

On Difficulty and other Essays

George Steiner

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Language, Thought and Culture: Advances in the Study of Cognition
The Cultural Definition of Political Response

Lineal Destiny Among the Luo

David Parkin

October 1978, xxii + 348pp., £14.80 0.12.545650.6

Cultural change is not just a straightforward response to external pressures: the culture itself, as a powerful and autonomous system of ideas, plays a large part in shaping people's internal adaptation to new circumstances. Recent far-reaching changes—educational expansion, increasing wage dependency, population growth and urban unemployment—have all had their impact on the populations of Africa, but underlying cultural differences have persisted throughout. It would be misleading, therefore, to think of ethnicity as a mere 'false consciousness', without any bearing on the destiny of a people. The Luo of Kenya, who are the main subject of this investigation into the nature of cultural change and its semantic aspects, are no exception to the rule.

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English Accents and Dialects

An Introduction to Social and Regional Varieties of British English

Arthur Hughes and Peter Trudgill

This book is a concise introductory survey of the main regional and social varieties of spoken British English, and the factors influencing them. The authors discuss accent and dialect in the broader framework of language variation – phonetic, phonological, grammatical, lexical, historical and stylistic – and variation within Received Pronunciation and Standard English. A section is devoted to each of ten main varieties of spoken English, each section including a discussion of differences from RP and Standard English, neighbouring varieties, features of continuous speech, explanatory notes, transcriptions, and a transcription exercise. The book is complemented by a recording. This consists of an RP

speaker reading a list of key words, and of sections with speakers from each of the different areas first reading the word list and then in edited interviews.

The study of accent and dialect is of interest not only to the advanced learner of English as a second or foreign language, who will often encounter varieties of English differing considerably from the one he has learned, but also to those studying and teaching sociolinguistics and language varieties.

With maps and diagrams

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— (1957b). A synopsis of linguistic theory, 1930–55. *Studies in linguistic analysis* (Special volume of the Philological Society). Oxford. 1–33.

Sapir, E. (1929). The status of linguistics as a science. *Lg.* 5, 207–14. (Reprinted in D. G. Mandelbaum (ed.). (1939) *Selected writings of Edward Sapir*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U. California P. 160–6.)

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Reviewed by Clive Cripser
Department of Linguistics
University of Edinburgh

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