Epërm, Pataqan i Ulët, Sopniq etc., positioned at the last syllable, the cluster *ye* is articulated unmonophthongized: *u thye, u lye, u krye, u shkye, u frye*.

The clusters ie, je

As for the vowel clusters *ie/je*, it must be noted that in the dialect of the Rahovec area the diphthongs *ie* and *je* are articulated in both variants, but also monophthongized: From an historical perspective, these groups appear, in the writings of medieval authors (Buzuku, Budi, Bogdani, Bardhi), with the vowel cluster *ie*. Describing the dialect of Rahovec, H. Agani in “Kujuxhiç’s Dictionary”, denotes the word *dhjetë* as “*dhjet vjet*”, but also as *dhët*. The words *dhjet* and *nxjerr*, are unlikely to have been articulated in the way Agani claims¹⁰³, since this form is not used by the older generations. These words are articulated as *dhet* and *nxe*, from the old Gheg form of *ie*, the vowel cluster has shifted to a clear *e*. But in the word *cjell* it is unclear whether it is a *j* or a softened *i* bordering on *j*, because we also have the clear form of this word: *cill*. However, the cluster *je* is articulated in many words: *zjem, vjel, vjerr, pshtjell, njeri, sivjet, vjet, vjeta, vjen* etc. The development path of this feature splits into two directions: in cases where it had a significant

¹⁰¹ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.*, pp. 82.

¹⁰² See: Robert d’Angely, *Grammaire Albanaise Comparee*, Paris 1998, pp. 32.

¹⁰³ See: H. Agani, *vep. cit.*, pp. 100.

role the group *ie* was reduced to *i*, whereas the group *je* was reduced to *e*. In the *Atlas*, point 35, map number 54.a for the words: *diell*, *miell*, *ziej*, a complete reduction is evident in the first vowel: *dill*, *mill*, *zij/a dit me dill/*, *kum ble mill/*, *zij xhith*¹⁰⁴. In map 54.b, point 35, the vowel cluster *ie* and its phonetic variants in the phonemic composition of the words where it appears in the open end syllable: *bie*, *u zie*, *etc.*, are monophthongized as they are even to this day¹⁰⁵. In map 54c/1, point 35, the vowel cluster *ie* and its phonetic variants in the phonemic composition of the words where it appears in the internal open syllable, specifically the noun *dielli*, the *Atlas* denotes a monophthongized *ie* cluster¹⁰⁶ /*ka dal dilli*, /*ka li dilli*, similarly the words: *qilli*, *milli*, *bi*, “*u vrâ qilli*, *hupi dilli* , *bi pi shkallëve mu sos millin n’magje*. In map 54c/2, point 35, the verb *ziej* is spelled with *je*, as *zjeva*¹⁰⁷, which does not represent the correct dialect of the Rahovec area. In the areal of Ratkoc it becomes: *ziva mishin*, *zita pasulin*, and in some cases: *e zeva pasulin*, etc. The clusters *je* and *ie* in their phonemic composition of the present demonstrative form in the singular of the verb *vjel*, in map 55.a, point 35, it is part of the areas that continue to preserve this group¹⁰⁸. During our survey we encountered: *vjel specat/ vjel rrushin / e ka llez zjemin/*, etc. The cluster *je* in the phonemic composition of the participle of the verb *vjel* in map number 55.b, the group *je* has been preserved unreduced¹⁰⁹. K. Topalli notes that the cluster *je* in the Albanian language has been created from the decomposition of the short Indoeuropean and Latin vowel *e*. This is the only inherited sound which has had a spontaneous phonetic development, a diphthong developing from a simple vowel¹¹⁰. The *Atlas* provides an accurate account of the group *je*. An exception is only map 54c/2, because point 35 does not represent the entire area of Rahovec. In our survey, we did not encounter the past simple form *zjeva*, but *ziva*, *zita* in any areal.

Older clusters ae and oe

The development of the clusters *ae* and *oe* in the Albanian language has gone in two directions. These clusters are still used in the territory of Kosova¹¹¹. E. Çabej has provided an important review of the historical development of these clusters. Çabej thinks that “the vocal groups *ae* and *oe* have shifted directly to simple vocals, but the shift was made through diphthongs, in one syllable vocal links¹¹². In the dialect of the Rahovec area they are articulated in both forms, complete: *e kam pae*, *m’ka shae* , *m’ka rae*, *mu ka thae*, *m’ka epae*, *kujna ia dhae*, but these same words also appear monophthongized: *pa*, *sha*, *tha*, *ra*. The vowel cluster *oe* appears in open syllables in interrogative sentences. These diphthongs are articulated clearly: *çfar voe?* *Për çfar droe pa flet?*

¹⁰⁴ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 175.

¹⁰⁵ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 176.

¹⁰⁶ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 177.

¹⁰⁷ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 178.

¹⁰⁸ See: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* pp. 179.

¹⁰⁹ Shih: ADGJSH, *vep. cit.* f. 180.

¹¹⁰ Shih: K. Topalli, *vep. cit.* f. 75.

¹¹¹ See: Mehmet Halimi, *Togjet vokalike në të folmen e shqipës*, “Çështje të studimit albanologjik”, I.A.P. Prishtinë, pp. 152.

¹¹² See: E. Çabej, *vep. cit.* pp. 125.

The shift from vo into va

In the dialect of the Rahovec area, this process has followed the same developing path as in other Gheg dialects. Professor Gj. Skurtaj has written about the historical development of these groups, noting that: the old Albanian had a number of words beginning with **vo** (*voj, votër, vorr, vok, i vokët, i vorfën, vorfnoj, vojta, vojti(ë)* etc. As time passed, the *o* shifted to *a* in these words, and today they are distinguished by their equivalent Gheg forms. In the Tosk dialect the aforementioned words are pronounced with **va** (*përkant. vaj, vatër, varr, vak, i vakët, i varfër, varfëroj, vajta, vajtur, vajtje* etc.), which, as been noted by earlier dialectological studies, presents “an innovation in the Tosk dialect”, because the ethymology of the words affected by this feature proves that the primary forms were those with **vo**, such as: **voj** (nga lat. *oleum*), **i vorfën**¹¹³. Words which regularly begin with **va**, in the dialect of Rahovec appear with the group **vo**: *voj, voter, vorr, vok, vorfen. (vaj, vatër, votër vak, varfër) etc.*¹¹⁴.

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¹¹³ See: Gj. Shkurtaj, *Shqipja e sotme*, Ufo-Press, Tiranë 2010, pp. 110.

¹¹⁴ Grupi **va** në përbërjen fonemore të fjalëve: *vaj, vatër, i vakët, i varfer etj.*, i paraqitur në hartën numër 56 të ADGJSH, ashtu si në gjithë të folmet e gegërishtes edhe në tri arealet gjuhësore të Rahovecit e dëgjojmë me **vo** p.sh: */nata e par e vo:rrit/ votra jon a e vogel/ a vorros sod/ a vok uji/ a i vorfen (vobekt)*. Kahu i zhvillimit të këtij fenomeni e ka ndjekur rrugën e raportit **ue** dhe **uo**.

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