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Adulter Vs. Moechus: Jerome's Use of Terms for Adultery in Vulgate

Adulter Vs. Moechus: Hieronimova raba pojmov za prešuštvo v Vulgati

Abstract: Traditional marriage morality of the modern Western civilization has been greatly influenced by the Christian teaching on marriage, which sees adultery as a significant threat to a marriage bond. Christian marriage morality was shaped primarily during the 4th century when the Church allied with imperial institutions, rose to power, and Christianity spread at an extraordinary pace. Jerome revised the existing Latin translation of the gospels and translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to Latin. The Vulgate soon became the referential and most frequently used version of the Bible. It has for centuries influenced the content, style, and vocabulary of European literature and Romance languages. Due to its importance and the social, historical, and cultural circumstances under which it was formed, the Vulgate text is of the most significant relevance for exploring the terminology of adultery. The author investigates the terms for adultery used by Jerome in translating *Old Testament* (members of lexical families derived from the words *adulter* and *moechus* as a translation of Hebrew forms derived from the root *na'aph*) and endeavours to explain his motivation for choosing different Latin terms. The author also compares the vocabulary of adultery in the *New Testament* books of the *Vulgate* and explores Jerome's intervention in the Latin text of the *New Testament*.

Keywords: Jerome, *Vulgate*, *adulterium*, *moechus*, Latin language, adultery

Povzetek: Krščansko učenje o zakonu, ki razume prešuštvo kot glavno grožnjo zakonski zvezi, je v veliki meri vplivalo na tradicionalno razumevanje zakonske morale sodobne zahodne civilizacije. Krščanski moralni nauk o zakonu je bil oblikovan predvsem v 4. stoletju, ko je Cerkev skupaj s cesarskimi institucijami prišla do moči in se je krščanstvo neustavljivo širilo. V tem času je Hieronim posodobil obstoječi latinski prevod evangelijev in prevedel Staro zavezo iz hebrejščine v latinščino. *Vulgata* je kmalu postala osrednja in najpogosteje uporabljena različica Svetega pisma. Kot takšna je skozi stoletja vplivala na vsebino, slog in besedišče evropske književnosti in romanskih jezikov. Zaradi njenega pomena in tudi zaradi družbenih, zgodovinskih in kulturnih okoliščin, znotraj katerih je nastala, je besedilo *Vulga-*

te izjemno relevantno za raziskovanje besedišča prešuštva. Avtorica se posveča preučevanju izrazov za prešuštvo, ki jih je uporabil Hieronim pri prevajanju Stare zaveze (leksikalna družina okrog izrazov *adulter* in *moechus* kot prevedkov različnih oblik hebrejskega korena *na'aph*) in skuša razložiti njegove motive za različno rabo latinskih izrazov. Prispevek tudi primerja besedišče prešuštva v Novi zavezi *Vulgate* in pojasnjuje obseg Hieronimovih posegov v latinsko besedilo Nove zaveze.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, *Vulgata*, *adulterium*, *moechus*, latinščina, prešuštvo

1. Introduction and Methodology

In Western society, adultery is considered a serious threat to the stability of marriage and, consequently, family and society as a whole. In all ancient societies, a patriarchal view of adultery prevailed, based on the fact that only female sexuality was restrained. Adultery was considered extramarital sexual intercourse of a married woman; a married woman and her lover could only commit adultery. A husband who engaged in out-of-wedlock relationships was not considered an adulterer, and his actions were not subject to social or legal sanctions. A man's sexuality was restricted only when, as in intercourse with a married woman, his actions threatened another man's integrity. (Evans-Grubbs 1999, 94–102, 203–205; 2002, 83–87)

Christianity brought a great novelty in sexual morality: equal standards for both sexes. A man was expected to confine his sexual activities to marriage, and his unfaithfulness was condemned.¹ This paper shows how these cultural changes reflected on the Latin language, explore Jerome's method of translating the Old Testament and examines the range of his interventions in the New Testament.

At the instigation of Pope Damasus I (366–384), Jerome revised the existing Latin translation of certain New Testament books and, later, translated the Old Testament from Hebrew (or Aramaic). This Bible version, known as *Vulgate*, soon became the authoritative version of the Scripture in the Latin West. It has shaped the content, style, and vocabulary of Romance languages and European literature for centuries. Its text was formed at a crucial moment to develop Christian marital and sexual morality when the Church, allied with imperial institutions, rose to power, and Christianity was spreading at an extraordinary pace.

The traditional marriage morality of the Western world, which has its roots in Christian teaching on marriage, has been facing several challenges lately. Sexua-

¹ The idea that both genders are equal was sporadically present among pagan thinkers of the 1st century, but Christian ethics systematically adopts this idea (Joksimović 2016, 23–47). In *Ep. 77.3* Jerome speaks of Fabiola, who left her adulterous husband, so corrupt »that neither a whore nor a slave would put up with it« [non scortum quidem et vile mancipium ea sustinere posset]. In Jerome's opinion, she acted in accordance with Jesus' teaching that divorce is justified in the case of adultery, for what is true of a man is true of a woman. In this, Roman laws differ from divine laws: »Aliae sunt leges Caesarum, aliae Christi: aliud Papianus, aliud Paulus noster praecipit. Apud illos viris impudicitiae frena laxantur: et solo stupro atque adulterio condemnato, passim per lupanaria et ancillulas libido permittitur /.../ Apud nos, quod non licet feminis, aequè non licet viris /.../«

lity is no longer confined to marriage, and the need for marital sexual exclusivity is questioned regularly. By examining the terminology of adultery at the roots of Western marital morality, we hope to understand marriage better as we still know it today and identify its place in this rapidly changing world.²

This paper presents part of the results from the author's doctoral dissertation *Terminology of Adultery in the Vulgate and its Social, Historical and Cultural Context*³ (Joksimović 2016) in which Latin terms for adultery, namely, lexical families based on the words *adulter* and *moechus*, have been diachronically examined in several textual corpora: Pre-Christian Latin⁴, Christian Latin⁵, the Vulgate (Stuttgart edition), the Vetus Latina corpus, that is, Latin biblical translations other than Vulgate⁶, and Jerome's other works.

The first part of the paper presents Jerome's translation of the terms for adultery in the Vulgate Old Testament books. In the second part, the Old Testament vocabulary is compared with the vocabulary of the corpora as mentioned earlier in those aspects in which Pre-Christian and Christian Latin differ most.

This analysis comprises the works from the beginnings of Latin literature until Pope Gregory the Great (590–604). When the Lombard invasion of Italy (568) swept away Justinian's reconquest achievements, and Latin began to be vulgarized rapidly, the time of this Roman bishop is considered to be the actual end of late antiquity by many scholars (Löfstedt 1959, 9).⁷

2. Pre-Christian Latin

A specific Latin feature is two lexical groups for adultery: one based on the word *adulter*, and the other gathered around the word *moechus*. They are partial synonyms and differ in tone and connotations.

**Adulter* is originally a Latin word and *vox propria* for adultery. These are neutral technical terms, typical for high style, prose, and legal texts (Joksimović 2016, 146–147; 148–151).

Moechus is the Latinized form of the Greek *μοιχός*, 'seducer of a married woman'. The noun *μοιχός* was first adapted in spoken Latin and then passed over into the language of

² The views on this fundamental global social, cultural and religious changes have been summarised recently (Bahovec 2020).

³ In dissertation the author explores terminology of prostitution, fornication, mistresses and concubinage, as well.

⁴ Based on the *Packard Humanities Institute* database, containing Latin texts prior to 200 AD. Texts of unclear dating and commentaries on ancient works were not analyzed. *Digests* have been examined, as they contain older legal texts. Works of later pagan authors such as Ausonius were also explored.

⁵ Based on the *Patrologia Latina Database* containing works of Christian authors from Tertullian to 1216.

⁶ Based on the *Vetus Latina Database* containing Latin quotations of biblical verses other than *Vulgate* and references to them.

⁷ For the sake of brevity, an asterisk by a word marks entire lexical group, gathered around it (**adulter*, **moechus* ...), and Old and New Testament are abbreviated to OT and NT, respectively.

comedy. Such history determined its further destiny; thus **moechus* became a mocking and offensive term, appropriate for lower style and poetry (103–108; 108–117).

The differences in tone reflected in the frequency of the mentioned terms. In Pre-Christian Latin **adulter* occurs 11 times more frequently than **moechus*. Late Latin **adulter* prevailed in the language of the educated, while **moechus* disappeared from literary use but was preserved in spoken Latin (Adams 1983, 351–353).

The patriarchal view of adultery influenced the semantic content of the terms for adultery. Pre-Christian Latin has words to describe extramarital affairs of married women, that is, with them, but there is no term for an unfaithful husband and his actions. The term *adultera* (rarely *moecha*) denotes an unfaithful wife, verbs *adulterare* and *moechari*, and the noun *adulterium* refers to the adulterous wife and her lover (there is no corresponding noun from the **moechus* group). *Adulter* and *moechus* do not refer to an unfaithful husband but a seducer of a married woman.⁸ Such linguistic disproportion reflects the dual standard of sexual ethics.

3. Vulgate – Old Testament

In the OT, adultery is relatively often mentioned in the primary and figurative sense. In the basic sense, the patriarchal concept of adultery is described – the extramarital relations of a married woman and the seduction of married women. In this way, adultery is mentioned primarily in the Pentateuch as a rule within the verses which legally sanction sexual relations. A marital bond is a general symbol for a relationship between the Jewish people and God (Krašovec 2019, 880). In the prophetic books, however, adultery usually appears as a stylistic figure (allegory, metaphor, comparison) which describes the betrayal of an unfaithful wife (the Jewish people) and her falling away from her husband (God).

In the OT **adulter* and **moechus* are predominantly translations of the basic Hebrew terms for adultery, derived from the root *na'aph* (נָאֵף)⁹. Jerome consistently translates **na'aph* by the nominals from the **adulter* group (*adulter*, *adultera*, *adulterium*) and by the verb *moechari*. As will be shown, he departs from this practice for the sake of clarity, for stylistic motives, and, less frequently, to preserve the vocabulary of older Latin translations.

3.1 Nouns *ni'uph* and *na'aphuwph*

Two nouns meaning 'adultery': *ni'uphim* (נִיּוּפִים) (Strong 1890, 5004) and *na'aphuwph* (נֶאֱפָה) (Strong 1890, 5005) are translated by the word *adulterium* in the plural. There is no correlation with the *Septuagint*, where we find *μοιχεία* (singular, 2) and the participle of *μοιχεύω* (Table 1).

⁸ Only once *adulter* (Cic., *Scaur.* 8.2) and *adulterium* (Sen., *Ep.* 94.26) denote unfaithful husband and his actions; in Late Latin *adultera* can denote a mistress of a married man (Joksimović 2016, 162–163). For semantic content of **moechus* and **adulter* see Joksimović 2016, 111–132, 154–170.

⁹ 'To commit adultery'; figuratively, 'to apostatize'. (Strong 1890, 5003).

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Os 2:2	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχείαν	<i>na'aphuwph</i>
Jer 13:27	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεία	<i>ni'uph</i>
Eze 23:43	<i>in adulteriis</i>	ἐν τούτοις μοιχεύουσιν	

Table 1: *ni'uph and na'aphuwph.*

3.2 Non-finite Verbs

Jerome translates participles (functioning as nouns) and infinitives of **na'aph* mainly by nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium*, or the adjective *adulter*. Verb *adulterare* occurs only twice, in infinitive and participle form.

3.2.1 Feminine Participles

The form *adultera* always translates feminine participles: *qal* participles (7) by the noun, and *piel* participles, always combined with the noun *'ishah* (ἡ ψῆ) ,woman' (3), by the adjective (*mulier adultera*). The *Septuagint* has noun μοιχαλὶς (5) and passive participles of the verbs μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 2).

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Prov 30:20	<i>mulieris adulterae</i>	γυναῖκος μοιχαλίδος	<i>piel</i>
Os 3:1	<i>mulierem ... adulteram</i>	γυναῖκα ... μοιχαλὶν	
Eze 16:32	<i>mulier adultera</i>	ἡ γυνὴ ἡ μοιχωμένη	
Le 20:10	<i>adultera</i>	ἡ μοιχευομένη	<i>qal</i>
Eze 16:38	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος	
Eze 23:45	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος	
	<i>adulterae sunt</i>	μοιχαλίδες	

Table 2: *Feminine participles of na'aph.*

3.2.2 Masculine Participles

Masculine participles are mostly (7/9) translated by the form *adulter*. In Os 7:4 we find participle *adulterantes*, and in Le 20:10 the noun *moechus* (Table 3).

	Vulgate	Greek
Le 20:10	<i>moechus</i>	μοιχεύων
Job 24:15	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχοῦ
Prov 6:32	<i>adulter</i>	μοιχὸς
Is 57:3	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχῶν
Ps 49:18	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχῶν
Jer 9:2	<i>adulteri sunt</i>	μοιχῶνται
Jer 23:10	<i>adulteris</i>	-
Os 7:4	<i>adulterantes</i>	μοιχεύοντες
Mal 3:5	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχαλίδας

Table 3: *Masculine participles of *na'aph.*

Os 7:4 belongs to an obscure section on idolatry.¹⁰ It is quoted in the translations of Origen's works¹¹ and referred to in the verse *omnes adulterantes, quasi clibanus corda eorum*, which is a compound of Os 7:4 and 7:6 in the form found in older Latin translations.¹² This compiled verse became widely known in the 4th century with the struggle against numerous heresies and Origenism and often occurred in the works of Jerome¹³ and his contemporaries,¹⁴ containing almost exclusively participle *adulterantes* (cf. μοιχεύοντες in the *Septuagint*). Jerome presumably preserves the vocabulary of existing Latin translations, established by frequent references to the mentioned verse.

Le 20:10 prescribes the death sentence for adulterers: »Si moechatus quis fuerit cum uxore alterius, et adulterium perpetraverit cum conjugē proximi sui, morte moriantur et moechus et adultera.«

In the original, **na'aph* occurs four times.¹⁵ Jerome translates the same finite verb form (*yin'āp*) by *moechari* (*moechatus fuerit*) and by the construction *adulterium perpetrare* (*adulterium perpetraverit*), while masculine and feminine participles are translated by the nouns *moechus* and *adultera*. This is the only occurrence of the noun *moechus* in *Vulgate*. The use of the terms from different lexical families is a peculiarity of Jerome's translation. In the *Septuagint* we find forms of the verb μοιχεύω in all four places.¹⁶ Jerome's translation is probably motivated by style; this is indicated by his use of *uxor* and *conjunx* as a translation of the word ,wife', ,woman' (*'ishah*) in the same verse. The reason may be stylistic: parallelism is the primary stylistic tool in Hebrew literature¹⁷ but can be redundant in Latin; Jerome may have, therefore, opted for different terms: »moechatus fuerit cum uxore« – »adulterium perpetraverit cum conjugē« – »moechus« – »adultera«.

3.2.3 Infinitives

Jerome translates the infinitive of *na'aph* by infinitive *adulterare* (1) and noun *adulterium* (2). In *Septuagint* we find the noun μοιχεία and infinitive and participle of verbs μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 4).

¹⁰ Hier., *In Os.* 2.7.5 sqq.: »Obscurus locus et attento lectoris sensu indigens ut historiam cognoscamus.«

¹¹ *Adulterantes*: Orig., *In Matth.* 13.4 (PG 13,1103–1104); Iulian. (Ps.-Rufin.), *In Os.* 2.7; cf. Hier., *Jer.* 5.67. *Moechantes*: Rufin., *Orig. in Lv.* 5.5.

¹² Hier., *In Os.* 2.7.4–7: LXX 7.4: »Omnes adulterantes quasi clibanus ardens ad coquendum /.../«; 7.6 »Quia succensa sunt quasi clibanus corda eorum /.../«

¹³ Hier., *Ep.* 22.17; *In Eph.* 3.6; *In Eccl.* 107.1a; *In Soph.* 2.3–4; *In Matth.* 3.6.16 *adulterantium corda*; *In Ezech.* 9.28; 11.38; *In Mich.* 2 *adulterantes a Deo...*, 3 *adulterantium corda*; *In Nah.* 2.3; *In Ioel.* 1.19–20; *In Is.* 8.27.5; 16.58.13; 17.64.8sq.; *Ep.* 130.10.4; *In Ier.* 1.24; 3.81; cf. Ps.-Hier., *In Iob* 26.28.

¹⁴ Caes. Arel., *Serm.* 43.2 (=Ps.-Aug. 289); 189.4; 43.5; Eucher., *Form.* 7; Hesych., *In Lev.* 5.18; Ps.-Hier., *Brev.* 104; 107. Gaudent., *Serm.* 13.29: *fornicantes*.

¹⁵ אִישׁ אִשָּׁר יִשָּׁב אֶת זֶכֶר מִשְׁכַּבִּי אִשָּׁה תּוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם מוֹת יִמָּוֶתוּ דְּמֵיהֶם בָּם

¹⁶ "Ἀνθρωπος ὃς ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα ἀνδρός ἢ ὃς ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον θανάτῳ θανατούσθωσαν ὁ μοιχεύων καὶ ἡ μοιχευομένη."

¹⁷ On foundational literary forms in the Bible, and particularly on the parallelism see Avsenik Nabergoj 2019; on parallelism and synonyms and their translation in the *Septuagint* and the *Vulgate*, see Krašovec 2018, 490–495.

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Jer 7:9	<i>adulterare</i> ¹⁸	μοιχᾶσθε	qal
Jer 23:14	<i>adulterium</i> ¹⁹	μοιχωμένους	
Os 4:2	<i>adulterium</i>	μοιχεία	

Table 4: *Infinitives of *na'aph.*

3.3 Finite Verbs

3.3.1 Masculine Subject

Jerome translates finite verbs, whose subject is a man, by the verb *moechari*. The exception is Le 20:10, where he uses the syntagm *adulterium perpetrare* for stylistic motives (*supra*). Jerome avoids the verb *adulterare* (in Le 20:10 he uses *adulterium perpetrare*, not *adulterare*). In Septuagint, we find finite forms of μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 5).

	Vulgate	Greek
Ex 20:14	<i>non moechaberis</i>	οὐ μοιχεύσεις
De 5:18	<i>neque moechaberis</i>	
Le 20:10	<i>si moechatus quis fuerit cum adulterium perpetraverit cum</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα
Jer 5:7	<i>moechati sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
Jer 29:23	<i>moechati sunt in</i>	36:23 ἐμοιχῶντο τὰς γυναῖκας

Table 5: **Na'aph: finite verbs with masculine subject.*

3.3.2 Feminine Subject

The finite verbs of *na'aph*, whose subject is a woman, appear only in the prophetic books and are inconsistently translated with terms from three lexical families: **adulter*, **moechus*, and **fornicatio*. Jerome's translation is not correlated with the *Septuagint*, where we always find μοιχεύω or μοιχάομαι, or with the use of particular conjugations in the Hebrew original (Table 6).

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Jer 3:8	<i>moechata esset</i>	ἐμοιχᾶτο	piel
Jer 3:9	<i>moechata est cum</i>	ἐμοίχευσεν	qal
Eze 23:37	<i>adulterae sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο	piel
	<i>fornicatae sunt cum</i>		
Os 4:13	<i>adulterae erunt</i>	μοιχεύσουσιν	
Os 4:14	<i>cum adulteraverint</i>	ὅταν μοιχεύωσιν	

Table 6: **Na'aph: finite verbs with feminine subject.*

¹⁸ Clementina: »adulterari«.

¹⁹ Clementina: »adulterantium«.

When translating Jer 3:8-9, Jerome preserves the vocabulary of older translations while altering the construction of the verse: »quia pro eo quod moechata esset aversatrix Israël, dimissem eam /.../ et /.../ praevaricatrix Juda /.../ abiit /.../« (Jer 3:8); »/.../ et moechata est cum lapide et ligno« (Jer 3:9).

In the Septuagint and Origen's translation, Jer 3:8 has the imperfect ἐν οἷς ἐμοιχᾶτο, corresponding to *in quibus moechabatur* in Jerome's and Rufin's translation of Origen.²⁰ In the Vulgate, Jerome uses the pluperfect conjunctive *moechata esset*. In Jer 3:9, aorist ἐμοίχευσεν²¹ was translated in old Latin translations and Jerome's other works by perfect or imperfect, followed by the preposition *in* (*moechata est*²²/*moechabatur*²³ *in+acc./abl.*). In the Vulgate, we find the perfect *moechata est*, but with the preposition *cum* (*moechata est cum*).²⁴ Jerome, thus, innovates with syntax and morphology but not with vocabulary.

In Os 4:13-14 *adulterae erunt* and *adulteraverint* are a translation of the same verb form (3 pl. *tānā'āpnāh*): »Ideo /.../ sponsae vestrae adulterae erunt« 4:14: »non visitabo /.../ super sponsas vestras cum adulteraverint« (Os 4:13). There are two relevant older Latin translations of these verses: »Propterea /.../ sponsae vestrae moechabuntur, et non visitabo /.../ super sponsas vestras cum adulteraverint/.../« (Hier., *In Os.* 1.4.14 LXX);²⁵ »Moechabuntur/.../« (*Cod. Wirc.* Os 4:13) and »Et non respiciam /.../ super nurus vestras cum moecat« (*Cod. Wirc.* Os 4:14).

In Os 4:13, we find the future *moechabuntur* in both translations, corresponding to the future μοιχεύσουσιν in the *Septuagint*. In Os 4:14 in *Cod. Wirc.* we find the present *moecat* (active!) and in *In. Os.* *adulteraverint* as in the Vulgate (in Septuagint present conjunctive μοιχεύωσιν). The translation in Jerome's commentary on Hosea is almost identical to the one in the *Vulgate*, but *Cod. Wirc.* differs in: *respiciam* (Vulg. *visitabo*) and *nurus* (Vulg. *sponsam*). There are no other references to Os 4:13. When citing Os 4:14 (before and after the translation of the Book of Hosea c. 393), Jerome always uses *adulteraverint*, but alternates *nurus* and *sponsa*, which indicates that he was familiar with translations like *Cod. Wirc.*, containing *moechari* in both verses.²⁶ Nevertheless, Jerome uses terms from the group **adulter* in both verses.²⁷

²⁰ Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 14.1.5; Rufin., *Orig. in Rom.* 7.18.

²¹ LXX: »/.../καὶ ἐμοίχευσεν τὸ ξύλον καὶ τὸν λίθον.«

²² Cyr., *Ep.* 63.18; cf. Ps.-Aug., *Alterc.* 237 (44); Ps-Hier., *Pachom. Reg.* 159 (61.9) *moechatus est in*; Rufin., *Orig. in Ios.* 7.5: *meretricabamur*; Euseb. Emes., *Serm.* 26.3 *fornicabatur ad*. Faust. Rei., *Grat.* 2.10 gives up the metaphor: *lignum adorat et lapidem*.

²³ Gaudent., *Serm.* 8.37; Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 14.1; 14.6; *moechabantur in*: Hier., *In Os.* 1.4.10 sqq.; *In Is.* 16.3 sqq.

²⁴ Ita Hier., *In Ier.* 1.3.6 sqq.

²⁵ Latin version of Origen's recension of *Septuagint*.

²⁶ *Sponsas*: Hier., *Quaest. Hebr. in Gen.* 9.4; *In Is.* 17.63.18-19; *nurus*: *In Is.* 1.1.5; 6.13.11; 7.19.20sq.; *Ep.* 140.15.3; *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 2.5.

²⁷ Cf. Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 2.5: »non uisitabo /.../ super nurus vestras, quando adulterant (al. adulterantur).«

In Eze 23:37, the same verb form *ni'êpû* is translated first by the construction *adulterae sunt* and then by *fornicatae sunt*: »Quia adulterae sunt²⁸ /.../et cum idolis suis fornicatae sunt /.../.« It is unclear why Jerome chooses words from different lexical families or opts for the verb *fornicari*. In both places we find ἐμοιχῶντο in the *Septuagint* and *moechabantur* in *Fragm. Sang.*²⁹ In the commentary on Ezekiel, Jerome quotes translation as in the *Vulgate* but uses *moechari* instead of *fornicari* in the paraphrase.³⁰

Maybe the Hebrew text Jerome translated differed from the one known to us, which was the basis for the *Septuagint*. As we have seen before, the reason may be stylistic: Jerome opts for different terms to avoid the redundancy of Latin words caused by Hebrew parallelism.

3.4 Jerome's Self-initiated Use of *adulter

In the OT **moechus* appears exclusively as a translation of **na'aph*. Jerome, however, uses **adulter* to translate **na'aph*, but also Hebrew words of more general meaning (7 occurrences, Table 7). Such use of **adulter* prevails in the Pentateuch (5/7); it is not conditioned by the vocabulary of older Latin translations or the *Septuagint*.

Ancient Bible translators generally tended to choose words with the most general meanings for translating terms with a wide semantic range unless the context required specificity (Krašovec 2018, 489); this indicates that Jerome felt the strong need to use the terms with more specific meaning.

Jerome only uses nouns *adulter* (2), *adultera* (2) and *adulterium* (3) in such a manner. He never uses the verb *adulterare*, although half of the translated Hebrew forms are verbs (Num 5:13; 5:27; Is 57:8) and predicate constructions (De 22:22).

3.4.1 Adulter, adultera = ,man', ,woman'

In De 22:22, the death penalty for adulterers is again prescribed: »Si dormierit vir cum uxore alterius, uterque morietur, id est, adulter et adultera /.../.« The nouns *adulter* and *adultera* are a translation of 'iysh ,man' (אִישׁ), that is, the syntagm meaning ,the one lying down with a woman' and 'ishshah ,woman' (אִשָּׁה), referring to an adulteress and her lover. The text of the *Septuagint* and older Latin translations corresponds to the Hebrew original; therefore, Jerome's translation is excluded.³¹

3.4.2 Adulterium = ,defiled', ,sin', ,betray'

Section Num 5:12-31 describes the procedure for proving a wife's adultery; in it *adulterium* appears three times, indicating wife's infidelity as a translation of the

²⁸ *Clementina*: »adulteratae sunt.«

²⁹ »Maechabantur /.../ cogitationibus suis moechabantur.«

³⁰ Hier., *In Ezech.* 7.23.36 sqq: »Adulterae sunt /.../ sunt enim moechatae in idolis.«

³¹ LXX: »τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν κοιμώμενον μετὰ τῆς γυναίκος /.../ τὴν γυναῖκα«; *Cod. Lugd.* »qui dormierit cum mulierem.«; *Cod. Monac.* »/.../ et illum qui cum muliere /.../ abit, et mulierem.«

words *tame'*, *'avon* and *ma'al*.

In Num 5:13³² *adulterium* is a translation of *niṭmā'āh* ,defiled' from *ṭame'* (אִמְּץ)³³ (*latet adulterium*, literally ,there is no evidence that she is defiled'). In the Septuagint and older Latin translations, we find the perfect passive participle ἡ μεμιαμμένη (μιαίνω) and *coinquinata*, both meaning ,defiled'.³⁴ Elsewhere in the *Vulgate* *niṭmā'āh* is translated by the perfect passive participle *polluta est*.³⁵

In Num 5:15³⁶ *adulterium* is a translation of the noun *'avon* (אִוֹן) (Strong 1890, 5771) ,sin', corresponding to ἀμαρτία in the *Septuagint* and *peccatum* in older Latin translations.³⁷ Elsewhere in the *Vulgate*, Jerome translates *'āwōn* (68) mainly by *iniquitas* (60)³⁸ and, less frequently, *peccatum*,³⁹ *peccare* (Is 22:17), *malum* (1Rg 28:10), *scelus* (3Rg 7:9) and in the paraphrase *quod argueres* (2Rg 3:8).

In Num 5:27⁴⁰ clause (*sc. si uxor est*) *contempto viro adulterii rea* translates two Hebrew forms: a) finite verb *wattim'ōl* from *ma'al* (לַעֲלֹךְ)⁴¹ ,to betray' and b) noun *ma'al* (לַעֲלֹךְ)⁴² ,betrayal'. Jerome's translation differs from the *Septuagint* and other Latin translations.⁴³ The noun *ma'al*, usually combined with the verb *ma'al*, indicates apostasy in the OT (except Num 5:12). Jerome translates it by *contemnere* (*maritum, Deum, Dominum*),⁴⁴ *praevaricari*, *transgressio*, and related terms.⁴⁵

3.4.3 *Suscepisti adulterum* = *'alah*

In Is 57:8⁴⁶ *suscepisti adulterum* is a translation of the finite verb *watta'ālī* from *'alah* (אָלָה)⁴⁷ ,to ascend', ,mount'.⁴⁷ Jerome's motivation for such a translation is not

³² »(Sc. vir cuius uxor) dormierit cum altero viro, et hoc maritus deprehendere non quiverit, sed latet adulterium, et testibus argui non potest, quia non est inventa in stupro /.../«

³³ »To be foul, especially in a ceremonial or moral sense (contaminated).« (Strong 1890, 2930)

³⁴ »κρύψῃ αὐτὴ δὲ ἡ μεμιαμμένη.«; *Cod. Lugd.*: »et sabsconderit hoc ipsa aut fuerit coinquinata.«

³⁵ Eze 23.7; 23.13; *cf. Nova Vulgata* Num 5:14: »sed latet quod impuram se reddiderit.«

³⁶ »/.../adducet eam ad sacerdotem, et offeret oblationem /.../ sacrificium zelotypiae est, et oblatio investigans adulterium.«

³⁷ »ἔστιν γὰρ θυσία ζηλοτυπίας θυσία μνημοσύνου ἀναμνήσκουσα ἀμαρτίαν.«; *cf. Cod. Lugd* »est enim sacrificium zelationis, sacrificium memoria, commemorans peccatum.«

³⁸ *E.g.* Gen 15:16; Le 10:17; Num 14:18; 18:1; De 5:9; 1Rg 3:14; Job 31:11; Ps 49.5; Is 53:6; Jer 14:20.

³⁹ Num 14:18; 18:1; De 19:15; Ps 78:38.

⁴⁰ »Quas cum biberit, si polluta est, et contempto viro adulterii rea /.../«

⁴¹ »To cover up /.../ to act covertly, i.e. treacherously.« (Strong 1890, 4603)

⁴² »Treachery, i.e. sin.« (Strong 1890, 4604)

⁴³ Num 5:27 *Cod. Lugd*: »siquidem fuerit coinquinata et latuerit uirum suum«; LXX: »ἐὰν ἡ μεμιαμμένη καὶ λήθῃ λάθῃ τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς.«

⁴⁴ Le 6:2 »contempto Deo«; Num 5:12 »maritumque contemnens«; 2Par 28:19 »contempui /.../ Dominum.« *Cf.* Jos 22:20 »praeteriit mandatum Domini.«

⁴⁵ »Praevaricari et sim.«: *e.g.* Num 31:16; Le 5:15; Jos 7:1; Eze 14:13; »Transgressio et sim.«: Esdr 9:4; 10:6; Num 5:6; Job 21:34 »repugnare /.../ veritati.«

⁴⁶ »Quia juxta me discooperuisti, et suscepisti adulterum, dilatasti cubile tuum; et pepigisti cum eis foedus; dilexisti stratum eorum manu aperta.«

⁴⁷ »Used in a great variety of senses, primary and secondary, literal and figurative.« (Strong 1890, 5927)

clear.⁴⁸ The possibility of impact of the Septuagint text, significantly different from Latin, is excluded.⁴⁹ The commentary on Isaiah provides no answers since it contains a formulation similar to the one in the Vulgate.⁵⁰ Maybe Jerome interprets *’alah* in Is 57:8, ‘to abandon’ (husband, God); in certain verses, he translates *’alah* by *recedere* ‘to leave’ (3Rg 15:19; 4Rg 12:18; 2Par 16:3; Jer. 37:4.).

3.4.4 *Adultera* = μοιχαλῖς

In Prov 18:22a, *adultera* is a translation of μοιχαλῖς. We find this verse in the Septuagint and Clementine, but not in the Hebrew text or the Stuttgart edition of the Vulgate.⁵¹

	Vulgate	Greek	Vetus Latina	Hebrew
Num 5:13	<i>latet adulterium</i>	ἡ μεμιαμμένη	<i>fuertit coinquinata</i>	<i>tame</i>
Num 5:15	<i>adulterium</i>	ἀμαρτίαν	<i>peccatum</i>	<i>’avon</i>
Num 5:27	<i>si... est et contempto viro adulterii rea</i>	λήθη λάθη τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς	<i>fuertit coinquinata et latuerit uirum suum</i>	<i>ma’al</i>
De 22:22	<i>adulter</i>	τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν κοιμώμενον μετὰ τῆς γυναικὸς	<i>qui dormierit cum mulierem/ qui cum muliere... abit</i>	<i>’iysh</i>
	<i>adultera</i>	γυναῖκα	<i>mulierem</i>	<i>’ishshah</i>
Prov 18:22 a	<i>adulteram</i>	μοιχαλῖδα		
Is 57:8	<i>suscepisti adulterum</i>	ῥου ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ ἀποστῇς πλεῖόν τι ἔξεις		<i>’alah</i>

Table 7: Jerome’s self-initiated use of **adulter*.

3.5 Distribution by the Books

The distribution of the terms for adultery by OT books shows certain not overly significant regularities. **Moechus* (almost exclusively *moechari*) occurs only in the Pentateuch and the Book of Jeremiah. Finite verb forms of *moechari* always translate the finite verb forms of **na’aph*. The exception is Le 20:10 (*adulterium perpetrare*) for stylistic reasons; it is also the only place in the *Pentateuch* where **adulter* appears as a translation of **na’aph*; everywhere else in the *Pentateuch* **na’aph* is translated by **moechus*, while **adulter* as a translation of more general terms (Table 8).

Jerome translated the Torah at the very end of his translation endeavour, after most other OT books, after the much-translating experience.⁵² However, all the

⁴⁸ *Nova Vulgata*: »et ascendisti«.

⁴⁹ » /.../ ῥου ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ ἀποστῇς πλεῖόν τι ἔξεις ἡγάπησας τοὺς κοιμωμένους μετὰ σοῦ.«

⁵⁰ Hier., *In Is.* 57.7sq.: »eamdem nunc quasi uxorem adulteram arguit et confutat, quod dormiens cum viro, clam adulterum suscepit, et discooperuit pallium, immo, dilataverit stratum suum, et fecerit pactum, quasi dotis instrumenta conficiens cum adulteris. Hoc autem dicit, ut ostendat quod non solum in agris et domibus idola coluerint, sed in Templo quoque posuerint simulacrum Baal /.../«

⁵¹ Reflections of Prov 18:22a are found in: Hier., *In Matth.* 19.9 (146); Aug. *Retract.* 1.19.6; 94; *Cod. Valv.* p. 206.

⁵² Between 398 and 406 (Denzin-Weber and Thompson).

prophetic books were translated in the same year, 389–392 AD (Williams 2006, 281–283); still, **moechus* only appears in the Book of Jeremiah. The chronological criterion, therefore, only partly explains Jerome's lexical choice.

	<i>*moechus</i>	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*fornicatio</i>
Ex	1		
Num		3	
De	1	2	
Le	2	2	
Job		1	
Prov		3	
Is		2	
Ps		1	
Jer	4	5	
Eze		6	1
Os		6	
Mal		1	
Sum	8	32	1

Table 8: *Distribution by the books.*

3.6 Impact of Greek Vocabulary

The impact of the Greek vocabulary in choosing **moechus* or **adulter* is negligible. In the *Septuagint* **na'aph* is always translated by **μοιχός* (Joksimović 2016, 213–225). The expected influence would be reflected in the more frequent use of **moechus*, especially in the books, which Jerome first translated from Greek into Latin (Ps, Prov, Eccl, Job, Par). In these, however, only **adulter* appears.

4. Vulgate - New Testament

The translation of the Vulgate NT books shows a great deal of consistency and uniformity. The leading Greek lexical group for adultery is based on the term *μοιχός*. In NT, the nouns *μοιχός*, *μοιχαλῖς*, and *μοιχεία* are always translated by the nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium*.⁵³ The verbs *μοιχεύω* and *μοιχάσμαι* are mainly translated by the verb *moechari* (14), and less frequently by the verb *adulterare* (4) and constructions with the noun *adulterium* (2).⁵⁴

5. Other Jerome's Works

In quotations and references to relevant Bible verses in his other works, Jerome predominantly uses the same forms as in the Vulgate, particularly in the OT ver-

⁵³ Exceptions: 2Pt 2:14, Iac 4:4.

⁵⁴ For group **μοιχός* and its translation in the NT, see Joksimović 2016, 83–102, 215–258.

ses. Discrepancies are rare and usually conditioned by stylistic needs, the desire for precision, or under the influence of older Latin translations. As in the Vulgate, he only uses the verb *moechari* and the noun *moechus*, and never *moecha* or neologisms *moechia*, *moechatio*, *adulterator*, *adulteratio*. (Joksimović 2016, 219; 221; 224; 246; 256–258).

6. Vetus Latina

Vetus Latina shows the most remarkable similarities to the vocabulary of the Vulgate NT books. The impact of the Greek language and Vulgar Latin is noticeable. The quotations of the relevant Bible verses and references in the corpus Vetus Latina mostly contain the same forms as in the Vulgate. Discrepancies from the Vulgate mainly consist in alternate use of the terms **moechus* and **adulter*. The terms for prostitution, fornication and sin in general (**fornicatio*, **meretrix*, **peccatum*, **stuprum*) occur less frequently. In Vetus Latina we find words absent from the Vulgate: *moecha*, *moechatio*, *moechia*, *adulterator*, *adulteratio*. **Adulter* is typical for the language of the educated, above all the constructions with the noun *adulterium* and the corresponding verb (*facere*, *committere*, *admittere*, *concupere*, *perpetrare*). (Joksimović 2016, 217–224)

7. Christian Latin

7.1 New Meanings – Husband's Adultery

Christian sexual ethics brings a great novelty – the view that adultery violates the marriage bond, regardless of who violates it. All extramarital sexual relations are condemned, including a husband's infidelity. A man is expected to limit his sexuality to marriage. This cultural change is reflected in the language; the semantic content of the terms for adultery changes, and **adulter* and **moechus* begin to denote the unfaithful husband and his actions.

Such use begins with the New Testament. The Synoptic Gospels testify that Jesus forbade divorce and characterized the second marriage, concluded during a former spouse's life, as adultery.

Lk 16:18 »Omnis qui dimittit uxorem suam et alteram ducit, moechatur.«

Mt 19:9 »/.../ quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam /.../ et aliam duxerit moechatur /.../.«

Mk 10:11 »/.../ quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam et aliam duxerit adulterium committit super eam.«

Moechari and *adulterium committere* in the verses mentioned denotes the husband's adultery, thus imposing a new meaning on Latin terms. Such use is marked and aims at changing the language content to adapt it to Christian teaching. The

verses mentioned were of great importance for the development of Christian sexual ethics, and such use of the terms for adultery in them paved the way for their further use with a new meaning.

In the OT **adulter* and **moechus* denote the patriarchal concept of adultery, that is, only a wife's infidelity, or, respectively, the seduction of married women. In the Hebrew world, as in other ancient societies, only female adultery was sanctioned; thus, it is the only form of infidelity mentioned.

7.2 Revival of **moechus*

Another change with Christian Latin is a higher frequency of the group **moechus*. **Moechus* occurs five times more frequently in the Christian texts than in Pre-Christian Latin (556:99).⁵⁵ This is only partly due to the larger volume of preserved texts; **adulter*, by comparison, occurs only twice as often (2610:1078). **Adulter* remains more frequent than **moechus* (2610:556), but the proportion decreases from 11:1 to 5:1, and the share of **moechus* increases from 8% to 18% (Table 9).

The difference in tone and connotations between **adulter* and **moechus*, characteristic of Pre-Christian Latin, disappears with Christianity and is used interchangeably (Joksimović 2016, 174–175).

	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*moechus</i>	Sum	<i>*adulter</i> : <i>*moechus</i>
Pre-Christian	1078	99	1177	11:1
%	92	8	100	
Christian	2610	556	3166	5:1
%	82	18	100	

Table 9: **adulter and *moechus in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin.*

In the *Vulgate*, this ratio is even more favourable of **moechus*, with 4:1 (32:8 occurrences) in the OT and 1,6:1 (22:14 occurrences) in the NT. Moreover, in the NT **moechus* occurs almost twice as often (14) as in the OT (8). This does not apply to **adulter*, which remains more common in the OT (32) than in the NT (22) (Table 10).

	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*moechus</i>
Pre-Christian	11	1
Christian	5	1
OT	4 (32)	1 (8)
NT	1.6 (22)	1 (14)

Table 10: *Ratio of *adulter and *moechus in Pre-Christian Latin, Christian Latin, OT and NT.*

Terms for adultery occur almost as often in the OT (40) as in the NT (36), but in the OT **adulter* (32:8) predominates, and in the NT **moechus* (22:14); this difference indicates that Jerome's interventions on the text of the NT were not extensive.

⁵⁵ Numbers in brackets are explained and compared in relevant accompanying tables, in this case, Table 9.

The high proportion of **moechus* in the NT indicates that Christianity gave a key impetus for the revival of this lexical group due to Greek and spoken Latin on Christian Latin. In Late Latin **moechus*, we have said, disappeared from the literary language of pagan writers; it was revived in spoken Latin under the influence of the Greek and established itself in the Christian written tradition.

7.3 Higher Proportion of Verbs *adulterare* and *moechari*

In Christian Latin, *adulterare* and *moechari* are more frequently used, while the proportion of the nominals from groups **moechus* and **adulter* diminishes.

Within its lexical group, the proportion of *moechari* increases drastically (5: 67%). The share of the noun *moecha* is, on the other hand, drastically reduced (32: 2%). *Moecha* disappears after the age of Augustine. Vulgate follows these tendencies; *moecha* occurs neither in the OT nor in the NT (nor in Jerome's other works). *Moecha* probably retained offensive connotations, causing its gradual disappearance (Table 11).

	moechus	moecha	moechari	ἅπαξ λεγομένα	moechia	moechatio	Sum
Pre-Christian	58	32	5	4	/	/	99
%	59	32	5	4	/	/	100
Christian	91	13	365	/	67	11	547
%	17	2	67	/	12	2	100

Table 11: **moechus* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin (Joksimović 2016, 142).

**Adulter* is not subject to such drastic changes. Despite the more significant proportion of *adulterare* (1:8%), the nominals prevail in Christian Latin, as well (Table 12). (Joksimović 2016, 171–172)

	adulter	adultera	adulteri- um	adulter (adi.)	adulteri- nus	adulter- are	other	Sum
Pre-Chri- stian	405	114	525	15	1	16	2	1078
%	38	11	49	1	0	1	0	100
	98							
Christian	740	339	1149	99	65	217	1	2610
%	28	13	44	4	3	8	0	100
	92							

Table 12: **adulter* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin.

In Vulgate, these tendencies are even more emphasized. The ratio of the nominals and the verb *adulterare* is reduced from 66:1 in Pre-Christian to 11:1 in Christian Latin and 3:1 in the OT. Moreover, in the NT, *adulterare* appears twice more often than the nominals from the same group. The high frequency of *adulterare* in the OT is striking, given that Jerome, as we have said, avoids using the verb *adulterare*.

In the Pre-Christian corpus, the nominals from the group **moechus* appear more often than the verb *moechari* (16:1). In Christian Latin, *moechari* becomes more common (2:1). Even more striking is this ratio (in favour of *moechari*) in the OT (7:1) and NT (14:1). In *Vulgate* alone, *moechari* occurs more frequently (OT 7; NT 14) than in the entire Pre-Christian corpus (6). In *Vulgate*, we have said that the verb *moechari* occurs; the noun *moechus* appears only once in the OT. (Table 13).

Moreover, in Christian Latin *moechari* is more common than *adulterare* (365:217 = 1,7:1); this proportion increases with the OT (7:3 = 2,3:1) and especially the NT (14:4 = 3,5:1). (Table 13)

	<i>*adulter</i>		<i>*moechus</i>	
	Nominals	Verb	Nominals	Verb
Pre-Christian	66 (1062)	1 (16)	16 (93)	1 (6)
Christian	11 (2393)	1 (217)	1 (182)	2 (365)
OT	3 (8)	1 (3)	1 (1)	7 (7)
NT	1 (2)	2 (4)	0 -	14 (14)

Table 13: *Ratio of the nominals and verbs from the groups *adulter and *moechus in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin, OT and NT.*

There are several possible explanations for the high proportion of *moechari* in the *Vulgate*. First, *adulterare* has been used predominantly in non-sexual meaning in Pre-Christian Latin; maybe that is why Jerome avoids it. Jerome's time, the revival of **moechus* was already finished, and *moechari* was already established in the existing Latin translations. Thus, *moechari* might have been an acceptable choice to Jerome. *Moechari* occurs in many verses of great importance for the development of Christian sexual ethics. We find it in Jesus' words about the unbreakability of marriage, but also God's commandment forbidding adultery (Ex 20:14: *Non moechaberis*). These verses were often repeated at gatherings of believers and in Christian literature, so their vocabulary became widely known. His interventions would encounter opposition if Jerome departed from the established vocabulary, replacing the *moechari* with *adulterare*.

7.4 Neologisms – Abstract Nouns *moechia* and *moechatio*

There is no abstract noun from the **moechus* group with the meaning of adultery in Pre-Christian Latin. With Christianity, the nouns *moechia* and *moechatio* appear as a translation of *μοιχεία*. Their use is sporadic compared to *adulterium* (*moechia* 67, *moechatio* 11, *adulterium* 1149, Table 11).⁵⁶ *Adulterium* remains the primary abstract term with the meaning 'adultery' in both eras. The only neologism in the **adulter* group is *adulteratio*.

⁵⁶ *Moechia* survives in medieval literature. *Moechatio* is rare, found mainly in translations of Greek Christian scriptures, and disappears from the 6th century (Joksimović 2016, 132–142).

No neologisms appear in the Vulgate, in the OT, or the NT. In this aspect, the Vulgate vocabulary is conservative. Maybe Jerome purified the NT Vulgate text from neologisms. Their absence is the main difference between the vocabulary of the Vulgate and older Latin translations.

8. Conclusion

Jerome translates Hebrew terms for adultery formed from the root *na'aph* by the nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium* and the verb *moechari*. Similarly, in the NT Greek terms for adultery, gathered around the word *μοιχός*, are translated predominantly by nominals from the group **adulter* and the verb *moechari*. As Krašovec points out, »we may assume that relative uniformity of ancient translations of the Bible reflects a living tradition« (2018, 488).

With the NT, terms for adultery start denoting the husband's adultery and paving the way for new use in Christian Latin. In the OT, due to the content of the Hebrew sacred texts, terms for adultery denote only a patriarchal concept of adultery.

A specific feature of Christian Latin is a higher frequency of a) terms from the **moechus* group, especially the verb *moechari*, and b) verbs *adulterare* and *moechari* in general. Their frequency increases with the OT and, particularly, the NT, indicating that Christianity has instigated said lexical changes. The fact that the vocabulary of the OT is more similar to the language of the Christian Fathers in general than to the vocabulary of the NT indicates that Jerome adopted the current language tendencies only to some extent and that he rarely intervened in the text of the NT.

The vocabulary of the NT and *Vetus Latina* shows the most significant similarities. The striking difference between them is the absence of neologisms such as *moechia*, *moechatio*, *adulteratio* from the NT. Jerome may have cleaned the NT of them. Neologisms are absent from other Jerome's works as well. The term *moecha* gradually disappears with Christian Latin; it does not appear in Vulgate or Jerome's other works. Such consistency of vocabulary and phrasing may be the product of Jerome's editorial interventions (Krašovec 2018, 489).

Jerome's lexical interventions in the NT are scarce. He instead innovates with syntax and morphology than with vocabulary. The biblical text is considered sacred, which reflects in the conservative approach to its translation. Once formed, the vocabulary of biblical translations is preserved and not changed without valid reasons. Any change contradicts the established tradition and leads to a possible misinterpretation of biblical truth.

This research clearly distinguished three separate lexical units. The first is Pre-Christian Latin, which shows no resemblance to other corpora. The second is the vocabulary of Christian fathers, including Jerome (in the OT translation and his other works); they show the most remarkable similarities. The third is the vocabulary of

the NT, which represents the radical lexical pole of Christian Latin, formed under the strong influence of spoken Latin on the one hand, and Greek on the other. New Testament translations have become the reference pivot for Christian Latin.

The language of biblical texts, especially of their most significant and quoted verses, became the basis for further developing Christian vocabulary. Such are the verses forbidding divorce and characterizing second marriage as adultery. In these verses, **adulter* and **moechus* are used in a manner inconsistent with Pre-Christian Latin, denoting the husband's adultery. Such use was the basis for the future development of the semantic field of lexical groups gathered around the terms mentioned.

		Vulgate	Greek
Ex	20:14	<i>non moechaberis</i>	οὐ μοιχεύσεις
De	5:18	<i>neque moechaberis</i>	
Le	20:10	<i>si moechatus quis fuerit</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα
		<i>adulterium perpetraverit</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται
		<i>moechus</i>	μοιχεύων
		<i>adultera</i>	ἡ μοιχευομένη
Job	24:15	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχοῦ
Prov	30:20	<i>mulieris adulterae</i>	γυναικὸς μοιχαλίδος
	6:32	<i>adulter</i>	μοιχὸς
Is	57:3	<i>semen adulteri</i>	μοιχῶν
Ps	49:18	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχῶν
Jer	3:8	<i>moechata esset</i>	ἐμοιχᾶτο
	3:9	<i>moechata est</i>	ἐμοίχευσεν
	5:7	<i>moechati sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
	7:9	<i>adulterare/ adulterari</i>	μοιχᾶσθε
	9:2	<i>adulteri sunt</i>	μοιχῶνται
	13:27	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεῖα
	23.10	<i>adulteris</i>	-
	23.14	<i>similitudinem adulterium</i>	μοιχωμένους
Eze	16:32	<i>mulier adultera</i>	ἡ γυνή ἡ μοιχωμένη
	16:38	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος
	23:37	<i>fornicatae sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
	23:43	<i>in adulteriis</i>	μοιχεύουσιν
	23:45	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος
		<i>adulterae sunt</i>	μοιχαλίδες
Os		<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεῖαν
	2:2		
	3:1	<i>mulierem ... adulteram</i>	γυναῖκα ... μοιχαλίν
	4:2	<i>adulterium</i>	μοιχεῖα
	4:13	<i>adulterae erunt</i>	μοιχεύσουσιν
	4:14	<i>adulteraverint</i>	μοιχεύωσιν
Mal	7:4	<i>adulterantes</i>	μοιχεύοντες
	3:5	<i>adulteris</i>	ἐπὶ τὰς μοιχαλίδας

Appendix – Table 14:

Translation of **na'aph* - cumulative table.

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