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THE GRAMMARIAN CONSENTIUS ON ERRORS CONCERNING THE ACCENT IN SPOKEN LATIN

Summary: The 5th-century Gaulish grammarian Consentius wrote an extensive treatise on errors in spoken Latin. In the Roman grammatical tradition, errors in single words are deemed to arise by means of the improper addition, removal, substitution, and misplacement of one of the constitutive elements of the word (letter, syllable, quantity, accent, and aspiration). Late grammarians assumed that the four categories of change applied to accents too, but only Consentius provided an example for each of these cases. However, his discussion poses some problems. The examples of removal, substitution and misplacement of an accent all concern the word *orator* and present oddities such as a circumflex accent on the antepenultimate syllable; they were clearly made up for the sake of completeness and have no bearing on our understanding of Vulgar Latin. On the other hand, the example of addition of an accent is *trígínta*, with retraction of the accent on the antepenultimate syllable; this must be genuine and fits in well with current reconstructions of most Romance continuations of Latin *triginta* (Italian *trenta*, French *trente*, etc.) and other vigesimals (*uiginti*, *quadraginta*, etc.).

Keywords: accent, barbarism, Consentius, *triginta*, vigesimals, Vulgar Latin

1. INTRODUCTION: CONSENTIUS ON BARBARISMS

The grammarian Consentius probably lived in Narbonese Gaul in the 5th century CE. His *Ars de barbarismis et metaplasmis* deals with phonological/phonetic errors (barbarisms) and poetic licenses (metaplasms).[1] His discussion of barbarisms is most interesting for students of Vulgar Latin; although the subject was traditional in Roman grammar, Consentius' treatment is original and so rich that it can be considered the

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[1] The reference edition is still NIEDERMANN, M.: *Consentii Ars de barbarismis et metaplasmis. Victorini fragmentum de soloecismo*. Neuchâtel 1937. While I refer to Niedermann's page and line number, I cite the text according to my own in-progress edition, which is based on a fresh collation of the two manuscripts used by Niedermann alongside a new one; see MARI, T.: A New Manuscript of Consentius' *De barbarismis et metaplasmis. CQ* 66 (2016) 372–375.

most extensive account of Vulgar Latin written by a Latin native speaker.[2] In fact, Consentius criticizes the other grammarians, who exemplified barbarisms with poetic licenses from literary authors instead of errors from the ordinary language; on the contrary, he announces that he will give examples taken from everyday spoken language.[3]

As far as we can tell, Consentius was mostly true to his word: many of the almost fifty examples of errors given by Consentius have parallels in inscriptions, papyri, manuscripts, and even reflexes in the Romance languages. A temptation that we must resist, however, is to assume that errors in spoken Latin should necessarily equal Vulgar Latin; they might also include occasional mistakes and need not point exclusively to "vulgar" speaking habits.

Most of the errors discussed by Consentius fit in a precise and traditional pattern, for the Roman grammarians thought that barbarisms arose by adding, removing, substituting or transposing one of those elements that constitute a word: a letter, a syllable, a quantity, an accent, or an aspiration. This is one of Consentius' definitions of barbarism (Consent. *barb*. 1.18–2.1):

> *barbarismus est dictio aliqua sui parte uitiosa. hoc ad adiectionem et detractionem et inmutationem et transmutationem litterarum syllabarum accentuum temporum adspirationumque pertinet.*

Grammarians aimed to give examples of barbarisms arising from the combination of the four categories of change with the five elements of a word; as a matter of fact, only Consentius did it.

2. LATIN GRAMMARIANS ON ACCENTS AND BARBARISMS[4]

It was especially barbarisms concerning accents that did not receive a full treatment by the other grammarians, although they assumed for the accent the same changes that applied to the other elements. Aelius Donatus, the most influential grammarian of Late Antiquity, skips the examples of barbarisms concerning accent altogether and says that they are easy to figure out for anyone (Don. *mai*. 3. 1 p. 654. 7–9):

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[2] A recent account of Consentius' work as evidence for Vulgar Latin is in MALTBY, R.: The *De barbarismis et metaplasmis* of Consentius as Evidence for Late and Vulgar Latin. In BIVILLE, F. – LHOMMÉ, M.-K. – VALLAT, D. (eds): *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif* IX. *Actes du IXe Colloque international sur le latin vulgaire et tardif, Lyon, 2-6 septembre 2009*. Lyon 2012, 727–737.

[3] Consent. *barb*. 10. 24 – 11. 1 *nos exempla huius modi dabimus, quae in usu cotidie loquentium animaduertere possumus, si paulo curiosius audiamus*.

[4] After this article was accepted for publication, there was published a comprehensive treatment of the ideas of Latin grammarians on the Latin accent in PROBERT, P.: *Latin Grammarians on the Latin Accent. The Transformation of Greek Grammatical Thought*. Oxford 2019. The grammarians' and Consentius' ideas on errors concerning the accent are discussed on pages 231–234.

> *Toni quoque similiter per has quattuor species conmutantur: nam et ipsi*
> *adiciuntur detrahuntur inmutantur transmutantur. Quorum exempla ultro*
> *se offerent, si quis inquirat.*

Was it really so easy to find examples of errors concerning accents? If one looks at Consentius' discussion, one might disagree, for that presents a number of problems. The aim of this paper is to assess the reliability of Consentius' examples of errors concerning the accent and to figure out what they can tell us about the accent in the varieties of Latin that he examines.

In order to do that, it will be helpful to start off by saying a few words about the accent in the Roman grammatical tradition. Just like the Greeks, Roman grammarians distinguished between acute, grave, and circumflex accent, and applied the same rule for the choice between acute and circumflex on the penultimate syllable; unlike the Greeks, they had it that neither the acute nor the circumflex normally fell on the last syllable, and they observed the "Penultimate Law". This is Donatus' explanation of the three kinds of accent (Don. *mai*. 1. 5 p. 609. 5–10):

> *Toni igitur tres sunt, acutus, grauis, circumflexus. Acutus cum in Graecis*
> *dictionibus tria loca teneat, ultimum, paenultimum et antepaenultimum,*
> *apud Latinos paenultimum et antepaenultimum tenet, ultimum numquam.*
> *Circumflexus autem, quotlibet syllabarum sit dictio, non tenebit nisi paen-*
> *ultimum locum. Grauis poni in eadem dictione uel cum acuto uel cum*
> *circumflexo potest, et hoc illi non est commune cum ceteris.*

Roman grammarians have been accused of mechanically applying the rules of the Greek accent to the prosodic system of Latin, which worked in a different way; at the time when Donatus (and Consentius) wrote, in particular, the accent of Latin certainly was one of stress, like in the Romance languages, not of musical pitch. In this perspective, distinguishing between acute, grave, and circumflex, makes little sense.

Having said that, when we read Roman grammarians, by acute and circumflex accent we should understand any kind of stress accent, but on syllables of different quantity and in different positions; by grave accent, the absence of accent.

3. BARBARISMS CONCERNING THE ACCENT IN CONSENTIUS

Now that we have briefly looked at the rules of the Latin accent according to the Roman grammarians, we can move on to what they deemed errors. Only Consentius of all grammarians provides all four examples of barbarism concerning the accent that correspond to the four categories of change. Let us now set forth all four of Consentius' examples:

> (sc. *barbarismus fit per adiectionem*) *accentus, ut qui dicens "triginta"*
> *priorem syllabam acuat et sequentem grauiter enuntiet, qui modus et per*
> *inmutationem fieri uidetur* (Consent. *barb*. 11. 9–11).

(sc. *per detractionem fiunt barbarismi sic:*) *accentus, ut si ⟨quis⟩ "orato-rem" ⟨dicens⟩ priorem syllabam circumflexo accentu pronuntiet* (Consent. *barb*. 11. 20–21).

(sc. *per inmutationem fiunt barbarismi sic:*) *accentus, ut si quis "orato-rem" dicens primam acuat* (Consent. *barb*. 12. 3–4).

(sc. *per transmutationem fiunt barbarismi sic:*) *accentus, ut si quis "ora-torem" pronuntians primam syllabam circumflectat* (Consent. *barb*. 12. 14–15).

By looking at all four examples at once, we can make a few observations. Consentius uses one word, the numeral *triginta* "thirty", in the first case, and another word, *orator*, in the remaining three cases; here he writes the accusative *oratorem* but we must understand the nominative *orator*, for it would be indefensible to posit an accent on the fourth from last syllable as the case would be with *oratorem*.[5] It is worthwhile pointing out that *triginta* is used as an example only here, while *orator* is commonly employed by grammarians as an example to illustrate prosody, morphology, semantics etc.[6] Only in the case of *triginta* does Consentius interpret the error in two different ways (*per adiectionem* and *per inmutationem*). The second and fourth examples present exactly the same type of change, *ôrator* instead of *orâtor*. In all four cases, finally, the accent is retracted from the penultimate to the antepenultimate syllable. Let us now focus on the single cases.

3.1. Adiectio accentus: *trígìnta*

The most obvious understanding of the *adiectio accentus* in *triginta* would be that an accent is added where there was none, on the first syllable; this would produce *trígínta*, with two acute accents.[7] But that is not what Consentius tells us, for he says that *triginta* is mispronounced with an acute accent on the first syllable and a grave

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[5] Consentius uses *orator* asyntactically after the verb *dicat* just before (Consent. *barb*. 11. 18–19): (sc. *per detractionem*) *temporis, ut si quis dicat "orator" correpta priore syllaba*. Apparently, he thought it sufficient to present the word in the exact form that he wanted to discuss only at its first occurrence. Generally speaking, it was quite common among grammarians to inflect the nouns used as examples depending on their syntactic role in the sentence.

[6] E.g. Diom. *GL* I 303. 18; 318. 11; 493. 24, Don. *mai*. 1. 4 p. 608. 6; 2. 9 p. 625. 3; Pomp. *GL* V 99. 21; 102. 4; 102.15; 106. 23; 107. 33; 116. 13, etc. Note in particular, on the accentuation of *orator*, Pomp. *GL* V 127. 6–8: *et quam uideris plus sonare a ceteris, ipsa habet accentum. ut puta si dicas "orator", quae plus sonat? "ra", ipsa habet accentum*. Consentius uses *orator* as an example also in his *De nomine et uerbo* (*GL* V 351. 15–16).

[7] That is indeed the case of the barbarism *per adiectionem accentus* in Augustine's *Ars breuiata* (Aug. *gramm*. 11. 2): *si autem duas acuat syllabas in una parte orationis, adiectione acuminis offendit auditum*.

accent on the second (*trígìnta*);[8] this means, as we have seen, that the syllable *tri* is stressed, the syllable *gin* is unstressed.[9]

It is not easy to tell why Consentius says that *trígìnta* is also a case of *inmutatio accentus* "substitution of an accent", for the exchange of *acutus* and *grauis* would be more readily interpreted as a *transmutatio* "transposition". Perhaps Consentius envisages here a sort of double *inmutatio*, that is the substitution of an *acutus* for a *grauis* on the antepenultimate syllable and vice versa on the penultimate.[10] Alternatively, this can be seen as the substitution of a *grauis* for an *acutus* on the penultimate syllable, with the *acutus* consequently falling on the antepenultimate. One should note that Consentius' official example of *barbarismus per inmutationem accentus* is, similarly, *órator* with an acute accent on the antepenultimate syllable (Consent. *barb.* 12. 3–4); in that case, however, the correct accent was supposed to be a circumflex on the penultimate (*orâtor*).

Although Quintilian does not talk of *adiectio accentus*, his first example of a *uitium* concerning the accent is strikingly similar to Consentius' *trígìnta*, for he writes (*Inst.* 1. 5. 22): *acuta et grauis alia pro alia ponuntur, ut in hoc "Camillus", si acuitur prima*. The error consists of pronouncing *Cámìllus* instead of *Càmíllus*. It has been suggested that Quintilian, here and in the case of *Cethegus*, refers to errors that are due to the influence of the Greek accentuation (i.e. *Cámìllus* < Κάμιλλος).[11]

Another similar case is the only instance of barbarism involving accent in Audax's *Excerpta de Scauro et Palladio* (GL VII 362. 16–18): *accentu fit barbarismus, cum aut acutus pro graui aut grauis pro acuto uel alius pro quolibet ponitur, ut si dicas "Metellus" acuto accentu ⟨in⟩ prima, cum in secunda sit acutus accentus, in prima grauis*. An almost verbatim parallel passage is found in a fragmentary treatise on barbarism attributed to Victorinus (Ps. Mar. Victorin. 36. 29 – 37. 2 Niedermann); here *Métellus* is presented as a case of *inmutatio*, which fits in well with Consentius' alternative explanation of *trígìnta* as an *inmutatio accentus*. The 3rd-century grammarian Sacerdos is the only one to give an example of barbarism *per accentum* where the acute accent falls on the final instead of the penultimate syllable (*GL* VI 451. 9–10): *isté* for *íste*.

The *adiectio accentus* is illustrated quite differently in other grammarians. Servius writes (*GL* IV 444. 20–21): *haec omnia aut adiciuntur aut detrahuntur … accentu, ut "hic"; aliter enim pronomen, aliter aduerbium pronuntiandum est*. Servius probably means that the accent is circumflex on the adverb *hīc*, acute on the pronoun *hĭc*. So thinks Pompeius, who considers as *adiectio accentus* the use of a circumflex where the acute would be normal, that is the addition of an accent to a preexisting

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accent (10. 12–13 Zago = *GL* V 285. 24–26): *Quo modo addis accentum? Si uelis dicere "ârma" ⟨pro eo quod est "árma"⟩.*

3.2. Detractio accentus: ôrator

The *detractio accentus* produces *ôrator*, whereas the correct form according to the grammarians' accentuation rules is *orâtor*. This might be understood as the removal of an accent from its natural position, the penultimate; as this has now no accent, the antepenultimate receives one, which is circumflex because the first *o* in *orator* is long.[12] This is odd, for grammarians allowed a circumflex only on the penultimate; perhaps it was conceivable to Consentius as a mistake, and we should consider that *ôrator* is also the example of *transmutatio accentus* (Consent. *barb.* 12. 14–15).

A similar process of *detractio* seems to be implied in Servius' example (9 Zago = *GL* V 444. 26–28): (sc. *per detractionem*) *accentus, quando dicimus "déinde" (mediam enim habere debuit ⟨acutam⟩, quia positione longa est)*; the accent is removed from the *i* and falls on the preceding syllable (Servius conceives of *deinde* as a trisyllable).

In Pompeius' example, on the other hand, the disyllabic *Roma* gets an acute instead of a circumflex (11. 4–6 Zago = *GL* V 285. 30–32): *detrahimus accentum, si uelis dicere "Róma", cum tractim debeas dicere: longiorem enim illum accentum ad breuem traxisti.*

3.3. Inmutatio accentus: órator

The *inmutatio accentus* produces *órator* instead of *orâtor*. This might be understood as the substitution of an accent with one of a different kind: of a circumflex with an acute (but on a different syllable);[13] or of a circumflex with a grave, so that the accent consequently falls on the antepenultimate.[14] The latter seems more likely, for this case resembles Quintilian's second example of an error concerning the accent (*Inst.* 1. 5. 22–23): *grauis pro flexa, ut "Cethegus" (et hic prima acuta; nam media mutatur)*. Above we have also seen *Métellus* presented as a case of *inmutatio accentus* (Ps. Mar. Victorin. 36. 29 – 37. 2 Niedermann).

When Sacerdos discusses *inmutatio accentuum*, he talks about vowel length rather than accent (*GL* VI 451. 13–14): *per immutationem accentuum, ac si dicas "Cērĕs" "ce" longa, cum breuis sit, et "res" breui, cum sit longa*; here he could imply that a circumflex instead of an acute accent falls on *Ce*.

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[12] MANCINI, M.: Agostino, i grammatici e il vocalismo del latino d'Africa. *Italian Journal of Linguistics* 13 (2001) 309–338, here 333 n. 16.

[13] MANCINI (n. 12) 333 n. 16; according to him, the first *o* is short here, hence the acute instead of the circumflex.

[14] This could also be understood as a "double" substitution, if one looks at the parallel of *trigìnta*: of a circumflex with a grave on the penultimate and of a grave with an acute on the antepenultimate.

3.4. *Transmutatio accentus: ôrator*

The *transmutatio accentus* produces *ôrator* instead of *orâtor*. This is readily under-stood as the transposition of *circumflexus* on the antepenultimate, or the shift of *circumflexus* and *grauis*; as has already been observed, Consentius has cited *ôrator* also as a case of *detractio accentus*. Consentius is the only grammarian who gives an example of *transmutatio accentus*. He invokes it another time to explain the alleged shift of the accent in the adverb *pone* "behind"; for according to grammarians the imperative *pone* had the accent on the penultimate, the adverb *pone* had it on the last syllable; as the adverb *pone* was chiefly poetic, Consentius first suggests that may be a a poetic licence, then concludes it is just a different word (*barb.* 8. 21 – 9. 2).[15]

4. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Several elements of interest have emerged from this discussion: it is remarkable that only Consentius, of all grammarians, produces instances of each case of barbarism resulting from the application of the four categories of change to the accent. Three of the examples that Consentius provides concern the same word (*orator*), and two of them describe the very same change (*ôrator*).

   This allows for some conclusions: the doctrine of barbarisms *per accentus* was one neither fixed nor particularly detailed among grammarians. This may be due in part to the fact that most grammarians drew their examples from literary texts, in which accents did not play a significant role. It was commonly acknowledged that barbarisms could occur by means of accent, but to establish the forms and ways in which they could arise was up to the individuals. The application of the four categories of change, which was quite artificial even as applied to segments like letters or syllables, was all the more artificial when applied to suprasegmentals such as prosody and accent, especially because the grammarians' theory of accent was quite artificial in itself, based as it was on the Greek system.

   Things were further complicated by the practice of treating accent and quantity, which were tightly bound, as separate categories. In sum, finding instances of wrong use of accent and fitting them to *adiectio detractio immutatio transmutatio* was a hard, if not impossible, task. In order to do so, grammarians needed to stretch some interpretations and, at times, make up some examples. I believe that this plausibly explains Consentius' use of the same word (*orator*) for three different cases: these can hardly represent instances of spoken usage and must be regarded instead as *exempla ficta*. At least one of them, the *inmutatio accentus* producing *órator* instead of *orâtor*, might have been inspired by a more ancient example in the grammatical tradition, such as Quintilian's *Céthegus* for *Cethêgus*.

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[15] In a passage of Consentius' *De nomine et uerbo* deleted by Keil as an interpolation, there is a clarification of the type of accent in *pone* (*GL* V 347. 6–7): *"pone" si uerbum est, grauis est ultima; si aduerbium, circumflexa.*

But this also suggests that the first example, *tríginta*, is not a fictitious one. This example is isolated and is explained (not quite satisfactorily) either as a case of *adiectio* or as case of *inmutatio*; why would Consentius have made up so ambiguous an example that he himself had to interpret it in two ways? The idea that *tríginta* was a mere school example is to be rejected;[16] Consentius certainly heard something like *tríginta* and used it as his first example, probably because it was the only genuine example he had at hand. But what was the reality of Consentius' *tríginta*? Was it a form generalised in Vulgar Latin or simply an occasional slip? And can it tell us something about the development of *triginta* beyond Latin?

5. *VIGINTI*, *TRIGINTA*, *QUADRAGINTA*:
BETWEEN VULGAR LATIN AND ROMANCE

This is not the place for an in-depth discussion of the complex development of *triginta* across the Romance languages; here I shall only focus on how the evidence of *triginta* in other sources can illuminate Consentius' testimony and, conversely, how Consentius' testimony can contribute to our understanding of the development of *triginta*.

One cannot discuss the accentuation of *triginta* without touching upon the numerals for 'twenty' and 'forty', for they present common patterns of development, although evidence in both substandard Latin and the Romance languages is diverse. The most significant misspellings of these numerals found in inscriptions, papyri and other documents are the following.[17]

For classical *uīgĭntī*, substandard forms are either trisyllabic or disyllabic. Trisyllabic are: *uigenti* in *CIL* V 1645, from Aquileia; βιγεντι in SB III 6304, a contract written on a wax tablet in Ravenna (151 CE); βειεντι in P. Ital. 2. 37, a papyrus written in Ravenna (591 CE); *uienti* in the manuscripts of Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, accepted by the editors Huemer and Polara but corrected to *uiginti* by Löfstedt (*epist.* 3. 607, 611, 654, 658 Löfstedt). Disyllabic *uinti* is in some sepulchral inscriptions: *CIL* VI 19007, from Rome (in hexameters); *CIL* VIII 8573, from Sitifis (Africa);[18] *CIL* VIII 16566, from Theveste (Africa).

For classical *trīgĭntā*, trisyllabic forms are: *trigenta*, frequent in early medieval Lombard laws;[19] curiously, *trigenta* is also the reading of Consentius' 8th-century Irish manuscript Basel F III 15 d; *trienta* in *CIL* XII 5399, from Tolosa, and in Le Blant's inscription no. 679, from Besançon.[20] Disyllabic forms are *trinta* and *trenta*,

[16] KOHLSTEDT, H.: Das Römanische in den Artes des Consentius. Erlangen 1917, 43.

[17] More in JUD, J.: Die Zehnerzahlen in den romanischen Sprachen. In: *Aus romanischen Sprachen und Literaturen. Festschrift H. Morf*. Halle 1905, 233–270, here 234–244.

[18] This has both *VIGINTI* (l. 4) and *VINTI* (l. 6).

[19] LÖFSTEDT, B.: *Studien über die Sprache der langobardischen Gesetze*. Uppsala 1961, 57–61.

[20] LE BLANT, E. F.: *Inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule antérieurs au VIII siècle. Tome II*. Paris 1865, 572.

found in early medieval documents;[21] it has also been suggested that *trinta* or *trenta* should be read in *CIL* XI 1711, from Florence, but that is uncertain.

For *quadrāgĭntā*, the most interesting by-form is *qarranta*, in a 5th-century inscription from the Mosel area (*CIL* XIII 7645); later we find *quadragenta*, *quarraginta* etc.

As for the Romance reflexes, all of them have lost Latin intervocalic *g*;[22] they have also undergone syllable reduction (like *uinti*, *trinta*/*trenta* and *qarranta* seen above), except for the forms of medieval Castilian and Portuguese: medieval Castilian *veinte treinta cuaraenta* and medieval Portuguese *viinte triinta quareenta* are opposed to Italian *venti* (*vinti* in non-Florentine) *trenta quaranta*, French *vingt trente quarante*, Provençal *vint trenta caranta*, Catalan *vint trenta koaranta*, Sardinian *vinti trinta baranta*, etc.

But what caused this difference? Most scholars have believed that the stress was retracted on the antepenultimate syllable in the Vulgar Latin forms underlying all varieties except for medieval Castilian and Portuguese, where the stress remained on the penultimate syllable and preserved it.[23] In the non-Iberian varieties, retraction of the accent certainly took place in *quadraginta* and the following multiples of ten (Lat. *quinquaginta* > It. *cinquanta* etc.), for if the accent had not been retracted, *quadragĭnta* would have yielded It. **quaraénta*, just as Lat. *sagĭtta* > It. *saetta* or Lat. *magĭster* > It. *maestro*.[24] As words of the same kind are likely to have the same accentual patterns, most scholars assume that the retraction of the accent took place, in one way or another, also in the substandard forms of *uiginti* and *triginta*, thereby accepting Consentius' testimony on *triginta*.[25]

A minority of scholars, on the contrary, have moved from the classical accentuation to explain the Romance reflexes of vigesimals and have questioned the reliability of Consentius' testimony or at least its validity for Vulgar Latin as a whole: according to Jud, Consentius refers to specific groups of speakers and does not address more widespread phenomena;[26] according to D'Ovidio, by Consentius' time intervocalic *g* could in no way be preserved, so Consentius' *trígínta* would be a compromise between spoken language and literary tradition;[27] Rydberg took D'Ovidio's

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[21] JUD (n. 17) 239–240.

[22] See VÄÄNÄNEN, V.: *Introduction au Latin vulgaire*. Paris 1981, 57–58.

[23] For cases of accentual retraction, see VÄÄNÄNEN (n. 22) 32–35.

[24] But cf. the Italian variant *mastro* and Sardinian *mastru*.

[25] CORSSEN, W. P.: *Über Aussprache, Vokalismus und Betonung der lateinischen Sprache*. Leipzig 1868–1870, II 901; SEELMANN, E. P.: *Die Aussprache des Latein nach physiologisch-historischen Grundsätzen*. Heilbronn 1885, 47; MEYER-LÜBKE, W.: *Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen*. Leipzig 1890–1902, I 494; LINDSAY, W. M.: *The Latin Language: an Historical Account of Latin Sounds, Stems, and Flections*. Oxford 1894, 165; SOMMER, F.: *Handbuch der lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre*. Heidelberg 1902, 104; GRANDGENT, C. H.: *An Introduction to Vulgar Latin*. Boston 1907, 64; VÄÄNÄNEN (n. 22) 35; COLEMAN, R.: Italic. In GVOZDANOVIC, J. (ed.): *Indo-European Numerals*. Berlin and New York 1992, 389–446, here 400; MANCINI, M.: Una testimonianza di Consenzio sul numerale "trenta" in latino volgare. In HEINEMANN, S. – BERNHARD, G. – KATTENBUSCH, D. (eds): *Roma et Romania. Festschrift für Gerhard Ernst zum 65. Geburtstag*. Tübingen 2002, 223–235, here 225–229.

[26] JUD (n. 17) 250.

[27] D'OVIDIO, F.: I riflessi romanzi di *viginti*, *triginta*. *ZRPh* 8 (1884) 82–105, here 102.

point on the dropping of *g* while conceding that Consentius might be focusing here on the Latin spoken by the Gauls, not on Vulgar Latin altogether.[28] More recently, Lausberg has elaborated on that by arguing that the retraction of the accent chastised by Consentius was a consequence of the reduction of *-igi-* to *-ij-* in Vulgar Latin; *trigínta* came to be pronounced as *tríjnta* (hence *trinta*), which led the schoolboys reading *triginta* of literary Latin to stress the first syllable; the forms *trígínta* and *trinta* would co-exist for some time.[29] To be sure, Consentius does not talk of schoolboys, but this reasoning could apply to any speakers.

Those who generalise the retraction of the accent have not reached unanimous conclusions as to why this happened. Corssen connected it to the initial stress typical of archaic Latin, of which this case would rather be a late confirmation than a continuation.[30] Grandgent suggested that the shift might be due to "a natural tendency to differentiate the numerals from one another".[31] Tekavčić thought that vigesimals were influenced by the accentuation of Greek numerals in -άκοντα.[32] Väänänen invoked a quite generic "intensité initiale expressive".[33]

More recently, Mancini has provided a new interpretation of Consentius' passage to answer a vexed question: why non-Iberian Romance reflexes presuppose *vinti* and *trenta*, with *i* and *e*, although in Latin both *uiginti* and *triginta* have *-i-i-*.[34] Mancini has argued that Consentius' discussion reveals not only that the accent was retracted on the first syllable of *triginta*, but also that that syllable was pronounced as short (*trĭ-*), unlike in classical Latin (*trī-*); for Consentius uses the verb *acuat*, which indicates an acute accent, while if *tri-* was long he would talk of a circumflex accent, as he does in the case of *ôrator* (Consent. *barb.* 11. 20 and 12. 14–15). The shift of the accent would have been caused by the influence of *tres* and *tredecim*, where the stress fell on the morpheme for 'three'.[35] Since Latin *ĭ* became *e* in Romance, Mancini concludes that *trĭgĭnta > tréjenta > trenta*, which underlies most Romance reflexes. This reconstruction is intriguing but it has to be treated with caution, for it works on the questionable assumption that Consentius was bound to attribute a circumflex rather than an acute accent to a long antepenultimate syllable; this is paralleled in two artificial cases that are presented as barbarisms but it is contrary to the rule of the accent, according to which a circumflex can fall only on the penultimate syllable.

[28] RYDBERG, G.: *Víginti, trígínta*, ou *vigínti, trigínta*? In *Mélanges de philologie romane dédiés à Carl Wahlund*. Macon 1897, 337–351, here 339–340.
[29] LAUSBERG, H.: *Linguistica romanza*. Milan 1971, II 170–171.
[30] CORSSEN (n. 25) II 902.
[31] GRANDGENT (n. 24) 64.
[32] TEKAVČIĆ, P.: *Grammatica storica dell'italiano*. Bologna 1980, I 219.
[33] VÄÄNÄNEN (n. 22) 35.
[34] MANCINI (n. 25) 231–233.
[35] Cf. GRÖBER, G.: Vulgärlateinische Substrate romanischer Wörter. *ALLG* 6 (1889) 117–149, here 131–132.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Consentius is the grammarian who deals most extensively with errors that arise in spoken Latin. As for errors concerning the accent, a topic on which the grammatical doctrine was not thorough, Consentius is the only grammarian to give examples of errors resulting from the application of all four traditional categories of change to the accent. In order to do so, however, he had to make up some examples; the cases in which Consentius uses the word *orator* are fictitious and are not evidence for Vulgar Latin. On the contrary, proparoxytonous *triginta* is a genuine example and a substandard phenomenon indeed. In fact, Consentius' testimony on the retraction of the accent in *triginta* fits in well with current reconstructions of the Romance reflexes not only of *triginta*, but also of *uiginti* and *quadraginta*, although the exact details of this development are not entirely clear.

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