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Effects of (in)alienability on the expression of possessive relations in the language of Plautus' plays

The aim of this paper is to analyse possessive constructions in the language of Plautus' plays and see whether there is any difference in expressing alienable and what may be perceived as inalienable relations. Since nouns denoting kinship and body parts make up the two most frequent semantic groups treated as inalienable in languages in which the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession is grammaticalized, a corpus of twelve plays was searched based on a list of possibly inalienable nouns including body part terms and kin terms. Certain partitive relations were subsequently included in the analysis. To see whether these putatively inalienable nouns appear in different possessive constructions than alienable ones, the prologues and the first two acts of each of the twelve plays were searched for instances of alienable nouns occurring in possessive constructions, which were then compared to the first group. The general finding is that, although the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession is not grammaticalized in Early Latin, i.e. there is no alienability split which requires different possessive constructions for alienables as opposed to inalienables, it seems to have been more appropriate to use certain constructions, such as the possessive adjective or possessor promotion and deletion, with inalienable nouns than with alienable ones. The result is a higher frequency of these constructions in cases when the possessed noun tends to be perceived as inalienable from the possessor.

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1. Introduction

Possession is a universal semantic category that expresses the relation between the possessor and the possessum, phrasing it in different ways depending on the language and on the exact nature of the relation. The great variation of these relations presents a problem when we try to precisely define and delimit possession. Perhaps the most prototypical possessive relation is that of ownership, or permanent possession, as Heine (1997: 34) calls it, defining it as a relation in which "[the] possessee is the property of the possessor, and typically the possessor has a legal title to the possessee", as in the example *John's car*, where John is the owner of the car. Langacker (1995) is of a similar opinion as to the status of permanent possession, except for the
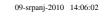
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fact that he believes that the same degree of prototypicality is found in body–part / part–whole relations.[1] In his short overview of different approaches to possession, Heine points out that attempts to define and describe possession have frequently used the notion of control of the possessor over the possessed (e.g. Hagège 1993, as cited in Heine 1997: 3), or the notion of spatial proximity between the two participants of the possessive relation (e.g. Taylor 1989, as cited in Heine 1997: 3). However, these descriptions of possession are restricted to the prototypical cases as well.

This brief look at some of the definitions and classifications of possessive relations offered by different authors clearly demonstrates the complexity of the phenomenon of possession. The diversity of ways in which possession can be expressed complicates matters even further. Most linguists would agree that possession is universal in that "any human language can be expected to have conventionalized expressions for it" (Heine 1997: 1). Or, as Seiler (1983: 11) puts it, "[in] the sense that conceptual possession is presupposed for the expressions of possession in all languages, it is undoubtedly universal." In other words, the conventionalized expressions of possession vary from language to language, but along with this cross–linguistic variation, there is typically a rich inventory of possessive constructions in each individual language and language–specific criteria and rules governing the choice of these constructions in different contexts. For example, in the Cariban language Makushi present and former possession are expressed differently (Heine 1997: 23). However, probably the most important and widely studied distinction within the domain of possession is the one between alienable and inalienable possession. Although the boundary between these two kinds of possessive relations is language–specific, certain noun classes almost always appear in inalienable constructions in languages with a clear alienability split. For example, partitivity is one of the relations that are typically considered inalienable (Mićanović 2001: 183), which means that such constructions feature terms for body parts and other examples of the part–whole relation. Kin terms are also very often found in the inalienable category.

The aim of this paper is to try to show that languages which are traditionally considered to lack the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession often show certain differences in the expression of the two kinds of possessive relations. The example language is going to be Plautus' Early Latin[2], and the structures characteristic of that language are going to be compared to their equivalents in some other European languages which show a trace of this distinction. Plautus' was chosen because his plays constitute the earliest substantial corpus of Latin literature, and because the language of the plays is believed to reflect the true everyday language of the people[3].

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1 Relations categorized as inalienable possession and inanimate inalienable possession, respectively, in Heine's classification (Heine 1997: 34–35).

2 Early Latin is the period from approximately 350 BC until the beginning of the first century BC (Matasović 1997: 39).

3 Lindsay (1907), for example, says that "we must see in his plays, not vulgar language, but the every–day talk of the educated Romans of his time".

Twelve of his plays were included in the corpus, based on the criterion of the frequency of occurrence of the putatively inalienable nouns listed below: *Amphitruo*, *Asinaria*, *Bacchides*, *Captivi*, *Casina*, *Epidicus*, *Menaechmi*, *Mercator*, *Miles Gloriosus*, *Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, *Trinummus*. The analysis of the expression of possession was done on the following nouns: body parts: *auris* 'ear', *caput* 'head', *corpus* 'body', *manus* 'hand', *oculus* 'eye', *os* 'mouth', *pes* 'foot' (including those examples in which the nouns are used with a different meaning, but which also express the part–whole relation, such as *os aedium* 'door of the house'); kin terms: *avus* 'grandfather', *gnata* 'daughter', *gnatus* 'son', *filia* 'daughter', *filius* 'son', *frater* 'brother', *mater* 'mother', *nepos* 'grandson', *nepotulus* 'little grandson', *pater* 'father', *patruus* 'uncle', *prognatus* 'son', *soror* 'sister', *uxor* 'wife', and five other nouns which are categorized differently depending on the author: *anima* 'soul', *animus* 'soul', *ingenium* 'nature, temperament', *nomen* 'name', *vita* 'life'. These nouns were selected because their translation equivalents are most frequently used in inalienable constructions in languages with the alienability split. The twelve plays were also searched for instances of alienable possessive constructions in order to compare them with those featuring one of the above listed nouns. Since a sufficient number of such constructions was found in the prologues and the first two acts of each of the twelve plays, only those parts were used as a corpus for alienable constructions. The analysis of both alienable and inalienable possession excluded examples of predicative possession such as those with verbs meaning 'to have', 'to possess', etc., focusing rather on attributive possession and on clausal syntax in terms of possessor deletion and possessor promotion.

2. Alienable and inalienable possession

According to Nichols (1992: 121), "inalienable possession is not primarily a semantic distinction but the automatic consequence of the closer formal bonding that results in head–marked possession". The alienable/inalienable distinction is nevertheless often viewed in terms of certain semantic features of the possessum. The boundary between entities perceived as inalienable and those considered alienable differs among different languages and different cultures. Lynch (1973, as cited in Heine 1997: 12) provides an illustrative example from Fijian and Melanesian; the noun meaning 'wife' is used in inalienable constructions in Fijian, while it is treated as alienable in Melanesian.

Body part terms and kin terms are almost always in the inalienable category in languages in which the distinction is grammaticalized (there are few languages which treat only one of these groups as inalienable), but the variation increases with other semantic groups. Seiler (1983: 13) adds the following semantic classes to the category of inalienable nouns, or, as he calls them, inherently relational nouns, as opposed to those which denote an established possessive relation: "social relationships ('leader', 'friend', 'partner', 'name', 'dwelling', etc.); implements of material culture ('bow', 'arrow', 'bed', 'clothes', etc.); part–whole relationships ('trunk', 'branches, roots of a tree', 'legs of

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a table', etc.); spatial orientation ('right side', 'left side', 'top', 'front', etc.); agent–action and object–action ('John's return', 'John's imprisonment', etc.)". These nouns are in some languages found in the alienable category, and in the inalienable category in others.

The preference for considering body part nouns to be inalienable can be seen, among other languages, on the example of Croatian, in which the use of the possessive pronoun with a noun referring to a body part is much less common than omitting the possessor altogether, as illustrated by the examples in Matasović (2002: 154): *Slomio sam nogu* 'I broke the leg' sounds much more natural than *Slomio sam svoju nogu* 'I broke my leg'. Thus, body part terms are treated differently than some other nouns in these contexts.

2.1. Grading of inalienability

Seiler (1983: 12) shows that with some inherently relational nouns there is a grading of inherency, reflected in the difference between possessive constructions. His example includes three English nouns – *cheek*, *ear*, *hair* – and three constructions, the unacceptability of which is a consequence of "the gradual decrease of intimacy in the relationship between self and the cheek, the ear, and (the) hair, respectively".

"The barber cut

(i) *me* on the cheek	?*me* on the ear	*me in the hair
(ii) *me* on *my* cheek	?*me* on *my* ear	*me in *my* hair
(iii) – – *my* cheek	– – *my* ear	– – *my* hair"

(Seiler 1983: 12)

A strictly formal approach to the alienable–inalienable distinction is possible only for those languages in which the alienability split requires an obligatory difference in the expression of alienable and inalienable possession. I believe, however, that Seiler's example clearly shows that an investigation of this opposition and ways of expressing it is also legitimate in languages which don't use a systematically different way of marking inalienable possession as opposed to alienable relations.

3. The possessive genitive and possessive adjective

My starting hypothesis was that the analysis of attributive possessive constructions in Plautus' plays was going to show a tendency for the possessive adjective to occur with inalienable nouns more frequently than with alienable ones. Leumann et al. (1965: 60) refer to a high frequency of possessive adjectives in Latin, especially adjectives denoting kinship, although they claim there can be no talk of a general preference for adjectival possessive constructions over the semantically more individualized possessive genitive. *Nomina gentilia* are an example of the use of the possessive adjective with kinship possessive

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relations, because they are adjectives derived from proper names, so that, for example, *Quintus Marcius* used to mean *Quintus, the son of Marcus* (Wackernagel 1957: 71).
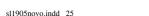
Though Wackernagel is reluctant to precisely define the divergence in meaning conveyed by the genitive in comparison to the adjectival constructions, he does offer two examples from Cicero's speech *Pro Milone* (34) which he finds illustrative of the subtle difference: *gloria (scil. Milonis), quae cottidie augebatur fragendis furoribus* Clodianis*, iam* Clodii *morte cecidit* 'glory, which was daily increasing in consequence of his efforts to repress the frenzy of Clodius, has been put an end to by the death of Clodius'[4]. The same possessor is expressed by the adjective *Clodianis* and by the genitive noun *Clodii* in the same sentence, and the explanation Wackernagel offers is that death happened to Clodius in an instant, whereas the frenzy was a constant feature of his (Wackernagel 1957: 75). In other words, the adjective is used to denote the possessor when the possessum is its permanent characteristic, something that cannot be disassociated, alienated from it.

During the development of Latin there was a tendency for an increasing use of the younger genitive construction rather than the possessive adjective (Wackernagel 1957), which is attributed to the assumed greater economy of the genitive, since the adjective first needs to be derived from the possessor noun, and then its case, gender and number need to agree with the possessed noun. Possessive adjectives in Roman poetry may be a result of the influence of Greek poetry, as suggested by Wackernagel, but since the language of Plautus' plays is often considered to reflect common, everyday language of his age, i.e. the transition from the third to the second century BC, the occurrence of adjectival possessive constructions in them should not be artificially high.

3.1. The possessive adjective and possessive genitive in Plautus' plays

In the twelve Plautus' plays analyzed here, the nouns listed at the beginning of this paper occur 102 times as the possessed either in an adjectival or in a genitive possessive construction[5]. All other nouns (i.e. nouns which were not included in the "inalienable" list) found in possessive constructions of this kind in the prologues and the first two acts of each of these plays are also analysed to see whether they are used differently, and they occur 216 times[6].

As stated earlier, the criterion for determining possession is not unproblematic. The usual definition of the possessor relies on the features [+ animate], [+ human], which characterise the prototypical possessor in, for example, Heine's theory of possession (Heine 1997). However, the choice of possessive constructions here was not limited to prototypical possession, thus

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4   Translations of Latin texts, unless otherwise noted, are taken from *Perseus Digital Library* at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/.

5   Only those examples in which the possessor is a genitive noun or an adjective derived from a noun are considered here.

6   This paper is a shortened and revised version of my M.A. thesis *Kategorija posvojnosti u latinskome jeziku* (2007), in which a list of concrete examples can be found.

including examples of what Heine calls "inanimate inalienable possession", e.g. *the branches of a tree*. Mićanović also points to the fact that many relations that are normally considered possessive are actually excluded from this category by the [+ animate] [+ human] condition on the possessor (Mićanović 2001: 181), and that in some cases the possessor is not even necessarily animate, as in the Croatian examples *gradski park* 'city park' or *školsko dvorište* 'school yard', in which the adjectival suffix is not the usual possessive suffix, because it denotes qualitative features as well as possessive relations (Mićanović 2000: 115). Phrases such as *muros civicos* (Bacc. 24) 'city walls' and *virgas ulmeas* (Asin. 341) 'elm twigs' were thus included in this analysis because the possessive meaning is implicated in the adjective, alongside the more prominent qualitative meaning.

Possessive adjectives and genitives derived from anthroponyms (e.g. *Venerium nepotulum* (Mil. 1412), *aede Dianai* (Bacc. 312)) and ethnonyms (e.g. *cives Thebani* (Amph. 678)) are discussed separately, since the derivation of adjectives from less common proper names requires more effort from the speaker, and because of the very high frequency of adjectives derived from ethnonyms in Latin. In the inalienable possession category there were altogether 35 possessors derived from names, and 75 such possessors in the alienable category, which leaves 67 examples in the first group (inalienable) and 141 examples in the second group (alienable) in which the possessor is expressed by a common noun or an adjective derived from a common noun.

Let us now look at the distribution of the possessive genitive of common nouns and the possessive adjective derived from common nouns. Of the 67 possessive constructions in which the possessum was one of the nouns denoting body parts or kinship defined at the beginning as the aim of the analysis (i.e. "inalienables"), 45 were found with the genitive possessor, and 22 with the possessive adjective. The alienable group had 101 genitive constructions and 40 adjectives. While the overall preference for the genitive was expected, the ratio of the two constructions within groups is unexpectedly similar. A closer examination of the examples, however, will show that the distribution of the possessive adjective and the possessive genitive actually meets expectations to a higher degree than it might seem at first glance.

Some of the possessive constructions found in the prologues and the first two acts of the twelve plays can be considered inalienable according to the above described criterion, even though the possessed nouns were not on the predefined list which comprised only kin terms and terms for human body parts. These are the following constructions, expressing the inalienable partitive relation: *muros civicos* (Bacc. 24) 'city walls', *virgas ulmeas* (Asin. 341) 'elm twigs', *ulmei fasces virgarum* (Epid. 30–31) 'osier bundles of twigs', *virgarum ulmearum* (Pseud. 333) 'elm twigs', *stilis ulmeis* (Pseud. 545) 'elm–tree stripes', *folles taurini* (Bacc. 10) 'bulls' stomachs', *corios bubulos* (Poen. 139) 'bulls' hides', *glandionidam suillam* (Men. 210) 'boar's neck', *sincipitamenta*

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porcina (Men. 211) 'pig's head', *agninis lactibus* (Pseud. 319) 'lamb's intestines', and *agninis extis* (Pseud. 329) 'lamb's entrails'.[7]

If we include these eleven constructions in the predefined inalienable group, in which case the same will have to be done with the example *elephanti corio* (Mil. 235) 'hide of an elephant', in which the possessor of a body part is in the genitive case, we will get the following ratio: out of 79 inalienable constructions there are 58.2% genitives[8] and 41.8% adjectives, while other nouns occur with 77.5% genitive possessors, and 22.5% adjectives. The examples thus show that the genitive is the preferred way for expressing the possessor of both alienables and inalienables. However, the possessive adjective derived from a common noun is far less frequently used with nouns which denote a possessum that is typically regarded as alienable, suggesting that the starting hypothesis was correct and that the use of the possessive adjective in Latin often marks the possessum as inalienable.

The nouns *amica* 'friend' and *concubina* 'concubine' were not included in the inalienable category because they are not among the most frequent inalienable nouns cross–linguistically, though they are often cited as such in the literature. Seiler (1983: 13), for example, includes the nouns *friend* and *partner* in the social relationships group, along with *leader*, *name*, etc. It is therefore interesting to see that among the examples analyzed *amica* appears with the genitive *eri* 'master' twice, and three times with the adjective *erilis* 'master's', while *eri* is found only once as the possessor of the noun *concubina*, compared to the six occurrences of *erilis* with the same *possessum*. Having studied the distribution of *erilis* and *eri* in all Plautus' plays, Matasović (2004) came up with the following results: *erilis* occurs 35 times as the possessor, while there are 23 cases of the possessive genitive *eri*. Three of the occurrences of both *eri* and *erilis* are found alongside *amica*, whereas the noun *concubina* prefers the adjective (6 examples) over the genitive (1 example). If these two nouns were accepted as inalienable, this would serve as another verification of the tendency to use adjectival possessors in inalienable constructions more frequently than in alienable ones. However, the status of these two nouns in terms of alienability is highly questionable, so for the purpose of this analysis they are considered alienable.

The most frequent possessum in Plautus' plays occurring with *erilis* is *filius* 'son'. There are eleven examples of this syntagm in the twelve plays studied here, and not one example of *eri filius*.[9] *Erilis* and *eri* are the most

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7   These examples are illustrative of how adjectives tend to denote what is typical, while the genitive denotes the individual (Leumann et al. 1965: 60).

8   The phrase *mater familias* occurs three times. Since this is a well–established phrase, there may not be a choice as to whether the genitive or the adjective will be used. It was, nevertheless, included in the analysis.

9   There is, however, one occurrence of *eri* with *filius* in a play not studied here: *ut eri sui corrumpat et rem et filium* (Most. 28) 'to be ruining both the estate and the son of his master' (Matasović 2004). It cannot therefore be claimed that with the noun *filius* there was no choice as to the form of the possessor, although *eri* is also the possessor of *rem* in this example, which may have been the reason to choose the genitive.

common example of the adjective–genitive conflict in the language of Plautus' plays, and based on their distribution Matasović draws the conclusion that "the possessive adjective is used by default with names of relatives and persons, while the possessive genitive is much more common with abstract nouns". (Matasović 2004)

The distribution of the possessive genitive and possessive adjective in Plautus' plays is consistent with some general diachronic typological findings. Nichols (1992: 117) has observed that possessive affixes on inalienable nouns are typically more archaic than those on alienable ones. If understood more broadly rather than just in terms of head–marking languages, this claim could also be relevant for the issue of the possessive genitive and adjective in Early Latin. Since the possessive genitive is diachronically younger than the possessive adjective (Wackernagel 1957: 71), the fact that the possessor is much more frequently expressed with the adjective when the possessum is inalienable is not so surprising. Thus, the more archaic way of possessor expression is expectedly associated mainly with inalienable possession in Early Latin. Given that inalienables are "nouns which are most likely to occur possessed in discourse" (Nichols 1992: 122), the use of the more archaic construction for the expression of inalienable possession is expected.

3.2. Possessor expressed by an anthroponym or an ethnonym

The possessive adjective is much more frequent in inalienable relations than in alienable ones when it is derived from a common noun, but possessors can also be expressed by a proper name. There are 35 such examples in the inalienable category, 31 of which are genitives (e.g. *Electri filia* (Amph. 99) 'daughter of Electryon') and 4 adjectives (e.g. *Venerium nepotulum* (Mil. 1412) 'little grandson of Venus'), while of the 75 examples in alienable constructions there are 40 adjectives (e.g. *campis Curculioniis* (Mil. 13) 'Gorgonidonian plains') and 35 genitives (e.g. *clavo Cupidinis* (Asin. 156) 'helm of Cupid').

It is quite obvious that this group of examples offers no possibility to discuss the preference for adjectives with inalienable nouns, as well as that the overall ratio would be completely different if names hadn't been made a separate category. As was already explained, the motivation for this was the specific nature of the formation of adjectives from anthroponyms and ethnonyms. At this point we should recall Wackernagel's assumption about the difference in the energy cost when using adjectival as opposed to genitive constructions, especially if the speaker does not have an already derived adjective available. Thus, not only is it necessary to set the morphosyntactic features of the adjective to agree with the possessed noun, but a whole new word needs to be derived, which is surely less economic than simply marking an existing noun for genitive case. (Wackernagel 1957: 72, 73)

Wackernagel (1957: 70) refers to a tendency in Latin to form adjectives from names of deities, and we can assume that these adjectives, since they were relatively frequent, did not require any extraordinary linguistic creativity nor a particularly big effort on the part of the speaker. As it turns out,

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the four adjectives found with inalienable nouns were derived precisely from names of deities, e.g. *Venerium nepotulum* (Mil. 1412, Mil. 1421) 'little grandson of Venus'. On the other hand, of the 31 examples of possessive genitives in inalienable constructions there are only eight cases of the possessor being a deity, whereas in all the rest the genitives are actually personal names, very often Greek, from which it must have been very difficult for a speaker of Latin to derive an adjective. It therefore seems that a relatively large number of genitives occurring with inalienable nouns could perhaps be attributed to the non–existence of a derived adjective as a lexical item, in line with Wackernagels's claims on energy cost.

Of the 40 adjectives in the alienable category as many as 35 are derived from an ethnonym or a toponym, e.g. *Samiis vasis* (Capt. 291) 'Samian ware'. Wackernagel (1957: 59) points to the tendency of Latin to use Greek ethnonyms as adjectives and to form adjectives from toponyms. These 35 examples also show that it was more natural to express origin with an adjective than with a genitive in Latin. Only in one case was the name of a people used in the genitive case: *legiones Teloboarum* (Amph. 414) 'legions of the Teleboans'. This type of regularity in the use of adjectives derived from ethnonyms and toponyms is another reason why names as possessors should form a separate category.

3.3. Semantic features of the possessive adjective

Leumann et al. (1965: 60) describe the possessive genitive as referring more to the individual, and the adjective as emphasizing what is typical. This can be seen clearly in some of the examples discussed here, such as *corios bubulos* (Poen. 139) or *agninis lactibus* (Pseud. 319), in which the possessor is not a specific bull or lamb, but rather the animal as a species, i.e. any individual of the species. In these cases the adjective also has a qualitative meaning, along with the possessive one. This cannot, however, be taken as evidence that there are no "pure" possessive adjectives in Plautus' plays. Constructions such as *erilis filius* 'master's son' or *patrium corpus* 'father's body' are clear as to the identity of the possessor – it is a specific master and a specific father that the adjectives refer to.

Adjectives denoting a feature pertaining to the type rather than the individual along with the possessive meaning are found more frequently in the alienable category. Examples with alienable nouns include, for example, *servili schema* (Amph. 117) 'servile garb', and *vestimentum muliebre* (Men. 167) 'a woman's garment'.[10] As with those included in the class of inalienable constructions, it is difficult to determine the ratio of possessive and qualitative meaning in these adjectives. A similar problem occurs with some Croatian adjectives ending in *–ski* in certain contexts, as opposed to those with the suffixes *–ov*, *–ev*, *–in*. Mićanović (2000: 114) shows the distinction on the examples *majčina ljubav* 'mother's love' and *majčinska ljubav* 'motherly love', where

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10   There are ten such adjectives occurring with putatively alienable nouns.

the meaning of the adjective in the former noun phrase is relational, whereas he defines that of the other adjective referring to an abstract rather than a specific person as relational–qualitative. Therefore, these adjectives should not be excluded from the analysis of the expression of possessive relations, neither inalienable nor alienable ones. Lindsay (1907) uses an illustrative example *ingenio degrediatur muliebri* (Mil. 185), the broader context of which shows that the adjective conveys possessive meaning as well: *ingenio degrediatur muliebri earumque artem et disciplinam optineat colere* (Mil. 185–186) 'she must not hesitate to bring in play her skill and cleverness'. The pronoun *earum* takes as its antecedent a noun which is implicit in the adjective *muliebris*.

Interestingly, the adjective *Plautinus* occurs twice in the twelve analysed plays, though both times with the same noun: *Plautinas fabulas* (Cas. 12) 'plays of Plautus' and *Plautina longa fabula* (Pseud. 2) 'a long play of Plautus'. Clearly, the adjective does not refer to an abstract person as in, for example, *vestimentum muliebre*, but still the author used an adjective rather than the genitive in an alienable possessive construction.[11] Wackernagel (1926: 75) provides a similar example as he quotes Phaedrus' observations on his fables: *quas* Aesopias *non* Aesopi *nomino, quia paucas ille ostendit, ego plures fero usus vetusto genere, sed rebus novis* 'which I call Aesopic and not Aesop's because he only wrote a few while I contribute more, using an old genre but new subjects'[12]. Even though it could be argued that the adjective here is purely qualitative, the adjective *Plautinus* as used in Plautus' plays is definitely relational–qualitative, denoting both the author of the plays and the special quality they have due to fact that they were written by this very author.[13]

4. Pronouns in possessive constructions

4.1. Nominal and adjectival pronouns denoting the possessor

The possessive adjective derived from a noun and the possessive genitive of a noun have an equivalent in the pronominal expression of possessive relations. The possessor can be expressed by personal, demonstrative, relative and interrogative pronouns in the genitive case, e.g. *pater eius* 'his father' as well as by possessive pronouns which agree in case, gender and number with the possessed noun, e.g. *meus pater* 'my father'. In contrast to nouns, Latin shows a tendency to use possessive pronouns rather than genitives of personal and demonstrative pronouns whenever it is possible. The genitives of demonstra-

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11 As with virtually all nouns in languages in which the expression of inalienable possession is not systematically different from alienable possessive relations, the nature of this noun is questionable. Precisely because so many nouns could be perceived as inalienable, only body part terms, kin terms and partitive relations were here taken as inalienable, since they are marked as such in most languages with a grammaticalized alienable–inalienable opposition.

12 Translation taken from Kaufmann (1996).

13 The prologues where the adjective *Plautinus* occurs were probably written by directors of Plautus' plays and not by Plautus himself, but the period is still Early Latin.

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tives *huius*, *eius*, *illius* 'his/her/its' are very frequent because there was no alternative, but genitives of personal pronouns occur as possessors very rarely since possessive pronouns were available. Wackernagel (1957: 81) interprets this as a general tendency for adjectival possessive constructions in Latin, which was preserved in Romance languages. In my analysis of Plautus' plays I found no examples of the genitive personal pronoun denoting the possessor, except in the cases when *omniorum* 'all' was also present, e.g. *res rationesque vostrorum omnium* (Amph., 4) 'the business and the accounts of you all'. Rather, a possessive pronoun was always used.[14] Alienable and inalienable nouns do not differ with respect to this – the adjectival pronominal form was used whenever the language allowed it.

4.2. Frequency of occurrence of the possessive pronoun with body part terms and kin terms

Possessor deletion, i.e. omission of the possessor, is very common with inalienable nouns and is "a sign of intimate, inherent relationship" (Seiler 1983: 18). According to Seiler, it occurs most frequently with nouns denoting body parts, and somewhat less frequently with kin terms. He offers a German example for the latter: *Er hat den Vater verloren* 'lit. He lost the father'. In Croatian, this would most likely be translated without the possessor as well – *Izgubio je oca*, while in English, in which possessor deletion is not allowed, the only correct option is *He lost his father*, with an explicit possessor. Matasović (2002: 154) formulates a pragmatic rule according to which the possessive pronoun *moj* 'my' and the possessive–reflexive *svoj* are normally deleted with inalienable nouns in Croatian, for example in *Vidio sam oca* 'I saw the father' instead of *Vidio sam svojeg oca* 'I saw my father', or *Slomio sam nogu* 'I broke the leg' instead of *Slomio sam svoju nogu* 'I broke my leg'.

Given that Latin, like Croatian, allows possessor deletion, I checked how often this happens with nouns denoting body parts and kinship, compared to constructions with explicit possessive pronouns. Idioms were not included in the analysis, and neither were vocatives of the possessed noun, since with vocatives the possessor is usually obvious (e.g. for kin terms) and therefore quite redundant. Kin terms showed a balanced ratio of constructions with and without the possessive pronoun (327 and 320, respectively), while nouns denoting body parts occurred 220 times without the possessor, and 66 times with a possessive pronoun. Omitting the possessor is therefore quite frequent with kin terms, whereas body part terms show a prominent tendency to appear without the possessor. It should be noted, however, that not all of these examples can be categorized as possessor deletion, since some of them, though there are few, do not meet the requirement according to which possessor dele-

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14 In some cases both interpretations are possible, as in *patris mei* (Asin. 52) 'of my father' and *oculi tui* (Merc. 371) 'your eyes'. It is, however, highly unlikely that the genitive is used only in those constructions in which the possessive pronoun, due to agreement with the possessed noun, has the same form as the genitive of the corresponding personal pronoun.

tion is characterized by "inalienable possessions [that] appear with no markers of grammatical possession whenever they are the object of a transitive verb whose subject is the possessor" (Kockelman 2001: 12).

Latin examples without an explicit possessor are not unusual, since possessor deletion is quite frequent for nouns which tend to be seen as inalienable in languages in which the possessor is not necessarily expressed. Alienable nouns in the plays analyzed here show an expectedly different pattern, occurring with the possessor more often than without. Possessor deletion is therefore not reserved exclusively for inalienable possession, but is far less common with alienable nouns.

5. Possessive dative and possessor promotion

The possessive dative occurring with the verb *esse* 'to be' is very common in Latin. Seiler (1983: 40) claims that there is a semantic difference between the possessive genitive and the possessive dative, with the dative denoting a less stable relation than the genitive. He illustrates the difference on the examples *liber es Marc–i* 'the book is Marcus's (gen.)' and *liber est Marc–o* 'the book is Marcus's (dat.)', where the ownership in the former sentence should be interpreted as permanent, whereas in the latter sentence the book is only temporarily in the possession of Marcus. However, the noun *nomen* 'name' very frequently occurs with the dative possessor, as in *Quid erat ei nomen?* (Capt. 285) 'What was his name?', *mihi est Menaechmo nomen* (Men. 1066) 'my name is Menaechmus'[15], even though there is a permanent and stable relation between a name and its owner.

The so–called *dativus sympatheticus* will be of more interest here. According to Leumann et al. (1965: 95), the use of this type of dative is motivated by certain semantic features of the verb, in such a way that it is most commonly used when the verbal action affects the mental or physical state of its object. Seiler (1983: 42) states that the dative case is used with what he calls inherently possessed nouns.

Matasović (2002: 154) analyzed *dativus symphateticus*, i.e. possessor promotion in Croatian, and came up with another pragmatic rule concerning possessive constructions with inalienable nouns, especially body part terms. According to this rule, in Croatian the possessor is typically expressed with a dative personal pronoun rather than a possessive pronoun in pragmatically and stylistically neutral sentences, e.g. *Slomila mu je srce* 'lit. She broke the heart to him' rather than *Slomila je njegovo srce* 'She broke his heart'. Matasović points out that these constructions are usually marked if occurring with alienable nouns.[16] Croatian therefore allows possessor promotion, or, in other words, if the inalienably possessed noun is the direct object, the possessor can be promoted from the possessive pronoun to the dative case. Possessor promo-

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15   With case attraction in the latter example.

16   Although possessor promotion in Croatian does often occur with alienables as well, as in *Razbila mu je auto* 'She crashed his car'.

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tion is found in many other European languages, such as Spanish, French, and German. Seiler (1983: 43) uses two German examples *Ich habe mir das Bein gebrochen* 'lit. I broke the leg to me' and the much less acceptable *Ich habe mein Bein gebrochen* 'I broke my leg' to illustrate how the body part is perceived as somehow separated from the body as a whole if the possessive pronoun is used. This closer connection between the possessum and the dative possessor can be seen even more clearly when both constructions are possible, but with a difference in meaning. For example, though it is possible to say both *Ivan je dodirnuo Ani kapu* 'lit. Ivan touched the cap to Ana' and *Ivan je dodirnuo Aninu kapu* 'Ivan touched Ana's cap' the former sentence presupposes that the cap was on Ana's head, whereas according to the default interpretation of the second example Ana was not wearing the cap at the moment it was touched (Matasović 2002: 156).

Plautus' comedies abound with examples of the dative possessor with nouns denoting body parts and, less frequently, kin terms. This happens typically with verbs expressing a negative action being performed upon the possessum, such as hitting or kidnapping, as Leumann et al. (1965: 95) remark for *dativus sympatheticus*, and as Seiler (1983: 44) claims is the case for the possessive dative in general. *Dativus sympatheticus* in Latin thus seems to be a case of possessor promotion occurring typically with inalienable nouns as in many European languages.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of possessive constructions in twelve Plautus' plays revealed three domains in which the difference between alienable and inalienable possession is manifested: the choice of the possessive genitive and the possessive adjective, the use of the possessive pronoun or its deletion when the possessum is the direct object, and the option to promote the possessor into what looks like the indirect object.

The possessive adjective derived from a common noun is found more frequently in constructions with inalienable than with alienable nouns, although there is a clear overall preference for the possessive genitive in both groups. Adjectives derived from ethnonyms and toponyms are very common and more frequent than the genitive regardless of the nature of the possessive relation. Since there is no systematic difference between possessive and qualitative adjectival suffixes, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish pure relational adjectives from the relational–qualitative type. It does, however, seem that pure relational adjectives occur more frequently with inalienable nouns, and relational–qualitative with alienable ones. Table 1. shows the distribution of the possessive genitive and the possessive adjective with alienable and inalienable nouns in the corpus studied here. A higher number of adjectival constructions with inalienables may be a result of the preservation of the more archaic construction due to a high frequency of explicit possessors with inalienable nouns.

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Table 1. Genitives and adjectives with alienable and inalienable nouns

| | COMMON NOUNS | | ANTHROPONYMS AND ETHNONYMS | |
	ALIENABLE	INALIENABLE	ALIENABLE	INALIENABLE
POSSESSIVE GENITIVE	100	46	35	31
POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE	29	33	40	4

The alienable – inalienable distinction is not reflected in the choice between pronominal genitive possessors and possessive pronouns, since the adjectival form of the pronoun is preferred whenever it is available. Possessor deletion, however, occurring most frequently with body part terms, is much less common with alienable nouns, as in many other languages which allow such a construction. Possessor promotion, traditionally termed *dativus sympatheticus*, is also typically found when the possessum is perceived as somehow inseparable or inalienable from the possessor, thus distinguishing the two groups of nouns analyzed here.

The opposition between alienable and inalienable possession is not grammaticalized in Latin, i.e. there are no rules which compel the speaker to mark inalienable possessive relations differently from alienable relations. It seems, however, that in Early Latin, as reflected in the language of Plautus, the two types of relations were distinguished by a degree of acceptability of certain possessive constructions. Thus, the inappropriate use of these constructions did not result in ungrammatical sentences, but there were certain preferences depending on the perception of the noun as either alienable or inalienable.

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Utjecaj (ne)otuđivosti na izražavanje odnosa posvojnosti u jeziku Plautovih drama
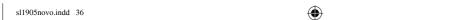
Cilj je ovoga rada usporediti posvojne konstrukcije u jeziku Plautovih komedija i vidjeti postoji li razlika u izražavanju otuđivih odnosa posvojnosti i odnosa koje bismo mogli smatrati neotuđivima. Budući da se u jezicima u kojima je opreka između otuđive i neotuđive posvojnosti gramatikalizirana neotuđivima najčešće smatraju imenice koje označavaju dijelove tijela i odnose srodstva, korpus od dvanaest Plautovih drama pretraživan je upravo prema tim dvjema semantičkim skupinama imenica. Neki su partitivni odnosi naknadno uključeni u analizu. Kako bi se vidjela eventualna razlika između posvojnih konstrukcija u kojima se pojavljuju ove pretpostavljeno neotuđive posjedovane imenice i onih s otuđivim imenicama, u prologu i prvim dvama činovima svake od dvanaest drama pronađene su konstrukcije kojima se izražava odnos otuđive posvojnosti i uspoređene su s prvom skupinom. Posebna je pozornost pridana posvojnim pridjevima i posvojnim genitivima imenica kao oznakama posjednika, kao i pojavama brisanja posjednika i promocije posjednika u usporedbi s upotrebom posvojnih zamjenica. Opći je zaključak da, iako opreka između otuđive i neotuđive posvojnosti nije gramatikalizirana u starolatinskome, čini se da su neke konstrukcije, poput posvojnog pridjeva ili brisanja i promocije posjednika, bile prihvatljivije uz neotuđive nego uz otuđive imenice, a posljedica je toga veća učestalost takvih konstrukcija u slučajevima kada se posjedovano smatra neotuđivim od posjednika. Konstrukcije iz latinskog uspoređene su sa sličnim posvojnim konstrukcijama u hrvatskome i u još nekim europskim jezicima u kojima također postoji tendencija razlikovanja otuđivih i neotuđivih posvojnih odnosa, premda ona, kao ni u latinskome, nije gramatikalizirana.

Key words: Plautus, Titus Maccius, inalienable possessivity, possessive constructions, philological analysis, Latin language

Ključne riječi: Plautus, Titus Maccius, neotuđiva posvojnost, posvojne konstrukcije, filološka analiza, latinski jezik

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