



## Romance genitives: agreement, definiteness, and phases

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4 In this paper, which discusses data from Gargano Apulian Italo-Romance, I propose that prepositional  
5 and non-prepositional genitives are fundamentally two different types of phrases, and that the  
6 interpretation of a non-prepositional noun as the possessor is not due to a silent preposition or head-  
7 modifier inversion, but rather to an agreement mechanism taking place between the modifier and its  
8 head. We propose that, just as a genitive can agree with its head for gender and number features so it  
9 can for definiteness, and that agreement for definiteness yields a genitival interpretation of the non-  
10 prepositional noun. I.e., definiteness can externalize the syntactic relation between head and modifier.  
11 We also propose that in this Apulian variety, non-prepositional genitives are syntactic phases  
12 (Chomsky 2001), and that the same holds for non-prepositional ‘qualitative’ predicative phrases in  
13 the same language. This would explain the impossibility of accessing the phrase through syntactic  
14 operations such as extraction.

15 Keywords: Apulian, genitive, definiteness agreement, phases

16

### 17 1. Introduction

18 The present work deals with a particular realization of genitival phrases found in the Italo-Romance  
19 variety of San Marco in Lamis, namely non-prepositional genitives. From the analysis of the data, we  
20 draw the following conclusions: no selection requirements for [+HUMAN] nouns take place; the head  
21 and its modifier are related through agreement for definiteness. Indefinites, by contrast, require the  
22 realization of a preposition. Post-nominal adjectival modification of the head is not allowed, and  
23 adjectives appear to the right of the modifier. Extraction and coordination are banned. We propose  
24 that such genitives constitute syntactic islands, in that they are phases. No syntactic operation can  
25 penetrate the phase, with phasehood being linked to definiteness (see Adger 2003, Radford 2004, and  
26 Jiménez-Fernández 2012). The paper is structured as follows: in §1 we present the data concerning  
27 non-prepositional possessors. In §2 we introduce other Romance non-prepositional genitives. We find  
28 that diachronic and diatopic variation mainly involves the modifier, particularly the possibility of its  
29 being article-less. In §3 we give an overview of a couple of proposals related to non-prepositional  
30 genitives. We suggest that agreement for definiteness takes place in Apulian non-prepositional  
31 genitives and we extend this idea to other types of Romance non-prepositional genitives. In §4 we  
32 discuss genitive agreement cross-linguistically, and add Romanian to the wider picture of genitives  
33 and definiteness in Romance, with the difference being that in Romanian, the denotation of heads  
34 extends to their modifiers even when they are indefinites (see Dobrovie-Sorin 2000). In §5 we give a  
35 first description of Apulian non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases and suggest that they can be  
36 treated on a par with non-prepositional genitives with respect to agreement for definiteness. In §6 we  
37 try to answer the question relative to the correlation of modification to D elements, and suggest that  
38 it has to do with a connection between D and Person. We treat definiteness like a proper agreement  
39 feature, such as gender and number features (which we refer to as  $\varphi$ ).  $\varphi$  can externalize the syntactic

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Paolo Lorusso for feedback on a first draft of this paper, and Danny Bate for proofreading it.

40 relation between head and modifier, and so can definiteness. We propose that Apulian non-  
41 prepositional genitives are phases and that their phasehood is linked to definiteness (Adger 2003,  
42 Radford 2004, and Jiménez-Fernández 2012). From this derive their islandhood properties vis-à-vis  
43 the unavailability of syntactic operations such as extraction. Finally, §7 concludes.

## 44 2. *Apulian non-prepositional genitives*

45 As evident from their name, non-prepositional genitives are possessor phrases that do not realize  
46 P(reposition). We focus here on their occurrence in a caseless<sup>2</sup> language, the Apulian Italo-Romance  
47 of San Marco in Lamis (Gargano promontory). The language under analysis here realizes the  
48 prepositional element as *də* ('of') and can realize either a prepositional or a non-prepositional genitive  
49 ((1) represents a context in which the school owns books that can be borrowed).

- 50 (1) a. *l-i libbr-a l-a skəl-a*  
51 DEF-PL book-M.PL DEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
52 'the school's books'  
53 b. *l-i libbr-a dəll-a skəl-a*  
54 DEF-PL book-M.PL of.DEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
55 'the school's books'

56 The choice however between a prepositional and a non-prepositional genitive is not free;  
57 prepositional genitives are found with nouns headed by both definite and indefinite articles, while  
58 non-prepositional genitives only allow nouns headed by definite articles.

- 59 (2) a. *\*l-i libbr-a n-a skəl-a*  
60 DEF-PL book-M.PL INDEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
61 'a school's books'  
62 b. *l-i libbr-a də n-a skəl-a*  
63 DEF-PL book-M.PL of INDEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
64 'a school's books'

65 The construction can yield a proper possessive interpretation, but also a partitive or a locative one:

- 66 (3) a. *l-i skarp-ə l-u patrə*  
67 DEF-PL shoe-PL DEF-M.SG father  
68 'the father's shoes'  
69 b. *l utəm-a l-a list-a*  
70 DEF last-F.SG DEF-F.SG list-F.SG  
71 'the last of the list'  
72 c. *a ll-u kwuartə l-a skəl-a*  
73 to DEF-M.SG side DEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
74 'beside the school'

77 Non-prepositional genitives also occur with prominence in the creation of toponyms:

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<sup>2</sup> Grammatical case is residual and is realized in the pronominal system (*ijə/me*; 'I/me').

- 78 (4) l-a vadda l-u 'mpernə  
 79 DEF-F.SG valley DEF-M.SG hell  
 80 'the valley of hell'  
 81 (5) l-a notʃə l-u passə  
 82 DEF-F.SG walnut.tree DEF-M.SG pass  
 83 'the pass of the walnut tree'

84 In this Apulian variety, adjectival modification of non-prepositional genitives seems to be  
 85 restricted to the sole genitival modifier (see the context in (6-7)). Except for a restricted class,  
 86 adjectives appear post-nominally and consequently to the right of the genitival modifier. Adjectival  
 87 modification of the head seems excluded in this construction (see §2).<sup>3</sup>

- 88 (6) l-i rət-ə l-a makən-a nɔv-a  
 89 DEF-PL tire-pl DEF-F.SG car-F.SG new-F.SG  
 90 'the tires of the new car'  
 91 (7) l-i rət-ə nɔv-ə \*(də.)l-a makən-a  
 92 DEF-PL tires new-PL \*(of.)DEF-F.SG car-F.SG  
 93 'the new tires of the car'

94 We have mentioned that this construction never involves indefinites. We can now add a further  
 95 element with regard to the role of definite articles. In this variety proper names are article-less, and  
 96 so, regardless of whether we ascribe this to an N-to-D movement (Longobardi 2005) or to a non-  
 97 realization of the D position, proper names do not occur with definite articles. We can take a look at  
 98 (8-9) and see how the (non)realization of definite articles works out in a non-prepositional context.

- 99 (8) \*l-u libbr-ə Mə'kelə  
 100 DEF-M.SG book-M.SG Michael  
 101 'Michael's book'  
 102 (9) l-u 'libbrə \*(də) Mə'kelə  
 103 DEF-M.SG book of Michael  
 104 'Michael's book'

105 This means that in this Apulian variety, a noun with no definite article can be a possessor only if it is  
 106 prepositional. Even though proper names are definite elements, a non-prepositional possessor can  
 107 only be definite and articed, i.e. it requires that definiteness be grammaticalized through an overt  
 108 definite article.

109 Although the construction generally occurs in the form of two consecutive articed nouns, we found  
 110 two instances in which the head noun can be article-less and these are: (10) head nouns as proper  
 111 names; and (11) head nouns as vocatives, respectively.<sup>4 5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Plural definite articles in this language inflect as *i* regardless of gender.

<sup>4</sup> *Strettəla* is the name of a street.

<sup>5</sup> Vocatives as in (11) correlate with apocope on the rightmost element of the phrase, applying right after the stressed vowel, here going from *g'gjanka* ('white') to *g'gja*. If the vocative phrase is composed of the head only, apocope will

- 112 (10) Maria l-a strettəla  
 113 Maria DEF-f.sg strettəla  
 114 ‘Maria from the strettəla’ (lit. ‘Maria of the strettəla’)  
 115 (11) figgjə l-a jaddin-a g'gja  
 116 child DEF-f.sg chicken-f.sg white  
 117 ‘silver spoon fed child’ (lit. ‘child of the white chicken’)

118 We move now to other syntactic properties exhibited by the construction, such as  
 119 presence/absence of the preposition; co-ordinated possessors; isolation and clefting of the non-  
 120 prepositional noun. Further on in this work, we will propose that these contexts show us that the head  
 121 and its non-prepositional modifier form are contained within a phase.

122 Let us start with co-ordination. In this variety of Apulian the non-prepositional genitive cannot be  
 123 coordinated:

- 124 (12) \*l-a fu'nestr-a l-a kas-a e l-a skəl-a  
 125 DEF-F.SG window.F-F.SG DEF-F.SG house-f.sg and DEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
 126 ‘the window of the house and of the school’  
 127 (13) l-i fu'nestr-ə l-a kas-a e \*(də)ll-a skəl-a  
 128 DEF-PL window.F-PL DEF-F.SG house-F.SG and of.DEF-F.SG school-F.SG  
 129 ‘the windows of the house and of the school’

130 (13) shows that the phrase where the non-prepositional possessor is contained can function as the first  
 131 conjunct, but that at the same time, there is no non-prepositional possessor functioning as second  
 132 conjunct.

133 Fronting of the possessor is another test we can carry out. In (14) we can see that a fronted non-  
 134 prepositional modifier is never an option. The consequence is that fronting is only allowed for  
 135 prepositional possessors/modifiers:

- 136 (14) \*l-a kart-a ne lett-ə dojə padʒ:ən-ə  
 137 DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG part.have.1SG read-PL two.F page-PL  
 138 ‘of the letter I have read two pages’  
 139 (15) dəll-a kart-a ne lett-ə dojə padʒ:ən-ə  
 140 of.DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG part.have.1SG read.PST-PL two.F page-PL  
 141 ‘of the letter, I have read two pages’

142 Clefting of the non-prepositional possessor produces identical results, requiring that the clefted  
 143 nominal be prepositional:

- 144 (16) \*'ε l-a kart-a ke ne lettə l-a bbusta  
 145 is DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG that part.have.1SG read.pst DEF-F.SG envelope  
 146 ‘it is of the letter that I read (what’s on) the envelope’  
 147 (17) 'ε dəll-a kart-a ke ne lettə l-a bbusta  
 148 is of.DEF-F.SG letter-F.SG that part.have.1SG read.pst DEF-F.SG envelope

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apply on the head itself. For truncation in the vocatives of the languages of Southern Italy, the reader is referred to D’Alessandro and van Oostendorp (2016).

149 'it is of the letter that I read the envelope'

150 We believe that the facts described suggest that non-prepositional modifiers are contained  
151 within a phase with their head noun. In §6 we will propose that what's at stake is D(efiniteness)-  
152 agreement within the constituent; before proceeding, in the next section we offer an overview of non-  
153 prepositional genitives within Romance languages and see that they occur in both Old Romance (Old  
154 Italian, Old French, Old Sicilian) and in other Contemporary Italo-Romance varieties, such as  
155 Calabrese. We will proceed diachronically, starting from Old Romance.

### 156 3. *Old and Contemporary Romance*

157 Non-prepositional genitives are often found in Old Romance. Jensen (1990) offers an outline of the  
158 construction in Old French, showing that it was a construction mainly dedicated to definite and  
159 specific referents. Summing up the data from Jensen (1990 :19, 20; (18e) from Diedhiou 2002: 3),  
160 we offer the following (18):

- 161 (18) a. l-a curt l-e rei  
162 DEF-F.SG court DEF-M.SG king  
163 'the king's court'  
164 b. l-e cheval Kex  
165 DEF-M.SG horse Kex  
166 'Kex's horse'  
167 c. l-i filz Venus  
168 DEF-M.SG son Venus  
169 'Venus's son'  
170 d. l-a Dieu benivolance  
171 DEF-F.SG God.m benevolence.F  
172 'God's benevolence'  
173 e. un-e maison a un hermite trova  
174 INDEF-F.SG house.F to INDEF.M.SG hermit found  
175 's/he came across the house of a hermit'  
176 f. enondu!  
177 In.name.God  
178 'in the name of God!'

179 (18a) is the same configuration with two consecutive determiner phrases as we found in Apulian.  
180 (18)b, however, shows a dissimilarity between Old Romance and Apulian in which, as we said, proper  
181 names can be possessors only when prepositional. Here, instead, an article-less possessor can be non-  
182 prepositional. (18d) shows that in Old French the position of head and modifier could be reversed  
183 (minus the position of the definite article dominating the head, which remains phrase-initial), however  
184 agreement morphology on the definite article specifies which one is the head. (18e) is an indication  
185 of a common trait shared with Apulian non-prepositional genitives and namely the realization of a  
186 preposition (here *a*) in the presence of indefinites.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, (18f) indicates that non-prepositional

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<sup>6</sup> Syncretism between dative and genitive elements is not rare cross-linguistically, occurring regardless of whether this is externalized analytically or synthetically (like for case syncretism in Romanian, uniting genitive and dative in oblique morphology). For an overview of the dative-genitive syncretism in Indo-European, see Luraghi (1987); Manzini and

187 genitives could form a compound. This pattern is solid within Romance but applies to other instances  
188 of non-prepositional genitives crosslinguistically, such as the Hebrew one, with heads in the Construct  
189 State (see Borer 2008).<sup>7</sup>

190 Old Italian non-prepositional genitives align with Old French ones, allowing, as far as we can  
191 tell, the same types of configurations encountered in Old French. In (19) we present Old Italian data  
192 obtained from Delfitto and Paradisi (2009):

- 193 (19) a. l-a Iddio mercé  
194 DEF-F.SG God.m mercy.F  
195 ‘for God’s mercy’  
196 b. l-o padre Enea  
197 DEF-M.SG father Aeneas  
198 ‘Anchises, Aeneas’s father’  
199 c. a nome messer Eustagio  
200 to name sir Eustagio  
201 ‘in the name of Sir Eustagio’  
202 d. da le rede Bertino d’Aiuolo  
203 from DEF heir Bertino d’Aiuolo  
204 ‘from Bertino d’Aiuolo’s heir’  
205 e. li armi Diana  
206 DEF weapons Diana  
207 ‘Diana’s weapons’  
208 f. cocitura lo detto pane  
209 cooking DEF said bread  
210 ‘the cooking of said bread’

211 (19a) shows that also in Old Italian the position of the head and the modifier could be reversed,  
212 yielding the order modifier-head. The definite article of the head, again, remains however in place  
213 and gender features specify which of the two nominals is the head. (19b-e) contain article-less  
214 modifiers, with (19c) and (19f) containing an article-less head as well. The latter comprises a pre-  
215 nominal modifier of the genitival noun (*pane*) in the form of a past participle. This means that there  
216 is evidence that in Old Italian a non-prepositional genitive could be modified by a pre-nominal  
217 modifier, unlike what we have seen for Apulian<sup>8</sup>. This is different also from what we see in a type of  
218 non-prepositional genitive found in Contemporary Italian, with *casa* ‘house’ as its head ((20) adapted  
219 from Longobardi (2001: 572)):

- 220 (20) a. cas-a Rossi  
221 house-F.SG Rossi  
222 ‘the house of the Rossi’s’

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Savoia (2011, 2014). What is interesting anyway is that it is a prepositional form (in this instance the *a*-type) which occurs with indefinite nominals.

<sup>7</sup> Nouns in the Semitic construct state are notoriously characterized by an article-less head but might undergo other processes such as the realization of feminine inflection (on this topic with regard to Arabic see, for instance, Mohammad (1999), working on Palestinian Arabic).

<sup>8</sup> As we anticipated in §2, only a handful of adjectives can be pre-nominal in this Apulian variety, among including *bell-*, *brutt-*, *bo/on-*, *brav-* (‘beautiful’, ‘ugly’, ‘good’, etc.). Note however that the adjectives in the data we present in this paper are strictly post-nominal (as *nov-*, ‘new’, *exx* (6-7)).

- 223                    b. \*cas-a        nuov-a    Rossi  
 224                           house-F.SG new-F.SG Rossi  
 225                           ‘the new house of the Rossi’s’  
 226                    c. cas-a        Rossi    nuov-a  
 227                           house-F.SG Rossi.PL new-F.SG  
 228                           ‘the new house of the Rossi’s’

229    There is also a difference between Italian in (20c) and Apulian in (6-7), in that in Apulian the adjective  
 230    agrees with the possessor, while in Italian it agrees with the head, as evident from agreement  
 231    morphology.

232        The Old French non-prepositional genitive seems limited to [+HUMAN] referents (see Jensen  
 233        1990). This is however not true of Apulian and Old Italian, in which the non-prepositional modifier  
 234        can also be a –human nominal (*pane*, ‘bread’ in (19f). Nonetheless, all the varieties presented so far  
 235        (excluding Apulian) allow for articleless non-prepositional proper names as possessors, and this  
 236        includes Old Sicilian as well ((21) from Delfitto and Paradisi 2009: 63):

- 237        (21)        a. la    morti Dyonisiu tyranpnu  
 238                           DEF death Dionysius tyrant  
 239                           ‘the death of the tyrant Dionysius’

240        As we anticipated, Calabrese is another contemporary Italo-Romance variety of Southern Italy  
 241        allowing non-prepositional possessors. The construction in the Calabrese variety has been previously  
 242        analyzed in Rohlfs (1969) and Silvestri (2012, 2016). The AIS map contains instances of Calabrese  
 243        non-prepositional genitives, specifically from the variety of Mangone. Like Old Romance, the  
 244        Calabrese variety of Mangone admits articleless non-prepositional possessors (AIS: 120)

- 245        (22)        u    pumu Adømu  
 246                           DEF knob Adam  
 247                           ‘laryngeal prominence’

248    Like in Apulian and Old Italian, Calabrese non-prepositional possessors are not restricted to  
 249    [+HUMAN] referents. We can see **this** in (23), **in** Verbicaro Calabrese data from Silvestri (2012, 2016):

- 250        (23)        a. a    nučə u    kʊəddə  
 251                           DEF nut    DEF neck  
 252                           ‘cervical vertebra’  
 253                    b. ʊ    čialə a    vʊkka  
 254                           DEF sky    DEF mouth  
 255                           ‘palate’  
 256                    c. a    panza a    gamma  
 257                           DEF belly    DEF leg  
 258                           ‘calf’

259    The construction in Calabrese seems to admit post-nominal adjectival modifiers of the head (Silvestri  
 260    2013: 142):

- 261 (24) a. a buttigghja gross-a u vinu (jank-u)  
 262 DEF-F bottle.F big-F DEF-M wine.M (white-M)  
 263 ‘the big bottle of white wine’  
 264 b. a buttigghja lord-a u vinu  
 265 DEF-F bottle.F dirty-F DEF-M wine  
 266 ‘the dirty bottle of wine’

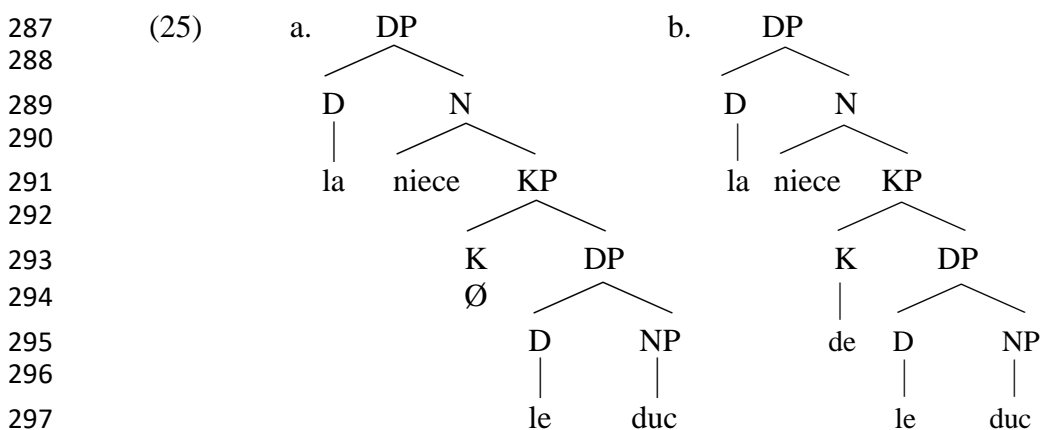
267 The puzzling thing about non-prepositional genitives inevitably involves a question about how  
 268 a non-prepositional noun can be interpreted as a possessor in the absence of a preposition or case  
 269 morphology specifying it as such. This is the topic of the next paragraph, where we will give an  
 270 overview of proposals put forward in the literature. We will suggest that in the case of Apulian, this  
 271 interpretation is made possible through the agreement of the two nouns for definiteness.

272 4. Interpretation with no P

273 The first account on non-prepositional genitives in the languages of Southern Italy goes back to  
 274 Rohlf's (1969), who analyzed non-prepositional genitives of the Calabrese variety and proposed that  
 275 the lack of a preposition is due to its absorption in an intervocalic context (vocalic word end for the  
 276 head, and the vocalic definite article for the possessor). **In contrast** to other Romance varieties of Italy,  
 277 whose articles retained the lateral from *ille*, the definite article of the Calabrese varieties discussed  
 278 by Rohlf's underwent the loss of the lateral consonant, thus resulting in the articles *a* (F)/*u*, *o* (M).

279 The fact however that in several Romance varieties whose definite articles retained the lateral  
 280 (such as the Apulian of San Marco in Lamis we deal with in this paper) non-prepositional genitives  
 281 occur **as well** is the reason behind Silvestri's (2012) proposal that Rohlf's hypothesis might be  
 282 incorrect, in that the lateral in the definite article assures that no inter-vocalic absorption takes place.

283 Within generative grammar, proposals for Romance non-prepositional genitives either involve a  
 284 non-pronounced P, or head-modifier inversion. Working on Old French non-prepositional genitives,  
 285 Simonenko (2010: 9) proposes a *KP* (Kase Phrase) which is only filled with prepositional genitives,  
 286 otherwise remaining silent.



299 Head-modifier inversion is instead proposed in Delfitto and Paradisi (2009: 60), who approach  
 300 the issue with an analysis à la Kayne, postulating head-modifier inversion.

- 301 (26) la [D/PP niece]<sub>j</sub> [ [AGR/K°<sub>k</sub>-D°] [IP le duc [e<sub>k</sub> [e]<sub>j</sub>]]...

302 The AGR head receives the definiteness feature of the possessor via Spec-Head agreement. The  
303 incorporation of AGR in D is triggered by a [+HUMAN] feature which syntactically activates AGR/K<sup>o</sup>,  
304 taking into account the [+HUMAN] nature of Old French non-prepositional possessors. However, this  
305 cannot apply to all the varieties we examine here, in that several of them require no [+HUMAN] feature  
306 for the possessor, making the triggering of AGR into D via a [+HUMAN] feature untenable.

307 As for (26), in this paper we maintain that the prepositional and the non-prepositional construction  
308 do not share the same underlying structure and that the interpretation of a non-prepositional noun as  
309 possessor is not due to a silent preposition or **to** inversion, but rather to an agreement mechanism  
310 taking place between the modifier and its head. In the **following** section, we will propose that just as  
311 a genitive can agree with its head for gender and number, so can it for definiteness, and that agreement  
312 for definiteness yields a genitival interpretation of the non-prepositional noun, in that it can  
313 externalize the syntactic relation taking place between the head and its modifier.

#### 314 5. *Genitive agreement cross-linguistically. A syntactic analysis*

315 In the previous section we suggested that in Apulian a non-prepositional noun is interpreted as a  
316 possessor iff:

- 317 (27) a) it always occurs with its head from which it cannot be separated neither via  
318 extraction nor because of interposing material (e.g. adjectives);  
319 b) **it is accompanied by an article**;  
320 c) it is definite, and so is the head.

321 (c) in particular is shared by all the Romance non-prepositional genitives we discussed in the paper.  
322 Let us say that (c) means that in these languages, a non-prepositional noun is interpreted as genitive  
323 only if it agrees for definiteness with its head.

324 Modifier-head agreement is a trait mostly associated with adjectival modifiers, but agreement  
325 between a genitival modifier and its head also exists. This can be achieved through (at least) two  
326 different strategies, namely one where agreement with the head is realized on the modifier itself, and  
327 a second type where this is externalized on free-standing elements. The first type is the one we find  
328 in Georgian wherein the possessor, in the oblique case, might agree with the head noun in number  
329 and case so that if the structural case of the head is nominative, the genitive will bear nominative  
330 morphology too (Bopp 1848, in Plank 1995: 4):

- 331 (28) çinamsrbol-n-i laşkar-ta-n-i  
332 vanguard-PL-NOM army-OBL.PL-PL-NOM  
333 ‘the vanguard of the armies’

334 In the second type, agreement appears on an element other than the possessor noun itself, **which**  
335 is generally known as *linker*. Albanian linkers, for instance, are elements that are identical to or  
336 allomorphs of definite inflections, agreeing with the head noun (Manzini and Savoia 2014: 84):

- 337 (29) libr-i i vëđa-it  
338 book-DEF.NOM.M. LKR.M brother-DEF.OBL.M  
339 ‘the book of the brother’

340 Let us return to Romance now, because Romanian has linkers too. There is a second reason why  
 341 we include Romanian in this list, and this pertains to the ‘purely synthetic’ genitive that Romanian  
 342 employs. Definiteness, as we will see, plays an important role in the realization of this type of  
 343 genitive. The linker type, as evident from inflection morphology, is an agreeing element. Like the  
 344 Albanian linker, the Romanian linker contains a D element (Latin *ille*)<sup>9</sup>, ((32)a from Dobrovie-Sorin  
 345 2000, 2005):

- 346 (30) a. o casa a vecin-ului  
 347 INDEF house.F LKR.F neighbor-DEF.OBL.M  
 348 ‘a house of the neighbor’s’  
 349 b. o câine al vecin-ului  
 350 INDEF dog.M LKR.M neighbor-DEF.OBL.M  
 351 ‘a dog of the neighbor’s’

352 The ‘purely synthetic’ type sees the possessor in the oblique case, with no linker appearing between  
 353 head and modifier (Dobrovie-Sorin 2000):

- 354 (31) a. casa vecin-ului  
 355 house neighbor-DEF.OBL.M  
 356 ‘the neighbor’s house’  
 357 b. o casa a vecin-ului  
 358 INDEF house.F LKR.F neighbor-DEF.OBL.M  
 359 ‘a house of the neighbor’s’

360 (31) shows that (in)definiteness is the feature leading to the realization of either a synthetic or a linker  
 361 genitive. Romanian non-*al* genitives can also include modifiers headed by indefinite articles (*unui*,  
 362 *unei*) and modifiers in the form of proper names, so that we have cases like the following:<sup>10</sup>

- 363 (32) a. [evaluare-a [utilizabilitati-i [un-ui scenariu]]]  
 364 evaluation-DEF usability-DEF INDEF-GEN scenario  
 365 ‘evaluation of the usability of a scenario’  
 366 b. casă Mari-ei  
 367 house Mary-GEN  
 368 ‘Mary’s house’

369 Indeed in the first case, *scenariu* is indefinite and no definiteness trait is present. For such instances,  
 370 we might adopt **the analysis proposed** in Dobrovie-Sorin (2000: 216), “the denotation of the overall  
 371 nominal projection is obtained by applying the denotation of the head N to the denotation of the DP  
 372 in SpecDP” (SpecDP would be the position assigned to the genitive, in her work). In so doing, **a**  
 373 **definite interpretation is not derived compositionally**, but rather extended from the head to the whole  
 374 phrase. As for (32b), we have no overt determiner, although definite nouns such as *casa* are known,  
 375 similarly to proper names, to show such a pattern (see Longobardi 2001).

376 Longobardi (1995) was the first to notice similarities between the Italian non-prepositional  
 377 construction in (20) and the Semitic Construct State, **which include** an articleless head and resistance  
 378 to post-nominal modification of the head. In Hebrew, genitival modification can be of two types. One

<sup>9</sup> It is debated whether other elements (such as the Latin preposition *ad*) might have been present in the original make-up of the linker. An extended discussion on the matter is provided by Giurgea (2012).

<sup>10</sup> I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

379 is prepositional (Hebrew has no grammatical case), and this relates to **head nouns accompanied by an**  
 380 **article**, the possibility of a following adjectival modifier and that of an indefinite head and/or  
 381 possessor. Alternatively, it is a non-prepositional genitive, and this correlates with modifier-head  
 382 definiteness agreement and a phonologically reduced deaccented articleless head, with stress falling  
 383 on the genitival noun ((34b), Borer 1988: 48):

- 384 (33) a. ha-caʕif šel ha-yalda/ šel yalda  
 385 DEF-scarf of DEF-girl/ of girl  
 386 ‘the scarf of the girl/of a girl’  
 387 b. caʕif ha-yaldá  
 388 scarf DEF-girl  
 389 ‘the scarf of the girl’

390 In a similar vein to **Dobrovie-Sorin’s proposal** for Romanian, Borer (1988) and Hoyt (2008) propose  
 391 that in Hebrew and Arabic<sup>11</sup>, respectively, the (in)definiteness feature of modifiers spreads to the head  
 392 (whereas for Romanian, the purported mechanism progresses from the head to the modifier).

393

394 5. *More Apulian non-prepositional constructions: qualitative noun phrases*

395 This **section** deals with another context where P might be absent, namely that of qualitative noun  
 396 phrases. These constructions are usually characterized by the realization of two nouns, one of which  
 397 is understood as the predicate. As such, they have been extensively studied with regard to predication  
 398 (see Napoli 1989, Den Dikken 2006). By *predication*, it is intended that the head is the externalization  
 399 of a property associated with the second noun. This is exemplified in the Italian example in (34) (from  
 400 Napoli 1989: 247):

- 401 (34) la teoria della relatività  
 402 ‘the theory of relativity’

403 What (34) says about *relativity* is that it is a *theory*. The head predicates that the property of being a  
 404 theory is related to *relatività*. We focus here on a particular type of qualitative noun phrase found in  
 405 Apulian, namely the *N of an N* type.

406 What we know about Italian is that this type of phrase sees its first member as generally dominated  
 407 by a distal demonstrative, with the second member realized as an indefinite:

- 408 (35) quell’idiota di un dottore  
 409 ‘that idiot of a doctor’

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<sup>11</sup> Hoyt (2008: 5, 6) shows that it is the modifier which triggers an (in)definite interpretation, as in the following cases, with identical heads, but with modifiers realized differently.

- (i) a. kitāb-u bint-i-n  
 book-NOM girl-GEN-NUN  
 ‘a girl’s book’  
 b. kitāb-u l-bint-i  
 book-NOM DEF-girl-GEN  
 ‘the girl’s book’

410 The predication being made about *dottore* is that of being an idiot. But in Italian we can also find two  
 411 variants of the construction: a type with a distal demonstrative preceding the first member and a  
 412 definite article preceding the second one (36a). The second type occurs with two definite-articled  
 413 nouns (36b).

- 414 (36) a. quell'idiota del dottore  
 415 'that idiot of the doctor'  
 416 b. l'idiota del dottore  
 417 'the idiot of the doctor'

418 In the Apulian variety we are dealing with here, binominal qualitative noun phrases occur in a fashion  
 419 similar to (36b). Except that they can be non-prepositional.

- 420 (37) a. l-u 'ʃemə l-u 'medəkə  
 421 DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor  
 422 'the idiot of the doctor'  
 423 b. l-a 'kaspəta l-a bul'letta  
 424 DEF-F.SG freaking DEF-F.SG bill  
 425 'that freaking thing of a bill'

426 The non-prepositional construction in (38) obeys the same constraints we found for Apulian non-  
 427 prepositional genitives, and especially the most salient one, namely a ban on indefinites.

- 428 (38) a. l-u 'ʃemə l-u 'medəkə  
 429 DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor  
 430 'the idiot of the doctor'  
 431 b. \*n-u 'ʃemə l-u 'medəkə  
 432 INDEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor  
 433 '\*an idiot of the doctor'  
 434 c. \*l-u 'ʃemə n-u 'medəkə  
 435 DEF-M.SG idiot INDEF-M.SG doctor  
 436 '\*the idiot of a doctor'  
 437 d. n-u 'ʃemə də 'medəkə  
 438 INDEF-M.SG idiot of doctor  
 439 'an idiot of a doctor'  
 440 e. \*n-u 'ʃemə n-u 'medəkə  
 441 INDEF-M.SG idiot INDEF-M.SG doctor  
 442 '\*an idiot of a doctor'

443 Like in non-prepositional genitives, here the second element of the construction cannot undergo  
 444 fronting. But this is often true of prepositional predicative noun phrases in Italian (see Napoli 1989)  
 445 and Apulian as well.

- 446 (39) a. n-u 'ʃemə də 'medəkə  
 447 INDEF-M.SG idiot of doctor  
 448 'an idiot of a doctor'  
 449 b. \*dəll-u 'medəkə e vistə l-u 'ʃemə  
 450 of.DEF-M.SG doctor have.1sg seen DEF-M.SG idiot

451                    \*of the doctor I have seen the idiot  
 452           c. \*ε dəll-u           'medəkə ke e           vistə l-u           'femə  
 453                    is of.DEF-M.SG doctor   that have.1sg   seen DEF-M.SG idiot  
 454                    \*it's of the doctor that I have seen the idiot

455 It is possible for the whole phrase to be fronted, or to be a cleft, but not for one of the two DPs which  
 456 constitute it.

457           (40)   a. dəll-u           'femə l-u           'medəkə e           vistə l-u           kane  
 458                    of.DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor   have.1sg   seen DEF-M.SG dog  
 459                    'of that idiot of the doctor I have seen the dog'  
 460                    b. ε dəll-u           'femə l-u           'medəkə ke e           vistə l-u           kane  
 461                    is of.DEF-M.SG idiot DEF-M.SG doctor   that have.1sg   seen DEF-M.SG dog  
 462                    'it's of that idiot of the doctor that I have seen the dog'

463 Napoli (1989) proposes that a qualitative noun phrase sits in the terminal node of an NP; that is to  
 464 say, it behaves like a noun. In generative frameworks, qualitative noun phrases have been derived  
 465 either on a par with prepositional possessive phrases proper, or in a separate fashion. Kayne (1994:  
 466 105-6), for instance, proposes a unitary derivation.

467           (41)   a. that idiot of a doctor  
 468                    a'. that[D/PP[NP idiot<sub>j</sub>] [of[IP a doctor I° [e]<sub>j</sub>...  
 469                    b. cet imbécile de Jean  
 470                    that idiot of Jean  
 471                    'that idiot of Jean'  
 472                    b'. cet[D/PP[NP imbécile<sub>j</sub>] [de[IP Jean I° [e]<sub>j</sub>...  
 473                    c. la voiture de Jean  
 474                    c'. la[D/PP[NP voiture<sub>j</sub>] [de[IP Jean [I° [e]<sub>j</sub>...]

475 Den Dikken (2006) proposes a structure for qualitative noun phrases only, distinguishing them from  
 476 possessive prepositional phrases proper. In any case both propose inversion,<sup>12</sup> having the common  
 477 idea that the preposition *of* is a sort of nominal copula (*the doctor is an idiot*). Without advocating  
 478 inversion, with regard to the Apulian data we suggest, like Kayne, that the two occurrences of *of* can  
 479 be united if we take into account the nature of the preposition in such instances, and namely that of  
 480 an element relating sets. P can relate head and modifier and therefore possessee and possessor. At the  
 481 same time, it can relate a property to a noun. In our case, P is absent, but definiteness agreement  
 482 relates the two nouns. One could argue that unlike qualitative noun phrases, possessors can undergo  
 483 fronting and clefting and that the two constructions should not go under the same umbrella. For the  
 484 time being, we will delay this discussion until §6.3, in which we return to the issue. To end this  
 485 **section**, we can recapitulate what we have found from the analysis of the data at our disposal. We  
 486 have seen that Apulian non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases are regulated by agreement for  
 487 definiteness. In **section** 3-4, we have proposed that this is what expresses the syntactic relation  
 488 between head and modifier in non-prepositional genitives. In the absence of P, we propose that the  
 489 same happens in non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases, i.e. that the relation between the

<sup>12</sup> And so do Delfitto & Paradisi (2009).

490 predicate and the subject of the predication is externalized through definiteness agreement, rather  
491 than the externalization of a preposition.

492 6. *Why D?D, definiteness, and definiteness effects.*

493 6.1 *Agreement*

494 This last section is dedicated to the question of why there seems to be a correlation between D  
495 elements and modification in the nominal domain. This correlation seems to externalize (mostly) in  
496 two ways. In one, elements stemming from allomorphs of determiners interposed between head and  
497 genitival modifiers host number and gender features. They can be either the features of the genitival  
498 noun, or those of the head. We have seen that these elements are usually called linkers. They seem to  
499 form a constituent with the modifier rather than with the head noun as suggested by linker behaviour  
500 in coordination (Philip 2012) and modifier iteration contexts (Manzini et al. 2014) (even though in  
501 some cases they might appear as graphically attached to the head, as in Persian). In this case, these  
502 elements belong with the modifier, and show agreement with the head via number and gender  
503 features. We have seen this for Albanian and Romanian (29-31). Previously, we have seen that in  
504 Romanian, oblique case morphology alone does not suffice for the noun to be interpreted as the  
505 possessor, and that it is somewhat defective.

506 So we end up with (at least) two contexts in which D is pivotal for head-modifier agreement.  
507 In one, D hosts gender and number features. In the other one, it is just the locus where definiteness is  
508 grammaticalized and definiteness agreement with the head is externalized. Another instance in which  
509 agreement for definiteness occurs in modification is that of relative clauses. Specifically, Modern  
510 Standard Arabic relative clauses are headed by *llaði* when the noun they modify is definite (for  
511 discussion, see Mohammad 1999). This element is not present with indefinite heads ((42) from Galal  
512 2004: 46).

- 513 (42) a. raʔayt-u 1-walad-a ʔallaði zaaʔ-a al-yaum  
514 saw-1.SG DEF-boy-ACC REL came-he DEF-day  
515 ‘I saw the boy who came today’  
516 b.\*raʔayt-u walad-a-n ʔallaði zaaʔ-a al-yaum  
517 saw-1.SG boy-ACC REL came-he DEF-day  
518 ‘I saw a boy who came today’

519 By the same token (assuming *llaði* to be a D element), Apulian non-prepositional genitives, which  
520 always modify a definite head, must be headed by an overt D.

521 What we would like to suggest with regard to the correlation of D(efiniteness) to modification  
522 is that this has something to do with indexing. In previous literature, it has been suggested that there  
523 is a correlation between D elements and person, gender and number features, and specifically with  
524 Person. In Chomsky (1995), by instance, D elements can satisfy the EPP (Extended Projection  
525 Principle), meaning the necessity for verbs to express a subject, either via a pronominal element,  
526 verbal inflection, or an expletive. Lyons (1999) goes further and proposes that Person and  
527 Definiteness can be unified under the same category, namely *Person-Definiteness*. When it comes to  
528 nouns, Person reduces to 3rd person (see Baker (2003) and Ackema and Neeleman (2019a, 2019b)  
529 on number features in R-expressions) and the rest is achieved by number and/or gender and case. If  
530 number and gender and definiteness can be correlated, this means that just as Kartvelian genitives

531 can agree for number, gender, and case, so genitives in other languages can agree for definiteness. In  
 532 this sense, definiteness is a proper feature, and as such can externalize the syntactic relation between  
 533 a head and its modifier. The definiteness features of internal arguments can also influence the type of  
 534 inflectional morphology present on a verb. This happens in Hungarian. Coppock and Wechsler (2012)  
 535 show that this occurs in a number of contexts, including proper names, possessives, third person direct  
 536 object pronouns,<sup>13</sup> and definite internal arguments. Again, there is a strong correlation between person  
 537 and definiteness. As they explain, definite inflections stem from pronoun incorporation, but given  
 538 that they inflect according to mood and tense, Coppock and Wechsler argue that they amount to  
 539 agreement morphology, rather than object clitics. They propose that through reanalysis, such  
 540 pronouns lost  $\phi$ -features,<sup>14</sup> while retaining formal DEF properties, finally resulting in a  $\phi$ -less form of  
 541 agreement, which is what we find in Apulian non-prepositional genitives. Within Southern Italo-  
 542 romance, yet another proof that (in)definiteness is pivotal in the choice of a particular configuration  
 543 over another emerges. Ledgeway et al. (2020), for instance, show that Calabrese features a type of  
 544 linker, which is found in indefinite contexts only.

- 545 (43) a. nu cumpagn-ə \*(r-u) miə (Orsomarso, Cosenza. Ledgeway et al. 2020: 97)  
 546 INDEF friend-m of-DEF my  
 547 ‘a friend of mine’  
 548 b. a cumpagna suə  
 549 DEF friend his/her  
 550 ‘his/her friend’

551 *ru* is undoubtedly a type of linker. Its morphological makeup is also analogous to the one found in  
 552 Romanian and Aromanian (§5, footnote 8 of this paper, and reference contained therein). Ledgeway  
 553 et al. also show that Italo-Greek varieties of Southern Italy prefer strong possessive forms over  
 554 enclitic ones in indefinite configurations. This is also true of Southern Italo-Romance in general, as  
 555 in the following example from Gargano Apulian.

- 556 (44) a. \*nu fratə-mə  
 557 INDEF brother-my  
 558 b. nu fratə mja  
 559 INDEF brother my  
 560 ‘one of my brothers’  
 561 c. fratə-mə  
 562 brother(s)-my  
 563 ‘my brother’ or ‘my brothers’<sup>15</sup>

## 565 6.2 Definiteness and phasehood

566 How can we explain the fact that non-prepositional genitives do not allow syntactic operations such  
 567 as extraction? Here we would like to propose that this is because they are phases. A *phase* is a chunk

<sup>13</sup> First and second person trigger instead the *subjective* inflection. See Coppock and Wechsler (2012) for discussion.

<sup>14</sup> *Phi* features, or number and gender features.

<sup>15</sup> Plural forms of the enclitic possessive only exist in the first person plural. Masculine, feminine plural and masculine singular morphology in nouns and possessives carries an invariable schwa. Agreement morphology in the clause disambiguates singular from plural forms.

568 of syntactic structure that once completed, is not accessible to further syntactic operations (Chomsky  
569 1998). Structure is built phase by phase, and once the phase is closed, no syntactic operation can take  
570 place, and **therefore island effects arise**.<sup>16</sup>

571 Chomsky (2001: 12) proposed that “phases are propositional: verbal phrases with full argument  
572 structure and CP with force indicators”. More recently, Adger (2003), Radford (2004), Jiménez-  
573 Fernández (2012), and Chomsky (2020) have argued that definite DPs can have phasehood status, as  
574 shown in (47), in which the banned syntactic operation is *wh*- extraction.

- 575 (45) a. \*Which poem did you hear Homer’s recital of last night? (Adger 2003: 327)  
576 b. Which poem did you go to hear a recital of last night?

577 Since Higginbotham (1985), nominal phrases are thought to be endowed with argument structure too.  
578 So for example in a language with articles, determiners saturate one of the noun’s argumental slots.  
579 Yet so do genitival phrases (regardless of whether this is grammatical case or its analytical  
580 counterpart). Putting together the **proposal** that definite DPs are phases **with the idea that** genitives  
581 are phrases with full argument structure, we would like to propose that non-prepositional genitives of  
582 the Apulian kind are actually phases, and therefore subject to islandhood effects. A similar proposal  
583 with respect to genitives is put forward in Shormani (2016), who argues that Semitic Construct State  
584 genitives constitute phases.

585 One question left to answer is why we have cases in which both the head and the modifier are  
586 headed by definite articles, but the result is not a non-prepositional genitive. We have already seen  
587 that prepositional and non-prepositional genitives allow for different syntactic operations, **including**  
588 extraction. Diachronically, we have seen that non-prepositional genitives externalize specific  
589 referents. This is also the case in contemporary Apulian. Such genitives **are** typically associated head-  
590 modifier pairs (*court* and *king*; *wheel* and *car*, or toponyms). In some instances, just like in Italian, a  
591 definite article does not necessarily contain a [+DEF] feature, **and** is not an iota operator proper.

- 592 (46) mangio la torta *ambiguous between definite and generic*  
593 eat-1sg DEF cake  
594 ‘I eat (the) cake’

595 What we have in non-prepositional genitives, instead, is DPs with a specific reference, with definite  
596 articles functioning as fully-fledged iota operators. So we might have a genitival phrase wherein both  
597 the head and the modifier are headed by definite articles, but definite articles will not always yield a  
598 definite interpretation.

### 599 6.3 *Qualitative noun phrases and phasehood*

600 In §5 we have speculated that the role of prepositions in genitival noun phrases and in qualitative  
601 noun phrases is roughly the same: that of relating two nouns. In the case of non-prepositional phrases,  
602 this role is played by definiteness agreement. It remains to explain why a prepositional genitival noun  
603 phrase can undergo extraction, while qualitative noun phrases cannot, regardless of whether they are  
604 prepositional or non-prepositional. This can be explained if we take into account the predicative  
605 function of qualitative constructions, with an analogous case being adjectival modification. Simple

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<sup>16</sup> See Ross (1967), in which they were first introduced.

606 adjectival phrases, at least in the systems considered here, do not allow the extraction of the head  
607 noun or its modifier. Hypothesizing a phasehood status for such cases would explain the impossibility  
608 for extraction (see also Chomsky 2020: 51). We assume here that merging of N<sub>1</sub> with a prepositional  
609 phrase (or through definiteness agreement) containing N<sub>2</sub> (*that genius<sub>N1</sub> of a doctor<sub>N2</sub>*) turns it into a  
610 predicative element on a par with adjectival modifiers. Consider further, by instance, that a qualitative  
611 noun phrase is analogous to saying “x is a doctor *and* an idiot”. Bošković (2020), following  
612 Higginbotham (1985), treats adjunction (modification) as being analogous to coordination<sup>17</sup>, which  
613 would explain similarities shared by the two regarding the impossibility of extraction.

614 To conclude, both non-prepositional genitives and non-prepositional qualitative noun phrases  
615 constitute phases, but for different reasons. In the case of genitives, this is to do with definiteness. In  
616 the case of qualitative noun phrases, this is to do with their predicative function.

## 617 7. Conclusions

618 In this paper, we introduced a peculiar type of non-prepositional genitive. We found that, in absence  
619 of a prepositional element, head and modifier are related through definiteness agreement. In light of  
620 the fact that a number of syntactic operations (such as extraction) cannot access these phrases, we  
621 proposed that this is due to their being phases. In this case, following previous work, we argued that  
622 their phasehood status is triggered by definiteness.

623 We also introduced another type of non-prepositional phrase, namely non-prepositional  
624 qualitative constructions. We identified a number of mechanisms shared with non-prepositional  
625 genitives; also in this case, we argued that the two nouns are related through definiteness agreement,  
626 and we also found that qualitative noun-phrases resist extraction too. We have proposed that  
627 qualitative noun phrases are predicative in nature, and that this derives from their phasehood (see also  
628 Bošković 2020 and Chomsky 2020).

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<sup>17</sup> A big butterfly=That is a butterfly, and it is big (for a butterfly) (see Higginbotham 1985: 563).

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