A Sociolinguistic History of Parisian French

Paris mushroomed in the thirteenth century to become the largest city in the Western world, largely through in-migration from rural areas. The resulting dialect-mixture led to the formation of new, specifically urban modes of speech. From the time of the Renaissance social stratification became sharper, as the elites distanced themselves from the Parisian ‘Cockney’ of the masses. Nineteenth-century urbanisation transformed the situation yet again, with the arrival of huge numbers of immigrants from far-flung corners of France, levelling dialect-differences and exposing ever larger sections of the population to standardising influences. At the same time, a working-class vernacular emerged which was distinguished from the upper-class standard not only in grammar and pronunciation, but most markedly in vocabulary (slang). This book examines the interlinked history of Parisian speech and the Parisian population through these various phases of in-migration, dialect-mixing and social stratification from medieval times to the present day.

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R. Anthony Lodge
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Acknowledgments

This book could not have been written without the help of numerous others, and to them I extend my grateful thanks here. A generous grant from the Leverhulme Trust enabled me to employ an able assistant – Dr. K. Anipa of St Andrews University – for the computerisation of a corpus of medieval and early modern Parisian texts, upon which I have drawn extensively. These data are publicly available in electronic form at the Oxford Text Archive (http://www.ota.ahds.ac.uk/). James Laidlaw and Piet van Reenen gave me access to their medieval corpora, for which I am most grateful. A ‘top-up’ grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Board greatly accelerated the completion of the project. Numerous colleagues – Jim Milroy, Françoise Gadet, Marie-Rose Simoni-Aurembou, Glanville Price in particular – have at various times offered invaluable advice, and to them must be added the anonymous readers employed by Cambridge University Press, without whose critical eye and constructive suggestions the quality of the work would have been much inferior. Finally, a sincere word of thanks to my wife, Janet, for her patience and support throughout.

The author gratefully acknowledges the following for permission to reproduce copyright material: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Editions Arthaud, Editions de Boeck, Hachette, Editions Picard, Editions du Seuil.
### Phonetic symbols

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