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LANGUAGE, SPEAKERS, HISTORY AND DRIFT* 1. Preliminaries; 2, Alternative ontologies; 3. Psychological reductionism and history; 4. Programmatic interlude: Some questions; 5. Arguments for the autonomy of history, 1: Conspiracies; 6. Problems for psychologism: Sapir on 'drift'; 7. Arguments for the autonomy of history, 2: Centres of gravity; 8. Arguments for the autonomy of history, 3: Convergent drift; 9. The ontological dilemma: A new pair of spectacles?; NOTES; REFERENCES; NUMBER NEUTRALIZATION IN OLD ENGLISH: FAILURE OF FUNCTIONALISM?; 1. Outline of the functionalist view 2. Number neutralization in Old English: The system 3. Number neutralization in Old English: Change and variation; 4. The functionalist view qualified; REFERENCES; THE STATUS OF THE FUNCTIONAL APPROACH; NOTES; REFERENCES; ON SH*TTING THE DOOR IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH: A REPLY TO PROFESSOR SAMUELS; NOTE; REFERENCE; A BRIEF REJOINDER TO PROFESSOR LASS; 'EXPLANATION' BY LINGUISTIC MAPS; REFERENCES; OLD ENGLISH DIALECTS: WHAT'S TO EXPLAIN; WHAT'S AN EXPLANATION?; NOTE; REFERENCES; SUBJECT INDEX

Sommario/riassunto

This volume presents the outcome of a workshop, held in Amsterdam in 1985, on the nature, even possibility, of explanation in Historical Linguistics: why changes take place and others do not, and why they occur at a particular time and place. The workshop, and this volume, aim to explore questions such as i) are the factors which explain the actuation of a change different from those that explain its implementation?; ii) is it possible to give a typology of changes?; iii) should linguistic explanation hope to meet the same requirements as explanation in the pure sciences?; iv) are all linguist
