THE LINGUISTIC PAST IN TWELFTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

How was the complex history of Britain's languages understood by twelfth-century authors? This book argues that the social, political, and linguistic upheavals that occurred in the wake of the Norman Conquest intensified later interest in the historicity of languages. An atmosphere of enquiry fostered vernacular literature's prestige, and led to a newfound sense of how ancient languages could be used to convey historical claims. The vernacular hence became an important site for the construction and memorialisation of dynastic, institutional, and ethnic identities.

This study demonstrates the breadth of interest in the linguistic past across different social groups and the striking variety of genres used to depict it, including romance, legal texts, history, poetry, and hagiography. Through a series of detailed case studies, Sara Harris shows how specific works represent key aspects of the period's imaginative engagement with English, Latin, French, and the Brittonic languages.

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Abbreviations

AND	*Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, ed. by William Rothwell et al., online edn (Aberystwyth: Aberystwyth University, 2012), www.anglo-norman.net
ANS	*Anglo-Norman Studies*
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England*
Bosworth and Toller	Joseph Bosworth and T. Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1898, repr. 1954)
CCCM	*Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*
DMBLS	*Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, prepared by R.E. Latham et al. (London: Oxford University Press, 1975–2012)
EH	*Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969, repr. 1991)
GPC	*Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: A Dictionary of the Welsh Language*, ed. by R.J. Thomas, Gareth A. Bevan and P.J. Donovan, 1st edn (Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1967–2002); 2nd edn (currently to *brig*) at http://welsh-dictionary.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html
HRB	Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain: An Edition and Translation of* De gestis Britonum [*Historia Regum Britanniae*], ed. by Michael D. Reeve, trans. by Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007)
Isidore	Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum*, ed. by W.M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford:

	Clarendon, 1911); *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. by Stephen Barney et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
Lewis and Short	Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879)
MED	*Middle English Dictionary*, ed. by Hans Kurath et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, *c.*1952–*c.*2001), http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011; online edn 2012), www.oed.com
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn 2007), www.oxforddnb.com
PL	*Patrologia Latina*
RS	*Rolls Series*
Toronto A-G	*Dictionary of Old English, A–G* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2009), www.doe.utoronto.ca
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*

When transcribing from manuscripts, abbreviations have been silently expanded and punctuation modernised. If no other source is indicated, translations from medieval languages are my own.