

## Latin Words for 'Woman' and 'Wife'

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Although both *femina* and *mulier* are abundantly represented in the Romance languages in a number of senses,<sup>1)</sup> for some time *femina* was severely restricted in use in Latin of all types<sup>2)</sup>. But it gradually widened its range of employment, first in the literary and then in the popular language, by a common process of semantic change. Meanwhile *mulier* too was acquiring a new function, as well as suffering eclipse in certain senses which it had borne from the earliest period<sup>3)</sup>. It is the purpose of this paper to outline the history of the two words from the early Republic to the late popular Latin which survives from Italy, Gaul and Spain. *Coniux*, a literary word which leaves no trace in Romance, will also be briefly discussed.<sup>4)</sup>

### I. The Respectful Use of *Femina* and its Debasement

At all periods *femina* is regularly used both adjectivally and substantivally with the sense 'female' (cf. Ital. *femmina*, Sp. *hembra*, Pg. *fêmea*), often in opposition to *mas* or *masculus*.<sup>5)</sup> This meaning will not concern us directly here.

In various languages the word for 'female' can have a contemptuous connotation when applied to a woman.<sup>6)</sup> But Latin is unusual in that *femina* tends to be employed rather as a respectful term denoting a woman of moral or social distinction.<sup>7)</sup> Indeed in Repu-

<sup>1)</sup> See W. Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*<sup>4</sup>, Heidelberg 1935, 3239, 5730; G. Rohlfs, *Die lexikalische Differenzierung der romanischen Sprachen*, Munich 1954, 79f.

<sup>2)</sup> Cf. the remarks of B. Axelsson, *Unpoetische Wörter*, Lund 1945, 53ff.

<sup>3)</sup> Within this general pattern certain regional variations are observable, as will be shown in due course.

<sup>4)</sup> I shall deal only indirectly with *uxor*, which was in both educated and popular use at all periods. See Meyer-Lübke, 9106 for its Romance derivatives.

<sup>5)</sup> See *TLL* VI. 1.458.9ff.

<sup>6)</sup> See, e.g., *NED*, s.v. 'female', B.2.b., quoting E. E. Napier, *Excurs. S. Africa* (1849), 'and his female, (for the creature can scarcely be dignified by the name of woman)'; and *Pall Mall G.*, 10 Aug. 1889, 'They are no ladies. The only word good enough for them is the word of opprobrium-females'. Cf., e.g., Ital. *femmina*, Fr. *femelle*.

<sup>7)</sup> But in Plautus the word is used a few times as an abusive term: *Pers.* 208 *feminam scelestam te astans contra contuor*; *Truc.* 131 *mala tu*

blican prose the word has, besides its original technical designation, only this meaning;<sup>8)</sup> and though its function is extended later, it continues to serve as a term of respect throughout the whole of extant Latin. Cf., e.g. Plaut. *Aul.* 135 *optuma femina*; Cic. *Phil.* 3.16 *sanctissimae feminae*; Plin. *Epist.* 6.33.2 *femina splendide nata*; Fronto p. 38 N. *nobilissima femina*; Amm. Marc. 15.9.6 *generosis feminis*; Jerome *Epist.* 46.13.2 *illustrum feminarum*; ib. 120.4.6 *sanctas feminas*; Font. *Iuris Rom.* III,<sup>9)</sup> p. 316 *feminam egregiam*; *CIL* VIII. 8993 *consulari feminae* (cf. IX. 6414b); *CIL* VI. 1780 *c[larissima] f[emina]*;<sup>10)</sup> Greg. of Tours p. 76.18<sup>11)</sup> *nobilis ac locuplex faemina*; *Leges Visigothorum* p. 450.19;<sup>12)</sup> *Codice diplomatico Longobardo* I, p. 40.12<sup>13)</sup> *honoranda femina*.<sup>14)</sup>

*Mulier* conversely, though it can sometimes have a complimentary epithet,<sup>15)</sup> is usually<sup>16)</sup> employed either with a pejorative epithet<sup>17)</sup> or as a neutral term designating a specific woman whose qualities need not necessarily be under discussion.

The respectful use of *femina* is most common in literary Latin, no doubt because formulaic terms of respect are more usual in upper-class speech; but it is by no means foreign to more vulgar writings: e.g. *Act. Petri c. Simone* 34<sup>18)</sup> *multae autem complures et aliae honestae feminae*;<sup>19)</sup> *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, p. 252<sup>20)</sup> *sanctissimae scilicet femina*; *CIL* XIII 2531 *femine incomparabili*;<sup>21)</sup> *CIL* XIII. 1839 *feminae sanctissimae*;<sup>22)</sup> *CIL* VI.

*femina es*. Note that in Greek *θῆλυς* (adjectival) is sometimes used in reference to the special virtues of females.

<sup>8)</sup> Cf. Axelson, o.c., 54.

<sup>9)</sup> Ed. V. Arangio-Ruiz, Florence 1969<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>10)</sup> A common inscriptional formula: cf., e.g. *CIL* VI. 2145, X. 4861, XI. 830.

<sup>11)</sup> Ed. W. Arndt and B. Krusch, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Script. Rer. Merov.* I, Hannover 1884.

<sup>12)</sup> Ed. K. Zeumer, *MGH, Legum Sectio I*, 1, Hannover and Leipzig 1902.

<sup>13)</sup> Ed. L. Schiaparelli, Rome 1929.

<sup>14)</sup> See further *TLL* VI. 1. 458. 23ff.

<sup>15)</sup> E.g. Cic. *Verr.* 4. 59, 4. 99, *Cael.* 36, *CIL* II. 497, Jerome *Epist.* 22. 32. 2.

<sup>16)</sup> When it is not emphatic: see below, II.

<sup>17)</sup> See, e.g. G. Lodge, *Lex Plautinum* II, 94a-b; cf. Cic. *Cluent.* 176, 177, 185, *Cat.* 2.7, 2.10, *Cael.* 53.

<sup>18)</sup> In *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* I, ed. R. A. Lipsius, Leipzig 1891.

<sup>19)</sup> The formulaic character of the phrase can be seen from the fact that it is not a literal rendition of the Greek: *πολλὰι δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι γυναῖκες*.

<sup>20)</sup> Ed. J. N. Garvin, Washington 1946.

<sup>21)</sup> = E. Diehl, *Vulgärlateinische Inschriften*, Bonn 1910, 24.

<sup>22)</sup> = Diehl 179.

15860 *optimae feminae*;<sup>23)</sup> *Documentos de tierra de León*,<sup>24)</sup> *nobilissima femina deo devota, nomine Fronildi Gutturiz, et abuit filios ex viro suo*.<sup>25)</sup>

Indeed one of the most striking manifestations of the word in its respectful function—its use to designate nuns<sup>26)</sup>—is especially widespread in the popular language. A particularly clear case is found at sect. 93 of the Lombard *Leges Liutprandi*,<sup>27)</sup> where a nun (*femina*) is distinguished from both a *mulier* and a *puella*: *si quis mulierem aut puellam aut religiosa femina, quae in alterius mundum est, in sacramento mittere presumpserit*. Cf., e.g. *Vitae Patrum*<sup>28)</sup> 3.33 *monasterium feminarum*; ib. 5.18.19 *feminas spirituales*; *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini*<sup>29)</sup> 22 *monasterium feminarum*; *Lex Ribuarum*<sup>30)</sup> 61.13 *ecclesiasticam feminam*; *Leges Liutprandi* 30 *de his feminis, quae velamen sancte religionis suscipiunt*; ib. 76 *religiosa femina*; ib. *sanctemonialem feminam*; *Cod. dipl. Long.* I, p. 58.26 *Theodelinda religiosa femina*; ib. II, p. 106.2 *de monasterio feminarum* (cf. p. 109.6); *Codice diplomatico Veronese*<sup>31)</sup> p. 289 *Fereleuba queda(m) femina D(e)o dicata*; *El archivo condal de Barcelona en los siglos IX–X*,<sup>32)</sup> p. 357 *abbatisse et sanctimoniales femine*; J. Tardif, *Monuments Historiques*,<sup>33)</sup> 210 *femina quaedam, . . . Deo sacrata*; *Inscript. Lat. Christ. Vet.*<sup>34)</sup> 1667 *religiosa femina* (cf. ib. 1341, 1668, 1673).<sup>35)</sup>

When it has a respectful sense *femina* is usually accompanied by a laudatory adjective, but it can occasionally be employed independently, or even with a derogatory epithet,<sup>36)</sup> and take its

<sup>23)</sup> = Diehl 379.

<sup>24)</sup> Ed. R. Menéndez Pidal, *Orígenes del español*, Madrid 1926, p. 30.

<sup>25)</sup> See further the last three passages quoted above, p. 33.

<sup>26)</sup> Cf. the use of Pg. *dona* ('lady'; < *domina*) in application to nuns.

<sup>27)</sup> Ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH, Legum Tom. IV*, Hannover 1868.

<sup>28)</sup> Ed. Rosweyd in Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, vol. 73.

<sup>29)</sup> Ed. P. Geyer, *CSEL* 39.

<sup>30)</sup> Ed. F. Beyerle and R. Buchner, *MGH, Legum Sectio I*, 3, Hannover 1954.

<sup>31)</sup> Ed. V. Fainelli, Venice 1940.

<sup>32)</sup> Ed. F. Udina Martorell, Barcelona 1951.

<sup>33)</sup> Paris 1866.

<sup>34)</sup> Ed. E. Diehl, Berlin 1925–1931.

<sup>35)</sup> Comparable with *femina* = 'nun' is the use of the word in reference to Christian ladies who may be married: e.g. Jerome, *Epist.* 77.3.5 *feminis Christianis*; ib. 123.1.2 *probatarum in Christo feminarum*; Caesarius of Arles I, p. 11.22 (ed. D. Germ. Morin, Maretoli 1937) *Christianae enim feminae sterilitas sola sit castitas?*; Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 1.19 *feminarum Christianarum*.

<sup>36)</sup> To designate an upper-class woman of ill-repute.

tone from the context: e.g. Petron. 111.8 *desiderium extincti non posse feminam pati* (the woman of Ephesus, who at this point in the story is still a singular model of chastity: cf. 111.3 *singularis exempli femina*); Cic. *Cael.* 34 *cur te fraterna vitia potius quam bona paterna et avita et usque a nobis cum in viris tum etiam in feminis repetita moverunt?* (Cicero is enumerating the distinguished ancestors of Clodia); Petron. 126.5 *quaedam enim feminae sordibus calent, nec libidinem concitant, nisi aut servos viderint aut statores altius cinctos* (the reference is to women of standing who seek lovers from the lower classes; cf. ib. 7 *usque ab orchestra quattuordecim transilit et in extrema plebe quaerit quod diligit*); Suet. *Tib.* 35.2 *feminae famosae, ut ad evitandas legum poenas iure ac dignitate matronali exolverentur, lenocinium profiteri coeperant* (again in reference to infamous upper-class women); cf. id. *Dom.* 8.3 *probrosis feminis lecticae usum ademit iusque capiendi legata hereditatesque*; Liv. 39. 8.7 *stupra promiscua ingenuorum feminarumque erant* (free-born women); Val. Max. 6.1. ext. 1 *Graeca femina nomine Hippo . . . in mare se, ut morte pudicitiam tueretur, abiecit* (from the section *de Pudicitia*); Sen. *Dial.* 12.16.7 *cum his te numerari feminis volo* (exemplary women); Jerome *Epist.* 77.10.1 *inter laudes feminae subito mihi Pammachius meus exoritur*.

An apparently idiosyncratic use of *femina* with respectful tone but without an epithet is found in certain Spanish documents of the ninth and tenth centuries from Barcelona (*El arch. cond. de Barc.*). In our other Spanish documents of the same period *domina* (cf. Pg. *dona*) is invariably preferred in similar contexts: e.g. p. 147 *in terra de Ichilo femina* (cf., e.g. *Colección diplomático de San Salvador de Oña* I,<sup>37</sup>) p. 120 *terra de domna Urracha*); p. 415 *uxori mee Madresinda, femina*<sup>38</sup>) (cf. *Col. dipl. San Salv.* I, p. 118 *uxor mea domna Terasia*);<sup>39</sup>) p. 412 *sorori mea, Spetosa, femina* (cf. *Col. dipl. San Salv.* I, p. 119 *soror mea domna Godina*);<sup>40</sup>) p. 408 *Letgarda, femina, mulier Seniofredo* (cf. *Cart. San. Mill. Cog.*, p. 20 *mea mulier domna Guntroda*); p. 123 *ego Richildes, femina*<sup>41</sup>) (cf. *Cart. San Mill. Cog.*

<sup>37</sup>) Ed. J. del Alamo, Madrid 1950.

<sup>38</sup>) Cf. pp. 396, 404, 409, 410, 426, 428, 429.

<sup>39</sup>) Cf. *Cartulario de San Vicente de Oviedo*, ed. L. Serrano, Madrid 1929, p. 78; *Cartulario de San Millán de la Cogolla*, ed. L. Serrano, Madrid 1930, pp. 19, 61, 64, 123, 159, 161, 186; *Chartes de l'église de Valpuesta du IX au XI siècle*, ed. L. Barrau Dihigo, in *Rev. Hispanique* 7 (1900), p. 338; *Becerro Gotico de Cardena*, ed. L. Serrano, Valladolid 1910, p. 103.

<sup>40</sup>) Cf. *Cart. San Vic. Oviedo*, p. 48.

<sup>41</sup>) Cf. pp. 136, 166, 170, 178, 183, 239.

p. 67 *ego igitur domina Maior*).<sup>42)</sup> It would seem that in the official language of the place *femina* had been handed on as an archaism<sup>43)</sup> to the exclusion of *domina*.

Words denoting women of distinction are always liable to be employed as genteelisms when their use is not necessary or justified, and thereby to undergo debasement. Thus in English 'lady' is often no more than a synonym for 'woman'; and in Italian *donna*, a derivative of Latin *domina*, which in other Romance languages produces a respectful term (Fr. *dame*, Pg. *dona*), has now become the word for 'woman', though in earlier Italian it still retained its special sence.<sup>44)</sup>

Hence it is not surprising to find *femina* losing its tone of respect. It first occurs extensively in prose as a neutral equivalent of *mulier* in the educated language, from the second century A.D. onwards. In vulgar Latin *mulier* alone had the role of neutral term until much later, perhaps because outside educated speech the respectful use of *femina* was comparatively infrequent and therefore less likely to give rise to the debased usage.

In the hands of Apuleius *femina* has degenerated to such an extent that it can be used constantly with uncomplimentary adjectives and without any implication that the woman in question belongs to the upper class: e.g. *Met.* 5.30 *rusticae squalentisque feminae*; 9.14 *nec enim vel unum vitium nequissimae illi feminae deerat*; 9.15 *pessimae feminae flagitia* (following *mulier*); 10.5 *proprius pessimae feminae filius*; ib. *dira illa femina*; 10.34 *praeter contagium scelestae pollutaeque feminae*.<sup>45)</sup>

For some neutral examples of the word in other writers see, e.g. *Amm. Marc.* 16.8.4 *versabilem feminam*; 22.10.5 *femina quaedam*; 22.16.11 *femina callida semper in fraudes*; Jerome *Epist.* 1.10.1 *tandem ergo ad feminam vindicandam populus armatur*; 1.12.2 *subito feminae palpitat pectus*; 21.3.3 *insanas feminas* (cf. 44.4.1, 120.9.16); 54.1.2 *gentiles feminae custodierunt*; 72.2.4 *necdum duo menses fuerant evoluti, et ecce feminae uterus intumuit*; 77.3.1 *perdam virtutem feminae, quae maluit culpam subire discidii*; 107.11.1 *maritis feminis*

<sup>42)</sup> Cf. pp. 107, 108, 120, 172, 189; *Col. dipl. San Salv.*, pp. 69, 70.

<sup>43)</sup> *Femina* survives in Spanish and Portuguese only in the sense 'female', and is rare in late Hispanic Latin: see below, p. 242.

<sup>44)</sup> See Rohlfs, *Lex. Diff.*, 80. Similarly in old Provençal *domna* (*donna*) had come to mean 'woman' (Rohlfs, l.c.).

<sup>45)</sup> Apuleius does not only use the word with derogatory adjectives. For a neutral instance, see, e.g., 2.2 *ignotae mihi feminae*.

(cf. 117.6.2); Augustine *Civ. Dei* 2.17 *ut . . . eo modo ad feminas, quas voluerat, perveniret*; 3.5 *nam et ipsi Romani antiqui in stupro detectas Vestae sacerdotes vivas etiam defodiebant, adulteras autem feminas . . . nulla . . . morte plectebant*; 7.24 *sed profecto sicut aliquando etiam ipsas vilissimas feminas earum, quas libidine quae-sierunt, taedet paenitetque turbarum*. Cf., e.g., 16.38 tit., 16.38, 17.4.

Prior to Apuleius the neutral usage is scarcely ever found in prose.<sup>46)</sup> It therefore seems likely that the *Declamationes Minores* ascribed to Quintilian, in which the word is already fully debased, are somewhat later than the time of Quintilian. See, e.g. p. 132.4 *non novimus hos mores turpissimarum feminarum, ut oderint puer-peria?*; 173.16 *videt miseram feminam durare in hoc non posse*; 253.7 *inter nos est femina inter prodigia numeranda*; 280.3 *adsum huic feminae*; 281.19 *negem fuisse rumorem, qui aspergeret hanc feminam*; 281.26 *potuit hanc amasse feminam dives*; 285.17 *quod primum pertinet ad pudorem huius feminae*; 334.2 *manifestum est infelissimae feminae factum*. Quintilian himself never employs *femina* in this way.

In poetry *femina* is already preferred to *mulier* as the neutral term from the Augustan period onwards.<sup>47)</sup> Obviously it would originally have been considered appropriate in verse because of its respectful and hence dignified tone. It is conceivable then that writers such as Apuleius and Ammianus were influenced by the poets in the use that they make of the word, for both often imitate poetry. The *Declamationes Minores*, however, show little or no poetic indebtedness; in them at least the neutral usage is undoubtedly the product of a natural process of debasement in the educated language.<sup>48)</sup>

<sup>46)</sup> See Petron. 106.1, Curt. 3.13.12.

<sup>47)</sup> Cf. Axelson, *Unpoet. Wört.*, 55f. Axelson does not however distinguish between the neutral and other uses of the two words.

<sup>48)</sup> It is worthy of emphasis that none of the poeticising authors of the early Empire uses *femina* as a neutral term synonymous with *mulier*. Axelson's view (p. 56) that the increased incidence of *femina* in early Imperial prose (e.g. in Seneca and Tacitus) was due to poetic influence must be rejected. Undoubtedly the main factor behind the spread of the word was its encroachment upon the emphatic function of *mulier* (see below, II), a development which cannot be attributed to the influence of poetry. Moreover it is always necessary to consider the possibility that a writer who employs *femina* often, may simply have had occasion to adopt the respectful usage with unusual frequency. It is this usage which is responsible for most examples of the word in the polite epistles of Pliny.

At the time of the old Latin versions of the Bible *mulier* was still the only neutral term current in vulgar Latin. In the *Vetus Latina* and also the *Vulgate* (both O.T. and N.T.) *femina* is used only rarely, and then never in a neutral sense.<sup>49)</sup> Jerome must have modified his choice of words in the *Vulgate* version of the O.T. (this he translated directly from the Hebrew; in the N.T. he adheres closely to the old Latin versions) to suit the readers he expected, for, as has been seen above, in his *Epistles* he was prepared to make considerable use of *femina* in its debased sense, in conformity with educated usage.

The distinction between educated and popular practice can also be illustrated at a somewhat later date (sixth century) from the *Vitae Patrum*. In the fifth book (translated from the Greek version by Pelagius) *mulier* is used 45 times, almost always in reference to specific women, but *femina* only 7 times, 6 times of nuns. In book 3, however (ps. Rufinus), the Latin of which belongs to a higher social stratum than that of Pelagius,<sup>50)</sup> *femina* is found a few times in a neutral sense in an anecdote which in Pelagius had contained *mulier*: 3.65 *an ideo huc venisti, ut Romam rediens, aliis te feminis glorieris vidisse Arsenium*; cf. 5.2.7 *an ut vadas Romam, et dicas aliis mulieribus: quia vidi Arsenium*; 3.65 *ut fiat pervium mare ad me venientium feminarum*; cf. 5.2.7 *et facias mare viam mulierum venientium ad me*.

The precisely dated Lombard laws of the seventh and eighth centuries (*Edictus Rothari*, A.D. 643, *Leges Liutprandi*, 713–735, and the *Ratchis Leges*, 745–746)<sup>51)</sup> allow us to observe the neutral use of *femina* in the process of spreading in the late popular language of Italy.<sup>52)</sup> In the *Edictus Rothari* *femina* is not used at all, but *mulier* occurs 46 times, often with neutral sense.<sup>53)</sup> In the early *Leges Liutprandi* (down to 731) *femina* makes its first appearance as a debased term,<sup>54)</sup> but is outnumbered in the proportion 4:1

<sup>49)</sup> For the *Vulgate* see F. P. Dutripon, *Concordantiae Bibliorum Sacrorum*, Paris 1844, s. v.

<sup>50)</sup> See A. H. Salonius, *Vitae Patrum. Kritische Untersuchungen über Text, Syntax und Wortschatz der spätlateinischen Vitae Patrum B. III, V, VI, VII*, Lund 1920, 33.

<sup>51)</sup> See above, p. 236 n. 27.

<sup>52)</sup> Note that, as indicated above, p. 238, in most places of Italy *femina* was in its turn replaced by another originally polite term, *donna*. On the survival of *femmina* = 'woman' in certain Italian dialects see Rohlf, *Lex. Diff.*, 79f.

<sup>53)</sup> E. g. 184, 185, 186, 188, 200 tit., 216, 378.

<sup>54)</sup> 30 (3 times), 31.

(17:4). In the later laws of the same king, however, *mulier* predominates by only 2:1 (30:14).<sup>55</sup>) The encroachment of *femina* on *mulier* is especially clear from *Leg. Liut.* 76, 120 and *Ratchis Leges* 6, where *femina* occurs in contexts in which earlier (*Roth.* 189, 182, 221) *mulier* had been preferred.

The evidence from Merovingian Gaul is difficult to interpret. In the *Formulae Andecavenses*<sup>56</sup>) of A. D. 514–515 *mulier* has already been all but completely displaced as the neutral term by *femina*;<sup>57</sup>) but at a slightly later date Gregory of Tours, whose prose has a strongly vulgar character, still leans heavily towards *mulier*.<sup>58</sup>) It is possible that in the *Formulae Andecavenses* *femina* was adopted contrary to popular practice as an artificial usage appropriate to officialese, just as *coniux* (on which see below, IV) is preferred to *uxor* in the same document. Nevertheless, the occurrence of *femina* alongside *mulier* in documents such as the *Pactus Legis Alamannorum* (early seventh century), the *Leges Alamannorum* (seventh century),<sup>59</sup>) and the *Lex Ribuaria* (seventh century) makes it likely that it was not long after Gregory that the word underwent an extension of use in the area. In the later *Formulae Turonenses*<sup>60</sup>) *femina* is even found in opposition to *puella*,<sup>61</sup>) a function previously reserved for *mulier* (see below, p. 248). It is also of note that in the earliest extant version of the Salic Law, the *Pactus Legis Salicae* (65 chapter text),<sup>62</sup>) *mulier* occurs a few times in contexts in which *femina* is substituted in the later 100 chapter version:<sup>63</sup>) *Pactus* 31.2 *si quis mulierem ingenuam . . . de via sua ostaverit aut inpinxerit*; cf. *Lex*, D text 50.2 *si quis femina ingenua de via sua ostaverit aut inpinxerit*; *Pactus* 41.16 *si quis mulierem ingenuam, postquam ceperit nutrire, occiderit . . .*; ib. 17 *post media vero etate et postquam infantes non potest habere, qui eam occiderit . . .*; cf. *Lex*, D. 33.1 *si quis femina*

<sup>55</sup>) For *femina* see 120, 125 (twice), 129 (4 times), 130, 135 (3 times), 146 (3 times).

<sup>56</sup>) Ed. K. Zeumer, *MGH, Legum Sectio V*, Hannover 1886.

<sup>57</sup>) For *femina* see, e.g., pp. 9.5 (twice), 10.11 (twice), 12.35, 12.37, 13.1, 13.26, 24.28, 25.17, 25.23, 25.26.

<sup>58</sup>) In the *Historia Francorum* *femina* is found only twice in a debased sense (p. 53.3 *conmovetur in femina*; 338.5 *praeter his feminis*), but *mulier* is used 76 times, often of specific women.

<sup>59</sup>) Ed. K. Lehmann and K. A. Eckhardt, *MGH, Legum I*, 5, Hannover 1966<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>60</sup>) Ed. K. Zeumer, *MGH, Legum Sectio V*, Hannover 1866.

<sup>61</sup>) pp. 163.30, 164.24.

<sup>62</sup>) Ed. K. A. Eckhardt, *MGH, Legum Sectio I*, 4, Hannover 1969.

<sup>63</sup>) ib.

*post media etate, hoc est quando iam infantes habere non potest, occiserit . . .*

In the Latin documents, most of them markedly vulgar in flavour, of roughly the same period surviving from Spain,<sup>64)</sup> *mulier* is almost invariably used as the neutral term.<sup>65)</sup> Predictably then it is *mulier* rather than *femina* that supplies the Spanish and Portuguese words for 'woman' (Sp. *mujer*, Pg. *mulher*). The conservative Latin of Spain often preserved older usages which had elsewhere been replaced.<sup>66)</sup>

## II. The Emphatic Use of *Mulier* and *Femina*

In Republican prose and comedy it is almost exclusively *mulier* that is used to place emphasis on the sex of a woman, both in explicit and implied contrasts with *vir*. The juxtaposition (or antithesis) *vir/mulier* is found 11 times in Plautus, once in Cato, 17 times in Varro, about 12 times in the speeches of Cicero, twice in the philosophica, and twice in Sallust.<sup>67)</sup> Note also *S.C. de Bacchanalibus*<sup>68)</sup> 10 *neque vir neque mulier*; 19 *virei atque mulieres*; 20 *virei . . . mulieribus*. In the same period there are only 4 examples of *femina* alongside *vir*, all of which have a special point: Varro *Ling.* 8.78 *nam virum dicimus sapientissimum et diligentissimum, feminam sapientissimam et diligentissimam* (variation: Varro has just contrasted *vir* and *mulier*); Cic. *Inv.* 1.52 *neque vir melior neque femina lector* (here and in the following two passages *femina* indicates a woman of distinction); Cael. 34 *cur te fraterna vitia potius quam bona paterna et avita et usque a nobis cum in viris tum etiam in feminis repetita moverunt?* *Tusc.* 1.27 *in claris viris et feminis*.

Similarly the independent emphatic use of *femina* occurs only twice in pre-Augustan comedy and prose: Cic. *Tusc.* 2.36 *quod Spartiatae etiam in feminas transtulerunt*; Cluent. 199 *cuius . . . ea vis ut nemo (eam) feminam . . . appellare possit*. *Mulier*, however, is commonly employed in this way: e.g. Cato *Agr.* 83 *mulier ad eam rem divinam ne adsit*; C. Gracchus *Orat.* frg. 58 *en quovis auctorita-*

<sup>64)</sup> For a list of Spanish documents extant, see J. Bastardas Parera, *Particularidades sintácticas del latín medieval*, Barcelona 1953, pp. XXXIIIff.

<sup>65)</sup> For a few instances of debased *femina*, see *Leg. Visigothorum* pp. 199.3, 451.2; *El arch. cond. Barc.*, pp. 179, 229.

<sup>66)</sup> See E. Löfstedt, *Late Latin*, Oslo 1959, 5, 41.

<sup>67)</sup> Most of these and the other statistics in this article were acquired from the material at the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae in Munich.

<sup>68)</sup> I.c.p. S. Riccobono, *Fontes Iuris Romani anteiustiniani*, Florence 1968<sup>2</sup>, 240f.

*tem sequimini, qui propter mulierum cupiditatem ut mulier est ornatus; Tusc. 2.46 exclamabis ut mulier, non constanter et sedate feres; Off. 1.113 cum (Ulixes) et mulieribus . . . inserviret.*

But a change begins to appear in Livy, who not only uses *femina* with emphasis, both in contrasts with *vir* and independently, but shows an increasing tendency to do so the further he advances. Thus in the first and third decades *vir/mulier* is found 7 times, *vir/femina* 6 times; but in the fourth and fifth decades *vir/femina* predominates by 13:5. Similarly *mulier/pueri* alone is used in the first decade (4 times), but in the later books *femina/pueri* is preferred by 8:3.<sup>69</sup>) The distribution of all emphatic instances of the two words is as follows:<sup>70</sup>)

		<i>mulier</i>	<i>femina</i>
books	1– 5	10	4
	6–29	7	12
	30–45	12	24

It will be seen that *femina* takes over the emphatic function progressively. The new situation is well illustrated by the account of the Bacchanalian conspiracy of 186 B.C., in which the antithesis *vir/mulier* of the original decree (see above) has been replaced by *vir/femina*.<sup>71</sup>)

Soon after Livy *femina* gains an even greater ascendancy as the emphatic word, in academic prose as well as in the artificial (archaising and poeticising) genres. In Seneca the Elder it outnumbers *mulier* by 8:0,<sup>72</sup>) in Seneca the Younger by 25:2, in Velleius by 3:0, in Pomponius Mela by 5:0, in ps. Quintilian (*Decl. Min.*) by 21:4,

<sup>69</sup>) In conjunction with *pueri*, *femina* and *mulier* may be taken as emphatic: women, as the weaker sex, are linked with children in implied contrast to the stronger (military) sex. See the concordance of D. W. Packard (1969) for these and the other juxtapositions.

<sup>70</sup>) The examples included in the following table are: *mulier*: 1.9.1, 1.29.5, 1.58.7, 1.59.13, 2.40.2, 2.40.11, 3.5.14, 3.68.8, 5.21.11, 5.42.4, 6.3.4, 6.25.9, 7.6.5, 22.7.11, 27.45.7, 29.17.16, 29.28.3, 34.1.3, 34.2.7, 34.2.8, 34.4.6, 34.4.10, 38.22.8, 39.8.5, 39.15.9, 39.15.12, 39.17.6, 39.18.5, 43.3.2; *femina*: 1.9.5, 1.46.7, 2.13.6, 2.13.11, 7.13.6, 9.19.10, 10.23.2, 10.28.4, 22.7.12, 22.60.2, 25.36.9, 26.49.11, 27.51.8, 28.19.13, 28.20.6, 28.23.2, 32.40.10, 34.2.1, 34.2.7, 34.2.11, 34.2.14, 34.4.1, 34.5.12, 34.7.3, 34.7.9, 36.24.11, 37.5.1, 37.20.14, 38.21.14, 39.13.8, 39.13.10 (twice), 39.13.14, 39.14.7, 39.17.5, 39.49.8, 40.38.6, 41.11.5, 45.2.7, 45.24.11.

<sup>71</sup>) 39.13.14, 39.14.7, 39.17.5.

<sup>72</sup>) Thesaurus material. These and the following figures include only emphatic instances of the two words.

in Pliny the Younger by 3:0, in Suetonius by 15:2,<sup>73</sup>) and in Ammianus by 10:2.

Quintilian, while preferring *vir/femina* to *vir/mulier*<sup>74</sup>) (at 9.4.23 he comments on *virī ac feminae* in terms which imply that it had become a fixed phrase: *est et alius naturalis ordo, ut 'viros ac feminas', 'diem ac noctem', 'ortum et occasum' dicas potius, quamquam et retrorsum*),<sup>75</sup>) continues to use *mulier* emphatically as often as *femina*,<sup>76</sup>) thereby setting himself midway between educated and popular practice (on which see below, p. 245). His conservatism may have been influenced by the usage of Cicero, whom he sometimes anachronistically follows in matters of language and style.

Tacitus, who has *vir/femina* frequently, places *mulier* in antithesis to *vir* only 3 times, always for a clear reason: *Ann.* 14.35.2 *id mulieri destinatum: viverent viri et servirent* (Boudicca, in her statement of a feminist sentiment, has probably used *mulier* with ironical self-contempt (the pejorative use)<sup>77</sup>) with the same sense ('mere woman') as that borne at 3.50.3 by *muliercula* in a similar antithesis with *virī*: *nec quicquam grave ac serium ex eo metuas, qui suorum ipse flagitiorum proditor non virorum animis, sed muliercularum adrepat*); *Agric.* 38.1 *mixto virorum mulierumque ploratu* (probably a reminiscence of Livy's account of the attack on Veii: 5.21.11 *mixto mulierum ac virorum ploratu*);<sup>78</sup>) *Ann.* 15.57.2 *libertina mulier . . . ingenui et viri* (the epithet *libertina* necessitates the use of *mulier*, as the standard pejorative term, rather than *femina*). The only independent emphatic instances which he allows are at *Ann.* 1.69.4 and 14.37.2.

It is of note that Aulus Gellius, the admirer of early prose, adheres for the most part to the Republican practice.<sup>79</sup>)

<sup>73</sup>) Both instances of *mulier* (*Iul.* 52.3, *Aug.* 44.3) are in quotations from earlier Latin.

<sup>74</sup>) For *vir/femina*, see 5.10.25, 5.11.10, 7.4.21, 9.4.23, 11.1.3.

<sup>75</sup>) For an instance of *femina* and *vir* in the reversed order, see Tac. *Hist.* 1.81.1. Tacitus often varies set expressions in this way.

<sup>76</sup>) For *mulier* see 1.7.28, 2.17.20, 7.2.52, 7.7.5, 11.3.19, 11.3.91, 11.3.138; to the above examples of *femina* add 4.1.13, 6. pr.5, 8.3.87, 12.10.5.

<sup>77</sup>) See above, p. 235. *Mulier* is often pejorative in Tacitus: e.g. *Ann.* 12.66.2, 13.13.3, 13.45.2, 14.3.2.

<sup>78</sup>) *Agric.* 38 (the aftermath of Mons Graupius) is full of literary reminiscence: see R. M. Ogilvie and I. A. Richmond, *Cornelii Taciti De Vita Agricolae*, Oxford 1967, ad loc.

<sup>79</sup>) For *mulier* see, e.g., 5.19.10, 10.23.tit., 10.23.1, 10.23.3, 11.6.tit., 11.6.1, 15.15.3, 15.20.6 (twice), 15.20.7, 18.2.8, 18.7.3, 20.1.23; *femina*: 5.19.10, 6.12.2, 11.6.3, 11.6.4, 12.1.7.

The encroachment of *femina* on *mulier* as the emphatic term may represent a spread of the word in the sense 'female'; previously with this meaning it had been used in reference to humans, as distinct from animals, almost exclusively in opposition to *mas* or *masculus*. The new usage was perhaps more scientific than the old. It may have found its way into the educated vocabulary from the various scientific languages (e.g. legal, medical), in which it would have been of obvious utility as embracing the whole female sex rather than merely those members of adult age (see further below, p. 248 for *mulier* in the latter sense).<sup>80</sup>) It was from the late Republican and early Augustan periods onwards that scientific and scholarly work spread at Rome; perhaps the replacement of *mulier* by *femina* is ultimately ascribable to the spirit of the age.<sup>81</sup>)

Predictably, the new scientific mode of expression at first leaves no mark on the popular language. It is only at a late date, with the gradual eclipse of *mulier* as the neutral term, that *femina* also begins to assume the emphatic function in vulgar Latin.

*Femina* is never used emphatically either by Vitruvius or by the freedmen in Petronius' *Cena Trimalchionis*. But observe the following instances of *mulier*: Vitr. 2.8.14 *itaque post mortem Mausoli Artemisia uxore eius regnante Rhodii indignantes mulierem imperare civitatibus Cariae totius, armata classe projecti sunt*; <sup>82</sup>) 6.7.4 *in his viri sine interpellationibus mulierum versantur*; 6.7.5 *Graeci enim ἀνδρῶνας appellant oecus, ubi convivia virilia solent esse, quod eo mulieres non accedunt*; Petron. 39.10 *in virgine mulieres (nascuntur)*; 42.7 *sed mulier quae mulier milvinum genus*; 67.10 *mulieres si non essent, omnia pro luto haberemus*; 74.13 *codex, non mulier*.

<sup>80</sup>) The advantage of *femina* over *mulier* in a technical language can be seen from the following passages from the legal work of Gaius: 1.144 *veteres enim voluerunt feminas, etiamsi perfectae aetatis sint, propter animi levitatem in tutela esse*; 2.112 *senatus consultum factum est, quo permissum est . . . feminis etiam sine coemptione testamentum facere, si modo minores essent annorum XII*. In both places it is clear that the term denotes those of pre-adult as well as adult age.

<sup>81</sup>) Had the influence of poetry been responsible for the spread of emphatic *femina*, we should have expected the neutral usage also, which is more common than the emphatic in verse, to find its way into early Imperial prose.

<sup>82</sup>) See, e.g., Tac. *Ann.* 3.33.3, 12.37.4, 14.35.1 for the use of *femina* in similar contexts.

In his *Epistles* Jerome prefers the emphatic use of *femina* to that of *mulier* in the proportion of about 2:1;<sup>83</sup>) but in the *Vulgate*, including that of the O.T., he has a marked preference for *mulier*<sup>84</sup>). Once again it is clear that he has adapted his Latin in the O.T. to make it natural to his readers. Where he does admit *femina* as the emphatic word, the *Vetus Latina* usually has *mulier*:<sup>85</sup>) e.g. *Gen.* 31.35 *iuxta consuetudinem feminarum*; cf. *VL secundum consuetudinem mulierum*; *Judith* 7.12 *omnes viri feminaeque, iuvenes et parvuli*; cf. *VL omnes principes civitatis, iuvenes et mulieres et infantes*; *Esth.* 1.9 *Vasthi quoque regina fecit convivium feminarum in palatio*; cf. *VL et Vasthi regina fecit potum magnum mulieribus*; *Esth.* 2.8 *Esther quoque inter ceteras puellas ei tradita est, ut servaretur in numero feminarum*; cf. *VL et apprehensa est Esther ab Oggeo custode mulierum*.

Similarly in the fifth book of the *Vitae Patrum* *mulier* alone is used for emphasis (about 13 times);<sup>86</sup>) but in at least one place the more refined third book has *femina* where the fifth has *mulier*: 3.65 *per feminam solet inimicus hominem impugnare*; cf. 5.2.7 *inimicus per mulieres sanctos viros impugnat*.

The difference between popular and educated preference is also apparent from the works of Augustine. When referring to or paraphrasing Biblical passages, Augustine sometimes substitutes *femina* for *mulier* of the original text: e.g. *Civ. Dei* 12.28 *femina illi ex eius latere facta est*; ib. *ex latere viri femina facta est*; cf. *Gen.* 2.22 *aedificavit Dominus Deus costam, quam tulerat de Adam, in mulierem*.<sup>87</sup>)

In the late Latin of Italy the emphatic use of *femina* appears to have gained currency at some time between the seventh and eighth centuries. In the *Edictus Rothari* only *mulier* has the function of

<sup>83</sup>) For *femina*, see, e.g., 22.11.4, 22.21.7 (twice), 22.27.8, 22.28.1, 53.7.1, 54.2.1, 71.3.1, 75.3.2, 77.3.2, 77.3.3, 77.10.1, 78.35.2, 79.9.1, 84.5.3, 100.13.1, 107.4.6, 108.13.4, 108.14.3, 108.18.2, 108.28.1, 123.9.2, 123.11.1, 123.12.1, 123.12.4; for *mulier*, 22.11.2, 22.12.2, 27.2.2, 49.15.5, 52.5.4, 52.15.1, 54.9.4, 72.3.2, 98.13.4, 100.12.6, 117.20.2.

<sup>84</sup>) The emphatic use of *femina* occurs only about 20 times in the *Vulgate*: see Dutripon, s.v.

<sup>85</sup>) For the old Latin versions of Genesis, see now B. Fischer, *Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altilateinischen Bibel*, Freiburg 1949; quotations from the other books of the O. T. are from P. Sabatier, *Bibliorum sacrorum Latinae versiones antiquae*, Reims 1743–49.

<sup>86</sup>) E.g. 5.2.7, 5.5.21, 5.10.73.

<sup>87</sup>) See also the discussion at *Civ. Dei* 14.11 of the passage *Adam non est seductus, mulier autem seducta est* (I *Tim.* 2.14).

emphasis,<sup>88</sup>) but in the eighth century Lombard diplomatic documents *femina* is preferred.<sup>89</sup>)

The situation in Merovingian Gaul is again confused, but it is evident that *mulier* suffered at least some eclipse after the sixth century. In the *Pactus Legis Alamannorum* and *Leges Alamannorum* *femina* has already replaced *mulier* almost completely;<sup>90</sup>) but in the *Lex Ribuaria* *mulier* continues alongside *femina*.<sup>91</sup>) In one place in the *Pactus Legis Salicae* we find *mulier* where the 100 chapter version later substitutes *femina*: *Pact.* 20.1 *si quis ingenuus homo ingenuae mulieri*<sup>92</sup>) . . . *digitum extrinxerit*; cf. *Lex D.* 26.1 (= E. 25.1) *si quis homo ingenuos ad femina ingenua digitu aut manu extrinxerit*.

Before moving on it is necessary to discuss briefly a suggestion which has been made by C. Mohrmann.<sup>93</sup>) On the basis of Augustine's remarks at *Serm.* 52.9–10 Mohrmann maintains that in the everyday language of his time *mulier* designated a woman who had lost her virginity, whereas *femina* was used of women in general.<sup>94</sup>) According to Augustine the common Biblical use of *mulier* where *femina* might be expected was a Hebraism.<sup>95</sup>)

It can be added that a similar remark on the sense of *mulier* is found in Servius, *ad Aen.* 11.687 *usus obtinuit, ut innuptas*

<sup>88</sup>) E.g. 139, 141, 186, 378.

<sup>89</sup>) E.g. *Cod. dipl. Long.* I, pp. 289. 19, II, 36. 18, 42. 19, 42. 34; *Codice diplomatico Toscano* I (ed. F. Brunetti, Florence 1806), pp. 568, 569.

<sup>90</sup>) See, e.g., *Pact.* 13.2, 14.5, 15, *Leg.* 48, 49, 53.2.

<sup>91</sup>) For *femina* see, e.g., 17, 61.12; for *mulier*, 41.9, 50.1, 50.2, 86.1.

<sup>92</sup>) The use of *homo* here in opposition to *mulier* where *vir* is expected well illustrates the decline which *vir* underwent in vulgar Latin in favour of *homo*, which alone enters the Romance languages. The use of *homo* to designate a man as distinguished from a woman is found as early as Plautus (*Cist.* 723 *mi homo et mea mulier, vos saluto*), but first occurs with frequency in late vulgar Latin: e.g. *Ed. Rothari* 139 *si quis homo liber aut mulier* (cf. 376); *Leg. Liutprandi* 139 *quispiam miser homo mulierem adulterat*; *Cod. dipl. Long.* I, p. 323.1 *homines et mulieres* (cf. 325.19); ib. II, 267.8 *omines et femine* (cf. 267.11); *Form. Andec.* p. 13.1 *femina/homo*; *El arch. cond. Barc.* p. 231 *ullus homo vel mulier*; 292 *cum hominibus et feminis*; 331 *homines et feminas* (cf. 384 (twice), 420, 445). It may have been current at a sub-literary level for the whole of the period between Plautus and the late documents. On the replacement of *vir* by *homo*, see in general E. Löfstedt, *Syntactica* II, Lund 1933, 43, 439.

<sup>93</sup>) In *Vigiliae Christianae* 2 (1948), 117 ff.

<sup>94</sup>) This general use is apparently a branch of the emphatic use discussed above.

<sup>95</sup>) Cf. *in Gal.* 30, *Loc. Hept.* 4.104.

'*virgines*', *nuptas* '*mulieres*' *vocemus; nam apud maiores indiscrete virgo dicebatur et mulier, utrumque enim sexum tantum significabat.*

In practice, however, no sharp distinction between *femina* and *mulier* of the kind suggested by Mohrmann is observable either in Christian or in late secular Latin. Both words can be used either as general / emphatic terms, or as specific terms describing individual women, whether virgins or not. Even Augustine himself sometimes employs *mulier* as a general term which obviously includes both virgins and non-virgins: e.g. *Civ. Dei*. 3.17 *atque in tanta strage bellorum etiam pestilentia gravis exorta est mulierum*; 7.26 *de mollibus eidem Matri Magnae contra omnem virorum mulierumque verecundiam consecratis*; 16.28 *si femina ita sit provectoris aetatis, ut ei solita mulierum adhuc fluant.*

Ancient grammarians often draw false distinctions between pairs of words. In this case it is not difficult to discover the reasoning behind Augustine's attempt to prescribe an artificial rule of usage.

*Mulier* is often used to denote a mature woman in opposition to a *puella*: e.g. *Lex Rib.* 39.3 *ingenuam puellam vel mulierem*; *Ed. Rothari* 26 *si quis mulieri libere aut puellae in via se anteposuerit*;<sup>96</sup>) *Fredegarius*<sup>97</sup>) p. 142.14 *mulierum et puellarum suggestionibus*; *Leg. Visigothorum* p. 127.9 *in puelle vel mulieris nomine*.<sup>98</sup>) From here it was a simple step for the word to take on an implication that the mature woman in question was also sexually experienced.<sup>99</sup>) Hence its use at all periods in opposition to *virgo*.<sup>100</sup>)

But this latter usage is sporadic and determined by the context. *Mulier* can equally well be employed, even outside Biblical Latin, of an adult woman who has not had intercourse:<sup>101</sup>) e.g. *Greg. of Tours* p. 338.23 *filius virginis, id est mulieris*; *Ed. Rothari* 178 *si quis sponsaverit puellam liberam aut mulierem* (an unmarried adult woman); 180 *postquam puella aut mulier sponsata fuerit*; 182 *et si tales fuerit mulier, quae maritum non vellit aut non possit habere*; 221 *si servus liberam mulierem aut puellam ausus fuerit sibi in con-*

<sup>96</sup>) Cf., e.g., 178, 183, 195 (twice), 196, 197, 201.

<sup>97</sup>) *Ed. B. Krusch, MGH, Script. Rer. Merov. II.*

<sup>98</sup>) Cf., e.g., pp. 128.2, 128.8, 137.20, 140.4, 140.25, 147.16, 147.23, 157.4.

<sup>99</sup>) There is sometimes a similar innuendo in the use of 'woman' in English (e.g. in the expression 'to make someone a woman'; cf. *SHA*, Vopiscus, *Quatt. Tyr.* 12.7 *omnes . . . mulieres intra dies quindecim reddidi*).

<sup>100</sup>) See *TLL* VIII. 1574. 3ff.

<sup>101</sup>) The following examples are all taken from late Latin, in view of Servius' remark that the distinction between *mulier* and *virgo* developed late.

*iugium sociare*; Agnellus<sup>102</sup>) p. 362. 37 *nuptae vero mulieres et innuptae*; Fredegarius p. 30.23 *mulieres prophetissae* (includes the Virgin Mary); *Vitae Patrum* 3.65 *quaedam mulier virgo*; *Leg. Visigothorum* p. 139.16 *si ingenuus ingenuam rapiat mulierem, licet illa virginitatem perdat, iste tamen illi coniungi non valeat*. The word is also used occasionally in reference to nuns.<sup>103</sup>)

Clearly Augustine and Servius sought to generalise from one of a number of uses possessed by *mulier*.

### III. *Mulier* = 'Wife'

The word for 'wife' in a number of Romance languages is supplied by *mulier*.<sup>104</sup>) *Uxor*, which for an extended period was in regular use in all types of Latin, left only limited traces (in old Venetian, old French, Provençal and old Spanish).<sup>105</sup>)

There are various factors which may have led to the acquisition by *mulier* of this secondary sense. In the first place, it seems to have been possible in colloquial speech for a man to refer to 'his woman' (see Catull. 70.1, Hor. *Epod.* 12.24). In possessive phrases of this type the woman in question would often be the man's wife. *Vir* no doubt developed the sense 'husband' (which it bears from early Latin onwards) at least partly as a result of its use in comparable expressions.<sup>106</sup>

Secondly, in juxtapositions or antitheses of the kind 'a woman and her husband', examples of which are common in extant Latin, *mulier* readily becomes almost synonymous with *uxor*: e.g. Quint. 7.8.2 *suspendit se maritus, mulier veneficii rea est*; Gell. 6.1.3 *in lecto mulieris, cum absente marito cubans sola condormisset*; Ulp. *Dig.* 23.3.10.6 *si fuerit adiectum 'utrum mulier velit' . . . 'utrum maritus velit'*; Caesarius of Arles I, p. 44.5 *mulieres, quando maritos accipiunt intrare in ecclesiam non praesumunt*; *Cod. Euriciani Leges Restitutae*<sup>107</sup>, p. 31.18 *quod si maritus et mulier sine heredibus mortui fuerint*; *Leg. Visigothorum* p. 213.2 *de rebus a marito mulieri concessis, vel si mulier fuerit adulterasse detecta*.<sup>108</sup>)

<sup>102</sup>) In *MGH, Script. Rer. Langobardorum et Italicorum saec. VI-IX*.

<sup>103</sup>) *Leg. Vis.* p. 161.11, *Col. dipl. San Salv. Oña*, p. 49, *Cart. San Mill. Cog.*, p. 107.

<sup>104</sup>) See *TLL* VIII. 1571. 63ff.

<sup>105</sup>) See Meyer-Lübke, 9106.

<sup>106</sup>) Cf. the parallel uses of 'man' and 'woman' in colloquial English.

<sup>107</sup>) Ed. K. Zeumer, *MGH, Legum Sectio I*, 1, Hannover and Leipzig 1902.

<sup>108</sup>) Cf., e.g., *Leg. Vis.* pp. 129.4, 133.4, 137.3, *Pactus Leg. Alamannorum* 34.1, *Ed. Rothari* 202, 203, *Lex Ribuaria* 41.9, 50.1, 50.2.

Finally, an influence on popular Latin may have been Greek *γυνή*, which combines both senses. This influence could have been exercised through the old Latin Bible translations (on which see below).

In Republican and early Imperial Latin the secondary sense of *mulier* occurs very rarely indeed. Although an example such as Ter. *Hec.* 777 (*nostras mulieres*; cf. 779 *tua . . . uxor*) may suggest that the usage had some currency at a sub-literary level, it must be noted that the freedmen in the *Cena Trimalchionis* use only *uxor*.<sup>109</sup>)

*Mulier* first appears with frequency in a sense indistinguishable from that of 'wife' in the old Latin versions of the Bible, in passages in which Jerome in the *Vulgate* invariably writes *uxor* (or, occasionally, *coniux*): e.g. VL, Gen. 3.8 *absconderunt se Adam et mulier eius* (*Vulg. abscondit se Adam et uxor eius*); 4.1 *cognovit Adam Evam mulierem suam* (*Vulg. Adam vero cognovit Evam uxorem suam*); 36.2 *Esau autem accepit sibi mulieres* (*Vulg. Esau accepit uxores*); 46.26 *qui exierunt ex femore ipsius praeter mulieres filiorum Iacob* (*Vulg. et egressae de femore illius absque uxoribus filiorum Iacob*).<sup>110</sup>) Again it might appear that we are presented with a vulgar usage which had not yet found its way into the literature; but it is more likely that the early translators often failed to distinguish between the two meanings of *γυνή*, for it is some centuries before *mulier* = 'wife' occurs with comparable frequency in texts of vulgar flavour. Moreover an examination of the old versions of Genesis shows that as the translators advanced they turned progressively to *uxor*, presumably because they gradually developed greater discernment. Nevertheless, even if the *Vetus Latina* does not in this case accurately reflect popular practice, it may have played a part in spreading the secondary sense.

It is not until the later Lombard documents that *mulier*, anticipating Italian *moglie*, becomes common as a word for 'wife'. Again we owe to the laws of A.D. 643–746 our ability to observe the gradual emergence of a usage. In the *Edictus Rothari* of 643 *uxor* is found frequently, but *mulier* (in this sense) not at all. Similarly in the *Leges Liutprandi* down to 729 *uxor* predominates by 15:0. Then in 731 *mulier* appears twice,<sup>111</sup>) but is still outnumbered by *uxor* (6 times). Finally, after 733 *mulier* becomes

<sup>109</sup>) 37.2, 42.6, 59.5, 61.6, 67.5.

<sup>110</sup>) For further examples see *TLL* VIII. 1574. 43ff.

<sup>111</sup>) 113, 117.

the preferred term (9:6)<sup>112</sup>). Its use at 133 in an expression in which *uxor* had long been standard (*tertiam mulierem duxerit*) is an indication that it was fully capable of assuming the sense 'wife'.<sup>113</sup>)

In the Lombard diplomatic documents *uxor* continues to be favoured at a somewhat later date, but *mulier* occasionally occurs in remarkable clusters.<sup>114</sup>) These may be put down to the momentary appearance of vulgar Latin through the normal officialese; secretaries might sometimes lapse into their own preference.

In Spain of about the tenth century *mulier* (cf. Sp. *mujer*) was certainly current alongside *uxor*, for both words occur twice in the highly vulgar *Glosas Silenses*:<sup>115</sup>) 176 *suas coniuges*; *mulieres*; 187 *digami: vir secunde uxoris*; 188 *trigami: tertie uxoris*; 219 *previgna: id est ante nata filia sua muliere*. But as in Italy, the officialese of our surviving documents, vulgar as it is in many respects, tends to prefer *uxor* as the longer established term, though again there are some clusters of examples of *mulier*.<sup>116</sup>)

In the Latin of Merovingian Gaul *mulier* = 'wife' must have had some currency, for it goes into old French (*moillier*); but it is rare in our extant official documents. However, its appearance in the 100 chapter text of the Salic Law (15 tit. *qui alterius muliere tollit*) in a context in which the *Pactus Legis Salicae* had had *uxor* (15 tit. *qui uxorem alienam tulerit*) does perhaps indicate that it gained some favour after the sixth century.

It was open to *femina* also, once its respectful sense was weakened, to acquire the meaning 'wife'.<sup>117</sup>) See, e.g. *Leg. Alamannorum* 59.2 *ad feminis eorum omnia dupliciter componatur*; 60.2 *feminas . . . eorum*; Tardif, *Monuments Historiques*, 227 *cum femina ipsius*.

<sup>112</sup>) For *mulier* see 130 (5 times), 133 (4 times).

<sup>113</sup>) Another particularly notable example is *Cod. dipl. Tosc. II*, p. 234 *legitima muliere*.

<sup>114</sup>) E.g. *Cod. dipl. Long. II*, pp. 74.6 (twice), 74.7, 74.12, 75.2, 75.13, 75.21; *ib.* 418.6, 418.9, 418.16, 418.27; *Cod. dipl. Tosc. II*, pp. 240, 242, 256 (twice).

<sup>115</sup>) Ed. by R. Menéndez Pidal, *Orígenes del español*, pp. 10ff.

<sup>116</sup>) E.g. *Col. dipl. San Salv. Oña* p. 55 (4 times); *Cart. San Vic. Oviedo* p. 129 (twice). Some other examples are at *El arch. cond. Barc.*, p. 408; *Chartes royales Léonaises*, p. 408 (ed. L. Barrau Dihigo, in *Rev. Hispanique* 10 (1903), 349ff.); *Chartes de l'église de Valpuesta*, p. 315; *Cart. San Mill. Cog.*, p. 200.

<sup>117</sup>) The examples of this sense from prose of the early Empire given at *TLL VI*. 1. 458. 63ff. may be disregarded (e.g. at Quint. 9.2.20 and Tac. *Ann.* 3.34 the word is simply emphatic). But instances in verse are not uncommon (e.g. in a pentameter from Pompeii, *CIL IV*. 6893).

IV. *Coniux*

*Coniux* was not in unrestricted use at any period, but rather was always largely confined to poetry and certain formulae.

The nature of the word in the early Republic can be seen clearly from its distribution in old poetry. In comedy it is found only once (Plaut. *Amph.* 475),<sup>118</sup>) and then in the mouth of a god and in reference to another god;<sup>119</sup>) but in tragedy, the remains of which are considerably less extensive than those of comedy, it occurs 7 times.<sup>120</sup>)

J. Köhm has pointed out that in early sepulchral inscriptions *coniux* is used mainly of freedmen and their wives,<sup>121</sup>) a fact which at first sight makes it difficult to understand why the tragedians employ the word freely, but the comic poets avoid it. But the difficulty disappears when it is observed that in epitaphs of all periods and from all social spheres the word was traditionally used as an appropriately high-flown term of respect. Words often remain in use in a special or technical language, though alien to the everyday speech of some or even all classes. See, e.g. *CIL* VI. 15860<sup>122</sup>) *coniugi dulcissimae incomparabili benemerenti*; *CIL* III. 8938<sup>123</sup>) *coniugi infelicissime defuncte*; *CIL* II. 4 *coniugi piissimae*; 156 *coniugi carissimae*; 486 *coniugi dulcissimae*; 487 *coniugi rarissimae et sanctissimae*; 536 *coniugi pientissimae*; 542 *coniugi benemerenti*; 1206 *coniugi carissimae*; 1291 *coniugi benemerenti*; 1620 *coniugis sanctissimae*; *CIL* VI. 23773 *coniugi sanctissimae castissimae incomparabili*. Note that most of the above examples are in formulae.

The tone of the term in the sepulchral language is apparent from the following figures: of the 94 instances of *uxor* in *CIL* II, 1–2400, only 18 are accompanied by a complimentary epithet; but of the 18 instances of *coniux*, no fewer than 11 are so qualified. A *recherché* term can readily take on a eulogistic quality.

In poetry of the higher genres *coniux* was almost exclusively preferred to *uxor*. Virgil has the latter only once, in the *Eclogues*,

<sup>118</sup>) Where it means 'husband'. In this sense it occurs at all periods, but only very sporadically.

<sup>119</sup>) Note that the only example of the word in the early annalists (ap. Gell. 13.23.13; cf. H. Peter, *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae* I, 1914<sup>2</sup>, p. 152.7) is used in a prayer in reference to a god.

<sup>120</sup>) See J. Köhm, *Altlateinische Forschungen*, Leipzig 1905, 85f.

<sup>121</sup>) l.c.

<sup>122</sup>) = E. Diehl, *Vulgärlateinische Inschriften*, 379.

<sup>123</sup>) = Diehl, 574.

and Ovid (in the *Metamorphoses*), Silius Italicus and Valerius Flaccus avoid it completely.<sup>124</sup>) Ovid does, however, admit it in the elegiacs. Similarly in Catullus *coniux* predominates markedly in the longer poems (13:2), but is no more frequent than *uxor* in the lyrics and epigrams.<sup>125</sup>) Horace, however, shows no reluctance to use *uxor* even in his most elevated composition, the *Odes* (in which both words occur 8 times), in keeping with his habit of injecting prosaic and down-to-earth words into that work.<sup>126</sup>) In elegy both words are used with similar frequency, but *coniux* is largely restricted to epic contexts. Finally, at the furthest remove from epic is satire, in which *uxor* is the preferred term.

In ordinary educated prose from the late Republic onwards *coniux* did achieve a certain currency, but only in formulae expressing collectively the various objects of a man's family, and occasionally patriotic, loyalties. The most frequent is *coniux et liberi*.<sup>127</sup>) Cf., e.g. *parenti, coniugi tuisque omnibus* (Cic. *Fam.* 6.22.2); *coniugem . . . domum . . . patriam* (Att. 1.14.3); *coniugis . . . filiae filique* (Red. *Quir.* 8); *parentibus, liberis, coniugibus, fratribus* (Phil. 14.38); *fili . . . coniugis* (Phil. 9.5). As an emotive and eulogistic term, *coniux* was naturally felt to be highly suitable in phrases of this kind. Family loyalty (*pietas*) was a value of exceptional emotional significance to a Roman.<sup>128</sup>)

*Coniux* is used outside formulae of the above type only very sporadically in prose of the late Republic and early Empire, and then usually for a special reason or in the higher (poeticising) genres. It is found 3 times in Cicero (once soon after *uxor*, with an accompanying complimentary attribute: Phil. 3.16 *tuae coniugis, bonae feminae*; once with obvious emotive force: Off. 2.25 *o miserum, qui fidelio rem et barbarum et stigmatiam putaret quam coniugem*; and once in irony: Phil. 2.113 *etenim ista tua minime avara coniux quam ego sine contumelia describo*), 5 times in Livy,<sup>129</sup>) once in Seneca the

<sup>124</sup>) See Axelson, *Unpoet. Wört.*, 57f.

<sup>125</sup>) Both instances in the shorter poems are of interest. One is accompanied by a complimentary epithet in the superlative (cf. the grave inscriptions quoted above): 78.1 *quorumst lepidissima coniux/alterius*; and the other is in an abusive context with an uncomplimentary epithet: 23.6 *et cum coniuge lignea parentis* (a humorous juxtaposition?).

<sup>126</sup>) See Axelson, o.c., 98ff.

<sup>127</sup>) See *TLL* IV. 342.65.

<sup>128</sup>) Note that in grave dedications also *coniux* describes a wife (or, occasionally, husband) as the recipient of *pietas*; one of the main manifestations of a person's *pietas* was his bestowal of an adequate burial on his kin.

<sup>129</sup>) 1.11.2, 1.21.3, 24.25.6, 34.7.1, 34.36.5.

Elder, with a laudatory epithet (*Contr.* 10.3.2 *adeo tibi vetera exempla exciderunt bonarum coniugum*), once in Velleius,<sup>130</sup>) 4 times in Valerius Maximus,<sup>131</sup> 3 times in Seneca the Younger,<sup>132</sup>) and 3 times in ps. Quintilian (*Decl. Min.*).<sup>133</sup>)

Tacitus does not use *coniux* on its own before book 12 of the *Annals*, but in 12–14 he has it 8 times (about as often as *uxor*);<sup>134</sup>) he then drops it in 15–16. Tacitus' vocabulary is constantly in a state of flux.<sup>135</sup>) He often develops a taste (whether conscious or unconscious) for a word which he later abandons.

In some of the artificial prose of the later Empire *coniux* is used independently somewhat more often. Apuleius, Ammianus and Augustine, for instance, employ it freely in this way, if less often than *uxor*.<sup>136</sup>) Gregory of Tours, whose prose is not without stylistic pretensions despite its many vulgar characteristics, also has it frequently. Jerome even introduces it almost 20 times into his translation of the O.T.,<sup>137</sup>) though in the N.T. he follows the *Vetus Latina* in all but completely avoiding it.

Our late documents from Spain provide an interesting illustration of the tone which *coniux* could assume. Since the word is glossed by *mulieres* in the *Glosas Silenses* (176), we can assume that it did not linger on in the popular speech of the region. Nevertheless, it occurs constantly in the documents in question. The reason for its use emerges clearly from the contexts in which it is found: whereas *uxor* (and sometimes *mulier*) is the word regularly used to denote the wives of commoners, *coniux* is almost without exception

<sup>130</sup>) 2.75.3.

<sup>131</sup>) 2.1.7, 2.6.14, 4.3.3, 4.6.pr.

<sup>132</sup>) *Benef.* 1.9.3 (twice), *Nat.* 1.17.7.

<sup>133</sup>) pp. 47.4, 329.20, 368.18.

<sup>134</sup>) For *coniux* see 12.51.1, 12.51.2, 12.64.2, 12.65.1., 13.32.2, 14.34.2, 14.59.3, 14.60.5.

<sup>135</sup>) See F. R. D. Goodyear, 'Development of Language and Style in the *Annals* of Tacitus', *JRS* 58 (1968), 22ff. See also my article, 'The Language of the Later Books of Tacitus' *Annals* forthcoming in *Class. Quart.*

<sup>136</sup>) In the *Historia Augusta* there are 2 examples of independent *coniux*. One is in the address of letter: XVI. 7. 5 (Ael. Lampr.) *Opilius Macrinus Noniae Celsae coniugi*; and the other immediately follows a letter: VI. 11.8 (Vulcac. Gall.) *haec Antonius ad coniugem*. Obviously both examples are similar, but not similar enough to make it likely that one writer took the usage from another. Both passages were probably written by the same person.

<sup>137</sup>) For some passages where Jerome uses *coniux*, but the *Vetus Latina* *uxor* or *mulier*, see *Gen.* 31.17, 39.19, 45.19, 49.31.

The Romance Collective Neuter and the Survival of the Latin Ablative 255

applied to the wives of kings<sup>138</sup>) (especially in the formula *una cum coniuge*).<sup>139</sup>) It was no doubt considered apt as a term of respect because of its archaic quality.

Earlier there is a similar tendency for the word to be employed in application to members of the Roman Imperial family.<sup>140</sup>)

## The Romance Collective Neuter and the Survival of the Latin Ablative

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The term "collective neuter" is used by Romance scholars to cover a wide range of phenomena associated mainly with collective nouns in dialect-speaking areas of Italy and Spain. Clemente Merlo, writing on the derivatives of the Latin demonstrative *ille* in some of the Italian dialects, noted for instance that at Rieti the definite article was realized as *lò* (*ò*) instead of *lu* (*u*) before certain abstract substantives.<sup>1</sup>) Gerhard Rohlfs, summarizing much previous research in his well known historical grammar of Italian,<sup>2</sup>) says that a special form of the article, clearly differentiated from the masculine, was developed for certain collective concepts in a fairly large area of southern Italy which extends as far north as southern Umbria (Norcia, Rieti) and the southern part of Le Marche (Macerata, Camerino, Recanati, Cingoli) and as far south as the area of Bari and Matera. Some of these words are historically Latin neuters while others were masculine in Latin.

<sup>138</sup>) E. g. in *Diplomática española del período Astur* (718–910), ed. A. C. Floriano, Oviedo 1949–51, *coniux* is found 7 times, always in reference to the wives of kings; and in *Cart. San Mill. Cog.* it is found 41 times, 36 times in reference to the wives of kings.

<sup>139</sup>) Note that at *Cart. San Mill. Cog.*, p. 109, after the formula *una cum coniuge* (of a queen), the same woman is described (in the nominative) as *uxor mea*. Conversely the expression *una cum uxore* is often used of the wives of commoners: e. g. *Cart. San Vic. Oviedo*, pp. 53, 55, 58, 66, 78, 107; *Cart. San Mill. Cog.*, pp. 19, 40, 43, 44, 45, 155, 156, 159, 161, 163, 190.

<sup>140</sup>) E. g. *Act. Petri c. Simone* 34, *CIL* II. 810, 2070, 2200.

<sup>1</sup>) "Dei continuatori del lat. *ille* in alcuni dialetti dell'Italia centro-meridionale," *ZRPh.* 30. 11–25 and 438–54 (1906).

<sup>2</sup>) *Historische Grammatik der italienischen Sprache und ihrer Mundarten*, 1949, 2. 133–4.