The Romanian *îns, ins* 'person, human being' and its roots in Proto-Indo-European

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In the Romanian language there is the noun *îns, ins* 'person, human being' for which the current etymology needs to be revisited. The forms are masc. *îns*, *ins*, fem. *insă*, masc. pl. *inşi,* fem. pl. *inse*, all meaning 'person/persons, someone, anyone', as in expressions like *cîţi inşi?* 'how many people?', *tot insul* 'everyone'. Traditionally, this Romanian noun, as well as the personal pronoun *însul* 'he'*, însa* 'she', etc., was explained through the Latin demonstrative pronoun *ipse (-a, -um) ipsus*, 'that very, just that, self'. However, since *ipsus* proper is not to be found in the Romanian language, all the reflexes mentioned above supposed a formation with the preposition *in* + *ipsus* (ILR 1969: 300). To verify this etymology we should begin our investigation in the Latin etymological dictionaries.

Tucker in his *Etymological Dictionary of Latin* (1931) gives for *ipse*: "*i- (v. is) + pt- + s-e (*s-o) Old Latin *sam, sapsa-* (= ipsa)". Wordsworth in his *Fragments* (1876) states on page 94 that:

> *Ipsus* is not uncommon in Old Latin. It occurs in Plautus frequently, and in Terence (Hee. 455) and Cato, R. R. 70, 2. Even *ipsos* is found in Festus, Ep. s. v. *aliuta*, from the laws of Numa Pompilius, 'Si quisquam aliuta faxit, *ipsos* Iovi sneer esto.' (For *aliuta* see under TA, Class iii). Corssen derives it from the stems *i-* and *so-*, with the enclitic particle *pe* introduced, as in *nus-p-iant*, and so *ea-p-se, si-rem-p-se*; etc. (ii. p. 847);

and on page 112:

> *Pe-* appears in the middle of words in *i-p-se, reap-se, vs-p-iam,* and at the end in *qui-ppe, nem-pe, pro-pe, ipsi-ppe,* the latter from Festus, s. v., 'ipsi neque alii'. It evidently bears the same relation to *pa-* as *ce-* to *ca-*, *ka-*, and as the Oscans and Umbrians substitute *p* for *k*, this may, perhaps, be considered as a dialectic form.

Please note that this author refers to the particle 'p' , 'pt' 'pe', as a dialectic, Oscan-Umbrian development.

A. Walde (Walde 1910) on page 392 gives similar attention to the consonant 'p' with regard to this Latin pronoun *ipse,-a,-um* 'self ' < *is* + *pse*, suggesting an Old Latin *ea-pse, ea-psa*, or, Old Latin *sapsa* 'ipsa', with a particle *p* also present as in *quis-p-iam*; in Ossetic the *ps*>*ss* as in *essuf, esuf* 'there', and *isso* 'hic, is', conform *esto* Lat *iste,* and in Umbrian *isso* = Lat. *ipse.*

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Further, we find in Mallory-Adams (2006: 417), that the Latin demonstrative pronoun *īs/eā/id* has its root in the PIE **h₁éi/*h₁ih$_a$-/*h₁id*, and the stressing forms *is-te/is-ta/is-tu* in PIE **so/*seh$_a$/*tód.*

From these etymological analyses one should notice the difficulties encountered for the explanation of the Latin demonstrative pronoun *ipse (-a, -um) ipsus*, especially with regard to the particle 'p', considered in the end a dialectal development (Wordsworth). These difficulties must be taken into account when discussing the Romanian noun *ins* and personal pronoun *însul* 'he', *însa* 'she'. More importantly, the change of the consonantal Latin group *ps* into *ss* that took place in some Romance languages, did not take place in Romanian. The center of this transformation was Italy, and it is considered as a result of an Oscan-Umbrian substrata, a change that probably took place around the Second Century A.D., the time of the Roman colonization in Dacia (ILR 1969: 43).

This Latin demonstrative pronoun *ipse (-a, -um), ipsus*, considered by the Romanian linguists as the base for the Romanian personal pronouns *însul, însa,* etc., formed with the preposition *in + ipsus*, etc., is habitually used with prepositions such as: *într-*, as in *într-însul* 'within him', *dintru-însul* 'from him', *printr-însul* 'through him', etc.; in expressions like: "Că numai oasele-au rămas dintr-însul" 'Only bones remained from him' (citation from Coşbuc in DM 1958), thus assuming the use of the preposition *în* redundantly, first to form the pronoun *însul<in+ipsus*, then again, as in *într-+în+ipsus,* a problematic solution.

The Latin demonstrative pronoun is also taken as the base for the reflexive pronoun *eu însumi* 'I myself', *tu însuţi* 'you yourself', *el însuşi, ea însăşi* 'he/she himself/herself', *noi înşine* 'us ourselves', *voi înşivă* 'you yourselves', *ei înşişi, ele însele* 'they themselves', as found in Deacon Coresi 1581 "că elŭ e însulŭ fiulŭ lui Dumnezeu", 'that he himself is the son of God.' The same applies to the formal pronoun 3rd pers. sg. *dînsul* 'he', *dînsa* 'she', and pl. masc. *dînşii,* fem. *dînsele* 'they', probably a compound of *de+însul, de+însa*, etc.; it should be noted that there are no such formations for 1st and 2nd pers. sg. and pl. In his dictionary, Ciorănescu under *îns, (-să)* finds a relation of the Romanian pronoun *dînsul* with the Italian *desso* 'he himself', Comelico *densu*, *denso*, Friulian *zenso*, id., which, after Tucker are believed to be formed probably from the Lat. *idem ipsus, ipse*, with the *ps>ss* change already complete.

The nominal form *îns, ins* 'a person, any person', is also found in Aromanian *nîsu,* Megleno-Romanian *ọns*; Istro-Romanian *ăns*.

The complex developments for which this noun is responsible in Romanian language and the difficulties met in accepting the traditional etymology through the Latin *ipse, -a, -um, ipsus* requires a look from a different perspective.

Mallory-Adams in his PIE reconstructed roots, lists at page 409 the form

> **h$_a$énsus* 'god, spirit, vital force'; IEW 48 **ansu-*; GI 653; BK 369 **an-aħ-/*ən-aħ-*; ON *ōss* 'god' [gen. *āsir*, nom. pl. *aesir*]; OE *ōs* (gen. pl. *ēsa*) 'god'; Goth (as reported by Jordanes) *anses* 'half-gods', Av *anhu* 'lord, overlord; life (period) of existance', *ahura-* (<**h$_a$ṇsu-ró-*) 'god, lord', *Ahura-mazdāh* 'the highest of gods'; OInd *ásu-* 'powerful spirit', *ásura-* 'divine, mighty; god, lord'.

And in an earlier work he specifies: "This **h$_a$énsus* has long been thought to be related to **h$_a$en(h₁)-* 'breath' (and thus might mean 'spirit' or 'inspirator' or the

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like)" (*Encyclopedia* 1997: 330). From this investigation we can observe that phonetically and semantically the Romanian *îns* could be related to the PIE *$h_a$énsus* 'god, spirit, vital force', *îns* meaning just that, 'human being, breathing person'. Moreover, its use in forming the reflexive pronoun to express 'the self', connoting the spirit within oneself, on a larger scale, the sense of 'spirit, life, vital force', as originally attributed to in the Indo-European vocabulary, and as attested also in Jordanes (Getica) *anses* 'half-gods', perhaps 'heroes' or 'persons of importance' that require respect, a semantic nuance which may explain the polite pronoun *dînsul, dînsa*, showing a possible influence of the Gothic language over the Dacian-Romanian. In religious texts written in Medieval Latin we find the form *ens* 'human being', present participle of *esse*, cognate with Greek **ὤν**, present participle of **εἰμί**, infinitive **εἶναι** 'be'; this concept is used in philosophical discourse as *ens a se* 'being from itself', or 'the uncaused Being' who is God, a concept comparable with that of the PIE *$h_a$énsus*. A relation between this PIE root and Medieval Latin form is not yet recognized, although the general consensus is that the Latin *ens* is made up by philosophers under the Greek language influence. Apart from the semantic connections, the possibility of the Medieval Latin to influence the Romanian form *îns* is minimal, since the most influential theologian Thomas Aquinas wrote in the 13th Century his *De **Ente** et Essentia* ['On Being and Essence'] in which he discussed the Catholic meaning of *ens***,** ablativ *ente***,** while the Romanian form *îns* is attested fully developed in medieval religious literature as for example at 1581 in Deakon Coresi, *Carte cu Învăţătură*: "şi veniră cătr'însulŭ" 'and they came towards him', or, "Aceasta amu însuşŭ ştie" 'This he himself knows', proving that it was well established in language at that date in the current form.

The Romanian reflexive pronoun *însumi*, *însuţi*, *însuşi*, etc., could very well be formed as *însu* (human being) + *mi* (I myself)*, însu+ţi* (yourself)*, însu+şi*, *înşi* + *ne*, *înşi* + *vă*, *înşi* + *şi*, meaning 'in my spirit, within myself', etc. To support this formation process we could take a look at the reconstructed IE personal and reflexive pronoun, e.g. *h_1eĝ* 'I', emphasized as in *h_1eĝ-óm* 'I myself', showing an enclitic prticle *-óm*; for second personal pronoun we have an enclitic particle **-te**, as in Alb *–të*, etc.; the 1st dual 'we two, us two', e.g. Grk *nó* 'we two, us two', Toch B *wene* 'we two', Alb *ne* 'us'; the 2nd person plural enclitic **wos*, e.g. Lat *vōs*, Skt *vas*. (Mallory-Adams 2006: 416-417) Thus, in accord with the IE structure the Romanian reflexive pronoun *însu-mi, însu-ţi, etc.,* could be a compound form: *îns* 'the self, human being' and the IE pronominal system, with stressing enclitic particles as reconstructed by Mallory-Adams.

Recent studies in comparative linguistics, particularly in some isolated IE languages from the Caucasian area in relations with languages from the South East European region could help clarify some unexplained Romanian isoglosses. In particular, in recent studies of the Burushanski language, we find the noun **insa:n** 'human', considered a loan word from Urdu **insaan** 'human' (Munshi 2006), which shows a very interesting relation to the Romanian **ins** 'person, human being'. On the same note, the last studies of Ilija Časule on the relations between Burushanski, Macedonian, Romanian, and Albanian, (Čašule 2012a and Čašule 2012b) bring to our attention a few Romanian isoglosses with uncertain etymologies, that are considered from a common substrata, as for example, Romanian *baci* 'older shepherd', Albanian *baç* 'elder brother, uncle', Burushanski *bač* 'goat house, sheep

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house', Macedonian *bačilo* 'pen, enclosure in the mountains'; or, Romanian *ciucă*, 'peak of mountain', Albanian *çukë* 'id', Burushanski *čok* 'sharp (mountain) peak', Macedonian *čuka* 'stony mountain peak'.

Concluding, the Romanian noun *îns*, *ins* shows a strong persistence of an archaic concept of the spirit, thriving in the Romanian cultural heritage, together with other such archaic notions, as that of 'the self', m. *sine*, f. *sinea* < PIE ***séwe**, Skt *svá* 'one's own', Toch A *ṣñi* 'one's own' Toch B *ṣañ* 'one's own', Latin *sē* 'him-/her-/itself', OHG *sih* 'him-/her-/itself', Germ *sein*, subject of philosophic discourses, among which that of the famous Constantin Noica serves as a good example.

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Abstract

The Romanian noun *ins*, *îns*, meaning 'person, human being' has traditionally been explain through the Latin demonstrative pronoun *ipse (-a, -um) ipsus*, 'that very, just that, self', in spite of the phonetic difficulties. This paper offers a new perspective on the subject, relating the Romanian isogloss to the Proto-Indo-European form **h$_a$énsus* 'god, spirit, vital force' as reconstructed by Mallory-Adams in their latest work. Recent studies of isolated Indo-European languages, such as Burushanski, may bring new and interesting perspectives in comparative linguistics.

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