

**HELLENES – ALL ONE OF THE ILLYRIAN-PELLAZIAN TRIBES****HELENËT – MUND TË JENË NJË NGA FISET ILIRO- PELLAZGE****Pirro PRIFTI***Univeristeti Barleti, Tirane  
priftipirro2017@gmail.com, p.prihti@umb.edu.al***Abstract**

In this article, an attempt has been made to find the external and strong connections of the ancient Pelazgo-Illyrian population with the Dorian and Ionian tribes who came to the Illyrian peninsula around the 8th century BC and mixed with local populations who spoke another language.

The interesting fact is the discussions between historians who insist that the ancient Greeks arrived 4-5 thousand years ago, even before the Trojan War.

are one of the main elements of opponents to these historians are the names of people, names of widows, names of gods, which have meaning in today's Albanian language, and therefore the efforts of some historians for you, gods as Greek, tribal names. ancient Illyrian as Greek, the ancient names of the places of the Illyrian peninsula as Greek, are as rare as they are tendentious when you consider how it is possible for a Greek tribe to put names of gods in a non-Greek language, for Greek tribes to have names with meaning in Albanian?!

This may indicate that the long coexistence since ancient times of the inhabitants who speak a Pelasgian language similar to Albanian with the Greek tribes who arrived and were known in these lands, may explain the ancient history which is connected with the stories of theirs. nationalities.

The element of pre-Greek cuneiform scripts, linear b, and scripts with letters called Greek that dominated after the 5th century BC, how the Greek language and script became at that time an international writer, but this does not mean that the peoples in Anatolia and in the Illyrian peninsula were Greeks. This is evidenced by the Albanian language, which, although spoken for thousands of years, was written by thinkers in Greek or Byzantine, or Latin or later Ottoman until 1908, and the Albanian language written in Latin letters was approved at the Monastery Congress.

**Keywords:** Hellas, Illyria, Pelasgia Linear B

**Abstrakt**

Në këtë artikull është bërë përpjekje për të gjetur lidhjet e jershme dhe të forta të popullsisë së lashtë pellazgo-ilire me fiset doriane dhe jonianë që erdhën në gadishullin Ilirik rreth shekullit të viii pes dhe u përzierën me popullsitë vëndase që flitnin një gjuhë krejt tjetër.

Interesant është fakti diskutimet mndërmjet historianëve të cilët insistojnë se grekët e lashtë paskan ardhur që 4-5 mijë vite më parë madje edhe para Luftës së Trojës.

Sidoqoftë një nga elementët kryesorë të kundërshtive ndaj këtyre historianëve janë emrat e njerëzve, emrat e vëndeve, emrat e perëndive, të cilat kanë kuptim në gjuhën Shqipe të sotme, dhe rrjedhimisht përpjekjet e disa historianëve për ti nxjerë, perënditë si greke, emrat e fise të lashta ilire si greke, emrat e lashtë të vëndeve të gadishullit ilirik si greke, janë sa të paskta aq edhe tendencioze kur mendon se si ka mundësi që një fis grek të vendosë emra perëndish në një gjuhë jogreke, që fiset greke të kenë emra me kuptim në shqip?!

Kjo mund të tregojë se bashkejtesa e gjatë që në lashtësi e banuesve që flisnin një gjuhë pelasgike të ngjashme me shqipen me fiset greke të ardhura dhe të vendosura në këto troje, mund të spjegojnë historinë e lashtë e cila është e ndërlidhur me historitë e të dy kombësive.

Elementi i shkrimeve kuneiforme paragreke, lineari B, dhe shkrimet me gërma të quajtura greke që dominuan pas shek v pes, tregojnë se gjuhë dhe shkrimi grek u bë në atë kohë një shkrim ndërkombëtar, por kjo nuk do të thotë se popujt në Anadoll dhe në gadishullin Ilirik ishin grekë. Këtë e dëshmon gjuha Shqipe e cila megjithatë e folur për mijra vjet, shkruhej nga mendimtarët në greqisht apo bizantinisht, apo latinisht apo dhe më vonë osmanisht derisa në vitin 1908 u miratua në Kongresin e Manastirit gjuha shqip e shkruar me gërma latine.

**Fjalë kyç:** Helada, Iliria, Pelasgjia lineari B

## Introduction

In the history of the Balkans, the narratives of various nations and ethnicities have overlapped in remarkable ways. One of the major contributors to this entangled ethnic confusion was the 500-year-long Turkish (Ottoman) occupation. The Ottoman conquerors acted as mixers of the Balkan peoples to such an extent that even today it is extremely difficult to determine where one ethnically pure group begins and another ends.

Nevertheless, the historical thread of every nation can be traced by skilled professional historians—either through individual expertise or through the work of respective academic institutions. But how can the history of the Albanians be disentangled when individuals or academic bodies from neighboring countries (including, at times, our own—mainly due to incompetence) continuously attempt to misinform and misinterpret Albanian history?

In this article, I have tried to "shed light on the darkness" that surrounds the tribe of the Hellenes, whom some try to portray—both to the academic world and to the general public—as having nothing in common with the Illyro-Pelasgians or pre-Illyrians. However, various sources suggest that the Hellenes may in fact be one of the early Illyro-Pelasgian tribes in the Balkan region.

I believe, and I am attempting to document, that the history of the tribes that once inhabited the lands of present-day Greece—especially the Hellenes—is a history of Illyro-Pelasgian peoples.

## Analysis

It is known that modern Greece had neither the name "Greece" nor "Hellas" until the Greek state was established in 1821. With help from English, German, and French historians and politicians, the idea was launched that modern Greeks were the descendants of the ancient Greeks.

Throughout history, Greece was known by different names, usually based on the tribes inhabiting the region, especially during pagan times. Once Christianity was established, it became a part of the Byzantine Empire. However, at certain moments before Greece's independence, some historians referred to the region using the names "Hellas" and "Hellenes." This is so true that even King Otto (Otton, as referred to by Greeks), who was installed by Germany and England as king of Greece, was surprised to discover that the people of Athens were speaking another language—Albanian. It is well known that he attempted to form a solid Greek nation, both by expanding Greek territory and by including primarily the Arvanite population, Greek-speaking populations from Asia Minor, Slavs from Macedonia, and Vlachs who were living in the region at that time.

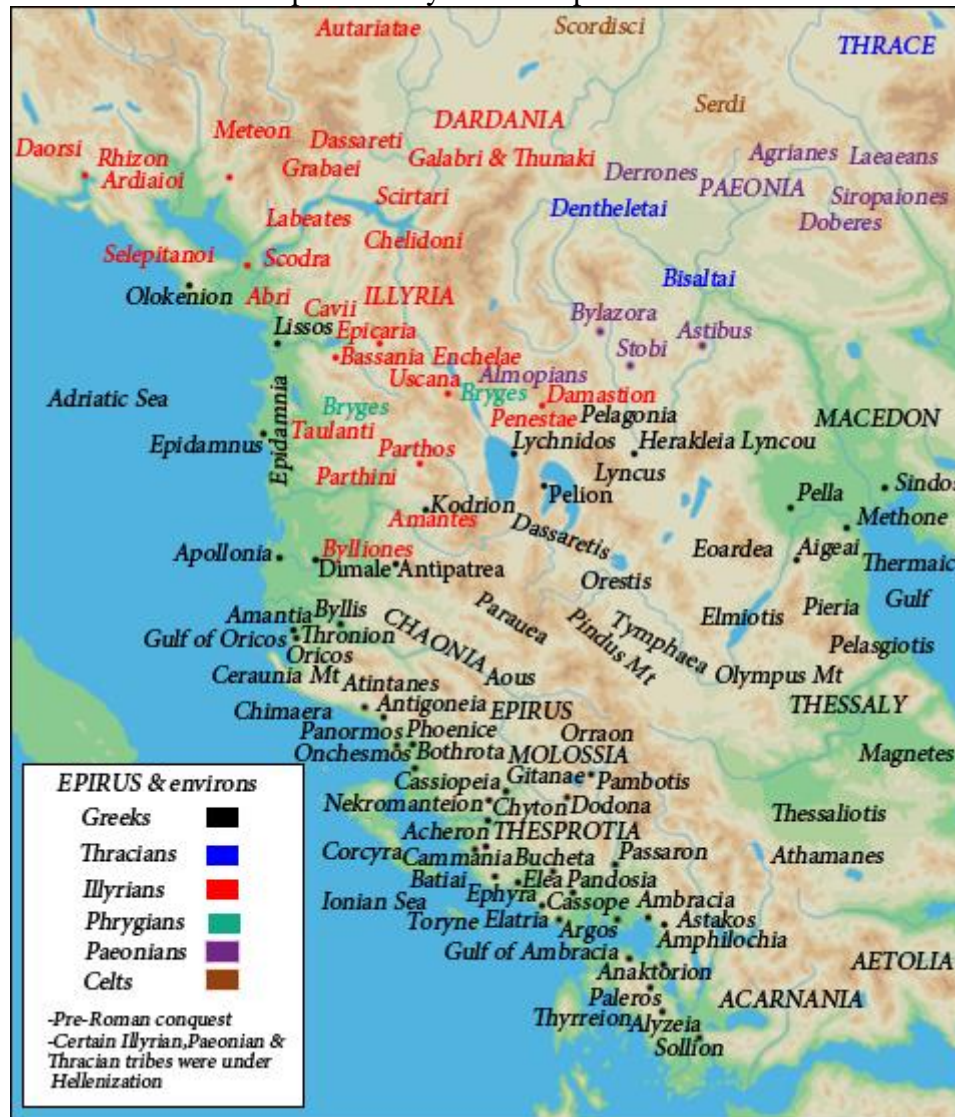
The argument that there was no solid Greek nation is also confirmed by a meeting in London, where a representative of the Greek state at the time stated: "Greece is a state but not a nation, whereas the Albanians are a nation but not a state." (This refers to the 19th century, after Greece gained its independence.)

From the earliest historical records of the Illyrian Peninsula to the present day, both Greece and Albania have been called and identified based on the various tribes that flourished at different times and in different regions within the Balkans and Asia Minor.

According to historical records, the periods during which tribes inhabited the lands of modern-day Greece are as follows:

- **Neolithic Europe:** 3000–280 BCE
- **Helladic Period:** 2800–2100 BCE

Map of the Illyrian and Epirus tribes:



(Aegean, Cretan, Mycenaean Civilizations)

- **Mycenaean Greece:** 2100–1100 BCE
- **The Greek Dark Ages:** 1100–800 BCE
- **Ancient Greece (Archaic or Classical period):** 800–323 BCE (until the death of Alexander the Great, who was not Greek)
- **Hellenistic Greece:** 323–146 BCE (when the lands of present-day Greece were conquered by the Romans)
- **Roman Greece:** 146 BCE – 212 CE
- **Greco-Byzantine Period:** 330–1453 CE (starting from the year 330 CE when Constantine the Great founded Constantinople—today's Istanbul—on the site of the small town of Byzantium, until 1453 when Sultan Mehmed II conquered it and renamed it Istanbul)
- **Ottoman Greece:** 1458–1821/1829 CE (1458 is the year Athens was conquered, and 1821–1829 marks the period of the Greek War of Independence)
- **Modern Greece:** 1821/1829 – present (until 1947, when the modern borders of Greece were finalized and internationally recognized)



## Map of Ancient Greece



At no point before Greece gained its independence were the inhabitants of what is now Greece known by the name “Greeks.”

They were identified according to their places of residence: Athenians, Thessalians, Peloponnesians, etc.

According to historical records, the terms Hellene and Hellas were primarily adopted by the people and the Greek state after Greece declared independence. It was at that time that both Greek and foreign historians began to take interest in Greek history, treating all historical events that occurred in the region as part of Greek history.

This historical development can also be observed through the evolution of the Greek language—from ancient to modern Greek.

I also attempt here to clarify certain unclear issues that we Albanians face when confronting the history of Greece, a history that has been studied in great depth by many serious historians. These issues are raised in the form of the following questions:

Why was it called Hellas?

The Greeks have been known by various names—by themselves and by other peoples. The Greeks themselves called themselves Hellenes, and their land Hellas (Ελλάς).

Homer referred to the Hellenes as a small but brave tribe from Phthia in Thessaly, a tribe that followed Achilles in the Trojan War and which also spread to Alos, Alope, Trachis, and to Pelasgian Argos.

It is also known from Herodotus—the “Father of History”—that Achilles was not Greek, but from a “barbarian” tribe, the Myrmidons, of Illyro-Pelasgian origin. Thus, the Hellenes were likely an Illyro-Pelasgian tribe which later came to dominate over the other tribes of what became Greece.

In antiquity, the Greeks called themselves Rhomaioi (Romans) or Romioi, especially after the year 212 CE, when all inhabitants of the region were granted Roman citizenship.

Following the Christianization of the empire by Theodosius I, the term Hellene was used to refer to pagan populations who still followed polytheistic rituals—thus, in that period, Hellene meant pagan, not Greek.

Eastern Europeans used the term Greeks for them. The Jews used the term Yavanim (Hebrew: יוונים), while Persians and Turks referred to them as Yunians (Ionians). In Georgian, the Greeks were known as Berdzeni (ბერძენი), derived from the Georgian word for “wise.”

During the Trojan War, Homer described Hellas as “the land of beautiful women” (καλλιγύναικος). According to historians, Hellas stems from the name Hellenes, stripped down and combined with laos (λαός), meaning “people.” Achilles, their leader, prayed to Zeus of Dodona—the god of Dodona and of Pelasgia.

Aristotle mentions that ancient Hellas extended between Dodona and the Achelous River, a land inhabited by the Selloi (modern-day Souliotes) and the Greeks.

This supports the Illyro-Pelasgian origin of the Greeks. The spread of the cult of Dodona and Delphi among the Greeks grew significantly, and so did the name Hellenes, gradually covering the entire region.

“The Greeks.” Encyclopedia Britannica. U.S.: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 2008. Online Edition.

The name Hellas, as we read in various texts about Greece, was never actually used as a native or Roman name for the region. In fact, the land came to be officially referred to as Hellas only much later—specifically after the establishment of the modern Greek kingdom in 1830 CE.

Before that time, especially during the Byzantine Empire, the region was never called Hellas or Graecia, nor was it known as the “Greek” or “Hellenic” Empire. It was always referred to as the Byzantine Empire. No Byzantine emperor was ever labeled as Hellene or Greek.

It is modern writers who later attributed the words Hellenic or Greek to the ancient population, but these terms were never used by the people themselves. At that time, there was no national unity—only rivalries between major city-states such as Sparta, Athens, Thebes,



etc (Robert D'Angely, "Enigma").



**Painting: Achilles, King of Thessaly and the Myrmidons, dragging Hector's body**

Another interpretation suggests that even the term **ELADHA** (Ελλάδα, *Elláda*, or *e'llada*) may be synonymous with the word **GRAIKIA**, meaning “land of beautiful women”—or, translated again into Albanian (Illyro-Pelasgian), *Eladha* = *e la dhënë* (“left the land”). The very word *graikia* resembles the Albanian word *gra*, meaning “women,” often implying beautiful women. The ancient Greek historian **Thucydides**, when speaking of *Hellas*, wrote that the term did not exist previously and that “it was named after various tribes, mostly the Pelasgians.”

According to mythology, **Herodotus** (Book II, 49) wrote:

“The wanderings of Cadmus (son of the Phoenician king Agenor and Telephassa), who is considered the founder of Thebes in Boeotia, brought the cult of Dionysus from Egypt into Hellas. Cadmus was searching for his lost sister Europa, as commanded by his father. Cadmus became king of the Illyrian tribe *Henetellei* (or *Enchelei*—interpreted here as *Hellas* or the land of the Encheleans).”

*(This interpretation is drawn from the work of albanologist Prof. Nezir Myrta, but is considered somewhat speculative by the writer.)*

**Aristidh Kola** (as cited by Vasil Dh. Zeno) states that the names *Ellas* (Greece) and *Elinas* (Greek) emerged as general terms for all inhabitants of Greek-speaking territories after the Dorian migration, when political calm was restored and tribal relations were stabilized. *Ellas* is mentioned by Homer as a small area near the Pindus mountains, known especially for its beautiful women (“*Ellada kalogynaika*”, as Homer puts it), and its leader was the most glorious Greek hero—**Achilles**.

A myth cited by **Thucydides** speaks of **Deucalion**, who, after the biblical-style flood, fathered two sons: **Hellen (Elini)** and **Amphictyon**.

During the Achaean period, the Greeks were composed of at least seven tribes and states. From the Peneus River to the Spercheus River, the people were called *Hellenes*, and their land *Hellas* or *Hellada*—the same area that the Pelasgians had earlier called *Phthia*, and which the Dorians later named *Thessaly*. The capital of this region was **Iolcus**, the seat of Achaean (Pelasgian)

leadership.

(“Pellazgët – Formumi Shqiptar,” 2005)

According to the book *"The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present"* by **Edwin E. Jacques**, based on ancient writers like Herodotus, Strabo, Dionysius, Pliny the Elder, Hesiod, Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, and others, the **Pelasgians** were the forerunners of the **Illyrians**, who in turn were ancestors of the **Albanians**.

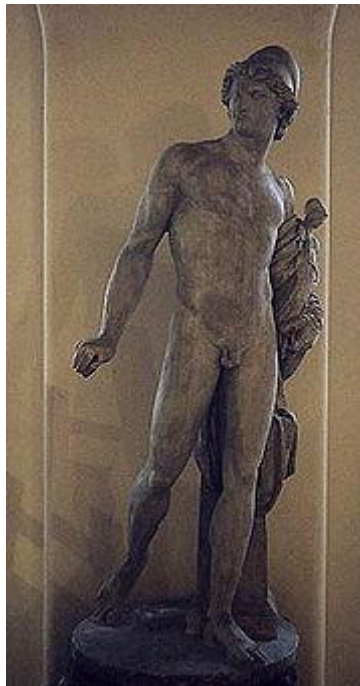
The author affirms that, according to classical sources, the Pelasgians inhabited the entire Balkan Peninsula and Aegean coast, including regions of Asia Minor such as Troy. Their language and identity were often labeled “*barbarian*,” a term used by the Greeks to describe non-Hellenic peoples.

In his analysis of *The Iliad*, Jacques finds that all the characters—both defenders and attackers of Troy—are Pelasgians. In this sense, both **Achilles** and **Hector** were Pelasgians from different tribes, who often clashed over matters both great and small—in this case, over a woman, **Helen** (interpreted in Albanian as *e lena*, meaning “the abandoned one” or “the one who left”).

This type of **inter-tribal conflict**, deeply rooted among Albanians, has continued across millennia—from antiquity through the medieval period (when **Skanderbeg** struggled to unify Albanian noble tribes), and still echoes today in the form of *blood feuds* or *family vendettas*.

In *The Iliad*, **Homer** refers to the **Achaean**s, **Argives**, and **Danaans**, but never mentions the **Aeolians**, **Ionians**, or **Dorians**, even though those are the tribes said to have founded the Hellenic or Greek civilization. The three groups that *are* mentioned—according to the author—are clearly identified as Pelasgian tribes. The book argues that equating them with later Greeks is a significant historical error.

“Certainly, the historians of antiquity knew how to make that distinction.”



**Hellen, son of Deucalion and Pyrrha, according to the Greek tradition (sculpture)**

According to their folklore, the Greeks trace their origins to around **800 BCE**, through the marriage of **Deucalion** and his wife **Pyrrha**, whose union gave birth to their son **Hellen**, who later gave his name to the land *Hellas* and to his descendants, the *Hellenes*. This might explain why **Homer** does not mention the Hellenes or their specific tribes during the **Trojan War**, which took place much earlier, around **1250 BCE**.

Historically, the migration of Greek tribes—such as the **Dorians**—began sporadically around **1200 BCE**, with permanent settlements in parts of what is now Greece only occurring around **1100 BCE**. These tribes coexisted with the earlier **Pelasgian** population, whom they later assimilated in one way or another. It should be noted that the Greek tribes were **Indo-European peoples** who migrated from the steppes of what is now **Russia**, moved into the Balkans, and then settled further south.

(*"The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present"*, Edwin E. Jacques)

The name **Hellas**, often encountered in texts referring to Greece, **was never the name originally used** by the indigenous peoples or by the Romans for this land. In fact, *Hellas* became the **official name** only much later, specifically when the **independent Greek kingdom** was established in **1830 CE**. Before that—especially during the Byzantine Empire—it was never called *Hellas* or *Graecia*, nor was it referred to as a Greek or Hellenic Empire. It was consistently called the **Byzantine Empire**.

Byzantine emperors were **never referred to as Hellenes or Greeks**. It is modern writers who retroactively applied the terms *Hellenic* and *Greek* to the ancient populations. In those times, **no national unity** existed, only **rivalries** between powerful **city-states** such as **Sparta, Athens, and Thebes**.



**Neoptolemus, Son of Achilles, Kills Priam**

Starting from the Hellenistic period, especially after the Roman conquest of Greece, the center of Hellenism was no longer Athens or other Greek city-states but rather Asia Minor and Egypt. This regime dispersed the Hellenes, leading to depopulation and impoverishment of Hellas, which Plutarch described in his era as an almost desolate land.

This situation resulted in the emergence of a **new, large, and wealthy Greece** in Asia Minor and a flourishing center of Hellenistic culture in Alexandria. However, this transformation did not happen overnight.

As Christianity spread and became the state religion, many talented individuals from the ranks of Christian clergy and educators adopted and preserved elements of Greek education, creating a true link between Christianity and old Hellenism. This period witnessed significant literary development for a short time before the rise of a "Byzantinism" in the following century, marked by political intrigues and literary sterility.

Thus, Hellenism gradually declined, being replaced by an ascetic and quarrelsome Christianity. This slow transformation makes it difficult to pinpoint an exact date for the disappearance of Hellenism, which effectively ended when great works ceased to be produced. Although many works still existed in the 5th century, they became rarer and more mediocre by the 6th century, and finally disappeared around the mid-7th century.



## Why the Hellenes?

According to the English Wikipedia, the term **Hellenes** in a broader sense was first used in an inscription dedicated to Heracles by Echembrotus, referencing his victory in the Amphyctyonic Games, specifically the 48th Olympiad (584 BCE).

The most accepted legend states that **Hellen**, son of **Deucalion** and **Pyrrrha**, married the nymph Orseis and had three children: Aeolus, Doris, and Xuthus, who founded the tribes of Hellas—Aeolians, Dorians, Achaeans, and Ionians.

Saint Paul in the New Testament uses the term Hellenes almost exclusively as the opposite of Jews, disregarding other ethnic groups (Romans, Syrians, Egyptians, etc.) living in those areas at the time.

The secular use of the word Hellenes revived in the 9th century CE, as paganism waned and Christianity dominated.

When interest in the Greeks increased, English historians preferred the term Romans (e.g., Edward Gibbon), while French historians used Greeks (possibly influenced by Pouqueville's jargon, which was also used by Ali Pasha Tepelena who called non-Albanians "Greeks").

The term Hellenes reappeared in the 19th century and dominated historiography, even within Greece despite objections from Constantine Paparrigopoulos, who considered the empire Roman. Some Greek scholars adopted this term, and it became popular in the second half of the 20th century.

The most popular name for Greeks in Greece remained **Romans (Ρωμαίοι)**, even after the formation of the Greek state in 1829.

According to Argyris Eftaliotis, who published a history titled "*History of the Romans*" in 1901, the Greeks maintained their Roman heritage well into the 20th century.



**The capture of Andromache, wife of Hector, by Neoptolemus, son of Achilles**

The term *Helen*, especially in its early usage, did not denote a nation. One could become Greek or Helen simply by learning or speaking the ancient Greek language. The Helens did not form a single ethnic group like the Ionians, Aeolians, or Dorians, but were a group emerging from the primitive Pelasgian element, intertwined with foreigners such as the Phoenicians and Egyptians (that is, the victorious conquerors). The name *Helen* began to spread in Greece as well as in the surrounding islands, Magna Graecia, and Asia Minor, from the 8th century BCE (Smith, Anthony D. (1999). *Myths and memories of the nation*. Oxford University Press. p. 21. ISBN 0-19-829534-0. "It emphasizes the role of myths, memories and symbols of ethnic

chosenness, trauma, and the 'golden age' of saints, sages, and heroes in the rise of modern nationalism among the Jews, Armenians, and Greeks—the archetypal diaspora people").

### Why are they called Greeks and Greece?

As mentioned above, the modern English word *Greek* derives from the Latin *Graecus*, which originates from the word *Graikos* (Γραικός) – meaning Greek (but in Albanian, it means “woman”). It is an eponym of the Greeks from Euboea who migrated to Italy in the 8th century BCE. The word ‘Graea’ is used by Homer in the *Iliad* for some warriors who took part in the Trojan War and came from a place called Graea, though today no one knows exactly where this place was. Aristotle says that this place was near Oropus, east of Delion. These people came into contact with the Romans, who called them *Graeci*. Aristotle mentions the word *graikoi* for the inhabitants of a region in Epirus where a landslide occurred at that time. According to Hesiod, the word *Graecus* is from the Deucalionid lineage and comes from the word *geranius* — or “old woman” — a title given to the priestesses of Dodona.

When the independent Greek state was created, its citizens called themselves *Hellenes*, linking themselves with ancient Greece. This idea sparked a passion fixed on antiquity in the newly independent Greece, neglecting and undervaluing the history of the Byzantine Empire, since at that time it bore different names in different periods. Classical European historians tended to support the Greek idea or the Megali Idea, which sought to revive Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire as the land for all Greeks. Meanwhile, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke before the Greek parliament in 1844: *"The Kingdom of Greece is not Greece; it is only a small, poor part of Greece. There are two great centers of Hellenism. Athens is the capital of the kingdom. Constantinople is the great capital, the city of dreams and hope for all Greeks."* (Markezines, *Political History of Modern Greece*, book A, pp.208, Athens).

### The Greek language and the Illyro-Pelasgian connection

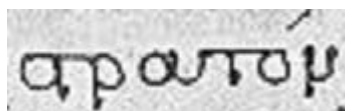
The ancient Greek language cannot be fully understood without addressing the ancient Illyro-Pelasgian language, whose descendant is undoubtedly Albanian, with which more and more words and phrases can be translated, whether in ancient Greek or other extinct ancient languages.

The oldest Greek letters, no longer used today, came from the Phoenicians; they remained in use until the 5th century AD.

ƆƆ [Digamma](#) Q̑ Qoppa Μ μ [San](#) Ϡ ϡ [Sampi](#)

*Other letters that were used in ancient Greek*

Ϛ ϛ [Stigma](#) Ϸ ϸ [Sho](#) Ϟ ϟ [Heta](#)



Word as greek – **στρατόν** - (this word here is written in modern Greek) written with sigma-tau connections in a Byzantine manuscript. notice the difference.

Unlike the names Pelasgian or, in Albanian, Leleg (as the Pelasgians were called by the Phoenicians because of their white clothing which they wore until the 6th century BCE), who had been widespread for a very long time, N. Ceka mentions that "archaeological science notes

that from the middle of the 4th millennium until around 2600 BCE there existed a Neolithic civilization of a population that the Greeks called by the name 'Pelasg', who apparently had something distinctive in their physical appearance, in their way of speaking with a prolonged 's' (Lissos, Issa, Larissa, etc.)" (Neritan Ceka, "The Illyrians," 2000, p.33).

According to Sami Frashëri, "The oldest of our ancestors the world calls Pelasgians, a word preserved by our later ancestors who call their earliest ancestors Plak and Pleq (Elders)" (Sami Frashëri, *Albania, What It Was, What It Is, and What It Will Be*).

The name Pelasgians remains "a general term," described as an ancient prehistoric people called "shpellagji," meaning "people of the caves." The Egyptians called them "peleset," and the Hebrews "peleshtim." These ethnonyms remind us of the Philistines (pellesh...et, peleshetâ...im, meaning "cave dwellers"), which is nothing other than a name given to them by the Semito-Egyptians (Mathieu Aref, *Albania, the Incredible Odyssey of a Pre-Hellenic People*).

Facts show that the Pelasgian language was not written, and the ancient Greek language was only written from the end of the 7th century BCE.

According to Wikipedia, the Greek language was written in a distinct Greek alphabet from roughly the 9th century BCE. It was created by modifying the Phoenician alphabet, adding vowels to it and creating some special consonants. This variant of the alphabet is still used today, especially the Ionic variant included in the classical Attic alphabet in 403 BCE.

The Greek language has these periods:

- Proto-Greek
  - Mycenaean (1600–1100 BCE)
  - Ancient Greek (800–330 BCE) with dialects: Aeolic, Arcadocypriot, Attic-Ionic, Doric, Locrian, Pamphylian; Homeric Greek, possibly also Macedonian
  - Koine Greek (the common spoken form) (330 BCE–330 CE)
  - Medieval Greek (330 CE–1453 CE)
  - Modern Greek (from 1453 CE to today)
- (According to English Wikipedia: Greek language – July 2010)

Always referring to ancient Greek writers, the first letters invented were Pelasgian, which initially arose in Egypt and then spread widely, first around the Mediterranean and beyond, from where later the Phoenician alphabet was brought to Thebes by Cadmus, which caused the letters to be called Cadmean. The author adds that if the Jews invented vowel points, it was in fact the Pelasgians who had the honor of creating the vowels.

From this Pelasgo-Phoenician alphabet, the Hellenic, Etruscan, and Latin languages emerged, which are the main ones, and to which must be added the Pelasgo-Tyrrhenian, Eteocretan, Cadmean, and other Greek languages, as well as Hittite, Lycian, Lydian, Cypriot, and other languages of Asia Minor such as Umbrian, Oscan, Sabellian, and other languages in Italy, not forgetting the various Neo-Latin alphabets, which are relatively more recent (Robert D'ANGELY, *Enigma*).





**Pelazgus (also called Dardanus by some), according to mythology, was the son of Poseidon and Larissa, and the founder of Argos in Thessaly.**

Mathieu Aref states (taken from the newspaper Shqip/Shqiptarët, “Are they the oldest people...?” Thursday, May 03, 2007):

“Thucydides, in the third chapter of his first book, skips over four centuries. These are the four dark centuries, about which we know almost nothing except for Linear B. Linear B was deciphered by Chadwick, and they were completely right to call it Ancient Greek. But it was not understood that this Ancient Greek was actually Old Pelasgian. Herodotus was treated as a ‘barbarophile’ because he spoke about the Pelasgians as a pre-Hellenic population. Rightly, he stated that the Pelasgians gave the Greeks part of their language and mythology. But how can what the father of history said be dismissed, including by others and even Thucydides? I rely on the old and not on the young who have said everything without opposition.”

The ancient Greek language, both in terms of vocabulary and syntax and morphology, is closer to modern Greek than Italian is to Latin. Greek was documented very early by the Mycenaeans and was written, but the problem is that Mycenaean Greek was written during a time when Herodotus said Greece was inhabited by Pelasgians and that the Aeolic and Ionic dialects split off from Pelasgian. In this sense, Greek contains the same morphological and lexical base from the time of Homer until today.

Some words in Mycenaean Greek are: anax (king, today anaktor meaning palace), basileus (today basilius, king), etc. However, during the Mycenaean period, basileus was not a king, as the king was called wanax, while basileus or pasileus referred to a dignitary or part of the administration below the king.

The etymological dictionary of ancient Greek, with comparisons to other Indo-European languages, is that of Hofmann (J. B. Hofmann, (EWG), 1950).



Ancient Greek is the written Albanian language in antiquity, and old Greek has nothing to do with modern Greek because modern Greek is a Semitic language rooted in the Arabian Peninsula, while old Greek is only Albanian written down. The first written records date back to 600 BC, but Albanian was written even earlier, about 3500 years ago. It is the language from which Indo-European languages were born, and Latin is purely Albanian. The writing and grammar of ancient Greek continuously developed, and some highlighted points of this development have been classified and named by linguists for study purposes. These names are usually created by adding surnames of tribes, scholars, regions, etc., which influenced language development or dominance in the Western Balkans. Thus, scholars understand ancient Greek as the language or its written variants representing the civilization of the Western Balkan people in the lands of present-day Greece and beyond. Also, an all-encompassing variant of ancient Greek was a second language in much of the Roman Empire and remains the official language of some modern Orthodox churches. This language has been studied in schools and universities worldwide since the Renaissance.

Like Latin, ancient Greek is part of the group of dead languages. It is encountered in various exact and social sciences.

(References: various language and cultural websites)

Here is what the Pelasgians sang during the time of Pal Kundurioti (from a longer fragment):

"So you too, old man of true Athens,  
Old Pelasgian thing, boast because you are right;  
Again you cannot stop speaking as is your custom,

The grace of Pelasgian men, as you always did."

(Taken from the Albanian forum, Arcas, 10/11/2005)

According to scholar Clirim Xhunga:

"The explanation of the origin of the ancient Greek lexicon can only be made through the Albanian language. Greek is a language constructed by grammarians. This claim is not new. It is confirmed by Haustratte and D'Angely, although I have not found convincing linguistic evidence in either of them. However, our study of ancient Greek shows that these scholars had undeniable proof to propose this hypothesis but were not allowed to elaborate it. Ancient Greek is not only a fabrication, a language artificially created by people who spoke another language, but it contains a multitude of linguistic problems. For example, the degrees of comparison for adjectives in Greek are built with the suffix  $-\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$  { $\tau\epsilon\rho$  = whole +  $\varsigma$ } in the comparative degree and  $-\tau\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  { $\tau\alpha\nu$  = all, whole +  $\tau\omicron\varsigma$ } in the superlative degree. Even the lexicon of ancient Greek is supported by Albanian roots. In Homeric Greek, the Albanian root appears diversified in pronunciation and writing. This happened mainly because Albanian words passed from one Greek dialect to another, undergoing phonetic and semantic changes so that in the Iliad and Odyssey we find many words revolving around a single root. For instance, alongside Re we have Ra; alongside Er, we find Hr and Ir; alongside Pei, Fei; alongside Pa, Fa. Also, Men, Man, and Mhn; Damo and Dhmo; Xeir and Keir; Pur and Pir; Kar and Khr. Ancient Greek and Latin are nothing but distorted continuations of Albanian written in two different alphabets. For example,  $\tau\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$  { $\tau\omicron\kappa\epsilon^*$   $\tau\omicron\kappa\grave{\epsilon}$  +  $\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma^*$ } means 'he who creates, father' (celui qui engendre, père); ἡ  $\tau\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$ , by Aeschylus, means 'mother' (la mère). In singular and dual, it means 'parents'. The formation of  $\tau\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$  is related to  $\text{Ζεύς}$ , Zeus {zë ish}."

(Parts of this article were published in the newspaper Koha Jonë, March 31 and April 1, 2005) Vicens Dorsa (an Arbëresh scholar) writes that Albanian preserves the roots of the pre-Homeric Aeolic dialect (digamma).

N. P. Elefteridhi states that most of the Greek language was almost entirely formed from the Pelasgian language.

These small inscriptions were found on the island of Lemnos, proving that the Pelasgians lived in their isolated communities as early as the 7th-6th centuries BCE. Hesiod, Homer, and other Greek authors undoubtedly show that the signs of Lemnos are in the Pelasgian language. Note: they are similar to Greek letters.

Jakov Thomopullo testifies that he has read the Eteo-Cretan inscriptions through the Albanian language.

Robert d'Angely writes: "...Albanians are older than the Greeks, this is without doubt, the monosyllabic sound is proof of this. The origin of Albanian and Greek clearly reveals the true relationship between them, that Greek originates from the Albanian language: its mother." (R. D'Angely - Enigma).

According to Robert D'Angely, it is said: "In 146 BCE, the conquest of Greece by the Romans, called Achaeans, took place. The language of the people was Pelasgo-Albanian, while Latin was the official language. After 800 CE, and especially after the first schism in 860 CE, when the Byzantine Empire began (the name given to the Eastern Roman Empire when it separated from the Western Roman Empire), the use of official Latin began to decline in favor of Greek, which had become the language of the Eastern Church. The Albanian populations of the Byzantine Empire, who were Eastern Orthodox Christians, were called Γράκοι (Grakoi), Ρωμηοί (Romioi), and Ρωμαίοι (Romaii), but they always learned only Greek, which was their second language after Albanian. This slow evolution made Byzantium an empire with an Albanian population and Hellenic civilization, with Old Greek as the official language. At that time, the people, who as always did not know Latin and did not speak it, also did not speak Old Greek nor modern Greek, which had not yet been born. For the Romano-Byzantine people, both



Latin and Greek were unknown." (Robert d'Angely, *Enigma* - Vol. I, Pelasgians, 1990, pp. 5-140).

Furthermore, for the author, the Greek of the *Iliad* is even older, therefore more archaic than that of the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad* is full of Pelasgian words with Greek suffixes and prefixes. The *Odyssey* was written and translated much later than the *Iliad*, taking no less than 150 years to reach the Greek of the *Odyssey*. (Robert d'Angely, *Enigma* - *ibid.*).

Regarding the origin of the Pelasgians, I support Aristidh Kola's theory that the Pelasgians, Illyrians, and Hellenes (Greeks) as part of them are not Indo-European peoples but autochthonous Europeans. However, there is a completely different theory (which I support but no historian has accepted) coming from the Old Testament, which states: - Pelazgus (or as one historian calls him, Dardanus) is the great-grandson of Shem, one of Noah's sons, named Peleg. Shem (the ancestor of the Hebrews and son of Noah of the Great Flood) had five sons, and Aram was his son who begot Arpakshad, who begot Shelah, who begot Eber, who begot Peleg. They spread out across different lands. One of them, Peleg, went to the Illyrian peninsula and gave his name to the Pelasgians. That is why it may not be translated into Albanian as many historians have tried to do for or against the Pelasgians. (Old Testament - Book of Genesis - 'Descendants of the sons of Noah' 10:25, p. 15).

There is also another confirmation I recall here concerning the Illyro-Pelasgian origin of the Hellenes as well as the natural and not hostile interweaving of historical citations.

According to *Myth & Legends* written by Thomas Bulfinch, 1993, Helenus-I ("Ἠλένοϋς) was the son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba and the twin brother of the prophetess Cassandra. Helenus was also called Scamandrios. According to the legend, Cassandra explained prophecies, but Apollo had taken away her power of persuasion; similarly for Helenus. He took part in the Trojan War led by his brother Hector (Priam had six sons). At the end of the Trojan War, Helenus fought against his brother Deiphobus (after Paris was killed) to marry Helen, but Helen was given to Deiphobus. Helenus, upset, fled to Mount Ida but was captured by Odysseus. After the Trojan War, Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, took captives and then married Helenus' sister-in-law and Hector's wife, Andromache (they had three sons, one of whom, Molossus, founded the kingdom of Molossia bordering the Chaonians and Thessalians). He also took Helenus with him. All three lived in Molossia in Epirus, but before leaving Epirus, Neoptolemus allowed them to found the city of Buthrotum (modern Butrint). Neoptolemus was killed by Orestes, son of Agamemnon, because of Hermione, daughter of Menelaus and Helen. (Thomas Bulfinch, *Myth & Legends*, 1993).

Aeneas in his Homeric journey (according to Virgil) arrived on the coast of Butrint and was surprised when he met his cousin Helenus and the wife of his cousin Hector, Andromache. They supplied him with food, and Helenus prophesied (because he had this gift along with his twin sister Cassandra) that Aeneas would become the father of a great nation (remember that Aeneas married Lavinia, from whom the Roman nation and Rome were born). (Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book III).

Later, Helenus married Neoptolemus' sister, Deidamia, to keep the kingdom of Molossia and Epirus.

In conclusion, this is how the Hellenic people gradually arose and strengthened, which according to mythology and historiography was entirely an Illyro-Pelasgian tribe, no different from them. This is also why they spoke the same language because during the war and captivity they had no need for translators, and shared the same rites, customs, and traditions.



**Helenus (son) dhe Priami (father)**

## Conclusion

Perhaps it is more reasonable that in the future, Greek and Albanian historians collaboratively investigate the antiquity of the Illyro-Pelasgian heritage, rather than opposing each other. The true history lies within mythology, which holds core truths that today's Greek, Albanian, and international historiography is gradually uncovering—whether through the help of the Albanian language or by overcoming the biases of some individuals on both sides. These biases only serve to delay, but not prevent, the discovery of historical truths hidden in the twilight of our shared past.

A joint scholarly effort would not only enrich our understanding of ancient civilizations but also strengthen the cultural ties between our peoples, acknowledging the deep-rooted connections that transcend modern national borders.

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