Carol Georgopoulos, *Syntactic variables: resumptive pronouns and A′-binding in Palauan.* (Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, 24.) Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991. Pp. x + 245.

This book is 'a case study in the interactions between theory and "new" language facts' (19): the theory is GB and the language is Palauan, a VOS West Austronesian language spoken in the Republic of Palau, a cluster of islands in the western Pacific. The domain of interaction concerns the properties of variable binding in long-distance dependencies, across a range of different Palauan constructions. The overall mode of argument follows classic GB rhetorical structure: a set of linguistic facts which at first sight seem 'exotic', on deeper analysis can be reduced to variation within the recognized parameters of GB theory, provided that certain reasonable modifications or clarifications of components of GB theory are made along the way. The overall force of the argument is twofold: first, this provides a

demonstration of GB's power and authority as a model of syntactic analysis, even in a demanding exotic domain; second, it demonstrates a refinement of GB itself, providing independent confirmation of widely accepted aspects of the theory, additional empirical criteria to help decide between controversial alternatives, and raising certain problematic issues that otherwise might have gone unnoticed.

After an introduction which surveys the principal relevant ideas of Government and Binding, and indicates the general thrust of the book, Carol Georgopoulos provides a sketch of Palauan grammar. This clearly presented section provides a handy overview of Palauan grammar. The verbal morphology is described, including the systems of aspect, mood and agreement. There can be both subject and object agreement. Both object agreement and object case marking are sensitive to the 'definiteness' of the object, where 'definite' is a language-particular construct in which humans are always counted as 'definite'. After a brief description of VP and NP structure, the author argues successfully against Joseph's SVO analysis of Palauan, and in favour of a 'basic' SVO word order (or, rather, pervasive head-initial order). A good deal of care is then devoted to the status of 'null pronominals'. For Georgopoulos, Palauan is a *pro*-drop language, allowing null expressions in both subject and object argument positions. Despite some degree of complementarity in distribution (in certain contexts there can be an independent pronoun, or agreement, but not both together), Georgopoulos concludes that in general the appearance of null pronominals cannot be linked to the presence of agreement: they are neither licensed by agreement, nor does the agreement itself constitute the argument. The agreement forms constitute genuine agreement, and are not cliticized arguments. Georgopoulos also explicitly rejects the radical possibility that null arguments do not exist at all (that an NP node is present only when it consists of lexical material), because this possibility is incompatible with GB theory and leads to descriptive inefficiencies: 'Such a consequence is not only incompatible with X′ theory, theta theory, and theories of the lexicon, but it requires parallel principles of structure where one (that the argument position is always present) will do' (pp. 50–51).

Chapter 3 continues with the main descriptive workload of the book. It introduces different types of Palauan structures involving A′ binding (different kinds of long-distance dependencies), arguing that the basic A′ binding structure is based upon the relative clause. Binding, whether local or long-distance, occurs with both null and overt variables. Georgopoulos observes that in every case expected island-constraint violations do not result in ungrammaticality in Palauan and that the 'violations' can occur with either an overt pronoun or a gap. The non-appearance of island-constraint phenomena suggests that, in GB terms, the Subjacency Condition, a constraint on movement, finds no application. Rather than attempt to modify or do away with the Subjacency Condition, the author proposes that

Palauan has no WH-movement. In Palauan all variables, whether overt or null, are to be regarded as base-generated 'resumptive pronouns': at D-structure the gaps are *pro* and the overt resumptive forms are lexically present as pronouns. A natural interpretation for this is available in GB because Palauan A′ binding is based upon a relative clause structure: in GB the relation between the head NP and the extraction site in a relative clause is captured by an interpretative rule, rather than a movement rule.

In the final section of chapter 3, Georgopoulos describes and illustrates the rule of 'WH agreement'[1] (a term taken from Chung, 1982). This is a constraint by which a verb form takes Realis or Irrealis morphology according to whether a local 'extraction' site for a bound variable is found in subject position (triggering Realis morphology) or non-subject position (triggering Irrealis morphology). In other contexts the verbal mood morphology expresses the expected semantic contrast that the terms Irrealis and Realis suggest. (The term 'WH agreement' is misleading and probably should be changed, since the constraint applies to unbounded dependencies in general, including topicalizations: it is not restricted to WH constructions.)

In the next chapter, working from the principle that Palauan A′ binding applies quite independently of movement, Georgopoulos argues from an examination of 'WH agreement', co-ordination and parasitic gap data, that antecedent and variable are bound at S-Structure by a co-indexing rule, rather than by an interpretive rule at LF. In Palauan the local nature of 'WH agreement' provides crucial evidence for the local nature of A′ binding. A mechanism of A′ chain formation is proposed – a definition independent of Move-α – in which Georgopoulos breaks down long-distance dependencies into series of local dependencies, just as in movement languages. In this respect Palauan A′-binding, achieved by co-indexing rules at SS, is equivalent to the more familiar A′ binding arising from Move-α.

The final two chapters explore implications of Georgopoulos's model of Palauan long-distance dependencies in the domains of WH scope and cross-over phenomena. Chapter 5 concludes with the intriguing observation that, although Palauan is uniformly left-headed, with specifiers and complements in all lexical positions on the right of the head, there is no evidence that Spec(C) is on the right: Georgopoulos's account requires that Spec(C) be on the left edge of the clause. In chapter 6 the author argues that weak cross-over is an ECP effect, derived from the module of government, and thus categorically distinct from strong cross-over. The weak cross-over effect will

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[1] Although this 'WH agreement' system seems rather odd, it finds straightforward parallels in the well-known type of voice system found in many West Austronesian languages: it seems that in Palauan what was originally a voice alternation has been regrammaticized to encode modality, with vestiges of the old voice function preserved in 'WH agreement' effects. The widespread WAN 'actor trigger' *m-* prefix verb form corresponds to the Palauan REALIS, and the WAN 'non-actor trigger' verb form with pronominal prefix corresponds to the Palauan IRREALIS Palauan. (See Schachter, 1984, regarding the term 'trigger'.)

be observed in a language in which government is not uniformly in one direction: in Palauan, a VOS language, government is uniformly to the right, and no weak cross-over effect is found.

This work can be read and evaluated at different levels. Taken on its own terms as a GB-internal work, it is a powerful and impressive construct, drawing together a demanding range of contemporary work in GB theory. Georgopoulos draws widely on the GB literature to explore Palauan facts in a highly detailed fashion. The clear centre of gravity of its references date around the years 1984–1985, which is understandable for a work that had its genesis as a PhD dissertation in 1985, however the author's comprehensive revision of the dissertation text to prepare it for a 1991 publication date has permitted numerous references to more recent work to be included. Nevertheless in some respects the whole argument predates GB thinking that surfaced in Chomsky's *Barriers* which appeared in 1986. In particular, as she points out (p. 19), it is crucial for her that subjacency effects are to be attributed to movement (hence the lack of island constraints in Palauan, which has no movement), whilst in the *Barriers* model subjacency is treated as a condition on representations, rather than movement.

There are two aspects of the text that deserve to be challenged. One is the occasional equation of the term 'generative grammar' with contemporary GB. For example, Georgopoulos writes of the generative grammatical approach to the variants goes so far as to presuppose that 'the linguist' is to be identified with 'the GB syntactician', when she writes that twenty-five years of research into long-distance dependencies reflects 'the linguist's view that a general theory of these dependencies will contribute crucial insight into the organization of the human language faculty' (2). This kind of GB-centric talk is at its heart as political as the reading of 'man' as 'human being', or 'America' as 'the USA'. It is completely out of character with the author's otherwise very professional presentation and argumentation, and her careful consideration of non-GB sources on Palauan.[2]

It also seems important to question the empirical basis upon which the whole analysis is constructed. In a text that relies on a large number of complex and subtle syntactic judgements involving what appear to be exclusively elicited data, the poverty of discussion of field-work methodology and the status of the informants stands out like a sore thumb. On page ix we read that her informants were nearly all young adults, bilingual in English and Palauan. The data were apparently elicited in southern California, some by means of questionnaires. More than this the reader cannot tell, except that at some points chapter 5, dealing with understandably intricate problems of wide and narrow scope, Georgopoulos suggests that at least some judgements were not categorical and at times the description is based upon 'preferred'

[2] Three references that escaped her are McManus (1960?), Hagege (1986) and Lemarechal (1991). The last presumably appeared after the book went to press.

judgements (155, 167–168, 180). These small pieces of information increase rather than dispel the disquiet of the sceptical reader. One must doubt the robustness of questionnaire data derived from young bilinguals living well outside the native context of their mother-tongue. Clearly a 'bilingual' is not a simple construct: true bilingualism is rare, with one or both of the languages of the 'bilingual' usually being spoken with some deficit or convergence. To what extent has the bilingualism of the informants affected their Palauan judgements? To what extent might possible daily exposure to English–Palauan code-switching have affected their intuitions? How much exposure did the author have to Palauan spoken by people who had lived all their lives in Palau? Even laying aside these questions about the status of the informants, many linguists will be sceptical about the value of the elicited data that is not contextualized in naturally occurring discourse. Certainly there WERE issues for which it would have been helpful to explore data within a more natural discourse context. For example, when dealing with the nature of topicalization and licensing of anaphoric 'gaps', it is potentially of real significance to what extent anaphoric 'gaps' are licensed in natural Palauan discourse merely by virtue of being recoverable from the discourse context, and whether the nexus between topicalization and subsequent 'gaps' is as tight in natural discourse as it appears to be in elicited data.

Despite these caveats, this stands out as a very successful book, offering an unusually elaborated and carefully argued account of a large syntactic domain in a little-known European language. In a number of ways the book is startlingly successful and thought-provoking. It deserves to be read with much interest by those concerned with the syntactic characteristics of Western Austronesian languages, and also by GB syntacticians. Georgopoulos's account of a reported absence of island constraints in Palauan is well argued and goes to quite some depth. Her work deserves to have an impact on the future development of GB. It remains to be seen how much of the apparatus of GB that is crucial for her analysis will survive the theory's ongoing rapid evolution. For other theories of syntax, Georgopoulos's account presents a challenge: assuming we accept her considered report that Palauan lacks island constraints, how are we then to capture this insight in a model of syntax? How exactly are we to characterize the striking similarities and differences in the behaviour of long-distance dependencies in Palauan and (say) English? We can be thankful to Carol Georgopoulos for posing this question in such a thoughtful way.

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REVIEWS

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