

Puella and Virgo *)

By PATRICIA WATSON, Sydney

On p. 58 of *Unpoetische Wörter* (Lund, 1945), B. Axelson draws attention to the general avoidance by epic poets of *puella* in favour of its *Ersatzwort* *virgo*. Whether supporting or refuting Axelson's explanation of this phenomenon (i.e. that *puella* is stylistically less elevated than *virgo*, its occurrence twice in the *Aeneid* being attributed to metrical convenience)¹⁾, subsequent scholars follow him in regarding the pair as synonymous. R. O. A. M. Lyne's statistics for the use of *virgo* and *puella* in „epyllia“²⁾, for instance, are based on this assumption³⁾.

Failure on the part of these scholars to take account of obvious cases where the two words do not overlap in meaning (for example, where *virgo* emphasises physical virginity)⁴⁾ is no doubt due to oversight rather than lack of knowledge⁵⁾. Nevertheless, it is my contention that the pair are used as exact synonyms far less frequently than might be supposed.

In order to determine the semantic range of each word, I will undertake a systematic investigation of the contexts in which *puella* and *virgo* are employed in both prose and poetry. A study of their

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¹⁾ On both occasions (2.238, 6.307) the nom. pl. is used; Axelson points out that *virgines* is metrically intractable.

²⁾ I.e. the *Ciris*, Catullus 64, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (regarded by Lyne as a series of "epyllia": see his note on 1.71 of the *Ciris* (R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Ciris* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 135).

³⁾ Cf. also L. P. Wilkinson, *The Georgics of Virgil* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 199 note, and G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford, 1968), p. 748, who attempts to demonstrate that the epic poets' avoidance of words like *puella* is based on considerations of context rather than genre.

⁴⁾ This accounts for 9 of the 76 occurrences of *virgo* in the *Metamorphoses*, for instance.

⁵⁾ In Lyne's case, it is also of little importance, since in most of the instances in "epyllia" the two words are used without any distinction in meaning (even if the 9 examples in the *Met.* referred to above (note 4) are taken into account, the resulting figures (*virgo* 67 *puella* 13) would enhance, rather than detract from, Lyne's general argument that *puella* is relatively common in "epyllia" as compared with epic).

occurrences in Comedy will first be used to establish the basic meaning of each word. Developments in their usage will then be traced in later writers, concentrating initially on the differences between the pair and concluding with instances in which they may be regarded as synonymous.

A) *Virgo and Puella in Comedy*

I begin with the Comedies of Plautus and Terence, the plots of which provide ample opportunities for references to girls. Since there is very little overlap in Comedy in the use of the two words, it will be convenient to discuss each separately.

(i) *Virgo*

In Comedy, the *Virgo* is a stock character like the *Senex*, *Adulescens*, *Servus* and so on. Her essential characteristics are three: 1. she is a young⁶), unmarried⁷) girl; 2. she is respectable, i. e. not engaged in the occupation of a *meretrix*; 3. in most cases she is nubile, a condition which presupposes citizen status⁸).

These three qualifications apply unconditionally in plots which concern a love affair between an *adulescens* and a poor but honest female citizen living with a parent or other relation, as for instance Plautus' *Aulularia* and *Trinummus* and the *Adelphoi* and *Phormio* of Terence. The parasite's daughter in Plautus' *Persa* is also a *Virgo* of this type, except that her role in the drama does not involve her in any romantic entanglement.

A more complex situation exists in the second type of comic plot which centres on a young man's love for an unmarried, but marriageable female, namely, plays where the girl has been exposed or stolen as a child and her identity as a free-born citizen is not revealed to all until the denouement. Such girls are either in the power of a

⁶) "Young" means of marriageable age (sometimes the age is specified e. g. at *Eun.* 318 the girl is said to be 16 years old). *Virgo* is occasionally used to allude to these young women when they were children (e. g. Plaut. *Rud.* 39) but in such cases it is qualified by an epithet such as *parva*.

⁷) Since there are no spinsters in Comedy, the notions of "young" (in the sense outlined in the previous note) and "unmarried" are synonymous. The only case of *virgo* applied to a married woman is Ter. *Hec.* 151, but in this instance the marriage has not yet been consummated.

⁸) See E. Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy", *Phoenix* 29 (1975) 47 ff.

leno (e.g. Planesium in the *Curculio*, Palaestra in the *Rudens* and the two sisters in the *Poenulus*) or are living with a *meretrix* (e.g. Pamphila in the *Eunuchus* and Glycerium in the *Andria*), or as a household servant (e.g. Plautus' *Casina*)⁹). Although in every case the girl has maintained her respectability¹⁰) in the sense that she has so far avoided embarking on a career as a *meretrix*, this fact is unknown to many of the characters in the drama. It is significant, then, that such young women are generally referred to as *virgo* only by speakers who are aware of their true status as a citizen (e.g. Plaut. *Rud.* 41, 51, 67, 74, 81, Ter. *Eun.* 132, 143, 202, 229, 505, 617, *Phorm.* 120, 128, 570, 752); those who are ignorant of this use other terms (e.g. *meretrix-icula*, *mulier-ercula*, *ancilla-illula* and sometimes *puella*)¹¹).

Three exceptions to this general trend merit consideration. On two occasions, young men use the term *virgo* with reference to an unknown girl they have met by accident and fallen in love with: in the *Phormio*, a beautiful young girl is discovered by Antipho at her mother's funeral, accompanied by an old servant; in the *Eunuchus*, Chaerea sees a girl walking in the street with a parasite and maid for companions. Neither young man knows that the object of his fancy is a free-born citizen¹²); on the other hand, since both *meretrices* and *matronae* would presumably be readily identifiable from their dress, each must think of his girl as a respectable *peregrina*. But the use of *virgo* on these occasions is perhaps best viewed as anticipating its common employment by later writers to mean simply „young girl“, especially in the case of the *Eunuchus*, where Chaerea confesses (321) that he has no idea who the *virgo* is or to whom she belongs.

Finally, in the *Curculio*, Planesium is alluded to as *virgo* both by the *leno* in whose possession she is and by the soldier who has purchased her. Though neither is aware that the girl is in fact a

⁹) In the *H. T.* Antiphila is living with her supposed father, a poor *peregrinus*.

¹⁰) But not necessarily virginity; *vid. infra*. Contrast the free-born Sele-nium in the *Cistellaria* who, brought up by a *meretrix*, is living with her lover, and is never referred to as a *virgo*.

¹¹) Two exceptions are *Phorm.* and *Eun.*; *vid. infra*.

¹²) In the *Eun.* he compares her with the girls of his own city (313 “*haud simili' virgost virginum nostrarum, quas matres student/ demissis umeris esse . . . etc.*”) and in the *Phorm.* the *adulescens* asks the old servant for an assignation, only to be told that the girl is a citizen, with whom marriage is the only relationship possible.

free-born citizen, the *leno* knows that she is respectable¹³), that is, she has not previously performed the function of a *meretrix*.

Up to this stage, frequent mention has been made of respectability rather than physical virginity, a distinction which might often seem unnecessary, for instance in the above case where Planesium is not only morally respectable but also biologically chaste. On one occasion, indeed, *virgo* is used with the notion of biological virginity to the fore¹⁴). In other cases, however, the girl's moral and physical state are not identical. For instance, Phaedria in the *Aulularia*, Philumena in the *Hecyra* and Terence's two Pamphilas (*Adelphoi* and *Eunuchus*) have all been raped by the young men they eventually marry. It is significant, then, that the term *virgo* is applied to these girls by speakers who know that they have been sexually violated (e.g. Ter. *Eun.* 721, 868, 891, 916, 927, 951, *Hec.* 574, *Ad.* 471). In the case of Pamphila in the *Adelphoi* she is called *virgo* when known to be pregnant (e.g. 474, 479, 650, 654) and at 728 it is announced that the *virgo* has just given birth! Similarly, at Plaut. *Aul.* 815 the newly-delivered mother is alluded to as *virgo*. On the other hand, since all these girls have been raped, they have preserved their mental, if not physical, integrity¹⁵).

The Latin *virgo*, then, is not completely synonymous with the English „virgin“. Whereas an English speaker could not say „the virgin has just had a baby“ without conveying the suggestion of parthenogenesis, in Latin this is possible because the basic meaning of the word *virgo* is not „a sexually inexperienced young girl“¹⁶) but „an unmarried girl of respectable morals“; in a society like the Roman where premarital sex is taboo¹⁷) the two meanings will

¹³) Cf. 518 “bene ego istam eduxi meae domi et pudice”. Presumably the *leno* has informed the soldier of the fact, since it would make the girl more desirable.

¹⁴) Ter. *Ad.* 346, where a mother whose daughter has been raped complains that she cannot be given in marriage *pro virgine*.

¹⁵) E. Fantham, *op.cit.* p. 53f., comments that the rape motif is necessary to provoke the marriages in *Aul. Ad.* and *Truc.* as well as to prevent the audience becoming prejudiced against the girl.

¹⁶) This has often been taken as the basic meaning of the word, e.g. A. Ernout and A. Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, 4th ed. 1959, define it as “vierge, jeune fille ou jeune femme qui n'a pas encore connu l'homme”; cf. the Latin dictionaries of A. Forcellini (1875) and C. T. Lewis and C. Short (1879) s.v. The recent article in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (1982), however, gives the primary sense of *virgo* as “a girl of marriageable age”.

¹⁷) And in normal circumstances unlikely to occur, given the low age of marriage (12–15 years: see S. B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and*

generally overlap, it is true, but the fact that *virgo* can be applied to rape victims demonstrates that the notion of physical virginity is not the basic one¹⁸).

(ii) *Puella*

Although the original¹⁹ feminine of *puer*, *puera*, survived until at least the first century B.C.²⁰, it had been largely replaced at an early date by the diminutive²¹ *puella*. This is the only form used by Plautus and Terence, and most commonly refers to newborn babies (Plaut. *Cas.* 41, 79, *Cist.* 124, 135, 139, 140, 151 etc., *Truc.* 404; Ter. *H.T.* 627, 651)²²).

When employed of older girls, *puella* usually refers to *ancillae* (Ter. *Eun.* 582²³), Plaut. *Cas.* 48²⁴) or *meretrices*: in the case of Ter. *Phorm.* 81 the double diminutive *puellula* is used of a *citharistria*, while at Plaut. *Poe.* 1094 and 1301 the *meretrices* in question are free-born *virgines* masquerading as such. At *Rud.* 264, 282, 1148 and 1153, *puella* is used of free-born girls, in the possession of a *leno*, whose real identity is unknown. In the case of *Rud.* 264 and 282

Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity (New York, 1975), p. 164, K. Hopkins, "The age of Roman girls at marriage", *Population Studies* 18 (1965) 309–27).

¹⁸ *Virgo* is closer to the English "maid(en)" than "virgin"; the former, though confined in current usage mainly to set phrases such as "old maid" or "maiden aunt", formerly had a wider range of meaning, and could be used of a young girl who was not intact (e.g. "What, is there a maid with child by him?" W. Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* 1.2.91) or to indicate sexual purity (e.g. "'Are you a maid?' 'No, my lord'" *ibid.* 5.1.170).

¹⁹ Cf. Suet. *Cal.* 8.3, Prisc. p. 697P.

²⁰ Liv. Andr. trag. 40R, Titinius 50R, Varro ap. Non. 156M (two examples), id. ap. Charis. I p. 64P (= 84K). There is also an isolated occurrence, of uncertain date, in a Pompeian wall inscription (*C. I. L.* 4.1956b). In early poetry *puer* was sometimes used instead of *puera*; cf. Charis. *loc. cit.*

²¹ Although *puella* was to completely oust its positive *puera*, it seems clear from the contexts in which *puella* is commonly used that its diminutive force continued to be felt. Perhaps *puella* was preferred to *puera* because babies and girlfriends (two of the most frequent uses of the word) arouse emotions that are better expressed by a diminutive.

²² Cf. also Ter. *Hec.* 231 where it is used of a grown-up girl, but with emphasis on her youth: "cum puella anum suscepisse inimicitias non pudet?", cf. Plaut. *Rud.* 567.

²³ The reference is to "noviciae puellae" whose age is uncertain: they could possibly be very young (i.e. not of marriageable age) and so not appropriately called *virgines*.

²⁴ In this case the *puella*, a foundling employed as an *ancilla*, is later found to be free-born.

the two young girls are addressed as *puellae* by an older woman whom they call *mater*- here the tender associations of the diminutive form might perhaps be felt; similarly at 1148 and 1153, where the girl is so addressed by an older man (who is later discovered to be her father).

The employment of *puella* on two occasions with reference to a young child²⁵) who has been lost or stolen is of particular interest, since *virgo* is also used in the same way. At first sight, it might seem that there is no difference between the two words when used in this context, in other words, „*virgo parvola/parva*“ and „*parvola puella*“ both mean simply „little girl“²⁶). Closer inspection, however, reveals that *virgo* is used only by speakers who are aware that the girl is free-born (Plaut. *Rud.* 39, 1105, *Poe.* 88, Ter. *An.* 924) whereas when *puella* is used, the speaker is uncertain of the girl's origin. Moreover, all the examples cited above occur in passages where the girl's status as a free-born citizen—crucial to the plot—is under discussion. I suggest that *virgo* is used deliberately, to define the social position of the girl in question: that is, a „*parva virgo*“ is not merely a „little girl“ (the meaning of „*parva puella*“) but a junior version of the unmarried respectable young woman that the term normally denotes. When this status is unclear, the more general term *puella* is employed²⁷).

This distinction is further seen in the three examples of *puella* which remain to be discussed. At Plaut. *Rud.* 45, 59 and *Pers.* 592 the word refers to a girl known by the speaker to be a *virgo* (in the sense outlined above). There seems no reason why *virgo* could not have been used in these cases; in none of them is it necessary, however, since the girl's position is not being defined (in fact, in the two examples from the *Rudens*, she has already been introduced into the narrative of the prologue as *virgo* (39, 41). It seems that here *puella* is simply used as a substitute for *virgo* in the sense „young girl“, in the case of the *Rudens*, perhaps for variety (she is mentioned 9 times in the course of 43 lines). *Puella*, then, is a general term,

²⁵) At *Eun.* 108–113 she is old enough to tell her name but not her address.

²⁶) Note that both words are qualified by an epithet because *puella* often, and *virgo* usually, denote girls in their teens (the one exception is Plaut. *Poe.* 88 where the meaning, however, is clear from the context).

²⁷) That *puella* is unspecific is shown clearly by Ter. *Eun.* 109f. where—after the girl has been described as *puella*—the question is asked “*civemne?*” In this case the speaker who calls her *puella* thinks that she is a citizen (and refers to her as *virgo* elsewhere) but here her status is in question; thus the defining term is deliberately avoided.

which can occasionally be substituted for *virgo* but may also be used of *meretrices*. *Virgo*, by contrast, is always applied to girls of a specific status (that is, girls who are unmarried and not *meretrices*). Finally, it is interesting to note that these three examples of the diminutive *puella* all occur in Plautus, whose freer use of diminutives in comparison with Terence is well-known²⁸).

B) *Virgo and Puella after Comedy*

Having established the basic distinction between the terms *virgo* and *puella* as used in Comedy, we may now trace the semantic development of each word in later poetry and prose.

(i) *Virgo*

In Plautus and Terence, as was demonstrated above, the word *virgo* generally refers to a young unmarried woman of respectable morals. In most cases she is also sexually inexperienced: this notion, however, is not part of the primary sense of *virgo* but a secondary resonance which the word acquired through social custom: since unmarried girls were expected to be chaste this meaning is usually — but not necessarily — present.

After the time of Plautus and Terence, *virgo* continues to be the „not juste“ for an unmarried girl. As the junior version of the *matrona*, *virgines* are often coupled with *matronae/matres* and/or *pueri* to denote the different groups of people within the civilian population, e.g. Livy 26.13.15 („nec dirui incendique patriam videbo, nec rapi ad stuprum matres Campanas virginesque et ingenuos pueros“), Caes. *B.C.* 2.4.3 („tali modo instructa classe omnium seniorum, matrum familiae, virginum precibus et fletu excitati“)²⁹).

As a „defining“ term, the word appears commonly on tombstones, where it is often added at the end of the inscription as an indication of the girl’s unmarried status: e.g. „Iulia Recepta/v.a. XV virgo“ (*C.I.L.* 6.8027; cf. id. 17144, 20653, 21070, 28280). In other cases, *virgo* is used in the course of an inscription, with reference to an unmarried girl (e.g. *C.I.L.* 6.7898, 10096, 12055, 13172, 22704,

²⁸ See F. Conrad, „Die Deminutiva im Altlatein I“, *Glotta* 19 (1930) 127–48, 20 (1931) 74–78.

²⁹ Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 4.35.77, *Phil.* 3.12.31, *Sulla* 6.19; Livy 29.17.15, 31.17.5, Sall, *Hist.* 3.98B.20f. (Mb); *Panegy.* 12.7.5, Mart. 5.2.1 etc.

36525). Of the examples cited, nos. 7898, 13172, 17144 and 22704 are epitaphs of free-born citizens³⁰). The remainder concern *libertae* or slaves, but this need not be inconsistent with our view of *virgo* as an unmarried respectable girl, since not all females of these classes became *meretrices*³¹): the former could marry³²), while the latter might enjoy a relationship with a fellow-slave that was tantamount to marriage, if not legalized³³).

A final manifestation of the stress on unmarried status is the frequent use of *virgo* with *filia* which amounts to „unmarried daughter“. Examples are numerous, especially in prose, e.g. Cic. *Sest.* 21.48, *Fin.* 2.20.66, *Rep.* 2.37.63, *Nepos Att.* 19.4, *Livy* 1.11.6 *et saep.*, *Virg. Georg.* 4.339, *Juv.* 3.110.

We have examined cases where *virgo* is employed to define a girl's status as unmarried. In a Roman context, such young women would normally be sexually uninitiated. Two passages, however, deal with the *mores* of foreign nations whose attitude to pre-marital sex is different: of the Illyrians, Varro says „nec non etiam hoc, quas virgines ibi appellant, non numquam annorum viginti, quibus mos eorum non denegavit, ante nuptias ut succumberent quibus vellent et incommitatis ut vagari liceret et filios habere“ (*Res Rust.* 2.10.9). In other words, Illyrian *virgines* (= unmarried girls) are both older and less pure than their Roman equivalents. And in Curtius (5.1.38) we learn that among the Babylonians women had sexual relationships with dinner guests- not only *meretrices*, but also *matronae* and *virgines*³⁴). The married women (*matronae*) are contrasted with the unmarried (*virgines*). These two examples both illustrate the use of *virgo* to indicate marital status and also provide further confirmation that *virgo* is a social rather than a biological term.

³⁰) Probably also 8027 and 20653, though the possibility that these are *libertae* whose patrons are not mentioned cannot be discounted.

³¹) In fact, the use of *virgo* in some of these cases is no doubt designed to stress that the girls were of respectable morals (e.g. the epitaph of the *liberta* Eucharis (10096), “docta erodita omnes artes virgo”, who appeared on the stage). I owe this note to H. D. Jocelyn, who also points out that the epitaphs of freedmen often pretentiously use terminology appropriate to free-born persons

³²) Marriage with a *liberta* was not encouraged among the upper classes, however. See S. Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen During the Late Republic* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 82ff., 211; S. B. Pomeroy, *op.cit.*, p. 195.

³³) Cf. Pomeroy, *ibid.*, pp. 193ff.

³⁴) *Virginum* is not the reading of the MSS but a plausible conjecture for *virorum*.

The most significant development in the usage of *virgo* after Plautus and Terence is that a single connotation „young“ or „chaste“ may be so much to the fore that it temporarily overshadows other meanings. This happens more frequently in the second case, but is occasionally also seen with the sense „young“.

At *Od.* 3.15.5 Horace mocks the old wife of Ibycus who wants to join in the erotic adventures of the younger women („inter ludere virgines“) ³⁵. Presumably the poet's intention here is not to expose the sexual *mores* of Rome's young ladies ³⁶—no *virgo* in the proper sense would behave this way—but to pour scorn on an old woman who tries to act like a teenager. In other words, *virgines* here means simply „young“ (as opposed to old) women“; its usual reference to a respectable unmarried girl is for the moment suspended ³⁷).

A second case of *virgo* in which the idea of youth is emphasised occurs at *Ov. Her.* 14.55 where the newly-married Hypermestra declares „femina sum et virgo, natura mitis et annis“. In view of Ovid's description of the fatal wedding night, when the husbands, „mero dubii“ (29), enter the bed-chambers, lie down, and fall into a drunken sleep („iamque cibo vinoque graves somnoque iacebant“ 33) before being murdered by their wives, it is likely that Hyper-

³⁵) For the sexual sense of *ludere* see R. Pichon, *Index Verborum Amatoriorum* (Paris, 1902), p. 192 s.v. *ludere*.

³⁶) The *virgines*, in that they include the daughter of a *matrona* (cf. l. 1 *uxor* l. 13 *lana*) are indeed unmarried citizens. But the Graeco-Roman setting places the poem in the realm of fantasy. More importantly, although Horace elsewhere condemns such behaviour (cf. *Od.* 3.6.21 ff.) he does not do so in the present poem, the point being that the activities of Chloris, because of her *age*, are reprehensible, but understandable in the case of her daughter.

³⁷) It is debatable whether the sense “young” is a basic meaning of *virgo* or an acquired secondary resonance like “chaste”. In favour of the former is the possible etymological connection with *virga* (see Walde-Hofmann ⁵1972 s.v. *virgo*; but contrast Ernout/Meillet ⁴1959 “sans étymologie”). Also, since spinsters were virtually non-existent, “unmarried” and “young” amount to the same thing (see Pomeroy, *op. cit.*, pp. 164–6, G. Clark in *Greece and Rome* 2nd ser. 28 (1981) 195: there is no special word for spinster in Latin, though *vidua* is sometimes employed as the feminine of *caelebs*; cf. Livy 1.46.7, Sen. *H. F.* 245, *Med.* 215). On the other hand, *virgo* is applied to Vestal Virgins, not all of whom were young (they entered service between the ages of 6 and 10 and served for 30 years: Dion. Hal. 2.67.2, Gell. 1.12.1) and to the aged Sibyl (*Virg. Aen.* 3.445, 6.45, 104 etc., *Sil.* 13.807), and even if, in these cases, the notion of virginity is important, the fact that *virgo* could be used at all might suggest that the connotation “young” is not fundamental.

mestra's description of herself as *virgo* (i.e. „virgin“) is true³⁸). This does not mean, however, that the notion of physical virginity is uppermost; taking the phrase as a whole, *virgo* balances *annis* just as *femina* goes with *natura*: i.e. I am female and thus gentle by nature and I am young and so gentle too by virtue of my age³⁹).

More significant is the increasingly frequent use of *virgo* to specify the notion of biological virginity⁴⁰).

A small number of examples survive from the republic, showing that the meaning was always a possible one, though, as we saw in the case of Comedy, it is by no means always present.

Festus (p. 141M) quotes a passage from a comedy of Afranius on the *molucrum*, a growth in the stomach which happens even to *virgines*: „ferme virgini/ iam crescit uterus tam quam gravidae mulieri:/ molucrum vocatur, transit sine doloribus“. The contrast between a *virgo* and a pregnant woman underlines that it is the physical condition of the *virgo* which is of importance here.

An even clearer instance is in Catullus 67, where the loquacious door discloses his first piece of scandal about the lady of the house: „Primum igitur, virgo quod fertur tradita nobis,/ falsum est. non illam vir prior attigerat/. . ./ sed pater illius gnati violasse cubile/ dicitur“ (19–24). Whatever the meaning of „non illam vir prior attigerat“⁴¹), the implications of *virgo* are manifest: the woman was said to be (technically) a virgin before her marriage to the owner of the house but had in fact been deflowered by her father-in-law⁴²).

Turning to the prose of the period, at *Inv.* 1.40.72 Cicero illustrates the concept of an *argumentatio* in which the conclusion is inferred rather than stated with the example: „si peperit, virgo non

³⁸) G. Giangrande (*Eranos* 64 (1966) 153–7) argues that the marriage was not consummated because the wine acted as a sleeping draught (cf. 1.42 “vina soporis erant”). H. Jacobson, *Ovid's Heroides* (Princeton, 1974), p. 140 and n. 44 believes the sexual act *did* take place. But the Danaids are referred to elsewhere as *virgines* (Hor. *Od.* 3.11.26, 35, *Stat. Th.* 5.118, cf. Prop. 2.1.67 *virgineus*) and if E. Rohde (*Psyche*, London 1925, Appendix 3) is right, the type of punishment inflicted on them—carrying water in broken pitchers—symbolises unfulfilment (i.e. of the marriage ritual).

³⁹) Cf. Jacobson, *op.cit.*, p. 140.

⁴⁰) I.e. *virgo* meaning “a virgin” as opposed to cases where it refers to a girl, who happens to be chaste, but does not draw attention to her physical condition.

⁴¹) See F. O. Copley, *T.A.P.A.* 80 (1949) 249–51, G. Giangrande, *Q.U.U.C.* 9 (1970) 93ff.

⁴²) Either her present or her former one, depending on whether “vir prior” means “her first husband” or “her present husband was the first to . . .”.

est: peperit autem"⁴³), and at *De Dom. Sua* 34.92 he derides Clodius' relationship with his sister: „tu sororem tuam virginem esse non sisti“.

Ovid is the first writer to make extensive use of *virgo* in the technical sense „virgin“, sometimes taking advantage of the opportunity for verbal wit: e.g. (of Callisto) „quae fuerat virgo credita, mater erat“ (*Fast.* 2.176, cf. *Am.* 3.4.22 (of Danae), „quae fuerat [in thalamum] virgo tradita, mater erat“). Other examples include *Her.* 5.129, *Fast.* 2.168, 6.283, 289, 293, *Met.* 2.451, 579 and 5.376.

Instances from later Latin prose and verse are numerous and need not be detailed here. In Christian Latin, *Virgo* becomes the customary title of Mary and is also regularly used to denote female saints honoured as virgins⁴⁴). Here the stress on the physical aspect of virginity is of course very strong.

Concordant with the use of *virgo* to emphasise the notion of purity is the increasingly common application of the term to animals and even inanimate objects.

Two factors are involved in this development: 1. the noun *virgo* is placed in direct apposition to another noun so that it becomes virtually an adjective, e.g. *virgo terra* (Pliny *N.H.* 33.15.2), *virgo lea* (Stat. *Th.* 12.357) etc. A precedent exists in earlier Latin in the common phrase *virgo filia* (= unmarried daughter) discussed above. 2. the range of meaning of the word becomes narrowed down to the purely biological, so that in some cases it comes to be an equivalent for *purus*.

The extension of *virgo* to animals is a logical one: hence a *virgo equa*, for instance, will mean a young mare which has not yet mated⁴⁵). In the case of Martial 13.56, 1, the emphasis is on the fact that the animal has not borne offspring: a *virgo porca* is contrasted to a *gravis* (pregnant) *sues*.

For the use of *virgo* with inanimate objects—a much more striking development—a precedent exists in Cicero's *Orator* (19.64), where *virgo* is applied metaphorically to the simple, pure style of philosophers: „mollis est enim oratio philosophorum et umbratilis nec sententiis nec verbis instructa popularibus nec vineta numeris,

⁴³) Later the same argument is repeated in the form “si peperit, cum viro concubuit: peperit autem”.

⁴⁴) Cf. A. Blaise, *Le Vocabulaire latin des principaux thèmes liturgiques*, rev. by D. A. Dumas (Brepols, 1966), pp. 349f., 514.

⁴⁵) E.g. Pliny *N.H.* 28.41.1 (mares), Stat. *Th.* 12.357 (lioness), *Silv.* 4.4.91 (heifer), Mart. 6.47.5 (pig).

sed soluta liberius; nihil iratum habet, nihil invidum, nihil atrox, nihil miserabile, nihil astutum; casta, verecunda, virgo incorrupta quodam modo“. Here, though, Cicero is likening an *oratio* to a *virgo incorrupta*. Grammatically, *virgo* remains a noun rather than a virtual adjective, and the metaphor is overtly stated⁴⁶). Martial (1.66.7) also makes a metaphorical use of *virgo* when he calls the paper on which his unpublished poems are written *virgo charta*: „secreta quaere carmina et rudes curas/ quas novit unus scrinioque signatas/ custodit ipse virginis pater chartae/ quae trita duro non inhorruit mento“ (5–8). Granted that the phrase was coined on the analogy of Catullus' *carta anus* (68.46)⁴⁷), nevertheless the meaning is not simply „young, fresh“, but a more complex image is created where the paper which has not yet made its way into the public is like a young unmarried girl carefully guarded indoors by her father.

In most later cases, on the other hand, the metaphorical force of *virgo* is attenuated to the extent that it means no more than „vacant, unused“, the basic notion of a young girl being completely forgotten; so Pliny (*N.H.* 33.15.2) talks of a king acquiring some *terra virgo*⁴⁸). A similar use is seen frequently in grave inscriptions where *virgo* is even applied to nouns of a different gender, *monumentum* (e.g. *C.I.L.* 6.24633 „D.M./ L. Pomponius/ Pantagathus/ comparavit/ monumentum/ virginem sibi/ et suis p.que“, cf. *C.I.L.* 6.13120, 25134), *soleum* (e.g. *C.I.L.* 6.33603), *locus* (*C.I.L.* 6.13074), and also the fem. *ollae* (*C.I.L.* 6.25192).

Finally, the feminine gender of *virgo* when used adjectivally may be so far forgotten that Marcellus, for instance, can write *puer virgo*—presumably without any feeling of inconsistency (*De Med.* 7.15, 8.126, 21.11, 26.107)⁴⁹).

It was demonstrated earlier that in Comedy *virgo* could be applied to rape victims after the event. In view of the increasing stress on (biological) virginity which we have just explored it may be enquired how long the usage seen in Comedy persisted.

We mentioned above two examples from prose (Varr. *Res Rust.* 2.10.9 and Curtius 5.1.38) and two examples from poetry (Hor.

⁴⁶) Cf. Cic. *Brut.* 96.330 where *eloquentia* is compared to an heiress who must be carefully protected by her guardians.

⁴⁷) Cf. L. Friedländer on Mart. 1.39.2.

⁴⁸) Pelagonius *Ars. Vet.* ed. M. Ihm 374 has *porrum virginem* which Ihm takes as “fasciculum viridis porri”.

⁴⁹) Marcellus also has “puella virgo” (29.34) and is fond of v. with *charta* in the sense “blank paper” (8.56, 57, 58, 10.34, 70, 14.68 etc.). For *virgo* of a young man cf. also *C.I.L.* 13.2036.

Od. 3.15.5 and *Ov. Her.* 14.55) where *virgo* refers to girls who are not biologically virgin (*Her.* 14.55, it was shown, is a doubtful case). In these instances, however, *virgo* bears a special emphasis („unmarried“ in the first two cases, „young“ in the examples from poetry) which overrides all other shades of meaning.

It remains to discuss several instances—all from poetry—in which *virgo* alludes to women who are not physically intact and where the word does not have any specialised resonances, that is, it simply means „girl“.

First, as in Comedy, girls are sometimes called *virgo* after they have lost their innocence. This use, it must be noted, is not very common: in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, for instance, where girls of this type abound, they are never referred to as *virgo* after the event. I have found only six examples. We know of a farce by Novius entitled *Virgo Praeagnas*⁵⁰). No doubt the title was intentionally paradoxical, the incongruity lying not in physical impossibility but in the violation of social conventions. Calvus describes the plight of Io (fr. 9 Morel) after her metamorphosis into a cow: „a virgo infelix, herbis pascere amaris“⁵¹). Raped maidens are described as *virgo* three times by Silius (3.420, 435, 6.633). The only other example, from Seneca's *Hercules Oetaeus*, is rather different: „est clara captas inter, in voltu genus/ regnumque referens, Euryto virgo edita/ Iole. tuis hanc facibus et thalamis para“ (1489–91). This is Hercules' dying request to his son, and although Iole has been his mistress, her physical condition is irrelevant: *virgo* is being used in its „social“ sense, to define Iole as a young unmarried woman, a suitable bride for Hyllus⁵²).

Two other classes of girl are sometimes referred to as *virgo*: (i) unmarried girls who have lost their virginity without preserving their moral integrity (i.e. who have not been raped) and (ii) young married women.

⁵⁰) Alluded to by Nonius (508M, 516M) and Prisc. GLK II 500,1; see P. Frassinetti, *Atellanae Fabulae* (Rome, 1967), p. 91.

⁵¹) In this case it is not certain that she has lost her virginity; in the original version she was turned into a cow by Hera to stop Zeus from raping her (cf. Aesch. *P.V.* 615ff.) but later writers put the rape before the metamorphosis, e.g. Hygin. 145 and Ovid (*Met.* 1.600) whose account may be based on that of Calvus (cf. *Met.* 1.632 “frondibus arboreis et amara pascitur herba”).

⁵²) It is noteworthy that in Sophocles' *Trachiniae* (1219) Iole is referred to as παρθένος, a word which, like *virgo*, is basically social rather than biological (see K. J. Dover, *Aristophanes: Clouds* (Oxford, 1970), note on l.530.)

Under the first heading may be mentioned Virgil's reference to Hero, the girlfriend of Leander, as *moritura . . . virgo* (*Georg.* 3.263), Horace *Od.* 1.6.17 („proelia virginum/sectis in iuvenes unguibus acrium“) and Ov. *Her.* 6.133 („turpiter illa [sc. Medea] virum cognovit adultera virgo“). In the first two examples, *virgo* is used as a general term for „young girl“⁵³.

The last example is somewhat different. It has been included here only because some scholars argue that *virgo* in the passage must mean „young girl“ rather than „virgin“ on the grounds that Medea is Jason's wife⁵⁴). But this is to misunderstand Ovid's intentions. A paradoxical effect is intended by the juxtaposition „adultera virgo“. Medea is being spoken of at the time of her „marriage“ to Jason, that is, when she was still a *virgo* and a bride. To perceive the full impact of the poet's words, the following line must be taken into account: „me tibi teque mihi taeda pudica dedit“ (134). Hypsipyle, the speaker (or rather, the writer) of the lines is contrasting her own chaste marriage („taeda pudica“) with the immoral („turpiter, adultera“) „marriage“ of Medea (note the sexual tone of „virum cognovit“ which is parallel to *taeda*), who came to Jason as a chaste bride (*virgo*) but who is also—paradoxically—*adultera* because she is usurping the position of a woman who still considers herself married to Jason⁵⁵).

(ii) In view of our basic definition of *virgo* as an unmarried woman, the application of the word to married women is striking. The case of Hypermestra in Ov. *Her.* 14.55 has already been discussed; if her marriage had not, as I think, been consummated, she may not be considered a *matrona*; as was shown, however, the force of *virgo* in the passage is „young“.

⁵³) In the case of *Od.* 1.6.17, *virgo* may have more point. Since the context is a *recusatio* in which Horace announces the confinement of his poetic activity to convivial/erotic themes, lines 17f. should refer to a lovers' *rixa*. Given, however, the aggressive behaviour of the girls, coupled with the military imagery, the usual erotic term *puella* (*vid. infra* for this usage) with its connotations of weakness, would be inappropriate.

⁵⁴) Lewis and Short include it under the heading „girl“ (not necessarily virgin); A. Palmer *ad loc.* says it refers to youth: „a girl but an adulteress“; Jacobson, *op. cit.*, p. 106 comments that the phrase „adultera virgo“ is paradoxical but does not explain in what way.

⁵⁵) G. Showerman's Loeb (1947) translation „base and shameless was the way that maid became your bride“, while not quite accommodating „adultera“ gets the basic idea right.

These circumstances do not apply to two other examples, though in each case reasons for the use of *virgo* may be postulated. First, in *Ecl.* 6 (47, 52) Virgil borrows Calvus' „a virgo infelix“, said of Io, but applies it to Pasiphae, the wife of Minos. To quote R. G. Coleman (note *ad loc.*) „the implication is perhaps no more than that Pasiphae was a young and chaste wife to Minos before Poseidon's intervention“.

Second, Horace in *Od.* 2. 8. 22f. alludes to the „miseræ . . . nuper/virgines nuptae“ who are afraid their husbands will be led astray by the notorious Barine. Now in the other two cases where *virgo* refers to a married woman, her marital status is irrelevant, as we saw: in the Ovid example *virgo* stresses her youth, in the case of the *Eclogues* *virgo* can be used because Pasiphae is thought of as a young girl. Here, however, the presence of *nuptae* deliberately draws attention to the fact that the girls are married. The explanation of R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard *ad loc.* is apposite: the juxtaposition of *virgines/nuptae* is a deliberate oxymoron, implying that the marriages, because of Barine, are „largely nominal“⁵⁶).

To summarise, although at first *virgo* means simply „an unmarried girl“, the accompanying notion of physical virginity becomes increasingly important, especially from the time of Ovid onwards. In prose, *virgo* refers to unmarried girls; and only to those who are *intactae*, except in the case of foreign nations with different attitudes to pre-marital sex⁵⁷). In Comedy, the word is also applied to girls after they have been raped; this use recurs in poetry up to the time of Silius. The application of *virgo* to non-respectable girls is rarer, is confined to poetry, and in many cases a special reason may be discerned. Finally, the reference to Pasiphae as *virgo* in *Ecl.* 6 is the only clear example where the word is used of married women whose marriage is known to have been consummated.

(ii) *Puella*

In Comedy, as was shown earlier, the contexts in which *puella* is used indicate that its diminutive character was felt. Most com-

⁵⁶ K. Quinn (*Horace: The Odes*, London, 1980) has recently suggested that the *virgines* in *Od.* 3.14.9 are young wives. It is much more natural to take them as the fiancées of the *iuvenes*, in contrast to the “pueri et puellae/ (non?) virum expertae” (children) in the following lines.

⁵⁷ Cf. Apul. *Met.* 4.29ff. where Psyche is called both *virgo* and *puella* up to the time of her “marriage” but afterwards is only referred to as *puella*.

monly it refers to babies or young children; when used of older girls, the emotional associations of a diminutive are often present. It is employed of *ancillae*, *meretrices* and on three occasions only, as a substitute for *virgo*. In only one instance (Ter. *Hec.* 231) is it applied to a married woman, but she is a new bride whose marriage has not been consummated, and in any case the emphasis is on her youth (she is contrasted with an *anus*).

After Plautus and Terence, *puella* continues to refer to babies or young children. This meaning accounts for the occurrences of the word in Cato (*Agr.* 157.5) and Varro (*Res Rust.* 2.10.1) and for most of those few in Cicero (*Div.* 1.121, *Ad Att.* 6.4.3.9, 6.5.4.3)⁵⁸); it is found several times in later writers⁵⁹) and is common on later grave inscriptions⁶⁰) (cf. Martial's *Erotion*, 5.34.1), though it does not seem to be employed in those dating from the Republic (in *C.I.L.* 1)⁶¹).

Far more frequently, however, *puella* refers to older girls, and it is in this sphere that the word's range of meaning is extended after the time of Comedy.

Firstly, *puella* is sometimes used of *ancillae*. Only two examples were found in Comedy and in one of these the use may be explained by the context: at Plaut. *Cas.* 41 allusion is made to an exposed baby (*puella*); at 47ff. we read „postquam ea adolevit ad eam aetatem ut viris/ placere posset, eam puellam hic senex/ amat . . .“. „Eam puellam“ means „that same *puella* referred to above“; also the use of *puella* comes close to its erotic use which will be discussed shortly.

When, by contrast, Horace refers to servants as *pueri* and *puellae* (*Od.* 4.11.10) he is using *puella* as the feminine equivalent of *puer* in the sense „slave“. *Puer* is, however, much more common than *puella* in this meaning; examples of *puella* so used are confined to poetry: Tib. 1.3.87, Ov. *Fast.* 2.745, 4.425, *Her.* 9.73, Mart. 2.66.6, Juv. 6.354.

⁵⁸) Caesar, Nepos and Sallust never use *puella*.

⁵⁹) E.g. Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.99, Ov. *Her.* 1.29, 8.92, *Met.* 9.712, *Tr.* 3.12.5, Mart. 10.63.5, 11.61.8, Tac. *Ann.* 5.9.4, Suet. *Ve.* 5.2, *Cal.* 42.

⁶⁰) E.g. *Carm. Lat. Ep.* 1160, *C.I.L.* 6.19168, 27383.

⁶¹) One early example of *puella* is found (*C.I.L.* 6.6051); the age is not given, but she is presumably grown-up (cf. 1.3 “quam coluit dulci gavisus amore”, 1.7 “laudata figura”; also *nymphē*, if it is not the girl's name, may mean “bride”).

A more frequent extension⁶²⁾ in usage is the application of *puella* to young married women. The first clear⁶³⁾ instance is again found in Horace who alludes to Diana's function as goddess of childbirth: „Montium custos nemorumque, Virgo,/ quae laborantis utero puellas/ ter vocata audis adimisque leto“ (*Od.* 3.22.1–3). Young wives who are pregnant or hoping to become so are also called *puella* at Ov. *Fast.* 2.445, 451, Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 24.14 and later, Prud. *Per.* 10.165; (cf. also Pliny *N.H.* 10.76.154 for *puellaris* used in the same way). Other cases in which married women are alluded to as *puellae* are Ov. *Fast.* 2.557, Sen. *Ad Helv.* 12.6.5, and frequently in inscriptions⁶⁴⁾ where emotional connotations may perhaps be to the fore (cf. also Pliny *Ep.* 4.21.2 on the early death of two sisters). Finally, on several occasions *puella* when used of wives has the special connotation „young“ as opposed to old: e.g. Ov. *Her.* 1.115, Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 94.15, Col. 12.1.1, Mart. 8.79.5, 9.66.1, Tac. *Ann.* 14.64.1, 16.30.7 (the last of a widow). This resonance is also sometimes present where the female in question is unmarried (e.g. a *puella* is contrasted with an *anus* at Phaedr. 2.2.10; at Livy 39.12.6. „puellam admodum“ means „when only a young girl“). In Martial, *puella* becomes virtually an adjective meaning „young“, e.g. a man's wife is described as „formonsa, pudica, puella“ (9.66.1); *puella* is likewise coupled with *formonsa* in a poem on Fabulla, whose girlfriends are all either old (*vetulae*) or ugly (*turpes*): „sic formonsa, Fabulla, sic puella es“ (8.79.5)⁶⁵⁾.

The most noteworthy development in usage of *puella* is in the erotic sphere, where it becomes the standard term for a woman viewed as a potential object of love. The elegists, of course, make abundant use of the word: it is frequently employed with reference to *meretrices* (the „cultae puellae“ of the *Ars Amatoria*, for example)⁶⁶⁾ or married women behaving as such. Whether or not Cynthia and her like were married women, there are other clear cases in which an *uxor* is referred to as *puella* in this sense: Tibullus, for example, uses „cultu puella“ of an old man's wife who dresses

⁶²⁾ Though in Comedy matrons are always older women who could not be called *puella*.

⁶³⁾ Apart from the ambiguous *C.I.L.* inscription; *vid. supra* n. 61.

⁶⁴⁾ E.g. *C.I.L.* 6.6986, 14404, 23629, 28877.

⁶⁵⁾ Cf. 1.64.1, 4; *puella* is also used of young as opposed to old women at 10.67.2 and 14.56.1.

⁶⁶⁾ *A.A.* 3.51 „cultas ne laede puellas“. *Puella* is thus used 73 times in the poem.

up to attract younger lovers (1.10.59). The word is also applied to faithful wives such as Propertius' Arethusa (4.3.72), in the context of their relationship with their husband.

In mythological *exempla*, both *virgines* and *matronae* are frequently referred to as *puellae* when the point of the *exemplum* is to compare or contrast the behaviour of mythical heroines with the poet's own *puella* or—in the case of *A.A.* and *R.A.*—with contemporary *puellae* in general. In Propertius' first poem, for instance, the *virgo* Atalanta is alluded to as „velox puella“ (1.1.15) because her successful wooing by Milanion is contrasted with Cynthia's intractable harshness towards the poet. Similarly, the application of *puella* to Procris, wife of Cephalus (Ov. *A.A.* 3.736) may be explained by the fact that Procris' tragic fate is presented as a warning to modern-day *puellae* (cf. 3.685f. „nec cito credideris: quantum cito credere laedat/ exemplum vobis non leve Procris erit“⁶⁷).

In employing *puella* of a mythical heroine who is being compared to the poet's mistress, the elegists were anticipated by Catullus (2.11, Atalanta—whom the poet compares to Lesbia—is called *puella*). It is to Catullus also that the elegists owe their most frequent use of the word: namely, to allude to the girl who is the subject of their verse. A favourite phrase of Catullus is „mea puella“ in the sense „my mistress“⁶⁸. He uses it 7 times—all in the polymetrics (2.1, 3.3,4,17, 11.15, 13.11, 36.2) and on 5 other occasions he employs *puella* by itself as a substitute for *amica* (8.4.7,12, 36.9, 37.11). Tibullus talks of „nostra“ or „mea puella“ 4, Propertius 8 and Ovid in the *Amores* 6 times⁶⁹, while *puella* is used by itself of the poet's mistress 11, 21 and 18 times respectively.

Examples from elsewhere are too numerous to detail, but *puella* is regularly used in erotic contexts in personal poetry (Horace has instances in the *Odes* and *Epodes* as well as *Sat.* and *Ep.*; Martial has many examples) and in the novel (Petronius, Apuleius *Met.*)⁷⁰.

⁶⁷) Other examples include Prop. 2.3.36, 8.23, 18.17; 3.19.26; 4.1.111, Ov. *A.A.* 1.109, 125, 551, 2.187 etc.

⁶⁸) It is uncertain whether Catullus was the first to use the phrase this way: *mea puella* occurs in a dramatic fragment of Ennius (402 R) but the context is not clear—is the speaker the girl's lover or an older person e.g. her father?

⁶⁹) By contrast, „nostra amica“ is found only once (Prop. 4.5.63), though *amica* by itself is common in the sense „mistress“ (Prop. 11 times, [Tibullus] once (3.19.13), Ovid *Am.* 9, *A.A.* 10, *R.A.* 5).

⁷⁰) Cf. also Livy 29.23.7, Sen. *Apoc.* 8.2.6, Col. 10.105.

The examples of *puella* so far discussed demonstrate that the word possesses its own distinct range of meanings. In none of the cases examined would *virgo* have been an acceptable substitute. Often, however, *puella* refers to a girl of marriageable age who could, in theory, also be termed *virgo*. Yet here too the use of *puella* rather than *virgo* is frequently the result of a conscious choice on the part of the writer arising from the emotional overtones possessed by the diminutive *puella*.

We have already noted instances in elegy where a mythological *virgo* who is being compared to the poet's mistress is termed *puella*. On other occasions, the context requires an emphasis on pathos or weakness which is better conveyed by *puella*. Two of the 13 occurrences of *puella* in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* may be explained in this way: at 2.434ff. Callisto's futile attempts to ward off the amorous advances of Jupiter are described: „illa quidem contra, quantum modo femina posset/ . . . / illa quidem pugnat, sed quem superare puella,/ quisve Iovem poterat?“ The connotation of *puella* here is „whom could a mere (or a poor weak) girl overcome?“ Similarly at 9.544f. Byblis complains that she has endured more than a poor girl could be expected to: „. . . plus, quam ferre puellam/ posse putes, ego dura tuli“. This use of *puella* is also seen very commonly in Ovid's *Heroides* (e.g. 2.63, 5.155, 10.118, 12.89f., 92, 14.65, 87, 19.7, 127, 21.122).

One last example to illustrate the use of *puella* for its pathetic associations: in an elegiac grave inscription a 12 year old *virgo* is lamented by her parents: „ . . . [viator],/ paulisper celeres siste rogate pedes,/ neu grave sit tenerae cognoscere fata puellae/ . . . / bis mihi iam senos aetas impleverat annos/ spemque dabat thalami . . . / cum mors festinans crescentis [abstulit annos]/ flevit et adsidue maestus uterque parens (etc.)“ (*Carm. Lat. Ep.* 1055 = *C.I.L.* 9.1817). Normally in epitaphs, the use of *puella* and *virgo* is distinct, the former referring to girls aged 10 and under or to young married women, the latter to unmarried girls, usually in their teens⁷¹), and defining their marital status. In the present case, however, instead of a bare statement of name, age and marital status, we have a

⁷¹) Of the 26 *virgines* in *C.I.L.* 6 whose ages are given, the majority are between 12 and 19 years, 14 being the most common (6 cases). There is one 22 year old (34728) and three children: 10703 (6 years), 17144 (9) and 7898 (10), but in the last case the girl's morals are emphasised (“v. pudica:”). At *Carm. Lat. Ep.* 1401, the application of *virgo* to a 4 year old may be justified by the presence of the epithet “tenera”.

parents' lament for their child, with the emphasis on the tragic fate of one who died too young for marriage. In these circumstances, the use of *puella* rather than *virgo* is inevitable.

(iii) *Use of Virgo and Puella in the Same Context*

Up to this point, the emphasis of the discussion has fallen on the differences between *virgo* and *puella*. It is now time to turn to cases where the pair may be regarded as synonymous. These will be examined under three headings:

(i) types of context where both words may be used.

(ii) passages in which the same person is referred to as both *virgo* and *puella*.

(iii) cases where *puella* is used as a substitute for *virgo* without any apparent special connotations.

(i) On many occasions boys and girls are grouped together, either as „*pueri et puellae*“ or „*pueri et virgines*“, and it is worth considering whether a distinction in meaning may be discerned between *puella* and *virgo* in this type of context.

In some cases, *puellae* refers to young children who are perhaps not old enough to be termed *virgines*⁷²), e.g. Cato *Agr.* 157.5, *Panegy.* 8.9.1 (Baehrens), Varro *Res Rust.* 2.10.1; in the last case an additional factor is present in that the *puellae* are *slaves* (employed to tend the flocks).

Conversely, where *pueri* are coupled with *virgines* it is often in connection with other groups of the population, e.g. Cicero (*Phil.* 3.12.31) speaks of *matres familiae*, *virgines* and *pueri ingenui* as victims of war. Such cases may be viewed as exemplifying the „defining“ use of *virgo* discussed earlier; in those instances where *matronae* are included, there is also a contrast between the married and unmarried women⁷³). A secondary consideration here, perhaps, is that in several cases the girls are victims of rape on the part of the enemy: in such a context *virgo*, with its connotations of moral as well as physical integrity, emphasises the shocking effect of the act on Roman sensibilities⁷⁴).

⁷²) In literary texts, *virgo* is not normally used of very young children unless qualified by an epithet such as *parva* (*vid. supra* n. 6). The most notable exception is Ov. *Fast.* 1.628 where *virgines* refers to baby girls.

⁷³) Cf. also Cic. *Sulla* 6.19, Livy 26.13.15, 29.17.15, *Panegy.* 2.37.4, 3.6.4.

⁷⁴) Other cases where *virgo* emphasises chastity are Columella 12.4.3 (*pueri* and *virgines* are employed in a certain ritual because purity is de-

In the light of the above, Virgil's use of *puella* in his description of the underworld at *Georg.* 4.476 and in a similar context at *Aen.* 6.307 is all the more striking. The crowd of ghosts is composed of „matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita/ magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae,/ impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum“ (*Georg.* 4.475–7 = *Aen.* 6.306–8). It is possible that the poet uses *puella* here because he is thinking of young children (especially in view of the contrast between *pueri* and *iuvenes*), but more importantly, the choice of *puella* not only emphasises the tender youth of the girls but as a diminutive form introduces an element of pathos which could not be conveyed by *virgo*⁷⁵).

In one type of context it is difficult to distinguish between *pueri et puellae* and *pueri et virgines*, namely, references to choruses of boys and girls of unspecified age taking part in a sacred rite of some kind. *Puella* is so used by Catullus („puellae et pueri integri“ 34.2), Tacitus (*H.* 4.53.9—though here *puella* may be used to distinguish these girls from the Vestals also participating) and Suet. *Cal.* 16.4. Horace, by contrast, combines *pueri* with *virgines* 5 times in this context: at *Od.* 1.21.1, 3.1.4, 4.1.25f., 6.31 and *C.S.* 6, but refers to *pueri* and *puellae* at *C.S.* 34–6, *Sat.* 1.1.85 and *Ep.* 2.1.132.

These figures bring us, for the first time, to the question of style. Can *puella* and *virgo* be differentiated, as Axelson and others have thought, purely in terms of stylistic level as opposed to meaning and connotation? Though in most of the cases so far discussed, the pair have been shown to possess their own distinct range of meaning, in the present case this does not apply and it is probable that the choice of vocabulary is determined by the tone, or stylistic level, of the passage in question. It is significant that Horace uses *puella* in the „lower“ *Satires* and *Epistles* but *virgo* in the *Odes*; of particular interest is his employment of the phrase „castis cum pueris ignara puella mariti“ at *Ep.* 2.1.132 to allude to the chorus which, in the

manded) and in Martial's epigrams, where *puella* is commonly used in its erotic sense, a distinction is made between such *puellae* and the innocent schoolchildren, *pueri* and *virgines*, for whom the poems are unsuitable (5.2.1; v. is also applied to schoolgirls at 8.3.16 and 9.68.2).

⁷⁵ See Austin's note on *Aen.* 2.238 and Wilkinson, *loc.cit.* Axelson's metrical explanation should be rejected; it would only be valid if *puella* and *virgo* were exact synonyms, and elsewhere in epic poetry *puella* is used in cases where the corresponding form of *virgo* is *not* metrically intractable (e.g. *Ov. Met.* 1.712, 2.436, 9.544, Manilius 5.255, 552, 569 etc., Silius 10.494, *Stat. Th.* 12.761).

solemn introductory section of the *Carmen Saeculare* (1.6) he had called „virgines lectae puerique casti“. *Puella*, as a diminutive in form, and a word used often to express pathos, erotic feelings or other emotions, is more at home in intimate, less elevated styles of writing; whereas *virgo*, as the defining term, might perhaps have had a more formal tone; at any rate it is devoid of the emotional connotations which might make *puella* seem unsuitable in an elevated context⁷⁶).

(ii) Passages where the same girl is referred to as both *puella* and *virgo*.

In nearly every instance, the girl is introduced as *virgo*—the term defining her status—and referred to subsequently as *puella*, apparently for variety. Even here, it is often possible to discern a contextual variation. Take, for example, a passage in Livy (24. 26. 1–12). Here two girls are introduced as the „virgines filiae“ (= unmarried daughters) of Heraclia: „ea (sc. Heraclia) . . . in sacrarium ad penates confugit cum duabus filiabus virginibus . . . (there follows an account in *Oratio Obliqua* of the mother’s entreaties) . . . quod ab se cuiquam periculum, a sola ac prope vidua et puellis in orbitate degentibus esse? . . . ut ferrum quosdam expedientes cernebat, tum omissis pro se precibus, puellis ut saltem parcerent orare institit, a qua aetate etiam hostes iratos abstinere . . . inter haec abstractam a penetrantibus iugulant; in virgines deinde respersas matris cruore impetum faciunt“. There is an obvious difference between the mother’s plea for pity (where *puella* is used) and the factual statement that the *virgines* were killed. One further example: in the *De Divinatione* (1.46.104) the story is told of Caecilia whose reply to her niece on being asked for her chair—„vero, mea puella, tibi concedo meas sedes“—proved to be an omen of the niece’s marriage to her uncle after Caecilia’s death. In this passage, the girl is referred to twice as *virgo* and twice as *puella*: „cum virgo staret et Caecilia in sella sederet . . . puellam defatigatam petisse a matertera, ut sibi concederet, . . . illum autem dixisse: „Vero, mea

⁷⁶ The use of *puella* to describe the Trojan children participating in the ritual reception of the wooden horse (“pueri innuptaeque puellae” *Aen.* 2.238) is not an exception to this trend, *puella* probably being used deliberately (unlike the Horace passages just referred to) to emphasise the youth of “these simple creatures, so soon to perish, or to be seized as slaves” (Austin, note *ad loc.*); in addition, the repetition of the phrase in Book 6 (discussed above) may suggest that the ghosts in the underworld are the same children who appear in Book 2.

puella, tibi concedo meas sedes'. Quod omen res consecuta est; ipsa enim brevi mortua est, virgo autem nupsit, cui Caecilia nupta fuerat".

The context in which the two uses of *virgo* occur is neutral; by contrast, the second instance of *puella* is in direct speech: „mea puella“ is a natural affectionate form of address between aunt and younger niece, and in the first case, *puella* might imply weakness and/or youth, especially in juxtaposition with *defatigatam*.

No such qualifications exist, however, in the case of Livy's narrative of Verginia (3.44ff.) where the girl is called *virgo* 13 times and *puella* 14, though here, too, it will be noted, *virgo* is the first of the pair to be used. *Puella* is simply employed for the sake of variety — unless we are to suppose that Livy in using *puella* is trying to evoke the reader's special sympathy. Other cases where the same girl is referred to as both *puella* and *virgo* are mainly confined to poetry: Catullus calls Ariadne *virgo* at 64.86 and *puella* at line 97; in the *Ciris*, *virgo* is used 10 times of Scylla and *puella* 8; Manilius has *virgo* 3 times of Andromeda and *puella* 5; Silius refers to the girl Cloelia as *puella* (10.494) and 3 times elsewhere as *virgo*. In prose, Apuleius uses both *puella* and *virgo* freely of Psyche (*virgo* 6, *puella* 8) and Charite (*virgo* 12, *puella* 22).

(iii) Passages where a *virgo* is referred to as *puella* without any special contextual reason⁷⁷⁾ are not as numerous as might be expected.

From 1st century B.C. literature the following can be cited: Lucretius 3.1008 (but the reference is to the Danaids whose marital status is in dispute — see above)⁷⁸⁾, Cinna fr. 12 p. 89M. (of the Amazons), Virg. *Ecl.* 6.61 (Atalanta), and Cicero *Ad Att.* 1.5.6 (though here the girl's age is unspecified).

Ovid has *puella* of Europa at *Fast.* 5.605 and of Syrinx at *Met.* 1.712 (the other 12 instances of *puella* in the *Met.* can all be explained as erotic or pathetic uses)⁷⁹⁾. Thereafter, I have found the following instances: Germ. *Arat.* 249, Manilius 1.323, 3.359, 4.615, 5.180, Persius 2.37, Mart. 6.8.5, 8.64.11, 14.75.2, Juv. 3.160,

⁷⁷⁾ I.e. the need for connotations of pathos, or for variety in cases where *virgo* has already been used.

⁷⁸⁾ Horace also employs *puellae* of the Danaids at *Od.* 3.11.23: here the expression "Danai puellae" is equivalent to "Danai filiae".

⁷⁹⁾ For pathos see above p. 137; at 9.712 *puella* is used of a baby, and in erotic contexts at 3.353, 5, 4.56, 9.454, 10.153, 259, 280, 622.

Pliny *Ep.* 1.14.8, 5.16.1, Suet. *Gal.* 9.2, Calp. Fl. 43, Apuleius *Met.* 4.28,29, Prudentius *S.* 1.78⁸⁰).

Firstly, most of these instances do not occur in the most elevated genres of poetry or prose, the latter being hardly represented.

The second important fact to emerge is the increasing frequency of *puella* as a substitute for *virgo* in later writers. Though the former did not usurp the role of the latter at any stage⁸¹), in later Latin it is sometimes used not only where *virgo* might have been employed, but also in cases where *virgo* would be invariably used in earlier Latin. At *Apol.* 76, for instance, Apuleius describes a young woman who, having been deflowered and abandoned by her former fiancé, came to her new husband as a bride „nomen potius afferens puellae quam integritatem“. In this case, *puella* must mean „virgin“. Prudentius refers to „Vestales puellae“ (*S.* 2.1001) and calls Mary „intemerata puella“ (*C.* 3.145, cf. *A.* 568, again of Mary with the stress on her virginity)⁸²). Although *puella* is not one of the usual terms in Ecclesiastical writers for a virgin consecrated to God⁸³), it is sometimes found in this sense⁸⁴) and is especially common in inscriptions⁸⁵).

⁸⁰) Nymphs and Graces are often called *puellae* (e.g. *Virg. Ecl.* 5.59, 10.9, *Georg.* 1.11, *Mart.* 4.25.4, *Sen. Ben.* 1.3.6, 1.4.4) but the Nymphs had a reputation for lasciviousness (cf. *R.E.* 17.2, 1547 s.v. *nymphai*), and in the case of the Graces, Seneca stresses that they were not virgin goddesses (*Ben.* 1.3.7; cf. 1.4.4 where he calls them “bellae puellae”).

⁸¹) While *virgo* in its technical sense comes down into modern languages, e.g. Engl. “virgin”, Fr. “vierge”, It. “vergine”, Sp. “virgen” etc., the survival of *puella* is less certain. The Romance languages contain a group of words for girl (e.g. “polçella” (Old Milanese), “puncella” (Old Catalan), “pùncjela” (Serbo-Croat), which W. Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 3rd. ed. 1935) derives from Lat. *puella* or *pulla*- but the latter seems more likely (the late Lat. *pulicellus* is a diminutive from *pullicenus* (cf. *Lampr. Alex. Sev.* 41) which in turn comes from *pullus*). The same probably applies to the old French *pucele*, commonly used of the Virgin Mary; cf. the modern French expression “elle est encore pucelle” and the Italian “pulcella” (= “virgin”).

⁸²) Another possible instance is *Cal. Fl.* 51 where a man addressing his wife of 10 months says “tu me docueras puella misereri”. If *puella* is taken as nom. rather than voc. it must mean “you had taught me how to show pity when you were unmarried/a virgin (the reference is to an event that took place immediately prior to their marriage).

⁸³) Cf. A. Blaise, *op.cit.*, pp. 513ff.

⁸⁴) E.g. *Fel. II Ep.* 13,6 p. 263; *puellaris* is also thus used. See A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des auteurs chrétiens* rev. H. Chirat (Brepols, 1954) and by the same author, *Lexicon Latinitatis Medii Aevi praesertim ad res ecclesiasticas investigandas pertinens* (Brepols, 1975).

It is time to briefly summarise the results of our investigation. *Virgo*, a young unmarried female, is basically a term which defines the girl's social position; there is an increasing emphasis over the centuries on physical virginity. *Puella*, a more general term, has the emotional associations of a diminutive and so can be applied to both female children and older girls viewed as erotic objects; it is also used of young married women. In later times, *puella* may sometimes replace *virgo* in the sense „virgin“. Although in the meaning „young girl“ the usage of the word-pair may overlap, the number of instances in which either word would have been equally appropriate is not great; these are confined largely to the less elevated genres of poetry and prose.

Drei Vorschläge zum Text von Petrons ‚*Satyrica*‘

Für Albrecht Dihle zum 28. März 1983 in herzlicher Verbundenheit

Von GÜNTER NEUMANN, Würzburg

1. c. 50, 2f. *aerarius Corinthus vocatur*

Trimalchio prahlt, er sei der einzige, der echte Korintherbronzen besitze („*solus sum qui vera Corinthea habeam*“¹⁾), und begründet das dann mit dem Witz: *Quia scilicet aerarius, a quo emo, Corinthus vocatur* „Weil eben der Metallwarenhändler, von dem ich kaufe, Korinthus²⁾ heißt“. Sein nächster Satz — in der Form einer rhetorischen Frage — soll diese Pointe wohl noch verdeutlichen. Im codex Traguriensis (H), auf dem hier allein unsere Textkenntnis beruht, lautet er: *Quid est autem Corintheum, nisi quis Corinthum habet?* Da übersetzt Ehlers „Was ist denn eine Korintherbronze³⁾, wenn man nicht seinen Korinthus hat?“. Das entspricht zwar dem latei-

⁸⁵⁾ Cf. H. Leclercq in *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* (Paris, 1948) s. v. *puella*.

¹⁾ Daß dieser Konjunktiv hochsprachlich ist und dem Leser dadurch etwas von Trimalchios (öfter auch erfolglosem) Streben nach gewählter Ausdrucksweise verrät, betont H. Petersmann, PuP, p. 270.

²⁾ G. Betts, in: Glotta 49, 1971, 259f. hat zwar zutreffend erkannt, daß dieser PN und der an ihn geknüpfte Scherz erklärungsbedürftig sind, doch vermag sein Lösungsvorschlag nicht zu überzeugen.

³⁾ Zu den korinthischen Bronzen vergleiche H. Payne, *Necrocorinthia*, 1931, besonders p. 210ff. „Metal Vases“ und p. 348ff. Appendix III.