Latin -īs 'Nom. Pl.' as an Indo-European Reflex*)

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Handbooks of Latin historical morphology perpetuate views on the 3rd declension -īs ending which are in need of qualifications. Firstly, it is commonly held that the -īs signalling Acc. Pl. was ousted by -ēs by the end of the 1st c. AD. That -īs was extensively utilized by authors of the early imperial period in free variation with the -ēs suffix to encode Acc. Pl. is evident from studies by Lundström (1914), Bömer (1953; 1954), Pulbrook (1973), and Gaebel (1982). That, however, the variation did not fade out is evidenced by Tingdahl's (1916) substantial study which showed that the -īs suffix was utilized to encode Acc. Pl. through the whole Late Latinity. Secondly, the -īs signalling Nom. Pl. has been regarded as virtually non-existent. The impression given by handbooks is that Nom. Pl. forms in -īs occur a few times as a caprice of nature. The tendency to deny the existence of Nom. Pl. nouns in -īs is probably due to the fact that no etymological justification has been found for the Nom. Pl. -īs ending. Traditionally, the *onus probandi* has lied on those claiming the manuscript reality of the Nom. Pl. -īs. It is my purpose to show that the Nom. Pl. -īs can be projected back to Indo-European inflectional morphology. In consequence, also the *onus probandi* will be more evenly distributed.

1. On the social reality of the Nom. Pl. -īs ending

The Nom. Pl. forms in -īs have been looked upon as anomalies with no etymological justification. It is this point of view which has created the current theory according to which the Nom. Pl. -īs is an analogical borrowing from the etymologically derivable Acc. Pl. in -īs. For instance, Leumann (1977) writes:

"Nom. plur. -īs steht vereinzelt bei *i*-Stämmen. (...) Die Erklärung ist einfach: nach der Gleichheit von -ēs in plur. nomin. und akk. der Kons.-Stämme wurde die alte Differenz bei den *i*-Stämmen

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nomin. -*ēs* und akk. -*īs* normal zu -*ēs* -*ēs,* vereinzelt aber hyperkorrekt zu -*īs* -*īs* ausgeglichen" (440).

Congenial explanations[1]) abound which are based on syncretistic encoding of Nom. Pl. and Acc. Pl., and operate with tendencies to form isomorphically patterned paradigms. The encroachment of -*ēs* upon -*īs* in Acc. Pl., on the one hand, and the occasional replacement of -*ēs* by -*īs* in Nom. Pl., on the other hand, are supposed to be based on the same kind of process. Bömer (1953: 218), for instance, speaks of occasional Nom. Pl. endings in -*īs,* "die vermutlich dem gleichen Grundsatz der Vertauschung des Nom. mit dem Akk. Plur. ihr Dasein verdanken, wie (...) sich das Eindringen der konsonantischen Endung -*es* in den Akk. Plur. der -*i*-Stämme als sprachgeschichtlicher Vorgang durchgesetzt (...) hatte". However, the processes are basically different. The tendency to replace -*īs* by -*ēs* in Acc. Pl. involves an elimination of the *īs/-ēs* allomorphy, i. e.

Nom. Pl.   Acc. Pl.   Nom. Pl.   Acc. Pl.

-*ēs*   -*īs*   >   -*ēs.*
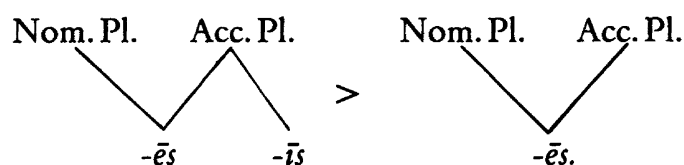
On the other hand, if the Nom. Pl. forms in -*īs* really came about as conditioned by Acc. Pl. forms in -*īs* in the environment of syncre-

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[1]) "Die Gleichheit des Nom. und Acc. pl. bewirkte ferner, daß, als im Acc. die Endungen -*īs* und -*ēs* nebeneinander standen (...), nun auch im Nom. bisweilen in republikanischer Zeit neben -*ēs* ein -*īs* aufkam" (Sommer 1948: §216); "Im *Nom. plur.* findet sich vereinzelt der Ausgang -*īs* bei *i*-Stämmen. Es sind nominativisch verwendete Akkusativformen. Der Gebrauch wurde dadurch hervorgerufen, daß bei den konsonantischen Stämmen beide Kasus auf -*ēs* ausgingen" (Kieckers II 1931: 58); "As the nom. and acc. forms of consonantal stems were alike, the nom. of the -*i*-stems occasionally took the acc. -*īs* (...), but such forms never became standard" (Kent 1946: 45); "e viceversa, ma meno frequentemente, -*īs* penetrò nel nominativo e poi dai temi in -*i*- anche in quelli consonantici, in ambedue i casi" (Pisani 1952: 168); "Zwar tauchen schon im 2. Jahrhundert vereinzelt Nom.-Endungen auf -*īs* auf, die vermutlich dem gleichen Grundsatz der Vertauschung des Nom. mit dem Akk. Plur. ihr Dasein verdanken, wie etwa zu der gleichen Zeit sich das Eindringen der konsonantischen Endung -*es* in den Akk. Plur. der -*i*-Stämme als sprachgeschichtlicher Vorgang durchgesetzt und Anerkennung verschafft hatte" (Bömer 1953: 218); "dans un texte de 107 A. C. [sic!] (*Sententia Minuciorum*), une forme *fineis* d'accusatif étendue au nominatif, à une époque où la forme du nominatif tendait elle-même à s'étendre à l'accusatif" (Monteil 1973: 202). Especially the last quote gives the false impression that the Nom. Pl. form *fineis* involves a single aberration. Some handbooks (e. g., Bammesberger 1984) do not even mention the existence of the Nom. Pl. in -*īs.*

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tistic coding of Nom. Pl. and Acc. Pl. in consonant-stems, then what was conceivably involved is a complex inference of a new allomorph on the basis of non-proportional analogy, in principle comparable to abducing, say, a first-declension Abl. Sg. form in -*ae* on the basis of Dat. Sg. in -*ae* and the syncretistic coding of Dat. Sg. and Abl. Sg. by means of -*ō* in the 2nd declension. Such formations would witness to a veritable barbarism, unless such tendencies are supported by semantic or syntactic reasons. It is conceivable, for instance, that mass nouns are amenable to an extension of the Acc. Pl. -*īs* to Nom. Pl. Also existential and impersonal passive sentences (cf. Le Bourdellès 1965) are in principle apt to provide a context favoring Nom. Pl./Acc. Pl. syncretism. None of these putative factors are borne out by the data, which exhibit a variety of syntactic patterns and semantic properties.

Additionally, Leumann characterizes the process as hypercorrection, thereby missing the point. Hypercorrection is what results from overdoing a socially interpreted variant type, a prestige form – a classic instance being Arrius' hypercorrect use of /h/ (Cat. 84; cf. Nigid. frg. 21 Fun. rusticus fit sermo, si adspires perperam). Accordingly, the hypercorrection explanation presupposes the existence of some prestige form(s) of Nom. Pl. ending in -*īs*. Leumann gives no hint as to what the prestige form affected by *finīs* etc. was supposed to be. The possibility of hypercorrection is excluded by Varro's express statement that *puppīs* and *restīs* stand in free variation with *puppēs* and *restēs,* respectively, in Nom. Pl. (ling. 8,66 nam sine reprehensione vulgo alii dicunt (...) *hae puppīs restīs* et *hae puppēs restēs*). According to Varro, this variation is on a par with the free variations *civitatum/civitatium, parentum/parentium* (Gen. Pl.); *montēs/montīs, fontēs/fontīs* (Acc. Pl.); *ove/ovī, ave/avī* (Abl. Sg.), which nobody would consider to exemplify hypercorrection.

There can remain no doubt about the social reality of the Nom. Pl. in -*īs*. We possess Varro's explicit statement that Nom. Pl. forms such as *puppīs/puppēs* and *restīs/restēs* are in free variation. And of course it would be naive to indulge in the positivistic belief that Varro gave an exhaustive list of nouns correctly selecting the -*īs* ending to encode Nom. Pl. Beside these two, Varro has a dozen of Nom. Pl. forms ending in -*īs* (see e.g. Woytek 1970: 37–38): ling. 8,67 cum horum casus patricus et accusativus in multitudine sint *disparilīs*; ling. 6,15 eo die publice immolantur boves praegnantes in curiis *complurīs*; ling. 5,21 quod eae *partīs* propter limitare iter maxime teruntur; ling. 5,56 ab hoc quattuor quoque *partīs* urbis tribus

dictae; ling. 5, 143 ideo coloniae nostrae omnes in litteris antiquis scribuntur *urbīs*; Men. 44 Büch. (= 44 Cèbe) non solum innubae fiunt *communīs*; Men. 174 Büch. (= 173 Cèbe) quae *servitutīs* et *libertatīs* ab origine ad exordium adductae (see Cèbe 1980: 803); furthermore: Men. 398 Büch. *annalīs*; Men. 488 Büch. *pudentīs*; Men. 576 Büch. *aquatilīs*; perhaps Men. 386 Büch. *exeuntīs*.

The word *vulgo* by which Varro qualifies the variable use of *hae puppīs/puppēs* and *hae restīs/restēs* means that this variation is characteristic of colloquial speech (cf. Sofer 1936; cf. Díaz y Díaz 1952). Bömer (1954: 202) is quite right in expelling the use of the Nom. Pl. forms in -*īs* from Vergil and literary latin in general. But contrary to what is held by Bömer, I prefer to think that Nom. Pl. forms occur in literary texts as well, and when they do, they occur either as archaisms or as colloquialisms. Notice that archaism and colloquialism do not necessarily exclude each other (cf. e.g. Ronconi 1957). It is scarcely an accident that the first epigraphical attestations occur in law texts, viz. Lex repett. [= CIL I² 583 (123/2 BC)], 13 *ceiveis* Romanei iustei sunto; Sent. Minuc. [= CIL I² 584 (117 BC)], 3 qua *fineis* fierent; ibid., 6 *fineis*; ibid., 13 hisce *finis* videntur esse (*finis* also in CIL I² add. 2, 2824). The evidential power of epigraphic occurrences has in general been depreciated by doubting stonecutter's Latin competence. It would be dogmatic to construe these forms as hypercorrect or plainly incorrect. It is true that part of the republican inscriptions having Nom. Pl. forms in -*īs* are of a clearly vulgar character, e.g. CIL I² 1447 coques *atriensīs* ⟨f.p.d.d.⟩; CIL I² 2184 non sum(us) *mendacīs*, quas dixti, consulis stulte (cf. Bömer 1954: 202). But this does not hold good for all epigraphical evidence. Manuscript evidence is difficult to judge. As is to be expected, the Nom. Pl. -*īs* ending occurs in variation with the -*ēs* endings. We know with respect to the Acc. Pl. -*īs* ending that the majority of alterations in mss. goes from -*īs* to -*ēs* (cf. Gaebel 1982: 112 on Vergil). In the case of Nom. Pl. forms in -*īs*, this is *a fortiori* to be expected. Except for cases of syntactic ambiguity (e.g., taking a manuscript form in -*es* to be a Gen. Sg.), it is difficult to see how the manuscript occurrences of the Nom. Pl. -*is* ending could be due to "Verschlimmbesserungen". On the other hand, it would be rash to take every manuscript occurrence of Nom. Pl. -*īs* to be genuine by dint of the principle of *lectio difficilior*. Bömer's (1953; 1954) and Gaebel's (1982) studies of Vergilian manuscript evidence for Acc. Pl. forms in -*īs* are very instructive and call for a cautious attitude. My position on the manuscript evidence for Nom. Pl. forms in -*īs* may

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appear to be unduly liberal. While being basically more agnostic
than the appearances may suggest, I find it implausible to explain
away every scribally attested Nom. Pl. in -*īs* as due to caprices of tex-
tual transmission. There are chances that those forms in -*īs* which
are preserved in good tradition are original, especially if some other
considerations support such a hypothesis. For instance, I find the
following attestations from Cicero compatible with what we know
on the basis of epigraphical evidence. Besides Lex repett., Nom. Pl.
civīs is attested in Cicero as well, viz. in the text of his ideal constitu-
tion: leg. 3, 3, 6 Iusta imperia sunto isque *civīs* modeste et sine recusa-
tione parento (in AB which are recognized as the best mss.). In the
same archaically stylized law text, the Nom. Pl. of *censor* is signalled
likewise: *Censorīs* populi aevitates, suboles, familias pecuniasque
censento (leg. 3, 3, 7 AB). These readings, especially the latter, are
accepted by most editors.

Like any other speech community, the Latin-speaking community
was multiply stratified. What is a priori expectable is a complex of
local, social, and stylistic variation. This tallies with Puşcariu's (1927)
and Gaeng's (1977; 1983; 1985) theory, according to which it is the
Latin -*īs* ending which historically underlies the plural -*i* in Italian
and Rumanian nouns stemming from the 3rd declension; e.g., It.
monti, Rum. *munţi* < Lat. *montīs*, and It. *parti*, Rum. *parţi* < Lat.
partīs. No asterisks are needed in the Latin "etyma": *montīs* is
attested as early as in Lucrece 6, 747 acri sulpure *montīs* / oppleti ca-
lidis ubi fumant fontibus aucti (O, whereas Q has the normalized
form *montēs*);[2]) *partīs* is likewise attested in Lucrece, viz. 5, 494 nec

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[2]) The practice of the editors varies. Bailey, who writes *montes*, points out that
"*Nomin. plur. in* -is attested fairly frequently by the MSS., but this is a point on
which they cannot fully be trusted" (1947a: 73). He does not mention in the
apparatus the variation *montīs/montēs* in the authoritative mss. O and Q, obvi-
ously because he, unlike many other editors, regards every instance of Nom. Pl.
in -*īs* as due to scribal error; cf. Bailey (1947·a: 174): "Codicum errata minora
saepius praetermisi". In Lucr. 4, 397 *extantīs*que procul medio de gurgite *montīs*
/ classibus inter quos liber patet exitus ingens, / insula coniunctis tamen ex his
una videtur. Bailey admits -*īs* (attested in OQ) only because he takes *extantīs*
(...) *montīs* to be Acc. Pl. (see 1947b: 1231). Bailey is wrong here. The construc-
tion *extantīs* (...) *montīs* is unequivocally a nominativus absolutus, which is per-
haps the oldest type of absolute constructions (Holland 1986); whereas accusa-
tive absolute constructions do not take off until Late Latin (see Helttula 1987).
So, the present passage must be nom. abs. Interestingly enough, Bailey writes,
contrary to manuscript authority, *extantīs* (...) *montīs* in his earlier Oxford edi-
tion (1901), obviously under the correct impression that the construction

pariter tantundem omnes subcumbere *partīs* (OQ), and also in
Varro, ling. 5, 21 and 5, 56. Both Pușcariu and Gaeng admit multiple
causation: The evolution of the East Romance plural *-i* was certainly
furthered by the fact that the 2nd declension nouns had *-ī* in plural
as well. The identity and role of the Nom. Pl. *-īs* ending is rightly
summed up by Gaeng (1983: 79): "there had continued to exist (...)
a free variation between *-is* and *-es* ending in identical grammatical
functions, echoing what must have been a free variation of *-ēs* and
-īs in the plural of *i*-stems in classical Latin already, and (...) the *-is*
ending had gained considerable extension in the Vulgar Latin of
Italy". We may add that the free variation between *-ēs* and *-īs* can be
traced back to Archaic Latin. From Plautus we may quote the fol-
lowing examples: quia *aedīs dotalīs* huius sunt (Plaut. mil.
1278 BDC); liberae sunt *aedīs* (Plaut. mil. 678 A); priusquam omnia
periere, et ⟨a⟩*edīs* et ager (Plaut. most. 80 BCD); fundi et *aedīs,* per
tempus subvenistis (Plaut. tru. 186 BCD, *-ēs* A); nam illius oculi atque
aurīs atque opinio / transfugere ad nos (Plaut. mil. 589 BCD; *-ēs* A);
postquam adbibere *aurīs* meae tuae oram orationis (Plaut. mil. 883
A); *forīs* (e. g. Plaut. mil. 1378; see below); quid *parentīs* mei? (Plaut.
mer. 948 BCD); an ita potius ut *parentīs* eum esse et cognati velint
(Plaut. trin. 307 BCD, *-ēs* A); ne qui *parentīs* neu cognati sentiant
(Plaut. tru. 59 BCD). From Accius: *omnīs* (...) / vagant matronae
(Acc. 201).

2. *Tracing the Indo-European origins of the Nom. Pl. -īs*

2.1. It is highly doubtful whether the Nom. Pl. nouns in *-īs* can be
looked upon as conditioned by the Acc. Pl. *-īs.* This is rightly
pointed out in NW: "Indessen muß bemerkt werden, daß die
Endung is im Nomin. auch solcher Nomina gefunden wird, bei
denen dieselbe sogar im Accus. sehr bedenklich oder entschieden
unstatthaft ist" (I 382). It is astonishingly often indeed that *-īs* is uti-
lized even in etymological consonant-stem nouns to encode Nom.
Pl. Evidence comes both from inscriptions and from manuscripts.
From the former let me quote CIL I² 20 ⟨*prai*⟩*torīs* pro po⟨plod⟩ ⟨...⟩ti
Diove dede⟨re⟩; *conductorīs* (see Carcopino 1922); CIL I² 2184 *men-
dacīs* (see above); CIL VI 4419 *curatorīs*; manuscripts: Cic. leg. 3, 3, 7

involved a nominative. All in all, this vacillation shows how preconceived norma-
tive ideas guide editorial solutions.

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AB *censorīs* (see above); Lucr. 5,1085 mutant (...) raucisonos cantus, cornicum ut saecla vetusta corvorumque *gregīs* (Q, -cis O); Cic. div. 2,9,24 quod me adiuvent *haruspicīs* (AP); ibid. 1,37,81 tum enim ferunt ex oraculo ecfatum esse Pythiam: "Ego providebo rem istam et altae *virginīs*" (AP), ex quo factum, ut viderentur virgines ferre arma contra; Turpil. 186 [= Non. 281,23 M.] *meretricīs* ad me delenificae Atticae ut convenerant; Plaut. mil. 657 BCD *omnīs morīs* ad venustatem vigent; ibid., 1358-9 ut *morīs* (CD) mutandi sient / *muliebrīs* (BCD) *morīs* (CD, -es B) discendi; ibid., 1392 eum oderunt qua viri qua *mulierīs* (BCD); mil. 78 sequimini, *satellitīs*!; mil. 118 capiunt *praedonīs* (B[pre- CD]) navem illam ubi vectus fui.

Instances like those adduced above cannot be explained as conditioned by the Acc. Pl. in *-īs*. Rather, those cases in which the *-īs* ending can be attested in Acc. Pl. consonant-stems (e. g., CIL I² 593,160 *municipīs* fundanos item teneto) are to be explained as occasioned by the Nom. Pl. forms in *-īs*.

2.2. What further points to the insufficiency of explaining the Nom. Pl. forms in *-īs* as conditioned by the Acc. Pl. *-īs* is that the same Nom. Pl. ending is met with in other Italic dialects as well. In Oscan, the normal *i*-stem Nom. Pl. ending is *-ís* (e. g. **trís** 'trēs'), phonologically *-ēs*, which goes back to *-ejes*. But in a Pompeian cippus we find the Nom. Pl. form **aídilis**, phonologically /aidilīs/: Ve 8,3 ⟨a⟩**ídilis eka⟨k⟩ viam terem⟨nat⟩tens** 'aedilīs hanc viam terminaverunt'; Ve 8,11 **aídilis prúfattens** 'aedilīs probaverunt'. Oscan **aídil** 'aedilis' is a Latin loan word, and it is in principle possible that the Nom. Pl. form **aídilis** has been borrowed as a ready-made unit. If this is the case, then we have independent external evidence for Latin Nom. Pl. *aedilīs* as well, which is in fact once attested in good tradition of Cicero (Planc. 5,13 (E) *aedilīs* quicumque erunt).[3] But there is also incontrovertible Latin-independent evidence for the nom. Pl. *-īs* in Italic. An Oscan inscription from Capua (Ve 81,5) has **vesulliaís fertalis staflatasset** '*Vesulliis *Fertalīs (epulae) exstructae sunt;' on **fertalis**, see Vetter (1953: 75). A third example from Oscan is Ve 5 c, 10 (Cumae) **trstus sullus inim eisunk uhftis** 'testes omnes et eorum opitulationes,' where the Nom. Pl. form **uhftis** is phonologically /uftīs/.

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[3] In the above-mentioned Ciceronian law text (leg. 3,3,7) the mss. provide suntoque *aedilēs* curatores urbis. It is in principle possible that this is a normalized form, but of course we have no way of ascertaining this. So, we have no right to reconstruct *aedilīs* in the text. On archaisms in *De legibus*, see Pascucci (1970).

Also Paelignian and Marrucinian evidence for the existence of the Nom. Pl. -*īs*. Witness Ve 213,6 (Corfinium): eite uus pritrome *pacris* puus ecic lexe 'ite vos porro placidi qui hoc legistis' and Ve 218,1 (Rapino) aisos *pacris* 'di propitii', where the adjective form *pacris* is phonologically /pacrīs/.

The provenance of the Nom. Pl. -*īs* in Oscan, Paelignian and Marrucinian has been difficult to explain. Nazari's (1900) theory that in Oscan "i polisillabi escono in -*īs*" (114) is contradicted by **uhftis**, and no account is given for *pacrīs*. According to Buck (1904: 126), the Nom. Pl. -*īs* follows the analogy of the 1st declension -*ās* and the 2nd declension -*ōs*. But this does not explain why the Nom. Pl. of e.g. **aídil** is **aídilis** (i.e. /aidilīs/), not **aídilís** (i.e. /aidilēs/). Bottiglioni (1954: 115) contents himself with writing: "difficile da spiegare". It is obvious that the Nom. Pl. -*ēs* have a common source in Latin, Oscan, Paelignian, and Marrucinian. (On the relationship between these dialects see Meiser 1987.) This is in fact what was suggested by Bronisch (1892: 118-119), who anticipated the modern view of a double-paradigm system for the Indo-European *i*-stem nouns.

2.3. The inflection of the *i*- and *u*-stems exhibits variation which has motivated distinguishing two stem-based *i/u*-paradigms for Indo-European (cf. Benveniste 1935: 60-62; Kuryłowicz 1935: 138-140; Haudry 1983: 478-481; Szemerényi 1989: 185-193), viz. open inflection (e.g. **owi-* 'sheep') and closed inflection (e.g. **egni-* 'fire'[4]):

Nom. Sg.	*owi-s	*egni-s
Acc. Sg.	*owi-m	*egni-m
Gen. Sg.	*owi-os/-es	*egnei-s
Nom. Pl.	*owi-es	*egnei-es
Acc. Pl.	*owi-ns	*egni-ns
Gen. Pl.	*owi-ōm	*egni-ōm.

Of these two patterns the closed inflection appears to have been the productive one, but there are clear traces of the open type as well; witness e.g. Gen. Sg.: Skt. (Ved.) *ávyas* = Gk. (Hom.) ὄιος (οἰός);

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[4] No position need be taken in the present context on whether **egnis* is an Indo-European representation (Loicq 1962: 131) or a (pre-)Latin form (cf. Hamp 1970). Beekes (1985) expresses the inflectional dualism 'open' vs. 'closed' in terms of 'hysterodynamic' vs. 'proterodynamic' inflection (originally proposed by Pedersen 1926). However, Beekes's views on the Nom. Pl. inflection deviate from the *communis opinio* (see 1985: 139).

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Nom. Pl.: Gk. (Hom.) ὄιες, cf. Skt. (Ved.) *aryas* (< *ari-es*); see e.g.
Chantraine (1942: 219) and Szemerényi (1989: 188–189).

Whereas Latin *u*-stems exhibit clear traces of this inflectional
duality (witness e.g. CIL I² 581,8 *senatuos* vis-à-vis CIL I² 2197 *sena-
tous* > class. *senatūs*), it is commonly held that no vestiges to this
effect exist in the *i*-stem nouns (but see Szemerényi 1989: 189 on the
Gen. Sg. form of Lat. *ovis*). This is why the handbooks of Latin his-
torical morphology, when presenting the prehistory of Latin *i*-stems,
are silent on the fact that a dual pattern is reconstructed for Indo-
European. This, in turn, has certainly contributed to biasing Latin
scholars to look for only Latin-internal explanations for the Nom.
Pl. *-īs* ending. Exception in this respect is made by Haudry (1983:
479) who suggests in passing that IE *ow-y-es* went to pre-Latin (?)
owīs. This is I think the right track to follow.

2.4. Consider the Nom. Pl. form *forīs* 'doors': Plaut. mil. 410 sed
forīs (B¹D) vicini proxumi crepuerunt; ibid., 985 aperiuntur *forīs*
(CD); ibid. 1250 occultae sunt *forīs* (BCD); ibid., 1378 hinc sonitum
fecerunt *forīs* (BCD); Pacuv. trag. 133 stridunt *forīs*; Tac. ann. 1,39,3
concursuque ad ianuam facto moliuntur *forīs*. I propose that *forīs* is
a direct outcome of pre-Latin *fories*.[5])

A potential objection to the possibility of deriving *(for)īs* from
(**for*)*ies* is implied in Safarewicz's (1975) proposal to account for
the analogical spreading of the consonant-stem Gen. Sg. *-is* (< *-es*)
to the whole third declension. Ascribing the change to paradigm
mixture Safarewicz points out: "Mais l'introduction d'une forme
analogique qui était particulièrement incommode, puisque elle était
identique avec la forme du nominatif, exige une explication spéciale"
(1975: 489). As the "special explanation" Safarewicz proposes,
shrewdly enough, that the Gen. Sg. type *ovis* was due to phonetic
change (i.e., *owies* > *oves* > *ovis*), thus limiting the cases subject
to analogical pressures to the closed *i*-stem inflection (à la *egnei-s*
> *ignīs* → (anal.) *ignis*). Referring to forms such as *ais, ait*, and
Mais (Abl. Pl.), he surmises that "il est, par conséquent, possible que
l'amuïssement devant *e* ait été également régulier" (1975: 490).
Safarewicz's explanation calls for a few comments. Firstly, there is,

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[5]) That the PIE consonant-stem *dhwer-/dhwor-/dhur-* tended to be inflected
according to the vocalic pattern in pre-Latin is evidenced by Gen. Pl. *forium*
(Plaut. curc. 158). Now, the existence of Nom. Pl. *forīs* offers a precisation: The
dual pattern was still alive in pre-Latin. In other words, Nom. Pl. *forīs* relates to
Nom. Pl. *forēs* as, say, Gen. Sg. *senatuos* relates to Gen. Sg. *senatūs* (< *senatous*).

as a matter of course, really nothing to explain, as far as the adoption of the consonant-stem Gen. Sg. ending is concerned. Notice that this ending was adopted in the form -*es* (as Safarewicz himself implies), i.e. **igneis* → (anal.) **ignes,* and so the morphological opposition "Nom. Sg. : Gen. Sg." was distinctively encoded in spite of the change; i.e. *ignis* : **igneis* → *ignis* : **ignes*. It was only after the morphological change that the "Nom. Sg. : Gen. Sg." opposition in parisyllabic nouns became non-distinctly encoded (i.e. *ignis* : **ignes* → *ignis* : *ignis*). It was very much in order to resolve this coding problem that Nom. Sg. of parisyllabic nouns became to be "syncopated" (à la *mentis* : *mentis* → *men(t)s* : *mentis*); see Nyman (1987: 261-262). Secondly, what is gained in simplicity in the explanation of the Gen. Sg. ending is wasted by the greater complexity in the case of the Nom. Pl. ending, as Safarewicz himself feels compelled to admit.[6] Thirdly, there are too many exceptions to warrant an unqualified acceptance of Safarewicz' historical-phonological rule "j > ø/C__V_{front}". It seems to me that we must differentiate between (a.) "j > ø/__i", which involves a phonotactically motivated process (e.g. **agjes* > **ajjes* > *ajjis* > *ais*; **conjacit* > *conjicit* > *conicit*), and (b.) "j > ø/C__e", which has the status of an allegro rule (Nyman 1978: 72). The glide (*j*) which is optionally dropped results from an allegro process itself; e.g. *abíete* (literary Latin; lento style) > *abjéte*[7]) (allegro Glide Formation; violating the phonotactic constraints of literary Latin) > *abéte* (allegro Glide Suppression; Svennung 1936: 17 and passim; Nyman 1978: 84).

Quite apart from this, we must reckon with a contraction process which joined a heterosyllabic *ie* sequence into a long *ī*. The scope of this process is very much in dispute, but as a minimal hypothesis it is safe to assume with Sommer (1948) and Leumann (1977) that the contraction took place in final syllable:

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[6] "Il semble que la supposition d'une forme indo-européenne en **-i-es* (...) est vraisemblable pour plusieurs raisons. (...) en latin même, la forme du nom. pl. en **-ies* > **-es,* qui entrait en concurrence avec **-eies* > **ees* > *-ēs,* n'était pas de force à résister à cette dernière formation (en -*ēs*): car la forme en -*ēs* devait être becaucoup plus fréquente que elle en **-ies* > **-es*. Mais la fréquence seule, supposée ici comme cause de l'action analogique (...) ne semble point être un agent suffisant pour expliquer le développement. Ainsi la forme du nominatif pluriel reste toujours peu claire" (1975: 491).

[7] Vergil's (Aen. 8,599) *ábjete,* etc., exemplifies "lexicalization out of casual speech" (see Nyman 1978: 78-83).

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"Der Bereich der Kontraktion *ie* > *ī* ist umstritten. Unanfechtbar ist nur ausl. *-ie* > *-ī* im Vokativ der *io*-Stämme, *filī Váleri*" (Leumann 1977: 121); "Die lautliche Erklärung von lat. *-ī* aus *-ie* ... ist kaum zu umgehen" (Leumann 1977: 424).

Whereas *filī* < *filie* suggests that the contraction took place in absolute word-final position, *(for)i-es* > (for)*īs* appears to call for extending this formulation to the effect that *ie* went to *ī* in any open or closed final syllable. Instead of that, however, I prefer to keep the more restricted formulation, according to which *ie* went to *ī* word-finally, and interpret any pre-Latin vowel as word-final, when either absolutely final or followed by a single sibilant phoneme, i.e. /s/. This is not a stipulation for descriptive purposes, but rather a fact of pre-Latin (and archaic Latin) phonetics. It is a well-established fact that, in earlier Latin, /Vs#/ was virtually /V#/; see Hamp (1959) and Giannini (1986) for phonological interpretation, and Cipriano & Mancini (1984) for some philological evidence.

Consequently, the Nom. Pl. in *-īs* à la *fori-es* > *forīs* furnishes another case for the *ie* > *ī* contraction, which has to be posited nonetheless to explain the change *filie* > *filī*.[8])

3. Conclusion

There is a tendency in Latin historical grammars to brush away the instances of Nom. Pl. forms in *-īs*. What has effectively contributed to creating such a bias is doubtlessly that the *-īs* signalling

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[8]) Notice that words such as *abies, aries,* and *paries* do not contradict my formulation: first, in earlier Latin, these word forms were phonologically /abiess/, /ariess/, and /pariess/, respectively, and this phonological fact was phonetically reflected in the preservation of sibilants in final position; and second, the *e* in Nom. Sg. *abies, aries, paries* was long, at least after the degemination of word-final sibilants [i.e. *ss* > *s* / __ #] (witness Lucil. 534 [Marx] *ibat forte aries, inquit, iam quod genus! quantis / testibus!*, in which *aries* is phonologically not /ariess/ but /ariēs/, as can be readily concluded on the basis of Lucil. 1238 [Marx] *o Publi, o gurges Galloni, es homo miser, inquit,* where *es* [morphologically /es-s/] is phonologically /es/).
There is no need to go farther into the difficult question of the scope of the contraction. Admittance of word-internal contraction opens the door for a flock of exceptions (à la why *societas* instead of *socītas*?) and raises the problem of the conditioning factor(s) of this process. A clear summary is given by Kent (1930: 313–314) and Szemerényi (1960: 117). The latter's view that "the volume of the word played a decisive part" remains (intentionally?) vague.

Nom. Pl. has been regarded as an aberration rather than as a vestige of an etymologically justified form type originally having nothing to do with the Acc. Pl. forms in -*īs*. The Nom. Pl. -*īs* must be historically related to the corresponding forms attested in other Italic dialects. Indo-European *i/u*-stems had a two-paradigm system, viz. the open and the closed inflection. The Latin, Oscan, and Paelignian Nom. Pl. -*īs* can be traced back to the open inflection. The Latin reflex -*īs* is explained with reference to the same contraction process which is responsible for the Voc. Sg. type *filī* (> *filie*). Accordingly, Nom. Pl. forms such as *forīs* come from pre-Latin **fories*. The Latin 4th declension bears clear traces of the original two-paradigm system (witness the Gen. Sg. variants *senatuos/senatūs*). Now we have a reflex of this inflectional duality in the Latin *i*-stems, too. Besides the etymological justification of the Nom. Pl. -*īs* ending, the present study involves a contribution to the sociolinguistically oriented analysis of Latin vocabulary and form variants. For an interesting study to this effect, see Giacomelli (1979).

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