Towards a 'Minimalist' Theory of Case
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I. Case and Government

(1) $\alpha$ governs $\beta$ if every XP dominating $\alpha$ also dominates $\beta$ and vice versa: XPs are 'barriers' to government.

(2) Case assignment requires government.

(3) a The object of a transitive verb is Accusative.
b The subject of a finite clause is Nominative.

(4) V governs its complement

(5) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VP} \\
V' \\
V \quad \text{NP} \\
\end{array}
\]
admire Mary

(6) 'Inf' governs its Specifier.

(7) John will win

(8) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{IP} \\
NP \\
I' \\
I \\
VP \\
\end{array}
\]

(9) On the 'split Inf' hypothesis, with Tense and Agreement each heading its own projection:

(10) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{AgrP} \\
\text{Agr'} \\
\text{Agr} \\
TP \\
T \\
VP \\
\end{array}
\]

II. Questions about Government

(11) The subject of the infinitival complement of certain verbs is Accusative. IP, unlike other XPs, is not a barrier to government. V 'exceptionally' governs into IP:

(12) ... believe Mary to be a genius

(13) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VP} \\
V' \\
V \quad \text{AgrP} \\
\text{believe} \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{Mary} \\
\end{array}
\]

(14) Configuration of Accusative checking: V-Complement

(15) Configuration of Nominative checking: SPEC-AGR

(16) Configuration of 'Exceptional Case Marking': ???

III. A 'Minimalist' Answer

(17) Another 'split' in Inf: In addition to subject agreement (AGR$_s$), object agreement (AGR$_o$). Then ECM can, via NP movement, also be assigned in a SPEC of AGR configuration:

(18) \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{AGR}_oP \\
\text{SPEC} \\
\text{AGR}_o' \\
\text{AGR}_o \\
\text{TP} \\
(T) \\
\text{(SPEC)} \\
\text{T'} \\
\text{AgrP} \\
\text{SPEC} \\
\text{AGR}_oP \\
\text{VP} \\
V' \\
V \\
\text{AGR}_oP \\
\text{NP} \\
\end{array}
\]

(18) Now Accusative, Nominative, and ECM are all assigned in X'-configurations: Head-Complement for the first, SPEC-head for the others.

(19) But now we can do even better: If ECM is SPEC-head, standard Accusative can be as well (and should be, since there is no known morphological or other difference between them).
We have seen a good conceptual argument for this approach, and in a minute, we will see powerful empirical evidence for it. But first, we have to deal with a seemingly devastating empirical problem.

*I Mary believe to be a genius

*We Mary admire

Two possible solutions:
a. The NP moves, but in LF, so you can't hear the movement (like QR, or WH-movement in Chinese).
b. The NP moves, and the V moves to a still higher position.

One additional 'split', the 'split VP hypothesis' could make solution (b) work.

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IV. Evidence for the AGR_o Theory
A. C-command phenomena

i. Y is in the domain of X only if Y is c-commanded by X.

ii. X c-commands Y iff the first branching node dominating X also dominates Y.

The lawyers criticized each other

*Each other criticized the lawyers

The DA proved [the defendants to be guilty] during each other's trials

The DA [accused the defendants] during each other's trials

The DA proved [that the defendants were guilty] during each other's trials

No one saw anything

*Anyone saw nothing

The DA accused [none of the defendants] during any of the trials

The DA proved [none of the defendants to be guilty] during any of the trials

The DA proved [that none of the defendants were guilty] during any of the trials

B. Ellipsis

VP Deletion:

John accused Bill and Mary will accuse Bill too

V Deletion:

John accused Bill and Mary will accuse Susan

The DA proved the first defendant to be guilty and the Assistant DA will prove the second defendant to be guilty

More than just V can be deleted, but seemingly not the entire VP, in this construction (called 'Pseudogapping'). Further, superficially, it seems that what is deleted is not even a constituent.

An analysis of Pseudogapping: Raise the 'remnant' NP to SPEC of AGR_o, and delete the 'lower' VP that it has left behind: