Introduction
Harley manuscript geographies

If you had to choose just one codex with which to encapsulate English literary culture during the century prior to the Black Death (1348–1351), odds are it would be this one: that is, the 1330s Ludlow-area miscellany known, from its shelf-mark, as London, British Library (BL) MS Harley 2253.[1] Considering that '[its] loss would wipe out our knowledge of whole areas' of literary history, in 1977 Derek Pearsall ranked Harley 2253 ('with BL Cotton Nero A.x', the *Gawain* manuscript) as our 'most important single manuscript of Middle English poetry'.[2] Twenty-three years later, curators at the British Library—very much the 'new' British Library right about then—confirmed Pearsall's assessment by selecting the Harley manuscript for inclusion in an ad hoc entryway exhibit presenting 'A History of English Literature in Twelve Books'. Eventually expanded (by Chris Fletcher, with Roger Evans and Sally Brown) to embrace seventy-seven items—all but five attached to named authors—this millennial initiative saw print as *1000 Years of English Literature: A Treasury of Literary Manuscripts* (2003).[3] Expansive gestures have their limitations, but the judgements of Pearsall and Fletcher show that, for literary scholars and book historians alike, Harley 2253 provides coverage of a troublesome early era.

This study explores the implications of the Harley manuscript's ongoing service as a device of cultural-historical surveying: how it provides a 'unique record' of an expired literary moment and superseded codicological form.[4] But *Harley Manuscript Geographies* also attends to how surveying functions in a cross-disciplinary sense. To that end, it asks how approaching this codex from the perspective of 'literary geography' helps reveal the dynamics by which literary history, codicological form, and cultural geography intertwine. Recent work across a number of disciplines has established that the concept of space plays a key role in determining social

relations. Edward Soja, a political geographer and urban theorist whose work treats contemporary Los Angeles, has emphasized the benefits of observing 'human beings making their own geographies, and being constrained by what they have made'.[5] Despite the distance between urban studies and literary medievalism, Soja and I share an essential point of departure: that any community or culture's geographies—that is, its constructions of space, or attempts to order the physical and the imaginative world—need to be analysed above all *in their multiplicity*. Geography is not something stable and singular, neither a bedrock upon which to build nor an inert backdrop against which to read. Geography is, rather, plural; and geographies are subject to contestation. One corollary to Soja's argument is that different social groups structure space differently, according to their interest. A second is that social structurings of space are not contextual to, but constitutive of, texts, and participate actively in their production of meaning.

'This curious Harleian volume'

The Harley manuscript employs three languages—Anglo-Norman, Middle English, and Latin—and preserves upwards of 120 texts, drawn from a range of medieval genres. Compiled here are social complaints and political songs, religious and secular lyrics, devotional texts and courtesy literature. There are local and foreign saints' lives, scurrilous fabliaux, and an ancestral romance; anti-feminist tracts, biblical paraphrases, and pilgrim topographies; prophecies, recipes, debates, prayers, and more—including some repurposed household accounts and cathedral service-book extracts (formerly, the book's wrapper) which provenance hunters use to locate this manuscript historically. By any measure Harley 2253's textual range is extraordinary. The book's fame, though, rests chiefly on its collection of Middle English lyrics, more than thirty in all. Many of these 'Harley Lyrics' are amorous in theme, most are preserved here uniquely, and together they comprise 'most of the best' English lyrics from before the age of Chaucer.[6] During the twentieth century, scholarship on Harley 2253 directed itself chiefly towards these exceptional poems. But in more recent years, coinciding with 'the move of book history to centre stage in literary studies', the Harley manuscript's 'shape and nature' as a literary artefact has taken on increasing importance.[7]

In due course we will address matters of taxonomy: should this codex be classified as an anthology ('a collection of texts within

which some organizational principle can be observed') or as a miscellany ('a manuscript that brings together texts which do not present a coherent set of organizational principles')?[8] Is it a fully fledged compilation (a literary object that 'adds up to more than the sum of its parts') or a 'mere' collection (which '[presents] textual items in a form that does not readily yield some larger meaning or effect')?[9] Given that a 'lack of adequate terminology' has produced 'looseness of categorization' among scholars, is it safest to refer simply to 'assemblages' or 'multi-text manuscripts'?[10] Harley 2253 is incontrovertibly a composite ('a volume assembled from initially separate codicological units or booklets'), but it also qualifies as a 'family' or 'household book' ('a local accretive collection', 'created in a particular place over time to reflect the literary tastes and literary activities of individuals in a shared environment'), no matter how haphazard (or alternately, 'subject to a controlling design') one may determine its prevailing practices to be.[11] To engage with medieval texts in materialist terms means 'bring[ing] comparative interpretive strategies to bear on the formal characteristics of both physical manuscripts and literary works', exploring thereby how the two 'inform and constitute one another'.[12] But to engage the literary along with the codicological is also, frequently, to foreground matters of geography. As Margaret Connolly observes, the 'mobility of the medieval household', in its various forms, 'can cast light upon manuscript production, allowing us to see how a single book may have been … born in more than one location'.[13] *Harley Manuscript Geographies* proposes that it is at the intersection of multiple subfields—literary history, manuscript philology, and the burgeoning realm I shall call literary geography—that an inquiry into Harley 2253 and its texts, in their richness and diversity, has most to offer.

The Harley manuscript was assembled, and the latter two-thirds of it copied, by a scribe who is said to have possessed a 'genius' for compilation approaching that of Chaucer,[14] and who also had a coordinating hand in two other multilingual manuscript compendia.[15] According to Carter Revard, this main 'Harley scribe' spent a career (1314–1349) copying land charters in the vicinity of Ludlow, a town halfway between Hereford and Shrewsbury on England's Welsh March.[16] Beyond his periodic work as legal scrivener and literary copyist, the Harley scribe's professional employment appears to have been as a parish or household chaplain, and/or tutor, in which capacity he will have been affiliated with one or another prominent local family.[17] Strong ties also appear to have obtained

between this Ludlow-based copyist and Hereford Cathedral, spe-
cifically its bishops and certain canons, although provenance spe-
cialists disagree about the precise nature of the Harley scribe's
attachment to diocesan leadership.[18] It is not only the emplacement
of this codex, topographically and socially, that determines what
interpretive communities may be relevant for Harley manuscript
texts. Equally decisive, I will argue, are issues such as the physical
geographical mobility and imaginative geographical experience of
those involved in the composition, circulation, and compilation of
Harley items. The diversity of materials gathered in Harley 2253
indicates that this compilation's audiences, like its geographies,
require treatment in their multiplicity.

Compared with other medieval material, Harley 2253 has
underperformed as an academic property in the forty years since
Pearsall could describe it as 'a manuscript which needs no pream-
ble' and which 'demands consideration' as witness to a departed
literary era.[19] Strangely, there are almost no books *about* this book.
Despite its array of languages and fund of literary-historical
treasures, the past three and a half decades have produced no aca-
demic monograph on the collection. Indeed, holding aside Daniel
Ransom's elegant but narrow *Poets at Play* (1985), which treats a
handful of 'secular' English lyrics more or less in isolation, there
has never been a single-author study published on Harley 2253.
Dissertations featuring texts from Harley have occasionally been
undertaken, but they tend to founder before reaching print.[20] The
difficulty in getting volumes between covers extends even to edited
collections.[21] Still, the compilation retains high-ceiling potential
for impact—and not only because it preserves textual exemplars
ranking among 'the very best of [their] kind'.[22] In addition to
being literary-historical, the factors underlying this potential are
literary-geographical and especially literary-materialist.

This present dearth of books on the Harley manuscript should
not suggest that research on Harley texts is non-existent. Certain
of its vernacular poems have earned an appreciative audience, and
recent trends (for example, in lyric studies, gender studies, devo-
tional culture, and multilingualism) point upward. Essays and book
chapters treating Harley 2253 have sometimes broken through to
generalist audiences. Still, it must be admitted that relatively little
Harley scholarship has made a bona fide mark, either upon literary
studies writ large or within medieval studies. It will be the business
of *Harley Manuscript Geographies* to show that an under-leveraged
document from the provincial fringe of medieval culture can offer

grounds from which to interrogate long-prevailing assumptions about the meaning of the literary past. As my literary-geographical case studies shall illustrate, over and over again the book we call Harley 2253 proves well-positioned to intervene, sometimes powerfully, in the ongoing processes whereby our under-threat subfield and discipline struggle to remake themselves for traction in a changing world.

The stretch of years during which Harley manuscript texts were being composed, copied, and read—England's late thirteenth to early fourteenth century—was, rather like our present, an era of political instability, ecological trauma, and massive social change. Yet this was also a period when the verbal practices and associated products we term literature mattered a great deal, even though— or perhaps partly because—literary expression's ways, means, and accepted forms were so intensely in flux. One recurrent concern of this study shall be to attend to what miscellany scholar Arthur Bahr describes as the 'vexed concept of literariness: what it is and how to recognize it in particular textual and physical forms'.[23] Appreciation of geographical factors in social interaction may be on the rise across the academy, but belief in the special value of literary expression has been in retreat for decades. No textual capsule from the Middle Ages may be able, these days, to inspire either the 'total moral engagement' literary criticism used to seek, or the ethically generative touching of the past that contemporary medievalists desire.[24] Still, Harley manuscript studies can hope for a future of improved critical traction. It helps that most medievalists possess passing familiarity with the manuscript, while even generalists know Harley 2253, vaguely, as containing that excellent set of early Middle English lyrics: poems highly prized so far as post-Anglo-Saxon, pre-Chaucerian years go.

Traditional paradigms have begun to show signs of weakening, but two book-end periods continue to define medieval English literary studies: the Anglo-Saxon (or Old English) era, as represented by codices from the late tenth century, and the late fourteenth-century (or Ricardian) era, epitomized in the rampant Middle English of Chaucer, Langland, and the *Gawain*-poet. Secluded in the bracken between these highlands of vernacular flourishing, the era made accessible via the Harley manuscript remains—as, in truth, do all post-Conquest/pre-pestilence subperiods—less than well-illuminated. Fletcher, Evans, and Brown show a strong preference in their British Library *Treasury* for canonical figures, as well as for 'manuscripts [that] provide a direct link … to the actual

creative force behind the work'. But whereas some segments of English literature's first thousand years present 'an embarrassment of riches', the medieval period's own middle-lying centuries prove poorly supplied with native-tongue masterworks, especially autograph ones.[25] Occluded because under-resourced, Anglo-Norman years like these comprise English literary medievalism's own degraded and abject *moyen âge*. What survives from *c*.1250–1350 attests to a textual culture misaligned with the rest: diffuse, decentralized, anonymous, largely devotional, and, worst of all, multilingual. To judge by teaching anthologies, course syllabi, conference programmes, and university press catalogues, those invested in 'the story of the English literary tradition' may pass over these years quickly.[26]

In a survey of the territory known as 'early Middle English', Thomas Hahn characterizes this era as, 'on consensus', 'an incoherent, intractable, impenetrable dark age scarcely redeemed by a handful of highlights'.[27] Christopher Cannon writes of 'literary history's general sense that there is nothing there' in these years, leaving such texts as survive doomed to reproduce their own marginality.[28] Facing an inverse situation was Anglo-Norman, whose 'most substantial and wide-ranging corpus', Susan Crane notes, 'comes from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries', although its 'expanded domain' becomes 'bound up with the resurgence of English'. England's two vernaculars maintain 'pervasive interrelations' and a 'fruitful dialogue'. But 'the validity of writing in English' rests 'on grounds quite different from Anglo-Norman's claim to exclusivity and refinement'.[29] We shall return later to Crane's metaphor ('grounds'); for there exists a foundational bond between language, text, and territory in a medieval insular context.

Leading scholars have routinely hailed Harley 2253 as an exception to the prevailing un-brilliance of its literary era—precisely the sort of 'redeeming highlight' Hahn has in mind. Inspired by similar factors, a string of prominent eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century medievalists vouched for the Harley manuscript's importance to the literary-historical record. Thomas Percy opened the second volume of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) with two poems from Harley 2253 which he adjudged 'too curious to be assigned to oblivion'.[30] Impressed by their 'artless graces', Thomas Warton, who from 1785 was Poet Laureate and Camden Professor of History, similarly enthused over 'this curious Harleian volume, to which we are so largely indebted'.[31] A half-century later, Thomas Wright immersed readers in Harley

manuscript material, featuring fifteen of its main scribe's poems as 'historical documents' deserving general circulation in his *Political Songs of England* (1839), an early title of the Camden Society (est. 1838), and then devoting *Specimens of Lyric Poetry* (1842), published by the Percy Society (1840–1852), to transcription of 'all the lyric poetry in this manuscript'.[32] Between them, Wright's Camden and Percy Society volumes put great swaths of Harley 2253 into circulation. But more than the brute number of lines they print, it is their inclusivity—Wright samples multiple genres and all three languages—that makes these paired works the first abiding publication landmark in Harley studies.

During the middle twentieth century, Carleton Brown and R.H. Robbins lobbied effectively on Harley 2253's behalf, reserving special praise for selections from this 'most famous' of vernacular lyric manuscripts, in a series of genre-defining volumes.[33] For several decades leading journals in literary studies (*PMLA*) and medieval studies (*Speculum*) published regularly on medieval lyric. G.L. Brook's *The Harley Lyrics*, reprinted four times by Manchester University Press (1948, 1956, 1964, 1968) and an edition still prized for its sleekness, 'gracefully supplie[d] a long-felt want' among students of early literature, and resulted in several generations of canonical standing for thirty-two English poems.[34] The 'vivid and homely' 'light-heartedness' of these lyrics, along with their 'ease and sureness of touch',[35] helped galvanize support for N.R. Ker's *Facsimile of British Museum Ms Harley 2253* (1965). It is symptomatic, however, that the Early English Text Society (EETS), as distinct from its Anglo-Norman counterpart (ANTS), compromised on its investment in Harley 2253 by declining to include the book's opening forty-eight folios. Only fols. 49–140, produced by the 'main' Harley scribe, preserve English materials, though even here French and Latin items outnumber English ones.[36] Despite the possibilities for examination of vernacular gems *in situ* that Ker's facsimile plus Brook's edition enabled, there ensued decades of critical stasis. For Susanna Fein, what the twentieth century's major Harley publications offered was 'still not nearly enough … just tantalizing glimmers and shadows'. Because each was 'limited in its purpose', Ker and Brook served mostly to 'illustrate how Harley scholarship continue[d] to be compartmentalized'.[37] Despite increasing the manuscript's profile, in Fein's view both contributed to its eventual marginalization, insofar as they provided incomplete pictures of the multilingual, multi-generic compilation as a whole. Their obstructed views left Harley

manuscript materials poorly situated for participation in medieval literary studies' evolving methodological arena.

The editorial and critical work of Fein herself has done much to counteract this situation. First came *Studies in the Harley Manuscript* (2000), a multi-scholar inquiry into the book's 'scribes, contents and social contexts' that no serious work on the codex can do without. Fifteen years later (with David Raybin and Jan Ziolkowski), Fein published *The Complete Harley 2253 Manuscript* in three volumes (2014–2015), the comprehensive edition—with translation, commentary, and cross-referencing—so long and desperately needed. If the former publication provided a critical baseline, serving as a stop-gap measure for those grappling with the complexity of an unedited miscellany, the latter inaugurates a new era in Harley manuscript studies. My own work on Harley 2253 commenced in the late 1990s, years when all who tried to write on this book encountered a legion of practical difficulties. Harley manuscript texts—that portion which had been transcribed— lay scattered across a slew of anthologies, journals, Text Society volumes, and dissertations, published in different decades and countries, with variation in editorial conventions to match. This piecemeal, partial, and uneven publication history meant that synthetic interpretation of Harley 2253 faced a host of impediments. At present, the 'interrelated matters of terminology and taxonomy together constitute the most fundamental issue connected with the comprehension of medieval miscellaneous manuscripts'—but until recently the greatest challenge in Harley studies lay in the 'provision of materials for research'.[38]

If *Complete Harley*'s importance deserves underlining, the essence of Fein's interpretive contribution has been to sharpen the thrust of her editorial work, by demonstrating how attention to material-codicological questions can affect literary analysis. The scholarly debts owed by *Harley Manuscript Geographies* will become clear as its arguments unfold, but Fein's efforts underlie certain sections in particular, especially Chapters 2 and 4, which explore byways of the codex, traversing quires seldom examined, but now (with *Complete Harley*) made a practical possibility.

All who write on Harley 2253 remain similarly indebted to Carter Revard. Revard's researches on 'Scribe and Provenance' (2000)—especially his analysis of the book's coordinating main hand (Scribe B) as it evolved paleographically—have produced a detailed picture of the Harley manuscript's composition process, contextual setting, and likely patronal connections. Revard's 'very

interesting scribe', Fein reports, is 'usually credited with being the agent behind the way the texts are compiled' (making him 'responsible for the selection and … order of items drawn from various exemplars')—although his codex is also 'likely tailored … to the needs and desires of a patron'.[39] Extending his documentary work, Revard has promulgated a series of essays that describe Harley 2253 as ruled by text-by-text counterpoint, a design feature he terms 'oppositional thematics'. In his view the Harley manuscript exhibits not merely tonal and thematic mixedness, but adherence to a ruling commitment: the proposition that everything is '[known] by its contrary'. Revard sees this ('*sic-et-non*') notion as 'the scribe's central ordering principle for his anthology'; the key to Harley 2253, in this vision, is how its maker 'unrolls' a consciously integrative 'metanarrative'.[40] Revard's version of the Harley manuscript is not quite mine. Yet, as with Fein, my next-generation perspectives are unimaginable without Revard's foundational efforts.

Who compiled the Harley manuscript?

One area in which I simultaneously depend upon and depart from Revard's work is in my position on Harley 2253's textual acquisition dynamics. Accounts of exemplar circulation tend towards generalization, while provenance arguments can become pointillist in method. But the Harley manuscript production picture I espouse can be distilled to a handful of points.

The first is that the main scribe of Harley 2253, as noted above, has been traced by Revard to the environs of Ludlow, where from 1314 to 1349 he wrote charters for local tradesfolk and minor lease-holders (forty-one are extant), probably while serving as chaplain or tutor for a gentle household. This firm localization of the Harley manuscript, with precise dating for the copying of many texts, is established through palaeographical and contextual documentary analysis. It is buttressed on the social-historical side by a plethora of vernacular contents—devotional material, debate and courtesy texts, social complaints—that bespeak a secular household context for the book, apparently one with a strong female patron.[41]

The second point is that, in commentary on this manuscript over the past few decades, the distinction between medieval author functions has collapsed. Almost uniformly nowadays, scholars posit a Harley 'scribe/compiler';[42] and where credentialled readers previously found an overriding miscellaneity in this scribe's handiwork,

'a variety of texts in no order' with 'no discernible relationship between them', contemporary critics find 'principled' selection and arrangement, a placement of diverse texts in subtle, even 'dialectical' counterpoint.[43] Arguments concerning the Harley scribe's ingenious thematic planning can become unwieldy, but by no means do I dissent from appreciative assessments of the manuscript's sophisticated literary *ordinatio*. Still, from the perspective of certain textual groupings—the book's Middle English lyrics among them—there is a problem in the emerging consensus that attributes to the copyist of Harley 2253 an authorial presence and compilatory agency so full and developed. Patronal connections such as Revard proposes may have carried the scribe beyond the area (about six miles in diameter) of his known activity. But so far as extant documentation goes, the Ludlow scribe's immobility and modest social positioning limit his personal ability to procure texts, especially of such variety and cosmopolitan reach.

Thus, my third point: while I agree that Revard's legal scrivener (Scribe B) should be conceded full and intelligent input concerning manuscript *ordinatio* (layout, arrangement, and selection of received texts), we should assign the bulk of the exemplar procuring and transmission activity (that is, the practicalities of *compilatio*) elsewhere.[44] Recent scholarly trends have inclined away from sharp divisions of labour, towards recognition of the overlap among the functions that together constitute medieval 'authorship': *patron*, *auctor*, *compilator*, *redactor*, *scriptor*, annotating *lector*, and—not least—operative textual community. Such erosion in distinction between medieval authorial roles bears keeping in mind. But in the case of Harley 2253, there are good, overriding reasons to re-divide 'scribe' from 'compiler'.

An active commissioning, procuring, or transmitting role may have been played by someone resident in the Harley scribe's sponsoring household, which 'must have [included]' patrons of 'sophisticated' literary tastes (who also retained a fondness for popular burlesque, didactic *débat,* and factional doggerel).[45] 'Patron-compiler', for this reason, seems a more appropriate place for collapse in distinction between Harley manuscript compilation roles and author functions, than 'scribe-compiler'. The latter usage, more common for Harley 2253's copyist than any other, seems to have developed as a consequence of mid- to late twentieth-century desires to assign Scribe B a fuller share of 'literariness' than book-making activities tend otherwise to be accorded. Especially persuasive in this regard has been the Harley scribe's purposeful layout

of some but by no means all of the texts he copied—whether or not he brought them to Ludlow himself. In Chapter 1, I will forward a group-biographical and literary-geographical case for viewing Harley 2253 as a production that depends upon the efforts of agents operating beyond those home localities within which Revard's legal scrivener can be ascertained to have moved. For now, it is worth noting that in the earliest of three codices connected to our scribe, there survives the sketched model for another, perhaps more compelling picture of Harley 2253's production dynamics.

The fourth point in my Harley compilation argument emerges from a single manuscript page. On fol. 70 of BL MS Harley 273 (*c*.1314–1328)—a composite volume consisting of Anglo-Norman devotional, instructive, and 'professional administrative' texts, long held by the Harley scribe and copied partially in his hand—there appears a multi-image sequence, drawn in pen. In the first drawing (upper left), we see an aristocratic lady speaking with a mature priest, tonsured and amply robed; second (bottom left), we see this ecclesiastical protagonist convening with some fellow clerks; third (upper right), we see a younger clerk, slender and curly-haired, copying out a codex; and finally (bottom right), this scribe presents his finished volume to the lady of the first scene, with the more established, procuring clerk no longer present. All figures in this visual sequence deserve attention with respect to the production dynamics they embody, and the interpretive possibilities they raise. Others have adopted the Harley scribe as their protagonist—and so too will *Harley Manuscript Geographies* often feature this book-making agent. But here my interest centres on another figure: that of the busy priestly go-between, who, integral to the initial panels but absent thereafter, acts as mobile intermediary between all other members of the production cast. Friend to ladies and clerks alike, this facilitator links the patroness of the first and last scenes to the junior scribal functionary of the third and fourth. He connects these high and low (local?) figures, moreover, to the second scene's implied crowd of clerkly associates—his several sources, presumably, for the textual matter copied in the third scene. The two scenes that begin the compilation process envisioned in Harley 273 do not include the young copyist (whose dashing portrait is accorded frontispiece status by Fein's *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*). Yet it remains unclear whether initiative for the compilatory work at hand resides ultimately with the lady-patron or with the senior clerk. Literary authority appears shared, in this quadripartite vision, not simply among the three principals—patroness, scribe,

and go-between priest, each of whom figures in two scenes—but also, radiating outward, with a wider community of ecclesiastical contacts.

I do not suggest that these drawings in Harley 273, penned years prior to our Ludlow scribe's mature work and by another hand, to accompany a popular courtly treatise,[46] should be understood as literally documenting the events surrounding Harley 2253's eventual compilation. Whereas the latter constitutes a 'carefully selected and structured' or at least '[somewhat] principled' codex miscellany, manuscript philologists describe the former in ad hoc, neutrally accretive terms. Revard characterizes Harley 273 as not a volume executed for gentle patrons so much as an aspiring priest-administrator's personal commonplace book.[47] However, even if imported from this earlier volume, the production picture I propose for Harley 2253 has interpretive advantages. It reconciles Revard's documentary discoveries, which describe a Ludlow scribe possessing basic legal/ecclesiastical training and nursing aspirations of benefice preferment, with other critics' suspicion that the book has connection with nearby Hereford Cathedral.[48] This, in essence, is my fifth point. In what follows I shall look to demonstrate that Harley 2253 possesses a 'doubled' affiliation, insofar as the copying of texts it preserves in one institutional and geographical locale in no way precludes the possibility of concurrent affiliation with other community settings. What I am specifically *not* proposing here is a Harley manuscript copyist who is attached to the retinue of one or another Hereford bishop.[49] Instead, my proposition is that Harley 2253's lay owners or Revard's legal scrivener—perhaps both—had an abiding contact in Hereford's episcopal *familia* [mobile household] or cathedral administration. Ludlow-area gentry families contributed younger sons to both of these institutions. Biographical construction and documentary animation of any proposed individual transmitter of Harley texts lies beyond this book's purview.[50] My operative point is that we have at minimum two interpretive communities in play. Primary is the Ludlow-vicinity lay household of the codex in which Harley items are preserved. But flickering behind this is a dynamic ecclesiastical household—and wider network of affiliates—within which such items gestate and previously circulate.

The vision of Harley 2253's compilation I outline above has special purchase for our book's most famous texts, the Harley Lyrics. But the literary-geographical implications of the manuscript's doubled community affiliation are not exclusive to these

poems. Almost all the book's items have extra-Ludlow dimensions, be they regional, metropolitan, national, or international.

The Harley manuscript as physical object

Before turning to conditions prevailing in the study of multi-text manuscripts, we need a working sense of Harley 2253 as a physical object, especially the sections into which it divides and related divisions in scribal labour. Four medieval hands contribute to Harley, in disproportionate degrees. The constitution of the book *as book*, and the relationship of its scribes to one another, sheds light on the collective nature of this compilational project. These issues have consequences for the reception of Harley texts by medieval and post-medieval readers alike.

British Library curators didn't exhibit the Harley manuscript in their entrance foyer for any arresting physical attributes. Indeed it is so visually unprepossessing—'Despite its great literary significance', Fletcher admits, 'the vellum volume is fairly unexceptional in appearance'—that London heritage tourists must have wondered how it made the cut.[51] Modern readers will experience Harley as outsized, since in page proportions (293 x 188 mm) it occupies nearly twice the area of the book in your hands. Lying flat, it is several times as thick. Despite this bulk, and despite generous margins (78 x 58 mm) and competent drafting, Harley 2253 is modest as artefacts of its genus and species go. It has no illustrations, diagrams, or drawings (except an ink cross near the back of the book [fol. 132v]); no illumination (discounting an 'artful' red-and-blue 'puzzle-initial' at the head of Item #1, fol. 1); and no decorative marginalia (aside from elongated 'tall letters' on some pages' top lines).[52] Readerly apparatus is limited, apart from enlarged initials (at incipits or section breaks) and minor rubrication (paragraph marks) throughout. Titles appear only occasionally. Finally, the codex bears scant annotation (mostly self-corrections by Scribe B). Taken overall, specialists describe Harley 2253 as a well-executed, though by no means deluxe volume. Compared with its scribe's two other books, which are less polished and more miscellaneous, the Harley manuscript is careful in its presentation of the texts it gathers—though how controlled it is in this undertaking, how designed in its codicological ordering, remains to be seen.

For centuries Harley 2253 has been regarded as a sovereign single book, but technically speaking it is a composite: a volume assembled from 'formerly independent codicological units'.[53] As

for foliation, the manuscript's 141 leaves are divided into fifteen quires, all but the last comprising bifolio gatherings. Quires range from four to twelve leaves, and contain from one to twenty items. More important organizationally is that Harley's fifteen quires separate into seven booklets, or 'independent blocks'. As Ker observes, the present volume's sections 'need not be in their original order, since in five places a new text begins on a new quire'.[54]

Quires 1–4 form Independent Blocks 1–2 of the manuscript. Copied in 'a professional textura of the late thirteenth century', these initial forty-eight folios are the work of Scribe A, and together 'constitute the volume that [Scribe B] had in hand when he commenced his own copying endeavor' around 1330.[55] They contain saints' lives and other religious items in verse and prose (#1–7), written in Anglo-Norman. Quires 5–14 form Independent Blocks 3–6 of Harley 2253. For literary historians, fols. 49–133v are the *de facto* core of the collection, because they contain virtually all of the vernacular poems (lyrics, fabliaux, political songs, the romance *King Horn*) upon which the book's reputation rests. But there is also much of a less literary sort: devotional and instructional texts, geographical itineraries, biblical apocrypha, and more. Quires 5–14 were copied (per Revard and Ker) over about a decade: *c*.1330–1341. A half-page of added paint recipes aside, these folios are written in Scribe B's distinctive Anglicana,[56] in a layout apparently 'dictated by the format' of the earlier booklets.[57]

Sometime after 1342, Scribe B also copied out the sixteen texts of Quire 15 (Block 7), but these seven singletons (fols. 134–140) were written under conditions and/or with goals unlike those that had obtained during production of Quires 5–14. The texts comprising Harley 2253's final booklet (as Chapter 4 will explore) differ from the texts compiled earlier in multiple ways. Content differences (genre, language, theme, tone) work in tandem with codicological differences (*mise-en-page*, foliation, orthography, date of completion) to establish the baseline otherness of this concluding block of the manuscript. Executed separately, Quire 15 may have been added later to the rest of what is now Harley 2253— perhaps by Scribe B (the volume's production overseer and, many presume, guiding intelligence), or perhaps by someone else.

Two other hands contribute to the Harley manuscript in slighter ways, one of them, Scribe D, prior to Scribe B's (*c*.1330–1341) production of Quires 5–14; the other, Scribe C, afterwards. 'Early in the fourteenth century' (*c*.1308–1314), Scribe D wrote the Irish household accounts roll that later served as the volume's wrapper

(now fols. 1/142v).[58] On this roll's dorse (fols. 1v/142), there are extracts, likewise fragmentary and in Latin, copied from the ordinal of Hereford Cathedral by Scribe B (*c*.1314–1315). Although made at Ardmulghan, in the liberty of Trim, Co. Meath, Ireland, these accounts pertain to a household 'from the west of England', judging by family names such as Talbot and Chaundos. They are likely connected with Herefordshire-based Marcher Baron Roger Mortimer, in these years Justiciar of Ireland—since Trim was 'Mortimer property from 1308 to 1330'.[59] Fein has discovered that Scribe D (of the Irish accounts) also contributed to Harley 273, the commonplace book treated as his own by the maker of Harley 2253. The 'unusually close proximity' of the two hands 'in each manuscript' leads her to suggest that early in his career, 'Scribe D worked beside Scribe B as his colleague in literary scrivening'.[60]

Scribe C, whose contributions date 'not much later than the main hand', is chiefly responsible for eight English paint recipes added to a blank space (fol. 52v) that ends Booklet 3 (Quire 5). This hand also adds minor 'finishing details' to Quire 15's late-copied concluding item (#116, fol. 140v; *c*.1347–1348), which Scribe B included as a 'final thought' but never got around to rubricating.[61] Fein suggests—plausibly, I believe—that Scribe C 'may have been a participant in the book's final execution'.[62]

We have seen how for early commentators, Harley 2253's value resided in its textual resources—specifically, their status as uncommon. Consciously or not, Wright echoes Percy's and Warton's diction exactly in calling Harley 'curious as illustrating the language of the period'. But it is important to recognize the basis of these items' 'curious'-ness.[63] Some portion of the Harley manuscript's appeal is intrinsic—masterful poems, with distinctive voices, in provocative juxtaposition—but much must be attributed to scarcity. We recognize its literary treasures *as* treasures because they are so lacking of kindred in the bibliographic record. Such is always part of what it means to be a medievalist, but the condition characterizes some artefacts, genres, and eras more than others.

Considerations of quality raise thorny questions about literary meaning. Productive precisely because they are difficult, these questions in turn govern how we approach interpretation of a book the perceived character of which has come to lie not just in the heterogeneity of its contents, but in what scholars increasingly regard as design, even authorial intentionality, in their selection and arrangement. If for antiquarians of previous centuries Harley 2253's value lay in the substance of the texts it preserved, for

recent critics, especially those committed to methodologies associated with the New Philology, the Harley manuscript's value has come to reside—just as self-evidently—in its character as a literary compilation. The one mode of reading (Victorian antiquarian, ethnic nationalist) seems hopelessly outmoded, whereas the other (literary materialist, with elements of New Formalism) hews closely to contemporary disciplinary standards. Yet in each case, a medieval miscellany's value relates intrinsically to the kind of book its readers adjudge it to be.

In 2000 Fein attributed the 'startling' lack of scholarship on the Harley manuscript's 'general character and features' chiefly to the parlous state of research materials—a situation her *Complete Harley* shows every sign of rectifying.[64] But the under-examination of this collection, relative to its accepted significance, may not only be a question of textual accessibility. There appears to be something elusive about the Harley miscellany in and of itself, an engrained disinclination to be neatly packaged—compounding which are certain abiding unknowns about the book's socio-literary ecosystem. Together these intrinsic and extrinsic factors have resulted in a slow-growing critical portfolio. The disaggregated state in which readers encountered items before *Complete Harley* led to little publication on the subject of Harley 2253 as a compilation. For generations, Harley scholarship has tended to be narrow in purview, self-curtailing in scope. Short philological notices and contained close readings account for much of the output, while theoretically inflected essays have been scarce. Even when expansive, successful Harley endeavours have attuned themselves to bite-sized bits of the codex—a single folio or set of poems; an isolatable genre or topical strain—as manageable features that stand in for larger compilatory truths. 'Most of the contributors' to Fein's edited collection 'wisely confine themselves to parts of it'; and yet their convener provides assurances that '[her] authors are unified by a desire to see the manuscript whole'.[65] To confine ourselves remains prevailing practice; but recent years have seen increasing deployment of such micro-critical methods in a macro-codicological, 'whole book' direction.

The above paragraphs provide an orientation to Harley 2253 in materialist terms: its textual and physical make-up; its provenance, contexts, and scribes. In critical terms, the upshot is that Harley studies' default mode—one genre, language, or codicological feature handled at a time—no longer obtains. Instead, the pendulum has swung towards celebration of juxtaposition and emphasis on

textual-interactive dynamics. If to embrace either methodological extreme too exclusively seems inadvisable, the lesson to be gleaned may be that the Harley manuscript itself contributes to its crabbed critical situation by encouraging multiple possibilities. To investigate how such a situation has developed, we turn now to the peculiar nature of Harley 2253 as a literary compilation.

Compilation, anthologization, miscellaneity

What exactly is the phenomenon that the Harley manuscript serves to exemplify? What is a book about the Harley manuscript *itself* necessarily about? And what literary-historical conditions does it need to confront? As we have begun to see, this early fourteenth-century collection proves exceptional as a case study—even controlling for the idiosyncrasy of medieval books. So few English literary manuscripts survive from our period that any individual artefact takes on qualities of the one-off, the feral exception to which taxonomic rules little apply. To derive broader insight from such a document can be a tenuous process. As Cannon observes, literary objects from this period tend to be 'so strange, and produced under such anomalous conditions, that they differ, not only from what came before (what we now call "Old English"), but from all that came after (what we otherwise call "English literature")'. Consequently 'the [most] startling general condition of these texts is their profound isolation'.[66] But books blessed with literary riches make their own critical luck. What scholars of Harley 2253 are chiefly resourced with is a curious, composite manuscript—no longer quite so intractable—together with the extraordinary textual inventory it houses. Still, there are other codices with comparable profiles. And it is from this slight haul of remainder traces—a physical book, its gathered texts, and some analogues—that we must extrapolate a vision of whatever phenomenon it is we wish to treat.

My decision to focus on the Harley manuscript, instead of co-featuring several codices, means that this inquiry's historical perimeters are unusually circumscribed. As noted, *Harley Manuscript Geographies* spans the century prior to the Black Death, that is, the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century. Scholars have seldom packaged these years as a unit of English cultural history.[67] They do not collate well with regnal eras (Henry III 1216–1272; Edward I 1272–1307; Edward II 1307–1327; Edward III 1327–1377); but such eras tend to offer limited purchase in literary study

anyway. Traditional historiography, as Hahn and Cannon testify, has been inclined to conflate everything from the cessation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle forward into one long, cipher-like anti-period, against which loom the traumas of the Conquest and the abyss of the pestilence. What recommends *c*.1250–1350 as a period term is that the items the Harley manuscript preserves—to say nothing of the settings it evokes and events it cites—fall overwhelmingly within this range. A handful of Harley texts date prior but most were composed not earlier than the second half of the thirteenth century. Almost all achieved whatever circulation they would achieve *before,* as opposed to after, the Black Death.

Another way in which the years between 1250 and 1350 unite to form a discrete literary conglomerate, within the larger entity of English medieval culture, is by hosting the development of a particular kind of book, one otherwise little known. As Marilyn Corrie observes, Harley 2253 'as a codicological phenomenon' turns out to be 'not [entirely] unique', since its essential practices and baseline features are 'matched by a number of codices compiled in England' during the late thirteenth to early fourteenth century.[68] That is, there survives a discernible group of South-West Midlands books analogous to Harley 2253 in codicological structure and textual content, likewise dating to 1250–1350, before and after which English literary culture takes different shape. Most medievalists do not choose to parcel these years together, but those who do tend to be those who study the multilingual miscellany.

Specialists continue to spar over the ability of this term—against others—to describe the elusory artefacts under study. I don't wish to contribute to the terminological proliferation. More important is to recognize that the codicological unit known alternately as the miscellany or anthology constitutes a technology 'basic to medieval literary circulation'. As Seth Lerer asserts, 'no line can be drawn between the literary artifacts that we imagine circulating in particular past periods and the media that circulated them'.[69] Harley 2253 helps us understand the period-specific dynamics of how 'literature becomes bibliography', that is, how meaning is constituted by the very forms that disseminate it. For Lerer, 'the idea of the anthology controls much of the English medieval notion of the literary'.[70] Others select different terms, but whichever is chosen, compilation as a material-textual process (Bahr suggests) can be taken as 'an invitation to literary analysis'. The interpretive issues that 'multi-text manuscripts' raise with unusual insistence—'[how] work and text inform and constitute

one another' in specific codices, for example—cannot fail to be pressing to all literary medievalists, and not just those few who specialize in books of 'this particular type'.[71] As Raluca Radulescu points out, how exactly we think about text/book interaction '[ties] in ultimately with the shaping of the literary canon'—if for no other reason than that '[medieval] anthologies that display both order and a certain aesthetic set of values in tune with modern sensibilities carry [special] weight in the scholarly debate'. Harley 2253 is one such 'totemic volume'.[72]

Among the comparables routinely cited for the Harley manuscript, the standout is Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 86 (Worcestershire, *c*.1271–1286).[73] This book shares several texts and so many features with Harley 2253 that many judge it to have served as a 'compilatory model' for its younger neighbour.[74] Other codices in Harley's affinity are three from the same period (late thirteenth century) and geographical area (SW Midlands, esp. Worcester and Hereford dioceses) as Digby 86. These include Oxford, Jesus College 29; Cambridge, Trinity College 323; and BL Cotton Caligula A.ix—books that correspond in social-institutional profile and exhibit 'common features', including shared items, comparable genre rosters, and similar physical qualities.[75] Digby 86, Harley 2253, and the Jesus/Trinity/Caligula trio all display features suggesting production contexts in which secular clerical and lay household elements overlap. Unlike these in institutional orientation are two volumes from the early fourteenth century, BL MSS Harley 913 (Kildare, Ireland, 1330s) and Additional 46919 (Oxford and Hereford, before 1337). These books share with Harley 2253 multiple items and a propensity for certain vernacular genres, yet qualify as 'authentic Franciscan miscellanies' (unlike the five above, which long held that designation spuriously).[76] Other partial analogues can be found in certain monolingual anthologies from the period, such as Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 108 (SW Midlands, *c*.1300), which (in addition to sharing items with Harley 2253) contains the earliest surviving version of the *South English Legendary*,[77] and the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland Advocates MS 19.2.1) (London, *c*.1340), with its wealth of Middle English romances and saints' lives.[78] Harley 978 (Oxford/Reading, *c*.1261–1265), famous as a musical miscellany (and for containing work by Marie de France and Walter Map), occupies an earlier, more Latinate end of the spectrum, although like Harley 2253 and other later, more vernacular books, it is inclined to mix genres and juxtapose themes aggressively.[79] Further afield (in date,

provenance, contents, or features) lie various compendia for which cases of relevance to Harley 2253 might be made: for example, the Vernon manuscript (*c*.1390–1400) and the Audelay manuscript (*c*.1426–1431)—both of West Midlands provenance—given their importance as repositories for vernacular lyric and lay pastoralia.[80] These books' divergences in codicological nature, textual blend, linguistic choice, and social context compound rapidly the further we travel from the pre-plague, South-West Midlands milieu of Harley 2253, Digby 86, and associates. Still, as related manifestations of Harley's physical form and compilatory practice, these manuscripts remain relevant.

Before moving on to enumerate the operative features that the Harley manuscript shares with others of its codicological type— those thirteen 'Aspects of the miscellany' that give my next section its title—it is important to hone our central category. Lerer features the term 'anthology' in his discussion of Harley 2253. The 'highly individualistic', multilingual, multi-text productions that together constitute the literary-historical phenomenon Harley 2253 exemplifies, however, traditionally have been referenced under the catch-all rubric 'miscellany'. Time-honoured and flexible, miscellany is also a term that drives manuscript philologists, genre taxonomists, and archive cataloguers to distraction.[81] Part of the problem lies in 'the medieval book's fundamentally miscellaneous character'.[82] But precisely 'because so many different kinds of manuscripts seem to fall within [its] purview', Stephen Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel declare *miscellany* to be an 'inadequate and finally enigmatic (or at least [overly] vague) term', for specialist purposes.[83] Rather than isolate for analysis a single 'type of book' (as Connolly and Radulescu do[84]), the contributors to Nichols and Wenzel's *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany* (1996) eschew so tight a taxonomic focus, embracing instead 'as large a variety' of medieval codices as possible. Although diversely located in literary history, many 'different kinds of books', the editors emphasize, reward examination 'from the standpoint of their miscellaneity'.[85] Consequently, despite programmatic sensitivity to how 'the codex can have a typological identity that affects the way we read and understand the texts it presents', Nichols and Wenzel's *Whole Book* offers limited traction on the phenomenon of the miscellany *qua* miscellany.[86] As James J. O'Donnell reflects, ' "miscellaneity" as a defining characteristic' of so large a swath of materials becomes 'a palpably false unity that covers what we perceive to be disorder'.[87]

To the extent that that which is miscellaneous 'arises as a class of the unclassed', it becomes 'a scandal to our attempts to wrestle the past into an order and shape comfortable to ourselves', O'Donnell suggests. A common response to the challenge posed by medieval codicological disorder is to argue that what appears to be incoherence, or a disunified jumble, really isn't. The lack lies in our modern-day ignorance as to original actors' 'context and purpose', 'intentionality', or differing senses of discursive 'unity'.[88] For Nichols and Wenzel, an ascription of miscellaneity may well 'be misleading, suggesting, as it does, an arbitrary principle of organization for manuscripts in which there may be a perfectly clear organizing principle'.[89] Materialist philologists often seek to 'dissolve the perceived miscellaneity of their targets'.[90] Miscellaneity in this respect becomes a condition to be banished, an accusation demeaning to the integrity of medieval people and books.

Harley manuscript scholarship provides a case in point. Some oppose all uses of 'miscellany' in the context of this and similar codices, advocating instead for 'anthology', 'compilation', or 'assemblage', as fitter terms for describing a production possessed of such high-minded literary credentials. Around the turn of the century discussion became barbed, with Theo Stemmler ('Anthology or Miscellany?') trying but failing to resolve the matter, with follow-up by Pearsall, Revard, Scahill, Corrie, Lerer, Fein, Bahr, and more. Other bids to end the terminological impasse include Jason O'Rourke, who 'regard[s] the term "collection" as particularly useful [to Harley 2253], since it [avoids] the baggage that the terms "anthology" and "miscellany" have picked up',[91] and Keith Busby, who adds the French term '*recueil*' to the mix, though without seeking to enforce a potentially 'undesirable' consensus.[92] The 'notion of a *recueil*', explains Ardis Butterfield, 'leads to the supposition that a manuscript has some kind of controlling intelligence in charge'.[93] In brief, the extent to which the Harley manuscript should be regarded as haphazard or deliberate has become a driving question.

Much of profit has emerged from these debates, but Ralph Hanna III offers a means by which to bracket the definitional bind facing scholars of manuscript miscellaneity, in observing how the 'difficulties of textual supply' so common in the medieval era 'contribute to the miscellaneous nature' of all the books we encounter. For Hanna, 'exemplar poverty motivates much of the literary record', such that 'typical for a large range' of insular codices is 'a combination of happenstance acquisition and variously motivated

selection'.[94] Logistics are accorded priority over intentions in such a view, but neither displace nor (as in some formulations) get trumped by them. Miscellaneity comes to seem less a dirty word, a state of false historical consciousness to explain away whenever possible, than a feature of the medieval bibliographic landscape. Hanna regards it as not just a material, but a literary condition always to be considered. Lerer, similarly, postulates an 'anthologistic impulse' as the key element in medieval literary practice. If Hanna and Lerer differ in emphasis, their accounts of a mutually constitutive relationship between literary study and manuscript study nonetheless coalesce.[95] Inevitably, the terms in play—'miscellaneity', 'anthologistic'—reprise longstanding debates in Harley criticism itself.

Not just various genres of medieval codex, then, but nearly all individual volumes partake of miscellaneity: so much does specialist opinion attest. But some books, and some kinds of book, are more heavily marked by this quality than others. It is no accident that Lerer chose the Harley manuscript when he went looking for evidence. Similarly, it is no surprise that in wrestling with Harley 2253, literary historians return compulsively to the parsing of codicological terms: miscellany, anthology, compilation, assemblage, and the rest. Individually and collectively, we remain desperate for taxonomical grounding, for some 'immediately graspable' understanding of the phenomenon, however provisional, upon which to rely as we journey forward through the quires.[96] What makes a medieval miscellany? It is no easy thing to theorize manuscript miscellaneity. Rather than expect certainty, better to delineate that roster of features, qualities, and conditions which together imply the form, as Harley and its cohort manifest it.

Aspects of the miscellany

First, books of Harley 2253's sort are *deeply marked by multilinguality*. As John Scahill observes, the 'structural patterns' that shape trilingual insular miscellanies tend to arise from their 'combination of languages'.[97] A volume's linguistic arrangement, John Frankis adds, may be block-like and orderly, with folio runs or whole fascicles given over to one language and then another, as in 'the neat anthology for churchman that we have in Jesus 29'.[98] Conversely, as in 'extravagantly heterogeneous' Digby 86, language alternation can occur incessantly, text by text or even line by line (macaronic poems being not uncommon).[99] As to how tongues

interact in the medieval miscellany, typical of such compilations is for language choice to follow social function, linguistic coding being part and parcel of generic meaning. Thorlac Turville-Petre finds three languages 'perceived as different in function and character' by the copyist of Harley 2253, who deploys them, Fein concurs, in generic manners 'deemed appropriate for each linguistic medium'.[100] Anglo-Norman operates as a normative default in these books, with Latin and Middle English items constituting departures from this baseline.[101] In structural terms, the Harley manuscript occupies a middle ground between autonomous blocks and linguistic commingling, with some sections containing texts entirely (Quires 1–4) or chiefly (Quires 12–13) in French, others largely in English (Quires 7–8) or with a slim majority in Latin (Quire 15), but most switching tongues regularly.

Just as important as the Harley manuscript's trilingual complexion are several other orders of miscellaneity. To say so sounds banal, but crucial is brute quantity. A second defining aspect of the insular miscellany as encountered *c.*1250–1350 is that there are *many, even a multitude of texts* captured between such an artefact's covers. To copy only a few items or one long work—however shaggy, diverse, and multipartite—means a qualitatively different kind of volume. Typically in this family of codices, texts are short, yet items retain a sense of their own sovereignty. As Boffey and Edwards point out, 'the notion of a "book" as a framework or repository for a group of works … has special resonance in relation to short texts', insofar as 'few short pieces can have any longevity' without at least booklet compilation. An impetus for assemblage can be sought in 'efforts to gather such works together for presentation in more durable forms'. The miscellany's foundational essence as a literary-codicological form, therefore, lies to some degree in its service as a 'programmed framework' designed to '[hold] short works together'—especially those 'otherwise too short to be easily stored for retrieval'.[102]

If the presence of short texts helps determine book character, even more determinative is *how a codex blends textual types*, which is to say, how it serves as a repository for multiple genres. This forms aspect three of the Harley-type miscellany. In her recent wide-frame taxonomy of the form, Connolly allows for miscellanies in which 'mixture of contents might include [only] material of the same type', with variation coming exclusively in language and/or medium. Alternately, miscellany contents 'might be written in a single language' with 'texts themselves … of a mixed

nature'.[103] But, just as multilingualism constitutes an essential feature of codices in Harley 2253's affinity, so too are such books marked by significant mixing of genre as well as of textual medium. Such hybridity is frequent, more so than in other classes of codex. Depending on factors ranging from exemplar availability to the proclivities of a patron, miscellanies may display strong or weak degrees of linguistic or generic clumping, and slight or pronounced thematic organization. Compared with their continental counterparts, insular multi-text manuscripts present a less than orderly mélange. Harley scholars have dwelt much on the distortions produced by compartmentalization, for even by period standards, our feature manuscript is unusually variegated in its arrangement of genres.

A fourth defining aspect of miscellany form as embodied by Harley 2253 and its compeers is such books' *inclination towards literariness*. For if pre-plague miscellanies include a variety of texts, it is also the case that they are 'essentially concerned' with literary materials.[104] In recent years the category of literature has been contested, with some preferring 'medieval writing' as an umbrella term, the better to embrace genres and modes (devotional texts, courtesy literature, administrative documents, craft manuals, religious apocrypha) marginalized by traditional terminology.[105] Put another way, manuscripts like ours preserve practical and institutional materials alongside what are, patently, more aesthetic or imaginative ones, with a certain preference—but not necessarily ideological priority—towards the latter. Such categories collapse under critical pressure. And yet the greater a collection's felt literariness or seeming concern for formal artistry (whether at the level of verbal craft or codicological unity), the likelier that volume is to have been accorded preservationist treatment by custodians of the English nation's cultural inheritance. It is for precisely this reason that the Harley manuscript has attracted consistent attention over the centuries.

Bahr has recently proposed how 'literary form and materialist history might be brought into more fruitful collaboration' in study of the medieval miscellany.[106] Bahr is unusual in interrogating 'the lexicon of intentionality' that continues to inform materialist inquiry, underlying as it does 'many of the binary oppositions used to describe [literary] manuscripts'.[107] His genial allowance of the subjective dimension to reading compilationally—that 'each reader must determine … whether such an object adds up to more than the sum of its parts'—is salutary, but so too is Connolly's reminder

that '[our] modern insistence on coherence and clear organizational principles … is not necessarily paralleled in medieval books'.[108]

A fifth defining feature of the insular miscellany before the Black Death concerns how the manuscripts most like Harley 2253 *share certain physical qualities*. Size is the most obvious—for much as commonplace books of the Tudor era incline towards a (narrow) format befitting their (mercantile) functions and milieu, the provincial anthologies of *c*.1250–1350 possess a common tendency towards capacious, though not massive, proportions. The Harley comparables listed above are mostly medium to large bifolio volumes: smaller than ecclesiastical service-books, administrative registers, and monumental display-folios, but larger and/or thicker (and thus less easily portable) than quarto- and octavo-sized devotional aids, scholars' notebooks, and the like. Their dimensions roughly correspond, if not always their bulk. In number of leaves they range between 64 (Harley 913) and 261 (Cotton Caligula A.ix), with Harley 2253—at 141—towards the middle. Given binding vagaries in medieval and modern times alike, it seems unwise to trust in any manuscript's present-day extent. Better to rely on Alexandra Gillespie's observation that fascicular production appears to be a feature common to medieval miscellanies.[109] Insular miscellanies also tend to possess few deluxe features. Typically, illustration is infrequent, and inexpertly done—even if a book's layout and scribal execution are professionally competent. Decoration tends to be modest. Diagrams and tables appear when intrinsic to a copied text. Collectively, the upshot of these shared physical features has been to reconfirm the conclusions of provenance scholars concerning miscellany milieux.

The question of their perceived literary nature, when combined with physical make-up, introduces a sixth signature aspect of the medieval miscellany: how, via their archiving of disparate texts and genres, these books enact a *commingling of sacred and secular* modes. Frankis has noted how Digby 86, Harley 2253, and related manuscripts collude with one another by being 'in some sense religious' in content.[110] Yet even if books of this sort must be distinguished from categorically religious collections (such as Laud 108, and later, Vernon and Audelay), Frankis' observation can be extended much further. For late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century miscellanies go to extremes in their capacity for accommodating worldviews that are at once robustly secular and, simultaneously, committed to sacred outcomes. In a word, they display what Barbara Newman has termed a 'crossover' spirit. Although sacred and secular 'confront each other in multifarious ways' throughout

the Middle Ages, crucial for Newman is that 'the sacred was the normative, unmarked default category against which the secular always had to define itself and establish its niche'. Even 'to parody the sacred is emphatically to engage with it': the latter 'might be viewed with skeptical, profane, or jaded eyes, but it was still the sacred'.[111] Medieval crossover's 'aesthetic of inclusiveness' makes this pervasive phenomenon an exceptionally good fit with the codicological form at hand. For as Newman notes, 'the mingling of genres is endemic to crossover [productions]', both via genre hybridity and in mixing of textual types. Harley 2253 exhibits crossover tendencies almost everywhere, but certain sections instantiate the 'dialectical relationship' Newman identifies with particular intensity (Quires #7–9, for example, which highlight poetic interplay 'between courtly and spiritual discourses on love').[112]

A book like Harley 2253 requires audiences who are flexible enough to countenance its unspooling of counterpoised visions. Put another way: its commingled sacred/secular hermeneutics 'likely taught readers to appreciate moral ambiguity', insofar as the 'best reading strategy' in such cases involves 'the cultivation of double judgment'.[113] Recognition of the Harley manuscript's crossover nature leads to our seventh and eighth aspects of the pre-plague miscellany: the connected matters of such books' *production contexts* and *early interpretive communities*. With regard to aspect seven, a manuscript's copying and compilation dynamics, one characteristic that sets these household compendia apart from other orders of miscellaneous codex (the scholar's notebook, the preacher's handbook, the merchant's commonplace book) is that, typically, collections like ours take the form they do as a result of coordination between lay patrons and 'clerics in partly secular environments'.[114] Such appears to have been the case in the Ludlow-area production of the Harley manuscript during the 1330s, though it applies differently at Redmarley d'Abitot, 35 miles south-east in Worcestershire, where a generation or two earlier (*c*.1271–1283) Digby 86 was compiled by a layman less clearly connected to clerical circles.[115] Other Harley comparables show pronounced lay/clerical mixing.[116] One or other of these aligned parties will have operated as procurer, maintaining relations with outside producers, owners, and/or transmitters of texts. Clerks in a client position (household chaplains, vicars, canons, beneficed priests) may also act as 'literary' or 'authorial scribes', whether in an editorial capacity or as textual producers of near-authorial dimension, by exerting influence over layout, selection,

and arrangement; translation, redaction, or dilation of items; and so on.[117] Such actors together put literary principles into physical practice, via compilation, at the level of the codicological artefact. Harley 2253's main scribe has become known as a copyist of zestful personality, and much detail been collected concerning the gentry or lesser baronial households likely to have hosted production of the book. Nonetheless, the ways and means of textual transmission (how items made their way to Ludlow) and of codicological assembly (who bound the quires in their present order, and under what conditions) remain open questions.

Various implications flow from trilingual insular miscellanies' production 'in and for' lay households and other 'mixed and marginal milieus', chief among them the principle that any item preserved in such a volume possesses meanings pertaining to not just one, but multiple and proliferating textual communities.[118] The eighth operative aspect of this kind of book is that *miscellany audiences are nothing if not blended*. The communities that produce and encounter them tend to be significantly mixed in composition. Men and women; lay and clerical; the provincial and the travelled; gentle-born, retainers, and servant classes: all number among the heterogeneous body of potential listeners for assemblages like these. Any text copied into Harley 2553 retains the trace of audience-functions pertaining to earlier, later, or otherwise located copyings. That is, a poem emanating from a cathedral school, curial, or university setting (or deriving from a metropolitan London, continental French, Norman-Hibernian, or other regional milieu) does not shed such affiliations simply because it accrues a new listenership in a Ludlow-area gentle household.

At the centre of all provenance inquiries lie unique literary-documentary items, which is to say, medieval texts, in the specific forms they take in extant manuscripts. Flowing in opposite directions from such textualized grounding points are two affiliated systems, which Radulescu terms 'back-processes' and 'forward-processes' of manuscript codicology. Both bear upon miscellany interpretation crucially.[119] Above we addressed the back-processes, or conditions of production, that appear standard for books of Harley 2253's sort. The forward-processes of post-copying circulation and consumption relevant for miscellanies, however, affect their literary-historical assessment even more profoundly. Included here are the various means by which initial audiences, other period readers, intervening antiquarians, and modern scholars, in turn, affix meaning to the items they encounter in multi-text manuscripts.

A ninth definitive feature of the *c*.1250–1350 miscellany is
that even a famous one like the Harley manuscript exerts *negli-
gible impact on ensuing literary culture*. Insular society re-boots
itself after the Black Death, such that the influence of collections
like these proves minimal in years to follow, notwithstanding the
efforts of periodic recovery projects to tell another story. The
treasures of pre-plague multilingual miscellanies, productions by
and large provincial, weren't much known to later medieval and
early modern audiences, with their metropolitan and increas-
ingly pronounced Chaucerian proclivities. When—not long after
completion, it would seem—Harley 2253 stops serving its patron
household as a live-access repository for practical edification and
literary entertainment, and becomes instead an antiquarian curios-
ity, it functions chiefly as a representative of vanished folkways,
linguistic traits, and ethnic-nationalist virtues. Despite advocacy
from some quarters, modern tastes also play a part in miscellanies'
less than robust reputation, and their texts' '[relegation] to the
margins of scholarly inquiry'.[120] If 'compilations shake up [inher-
ited] narratives', their potential for disruption derives chiefly from
how accredited readers have discounted them.[121]

The flatness of their literary-historical stock, whatever intrinsic
merits or historical value they may possess, also ties into miscellany
texts' *propensity towards anonymity*: the tenth aspect of the form as
Harley and its cohort represent it. Yet 'poems without names'—or
historicizable author profiles to attach to them—need not be forgot-
ten poems. In certain contexts, anonymity and impersonality may
be embraced as positively 'distinctive qualities' of literary produc-
tion.[122] Print- and digital-era literary anonymity has come increas-
ingly to be examined, but little work theorizes medieval anonymity
as such—despite the period's sheer ubiquity of unattributed texts.
Although native throughout medieval textual culture, anonym-
ity occurs more often in some genres than others—with miscel-
lany staples like lyric, social complaint, and devotions prominent
among them. For Robert J. Griffin, an underappreciated facet of
print culture lies in how tactical withholding of the authorial name
provides cover, enabling an extension of literary discourse into
realms otherwise prohibited. The Middle Ages, employed as pri-
mordial bedrock against which the sophistications of modern print
anonymity may be discerned, demonstrate more conversance with
such a paradigm than Griffin allows; yet even so medieval miscel-
lanies present another kind of case.[123] A handful of authorial names
attach to Harley manuscript texts, owing usually to attribution

elsewhere. But the vast majority of Harley items—including all its famous ones—elude ascription. As Radulescu observes, the typically 'anonymous status' of the miscellany '[poses] problems'; for if 'canonical authors … raise the status of a multi-text manuscript in modern scholarship', the absence of famous names lowers it.[124] Rather than regretting how anonymity constrains interpretation, better to recognize that the pre-Chaucerian disinclination to belabour authorship constitutes a feature rather than a bug in the system: that is, another aspect of the *c*.1250–1350 miscellany, intrinsic to the form's leveraging of meaning.

An eleventh hallmark of the miscellany as found in the century before plague involves another kind of obscurity—for books in Harley's class share *a prevailing regional orientation*. Some scholars regard the trilingual miscellany as a phenomenon specific to England's South-West Midlands, as a result of the clumped provenance of surviving exemplars.[125] But whether or not one commits to such exclusivity, the commitment of these compilations to social aggregation at a regional scale is unmistakable—a sensibility often aligned with a taste for pro-baronial politics. The generosity of embrace that characterizes the miscellany makes hard and fast claims (as to audience positionality and social ideology) unwise. Yet at base, extant artefacts in this line tend to array themselves against metropolitan interests and royalist projects in favour of deregulatory protocols, local administration, and shire-based, gentry-led commissions. In a word, miscellanies like Harley 2253 are not—contrary to 1990s arguments—prevailingly 'nationalist' in social-political orientation.[126] Later we will examine literary regionality in the context of territorial categories like nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and localism conjoined to it. For now, it is enough to register Boffey and Edwards' point that 'distinct regional factors' play an '[essential] role' in the production of books like Harley 2253—and so too in assessment of their literary-historical implications.[127]

The importance to miscellanies of regional perspectives does not mean that collections like ours reject the overarching claims of feudal internationalism or Christian universalism, those *mentalité* foundations which, per consensus view, experience a fatal fracturing with the arrival of pestilence and its apocalyptic challenge. When confronting the ideological dynamics of medieval 'crossover', we noted the privileged, definitively prior position of the sacred in medieval literary culture. Another way to distil the matter, as Eva von Contzen and Anke Bernau have done, is to conceptualize 'sanctity [itself] as literature' in medieval Britain. For

Harley Manuscript Geographies, the next step is to press further upon the eschatological and cosmographical dimensions of the sacred as a category.[128] Here we encounter our penultimate aspect of the pre-plague literary miscellany: the form's subscription, if by reflex more than policy, to a belief-system suffused by the prospect of redemption. Compilations like these don't simply 'include' a spiritual dimension, as one stray strand among others; it is something more than that 'all are in some sense religious'. Ad hoc in execution yet marked by 'cohesion of some kind',[129] insular miscellanies like Harley 2253 *build sanctified worlds upon incarnate ground*. Von Contzen and Bernau's consideration of sanctity from the perspective of its 'literariness' and literary potential, when brought to bear upon the phenomenon of the multi-text codex, sheds necessary light upon Harley texts' persistent appeals to some realm other than the mundane—to that experiential precinct which lies beyond the material.

My diction above ('sanctified worlds', 'incarnate ground') recalls Cannon, who employs the term 'grounds' as his title keyword, to highlight how the 'land of Britain' resides 'at the foundations of … early Middle English', comprising 'a common ground in the most basic sense of that phrase'.[130] That it is the 'peculiar topography' of the South-West Midlands and the Welsh Marches which tends to serve as the inaugurating 'grounds of English Literature' has special resonance for Harley 2253 and other collections from these regions.[131] Scahill's principle that miscellanies are 'more than simply a repository of a variety of items' means that such productions rely heavily upon certain roster selections in their hermeneutic undertakings.[132] As we shall find, especially active in producing meaning within the Harley manuscript are certain keystone texts which demonstrate a shared desire to locate the holy, and thus make eternity proximate. If, as per von Contzen and Bernau, sanctity may be said to function as literature in late medieval Britain, Harley 2253 effects such a process by means of geographical place.

There aren't always lyrics in collections like these—or romances, political songs, or debates. But invariably there are saints: shrines to them, relics of them, routes towards them, prayers for them, oaths by them, and lives narrating them. Simply put, *saints constitute a feature of the form*—and here we reach the thirteenth and final aspect of the medieval miscellany, in the *c.*1250–1350 variant to which Harley bears witness. This manuscript is no legendary (unlike Laud 108) and, despite a lot of death and dying (see Chapter 4), no martyrology. Nor, unlike more fully religious

miscellanies (Vernon, Audelay), does it so enthusiastically privilege devotional performance and penitential modelling as to drown out other modes of expression. Still, saints play a crucial role in the book's construction of meaning, and in communicating whatever cultural stance, existential position, or community vision one may assert it to possess. Miscellany saints run the gamut: Latin and vernacular; foreign and domestic; national and local; canonical and popular; biblical and medieval; religious and political; male and female; plus Harley's speciality, spiritual and carnal. Our codex contains multiple hagiography variants, but beyond even these, saints can be found throughout. Harley texts that aren't themselves *vitae* [lives] invoke, swear by, describe, and otherwise reference saintly bodies and relics, in terms devotional, political, parodic, erotic, geographical, economic, calendrical, and otherwise. Variety is paramount, yet the selection of *vitae* gathered into Harley 2253 confirms the insular miscellany's prevailing geographical orientation. As my Epilogue will show, the Harley scribe's tactical inscription into his books of regionally identified saints—figures possessing an inherent geopolitical valence—serves to sanctify his literary-codicological endeavours, as well as impart local-communal sanction to them. As we shall discover, sanctified bodies (those of factional rebels, downtrodden labourers, and absent lovers included) and the holy places they inhabit (lyric bowers and pilgrimage sites not least) lend cohesion to a form that is always being pulled apart.

The centrality of saints to the insular miscellany is particularly evident in Laud Misc. 108, a late thirteenth-century manuscript of South-West Midlands (Worcestershire/Gloucestershire) provenance that, as noted above, contains an early version of the *South English Legendary* (*SEL*). While Laud 108 is not the collection most proximate to Harley 2253 in all respects, this codex preserves the only other copy of the Middle English romance *King Horn* (Harley item #70) among other shared features. Catherine Sanok has shown that while the figure of the saint bears a variable relation to the *South English Legendary*'s structure as a 'multi-part narrative', such figures consistently authorize these collections, insofar as *SEL* localizations of bodily sanctity help establish vernacular 'forms of community'.[133] Saints also serve as binding agents (in a territorial more than formal sense) for Kimberly Bell, who proposes that Laud 108's gathering together of '*holie mannes liues*' [holy men's lives] characterizes the emergent entity of 'England' as, effectively, a conglomeration of 'its saints'.[134] Sanctified thereby,

the realm becomes a social/topographical collectivity that is tex-
tually conveyed and codicologically bound: whole as well as holy.
Sarah Breckenridge pushes further upon literary geography's con-
nection to community formation by examining the importance of
'cartographic language' to the *SEL*, especially the 'authorizing
function' of its grounded references to 'place'. The Diocese of
Worcester emerges as an ecclesiastical and social epicentre in Laud
108's codicological 'mapping [of] identity'.[135] But Breckenridge's
proposition has arguably greater purchase a province further west,
where in the early fourteenth century the Harley manuscript enacts
an associative relationship with the overlapping ecclesiastical and
local governmental units of Hereford Diocese and Herefordshire.

Geographical factors

As Julia Boffey and Tony Edwards observe, the 'role of distinct
regional factors' in their production makes it 'unhelpful to think
of' multi-text manuscripts in overly 'purposive' terms. Since they
are 'shaped by forms of local availability', 'doubtless geography
was a factor in a number of miscellanies'.[136] This section builds
on Boffey and Edwards to suggest how geography as a literary-
historical category proves crucial to appraisal of an artefact like
Harley 2253. Geography not only factors into production deci-
sively, but also influences period reception and modern valuation.
Interpretive propositions originating in the borderlands between
cultural geography and literary history provide a means by which to
perceive the hermeneutic processes that insular miscellanies enact.

Above I cited Cannon on the 'role of place in … early Middle
English'. But if literary form in this 'anomalous' period develops
partly as 'a function of geography', literary place 'also has its own
form: it is not simply the shape of the individual objects it locates,
but of the idea of so placing them'. Matters of topography, loca-
tion, and territoriality—the material and epistemological 'grounds
that early Middle English texts drew upon'—consequently drive
Cannon's account of how 'English Literature' did not, contrary
to traditional perceptions, 'for all intents and purposes [cease] to
exist' after 1066.[137]

If Cannon seeks to suggest how 'such equations are more paro-
chial than the texts they dismiss',[138] Hanna agitates against the sta-
tus quo more openly—objecting outright to that most engrained of
phrases, 'English Literature'. 'Better', he suggests, would be the
term 'literature in England'.[139] Employing 'English' as a boundary

term, Hanna uses geography to legitimize multilinguality, 'since [English Literature] might be written in any of three languages' during the Middle Ages.[140] Hanna's position has appeal for certain (reformist) strains of medievalist, because it contravenes the institutional gatekeeping of those who, throughout the history of the discipline, have tended to disenfranchise texts not written in English, along the way to suppressing geography as a category of analysis altogether.

Nicholas Howe, whose *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England* (2007) helped establish 'mapping' as an accepted literary-medievalist practice, stands at an opposite extreme to any denial of geographical difference. Because 'a sense of place was far more likely to have been created, transmitted, and preserved in Anglo-Saxon England through the use of language than through any type of visual representation', Howe maintains that his period's 'sense of cartography' was 'textual rather than visual': 'it wrote maps far more often than it drew them'.[141] The era's most 'complex and multivalent visions of place' appear in 'the great Anglo-Saxon manuscripts' Howe calls 'books of elsewhere', multi-text collections of which the topical range, generic diversity, literary orientation, and sacred/secular intercalation strongly resemble the insular miscellanies discussed above.[142] If Howe's cultural geography amounts to 'looking for Anglo-Saxon England',[143] it is symptomatic that he '[writes] his map' using miscellanies as cartographic stand-ins.

To the extent that scholars address geography as a factor in study of the later miscellany, they have done so chiefly as a matter conditioning provenance and text selection.[144] Wendy Scase advocates for a more explicitly geographical approach to literary-codicological study. In launching a project she describes as 'an experiment in manuscript geography', Scase argues that '[no] history of the manuscript book [can] be told without thick description of its geographies'. For Scase, 'each aspect of manuscript materiality has both geographical and historical coordinates: the manuscript book is the product of a multitude of processes whose practice always has its own geographical as well as historical individuality'.[145] Contributors to her enterprise 'do not adopt any single model of manuscript geography', yet operate 'in a tradition' of medievalist scholarship committed to the 'idea of literary geography'.[146]

Scase sketches a subfield genealogy of such practice. Elizabeth Salter's pioneering 1970s work on late medieval literary 'mappings' (including 'the geographical distribution of literary activity') and

on 'internationalism' as a force in insular culture (before and after the Black Death) forms one important strand.[147] Comprising another is work on dialectology, as epitomized in *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (1986–) and Richard Beadle's accompanying 'Literary Geography of Later Medieval Norfolk'. Beadle argues that vernacular literary production displays a systematically demonstrable geographical 'character': features 'characteristic of' one or another 'area' that is linguistically and culturally distinct. Beadle and *LALME*'s 'concept of literary geography' as regionalism is embodied in 'surviving manuscripts' and their 'written forms', as these 'mesh with' an area's '[institutional and] economic history'; 'prevailing social systems'; demography; 'historical geography'; and 'growth of literary patronage'.[148]

A generation ago this concept of 'regional cultural identity'—especially as suggested by England's West Midlands and Welsh Marches—'exercised a powerful attraction to scholars as a potential counterpoise to the dominant culture of the metropolis'.[149] More recent efforts deploy geography 'in new ways as a principle of analysis'. One way they do so—as in the work of John J. Thompson—is by 'mapping the networks within which the manuscripts were produced and read', thus prioritizing 'traffic and transition over location' and emphasizing 'cross-border [dynamics]' and 'relations between regions'.[150] Efforts like these supplement the work medievalists have done on literary representation (geographies of genre, allusion, and narrative structure) and on historical-contextual matters (aristocratic family-networks, institutional patronage, and documentary provenance). More might be said in surveying our subfield's 'cartographic turn'.[151] But to name-check all possibilities in a kaleidoscope of work falling under the Library of Congress rubric 'geography in literature'[152] is less useful than to flag the notion that practices in manuscript philology, medieval literary studies, and miscellany studies all generate increased traction when 'informed by geographical parameters'.[153]

Pre-plague miscellanies' similarity to one another in provenance and orientation requires that we attend further to regionality. Seeking to interrogate '[literary-historical] accounts that reflexively treat the nation as the default unit of analysis', and noting the 'elisions of the regional' in postcolonial medievalism, in 2009 Robert W. Barrett, Jr. championed a return to 'analysis of regional culture', in an updated 'dialogic' form. To examine medieval England 'from the vantage point of an explicitly regional literature' offers an 'opportunity for revisionary critique of English

national identity', Barrett argues, since 'provincial texts … complicate persistent academic binaries of metropole and margin, centre and periphery, and nation and region'.[154] In delineating thirteen aspects of the insular miscellany, I described the Harley manuscript as being, on the whole, something other than 'nationalist' in its geopolitical positioning. But such is true of the book's readers and texts even if their 'sense of regional distinction' does not rise to the 'fully developed' level that characterizes Cheshire writing—a consequence of that palatinate's '[pronounced] awareness of itself as a community separate'.[155]

Whereas 'regions willingly subordinate themselves to the needs of the nation' in work by 1990s scholars, Barrett's study highlights 'contestation, instances in which the interests of region oppose those of nation', as well as regional texts' 'simultaneous awareness' of local and international contexts.[156] This 'emphasis on the multiform character of regional identification' connects Barrett's focalized work with the transnational approaches of Kathy Lavezzo and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, both of whom stress 'the variety of nationalisms present in medieval England' while seeking 'to emplace the insular Middle Ages within more capacious analytical frames'.[157] Lavezzo's collection (2004) bears witness to the Middle Ages' 'construction of multiple, contingent and conflicting "Englands", each geared toward the needs of different social groups', while Cohen's (2008) reimagines medieval literary regionality by 'resisting the impulse to language separation', producing thereby 'a wider, pan-insular perspective' that '[restores] multiplicity to the island'. Such perspectives enable critics 'to map' how insular texts '[challenge] the wholeness, autonomy, insularity and inevitability' both of 'the political entity we now call the British Isles' and of its implicated domestic partner, English Literature.[158]

My book bears a portmanteau title in order to marshal the keywords of Fein's edition (*Complete Harley Manuscript*) and Scase's collection (*Essays in Manuscript Geography*). I mention my study's grounding-points—one prong textual, the other methodological—because before proceeding to the geographical and literary-historical implications of Harley 2253's compilation, we must first confront cartography. As any heritage tourist knows, early fourteenth-century Hereford is more famous for its Cathedral Map than for any surviving literary manuscript, even one of Harley's standing. Yet *Harley Manuscript Geographies* foregoes analysis of graphic cartography. In previous publications I have examined visual mapping at length.[159] But as geographer Keith Lilley affirms,

'mapping through texts', no less than through images, 'reflects …
a "spatial sensibility" permeating medieval lives and cultures'. For
Lilley, there is 'no neat line separating' one from the other: 'textual
geographies' and 'visual geographies' get assimilated by medieval
audiences as 'mutually constitutive ways through which the world
is understood and perceived'.[160]

In line with Lilley, Sylvia Tomasch highlights 'the recipro-
cal interaction of two associate processes' in late medieval cul-
ture: 'the textualization of territories and the territorialization of
texts'. Parallel yet intertwined, these literary-cartographical pro-
cesses help establish 'the inscriptive foundation of all geographic
endeavor'.[161] Yet for all their interaction, graphic maps and lit-
erary mappings remain theoretically distinct. As Harley 2253's
exclusion of illustrative and diagrammatic material underscores,
the schematic and the discursive are separable modes of repre-
senting geography, and may or may not mingle in a given arte-
fact. Most medieval maps accompany or are adjoined by written
texts. However, the opposite is by no means the case. Later mis-
cellanies sometimes include maps,[162] but the volumes we have
surveyed do not. My Epilogue will trace how Harley 2253's codi-
cological mapping of sanctity invokes *mappamundi* cartography as
a mode of regional devotion, but it doesn't do so pictorially. *Harley
Manuscript Geographies* is, finally, a book about a book. It is to that
foundational particularity—Harley 2253's configuration as a man-
uscript miscellany—that we must return.

Part and whole

It is no longer credible to dismiss Harley 2253 as 'haphazard',
'nothing more or less than' a chance amalgam of 'whatever inter-
ested' its producer.[163] Consensus now lauds the compilation as
'unusually deliberative in its … organization', in 'ways both local
and large', with implications for medieval compilatory practice
overall.[164] 'The most extraordinary aspect of this literary artefact',
for Fein, 'rests not in its individual items', 'but rather in … how the
scribe selected and arranged [those] items'.[165] There are good rea-
sons to acquiesce to such urgings. And yet, like others of its sort,
the book is fascicular: constituted by independent blocks and mod-
ular quires as much as by the binding leaves (early fourteenth cen-
tury) and leather-bound boards (1963) that now define its extent.
As O'Rourke observes, the variegated booklets that comprise its
main scribe's output across three manuscripts 'do not necessarily

appear in the order in which he copied or obtained them'.[166] Even within each codex, the Harley scribe's local tactics vary, with 'textual clusters' following different organizing principles in different quires.[167] Nor, despite carry-over between some blocks, do layout decisions (columns, ruling, rubrication, lineation, verse refrains) remain consistent. All told, his variety of page solutions suggests he 'collected and copied booklets while exemplars were available', assembling 'codices when there was sufficient material [for] a decent-sized book'.[168]

Harley manuscript interpretation remains at a point 'where we know the parts better than the whole', to the extent that insights into its 'codicological nature' tend to 'arise in investigations of either a specific topic or a local effect'.[169] Material philologists privilege codex-level inquiry, as may be seen in (editor) Fein's views on (editorial qualities like) selection and arrangement being Harley 2253's 'most extraordinary' features, not, as an antiquarian, poet, or cultural historian might maintain, 'its individual items'.[170] Perspectives on the Harley miscellany espoused by those less invested in 'whole' books, by contrast, might foreground the recalcitrant energies of its diverse texts.

'He is *quite right* to point out that to read Harley 2253 *properly* is to read layout with content': thus does one book historian co-sponsor another's approach.[171] It would be foolhardy to disagree. And yet, there are dangers in reading any miscellany too properly—especially if a mood of congratulation as to methodological rightness requires that we devalue Harley's trove of individual works, and encroach thereby upon their claims to textual sovereignty. To read the Harley manuscript 'properly'—with a privileging of the material book container and with heightened sensitivity to layout—would appear to require *not* reading its constituent items with similarly heightened attunement to how these texts might wriggle free from the interpretive frame that an act of compilation works to impose. Surely reasonable parties can agree that there must be more than one 'right' and proper way to read medieval material (including the decision, regnant for decades, to ignore the codices within which items of interest were preserved, along with their social/historical contexts). It doesn't take a New Critic to observe that texts, even short anonymous ones, aren't obliged to be tractable.

Fein lays her methodological cards on the table: 'The assumption I make is that the compiler laboured as an artistic arranger of whole texts, *a managing editor* who *sought to control* how specific

pieces were presented in sequence and by visual layout.'[172] I largely agree; such is one way I approach Harley texts. But to seek after a 'comprehensive understanding of the whole book'—to read, as Bahr recommends, compilationally—is not the only interpretive goal possible; nor is a producer's 'plan' or 'purpose' the only story to be told for any literary artefact, least of all a miscellany along the fascicular lines I've described.[173] My chapters' tracing of multiple, overlapping, sometimes conflicting Harley geographies will tack between miscellany-attuned inquiry (wherein we labour to discern the 'working principles' of the compilation)[174] and approaches from other domains (wherein we will triangulate among text, genre, historical context, critical theory, cultural geography, literary historiography, and more). Harley's collected texts activate a plethora of meanings beyond those purposed by their Ludlow copyist. But such proliferations are never *not* inclusive of those falling within his scribal purview, so I don't propose to dispense with attention to this agent's materialized efforts.

The plurality of approach characterizing work in literary geography parallels the situation in manuscript studies. And certainly, there can be 'no settled pursuit of a single trajectory of interpretation or ideology' when it comes to assessing the miscellany.[175] The disaggregated fascicles that underpin codices like Harley (and other genres heavily marked by miscellaneity) show how 'even our idea that a physical book should be a closed, fixed artifact is an artificial one'.[176] One way to challenge the supremacy of the unitary 'whole book' is to recognize how, just as the 'boundary between "collection" and "notebook"' is not fixed but fluid in medieval settings,[177] so may distinctions between the extremes of literary-historical repository and period-bound household book be unsustainable. Early functions must be granted their due. But they needn't unduly constrain critical undertakings, and ought not dictate what readings of the past are deemed permissible. Even if we grant the importance of selection and arrangement as such, audiences don't have to choose between competing visions as to the nature of the artefacts under study. Much as with sacred/secular 'crossover', individual parties may sample possibilities—reading by item, booklet, textual cluster, generic type, or topical thread, or reading in terms of a codicological whole, as situations and proclivities dictate.[178] Likeliest of all are readers able to hold multiple perspectives in mind simultaneously. Harley 2253 can be a compilation of uncommonly intelligent crafting, while also serving, more prosaically, as a repository of literary treasures and historical curiosities. Less

prescriptively still, the manuscript's (incompletely filled) pages can offer themselves as empty territory—as with Scribe B's 'tendency to use up' his inherited quires' 'blank space'.[179] So too did Scribe C utilize an empty column and a half (on the dorse of Quire 5) for paint recipes in English prose.[180] However ambitious Scribe B's literary/devotional programme may have been, and however deliberate his exercise of editorial control, the subtleties of the project fail to resonate for this earliest documented user, who, in line with later though not recent readers, sees Harley 2253 as simply a place to store data: in this case, techniques for decoration of other, fancier books. The evidence is slender (some finishing touches in his hand upon Scribe B's latest items), but Scribe C 'might [even] have taken a role in the compilation of Harley 2253 in its present form, collecting it from booklets, or sets of booklets, that existed among Scribe B's effects after his death'.[181]

The Harley manuscript stands out as a literary manuscript for the essential constructedness of its identity. This holds true whether it be judged an anthology of rare crafting, or dismissed as a 'chaotic' storehouse, precious only to the extent that it preserves rare documents.[182] If its reception history teaches anything, it is that Harley 2253's meaning—like that of the miscellany as a form—changes over time, in step with shifting perceptions about its 'nature' and 'character' as a codex. The phenomenon in our sights, many would now hold, is less a document of single-minded purpose than an assemblage of semi-connected parts, alternately 'purposive' and 'accretive' in its construction.[183] Put more functionally, it is a gathering of curious, sometimes excellent items—devotional, poetic, political, instructional, and otherwise—available for *ex post facto* shaping. Physically as well as metaphorically speaking, the Harley manuscript gets sutured together by those who read it. This suturing process starts with the Harley scribe himself, in conjunction with others involved in its conception, resourcing, and fashioning: patrons, literary contacts, textual transmitters. But the process never ends.

It would be a missed opportunity not to trade on the material-formal tension that is thus constitutive of Harley 2253. Any inquiry into the nature of the book must sooner or later take account of how the codex's sections stand frequently at odds with one another. For every generic strand, linguistic cluster, or thematic juxtaposition that draws a quire together, or ingeniously bridges a pair of them, there is another piece of evidence (or alternate reading of the same) that shifts the perspective, recalibrating our focus

and forcing the jaws of unity apart. Textual coherence, as gen-
erations of deconstructive technique have shown, always undoes
itself, revealing interpretive stability to be a fond perception. The
very features chosen to exemplify one understanding of the col-
lection, seen as pointing inexorably to this or that conclusion—it
is an ad hoc miscellany; it is an intentional anthology; it embod-
ies native Anglo-Germanic spirit; its essence lies in Francophone
cosmopolitanism—can be recast as evidence corresponding with
another, competing vision of the Harley manuscript.

   In response to the tendency of such an assemblage to pull itself
apart, generations of commentators have sought to impart unto
Harley a sense of unity; to replace its anarchic miscellaneity with
codicological cohesion; to compose from its divergent strands a
woven composite. Readers don't always admit that they're search-
ing, but they seem always to find what they're looking for in Harley
2253. What we see in the Harley manuscript, and value in it, is a
function of the vantage point from which we regard it. Of course,
so has it always been in medieval literary studies, whether dur-
ing establishment of the discipline or in contemporary popular
medievalism.[184]

Ways and means

Early antiquarian and modern academic exertions, alike, reveal
how sutured together is the 'whole book' we have become accus-
tomed to calling London, British Library MS Harley 2253—an
artefact which never, to judge by lack of wear, saw much service as
a working codex.[185] Still, recent work on Harley offers a collective
case study in book history's reinvigorated role within literary stud-
ies. Remaining mindful of such dimensions, the chapters to fol-
low track how literary geography, as informed by genre study and
philology, by institutional context, and by historiography, can help
us apprehend this book of parts. It has become customary to seek
in paratextual features and bound-up matter 'some larger mean-
ing',[186] to the extent that 'these days a miscellany volume whose
contents seem unrelated to each other' seems a volume in need of
fixing.[187] It is 'all too possible', Pearsall warns—in remarks made
thirty years on from the Harley assessment with which we began—
'to overestimate the activity of the controlling or guiding intel-
ligence of the scribe-compiler in the making of [miscellanies]'.[188]

   What drives such overestimation? Commentators have for cen-
turies noted the affinity between compilation and cartography,

between book-making and map-making. As we'll explore further at book's end, what the imbrication of text and territory in the Middle Ages illustrates above all is 'the pervasiveness and potency of geographical desire'—a force that 'encompasses an extraordinary array of notions' but 'can never be completely or finally gratified'.[189] Just as 'the totalization or wholeness' to which graphic maps like *mappaemundi* gesture is 'necessarily fundamentally flawed', so too do medieval texts and books engaged in 'writing the world' fail to enforce any seamlessly unified vision.[190]

The miscellany Harley 2253, this book asserts, produces its literary-cartographic effect via the constitutive tensions it harnesses: between part and whole; between home and away; and especially between carnal and spiritual, between this-world and next. Just as literary geography is marked by its diversity of approach, so too are the destinations of *Harley Manuscript Geographies* multiple. Its four chapters and Epilogue all feature textual geographies, those spatial arguments and interpretive structures that are introduced by genre, by intertextual allusion, and by historical context.[191] But each inquiry is also influenced by factors internal to (or activated by) its topic: whether love, death, Jewishness, femaleness, or sainthood. Since one of my points is that such perspectives throw other categories of analysis into relief, the spatial readings in *Harley Manuscript Geographies* interrelate along multiple axes. Different chapters isolate different social groups for consideration: Hereford clergy, especially bishop's clerks and diocesan administrators, in Chapter 1; Hereford Jews and their citizen/ clerk neighbours in Chapter 2, but also their royal and ecclesiastical antagonists; and in Chapter 3, spiralling outward from the woods beside Winchester, young women on the move, plus the men who pursue and seek to contain them—in medieval conclaves and literary history alike. Chapter 4 addresses those facing death, or with pressing need to prepare for it: anyone who might be aided by manual advice—or lyric reflection—on proper dying. The Epilogue examines regional saints and how a textual marshalling and framing placement of their Herefordshire habitation provides a sanctified geography that underpins the Harley scribe's literary-codicological pursuits.

Exploration of these matters is pursued along overlapping generic routes. The book's first and fourth chapters, which treat love (familial, erotic, spiritual) and death (an intimacy closely related), both feature 'Harley Lyrics'. But supporting roles are played by factional political songs (in Chaper 1), which complement them

semantically and socially; and by instructional death-culture texts
(in Chapter 4), which prepare the ever-expiring Christian subject
for a rendezvous with eternity. Chapter 3 concerns a hybrid poem
that combines lyric pastourelle, anti-feminist debate, fabliau, and
travelogue. Chapter 2 surveys Harley items that bear on Jews and
their place in a Christian world, finding its focus in a set of biblical
paraphrases and Holy Land descriptions to which literary critics
rarely attend. The Epilogue treats saints' *vitae* and related items, in
the context of a more famous later pilgrimage narrative: Chaucer's
Canterbury Tales. Literary genre, in this way, takes shifting form in
Harley Manuscript Geographies.

So too do my expeditions move between languages—necessarily
so, given the aspects of the miscellany we've explored. Chapters 1
and 4 engage the Middle English poems for which Harley is most
celebrated, but also enlist their non-English neighbours and affili-
ates. Chapters 2 and 3 spotlight lesser-known materials from the
book's Anglo-Norman majority, with reflection on language inter-
action and the reassessment of linguistic-nationalist cultural his-
tory this invites. The Epilogue pursues insular saints and places
sanctified, but shows how the Harley scribe begins and ends his
compilational project with the authority of ecclesiastical Latin. All
told, if Harley 2253 as a miscellany proves 'macaronic', individual
booklets contribute to this effect in uneven ways.[192]

Since multilingualism plays out by genre while also influenc-
ing codex organization, my chapters touch down at multiple quire
landing points. Chapter 1 ('Harley Lyrics and Hereford clerics:
the implications of mobility') pursues poems that cluster in Quires
7–8. Chapter 2 ('Captives among us: Harley 2253 and the Jews of
medieval Hereford') has centres of gravity in Quires 10–11 and
14, the habitat of biblical narratives and topographical descrip-
tions. Chapter 3 ('*Histoire imparfaite*: the counterfactual lessons of
Gilote et Johane') concentrates on the last folios of Quire 7, but
calls across to Quires 12–13, which blend kindred materials (lyric,
fabliau, *débat*, conduct literature). Chapter 4 ('Dying with Harley
2253: last lyric things') opens with Quire 6's early existential lyr-
ics; jumps to Quire 15, the book's penitential closing booklet, with
its surge of eschatological anxieties; then culminates in Quire 8–
9's less orthodox lyric devotions. The Epilogue ('Ye goon to …
Hereford? Regional devotion and England's *other* St Thomas')
examines the manuscript-framing locations that Herefordshire
saints inhabit: for Scribe B copies local *vitae* both at the inaugura-
tion of his project (Quire 5) and when, twice (the end of Quire 14,

the end of Quire 15), he attempts to conclude it. My study's material and textual sites do not cover Harley 2253 comprehensively, but do range widely across it.

   To what literary-historical arrival point does *Harley Manuscript Geographies* finally deliver us? If the world-making project of our miscellany begins and ends with saints' lives, the quires that lie between revel similarly in eroticized bodies and sanctified places, both vernacular and ecclesiastical. Harley 2253's insistent featuring of crossover between the secular and the sacred, of interchange between the local and the universal, lends cohesion to a codicological form that is always pulling itself apart.

   My argument doesn't build towards its literary-geographical destination inexorably, as if towards an expository summation. Like the multi-part document to which it responds, *Harley Manuscript Geographies* eschews a strict cumulative progression through the materials it treats, in favour of episodic forays which—like the quires of a miscellany—abjure consecutive sequencing. Still, its chapters do work together, affiliating with one another textually and topographically to produce a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. In its refusal to lay out a direct route through the variegated landscape that is Harley 2253, my study resembles the 15-quire, 7-block, 120+-item artefact upon which it is based. It also confirms an insight generated repeatedly by those grappling with miscellany form: that in examining such codices there can be no exclusivity of approach. The take-away from this book's journey through Harley 2253, indeed of any encounter with manuscript miscellaneity, is that there can be no 'clear and coherent' conclusion. In searching for 'the key to [its] metanarrative' we inevitably discover ourselves.[193] Connolly and Radulescu describe their volume *Insular Books* as 'itself a miscellany of sorts', while O'Donnell knits together Nichols and Wenzel's collection by revealing it as 'a self-exemplifying artifact. It is a codex miscellany devoted to the study of the codex miscellany.'[194] Bahr's position deserves enshrining: he sees compilation 'not as an objective codicological quality, but rather as a mode of perceiving such forms so as to discern a meaningful arrangement'.[195] I hope that the interpretations offered by *Harley Manuscript Geographies* can both extend and begin to undo our settled ways of proceeding. To assert that there are any number of new Harley manuscripts out there to discover—each one meaningfully arranged—may sound like tired sentiment, stale methodological news. But literary-geographical method offers a way to move forward while looking back. To re-chart Harley

2253's mappings of its world—and of English literary history—is an exercise long overdue.

Notes

 1 For early description, see Wanley *et al.*, *Catalogue of Harleian Manuscripts*, II.585–591.
 2 Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, 120.
 3 Fletcher *et al.*, *1000 Years*.
 4 Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, 120.
 5 Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 87.
 6 Revard, 'Fabliau Manuscripts', 270. Such assessments have long been standard; Brook, *Harley Lyrics* (hereafter *HL*), vii; Fein, *Studies*, 4–5.
 7 Scase, *Manuscript Geography*, 1; Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 14.
 8 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 4–5.
 9 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 11.
10 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 264–265; Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 15–16.
11 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 5; Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 267.
12 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 1.
13 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 12.
14 Hathaway *et al.*, *Fouke*, xliv; Revard, '*Gilote et Johane*', 138–142.
15 These earlier compilations are London, British Library MS Royal 12.c.xii (*c.*1320–1340) and MS Harley 273 (*c.*1314–1328). Royal 12.c.xii's major items include redactions (probably by the Harley scribe himself) of the Anglo-Norman (AN) romance *Fouke le Fitz-Waryn* and the Middle English (ME) *Short Metrical Chronicle*, but is overall 'even more of a miscellany than Harley [2253]' (Ker, *Facsimile*, xx). For description, see Hathaway *et al.*, *Fouke*. Harley 273 is an administrative and devotional compendium that the main Harley scribe came to treat 'as his book', though it was 'more gathered than copied by him'; Revard, 'Scribe', 67–73. Cf. O'Rourke, 'Problems of Patronage', 216–226.
16 Revard ('Scribe') has displaced Ker and Hathaway as the definitive voice on the Harley scribe and his context.
17 Ker and Hathaway regard a secular-household context as 'only [partly] applicable for the Harley/Royal compiler, who seems to have moved in an episcopal milieu, though his parents may have belonged to the baronial world'; Hathaway *et al.*, *Fouke*, xl–xliv; Ker, *Facsimile*, xx–xxiii.
18 Revard ('Scribe', 26–28) dismisses the 'romantic speculation' linking Harley to episcopal circles, but allows that its copyist 'had reason to copy seal-mottoes of Hereford bishops Swinfield and Orleton into a book of his [Royal 12.c.xii] during the 1320s'.
19 Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, 120.

20 For example, Maulsby, 'Harley Lyrics Revisited'; Duncan, 'ME Poems in Harley'; Kennedy, 'Poems about Love'; Dove, 'Lesser-Known Poems'; Rock, 'Romances by the Ludlow Scribe'; Hogan, 'Critical Study'.

21 Fein, *Studies*, 10, notes how a collection planned by Robbins (entitled 'Essays on Harley 2253') collapsed before publication.

22 Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, 120

23 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 2.

24 Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 17; Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval*, 206.

25 Fletcher *et al.*, *1000 Years*, 6–7.

26 *Ibid.*, 6.

27 Hahn, 'Early Middle English', 61.

28 Cannon, *Grounds*, 3.

29 Crane, 'AN Cultures', 49–51.

30 Percy, *Reliques*, I.ix, II.3–13. Emphasizing the Harley manuscript's 'peculiarities of writing and orthography' (II.10), Percy further describes *A Song of Lewes* (#23) as 'a *curious* specimen of ancient satire' (II.3; emphasis added) and introduces *The Death of Edward I* (#47) ('[an] antique elegy') by highlighting the political and devotional 'modes of thinking *peculiar* to those times' (II.10; emphasis added).

31 Percy, *Reliques*, I.x; Warton, qtd. in Fein, *Studies*, 3.

32 Wright, *Specimens*, lxix; *Political Songs of England*, vii. Three of Wright's political songs are drawn from Royal 12.c.xii, Harley's sibling manuscript.

33 Robbins, *Historical Poems*, xxxiii; see also his *Secular Lyrics* and Brown's *English Lyrics*, *Religious Lyrics XIV*, and *Religious Lyrics XV*.

34 White, Review of Brook, *HL*, 158.

35 Brook, *HL*, 21–22.

36 Ker, *Facsimile*. Some take Ker to task, but this decision fit mid-century practices. As Fein notes, EETS's 'prompt selection … testified to [Harley's] preeminence' (*Studies*, 5).

37 Fein, *Studies*, 5.

38 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 5, 13.

39 Fein, *Studies*, 8.

40 Revard, 'Oppositional Thematics', 95, 107–108. Fein distances herself from Revard's fervency, while highlighting the 'potential for instructive linkage' between 'often quite contrastive texts' ('Compilation' 69, 92).

41 Revard, 'Scribe', 22; 'Fabliau Manuscripts', 271, 277.

42 Ker, *Facsimile*, xxiii, Revard, 'Oppositonal Thematics', 97, Hathaway *et al.*, *Fouke*, and Stemmler, 'Miscellany or Anthology?', agree on this point. Resisting such conflation are McSparran, 'English Poems', and Fein, who sees 'supreme scribal ability' in our copyist's textual layouts and manipulation of opening lines, but offers salutary warnings about 'when scribal agency becomes confused with authorship' ('Compilation', 93–94).

43 Ker, *Facsimile*, xx; Revard, 'Fabliau Manuscripts' (among others).

44 Parkes, '*Ordinatio* and *Compilatio*'.

45 Revard, 'Fabliau Manuscripts', 261.

46 Fol. 70's drawings illustrate Richard de Fournival's *Bestiaire d'amour* (*c*.1250–1259), 'an important statement on the poetics of lyrical writing'; Huot, *Song to Book*, 135–174. Revard details our scribe's contributions to Harley 273; 'Scribe', 67–69.

47 Revard, 'Scribe', 65; O'Rourke, 'Problems of Patronage', 216–226.

48 Most pre-1980s critics presume a Hereford link; see Aspin, *AN Political Songs*, 24–26; Revard's own 'The Lecher', 71; Hathaway *et al.*, *Fouke*, xxxvii, xli–xliii; and latterly, Jeffrey, 'Franciscan Spirituality', 268–269. McSparran posits 'some kind of off-and-on relationship' between the Harley scribe and Hereford ('English Poems', 392–395, 411).

49 Some have regarded him as 'an entertainer in the household of Thomas Charlton [Bp. 1327–1344]', others as 'probably a canon of Hereford [and] follower of Adam Orleton'; Hogan, 'Critical Study', i–v; cf. Ker, *Facsimile*, xxiii.

50 For gestures towards such a project, see Birkholz, 'Biography after Historicism'.

51 Fletcher *et al.*, *1000 Years*, 20.

52 Ker, *Facsimile*, xvi–xx; Fein, 'Four Scribes', 32–33.

53 Friedrich and Schwarke, *One-Volume Libraries*.

54 Ker, *Facsimile*, xvi.

55 Ker, *Facsimile*, xvi; Fein, *Complete Harley* (hereafter *CH*), I.5.

56 Ker, *Facsimile*, xviii; Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands*, 1.

57 Writing space in fols. 1–48 (Scribe A) is divided into two columns, whereas Scribe B (fols. 49–140) varies between one, two, and (occasionally) three columns.

58 Ker, *Facsimile*, ix.

59 *Ibid*., xxii–xxiii.

60 Fein, 'Four Scribes', 37–38.

61 Ker, *Facsimile*, x; Fein, 'Four Scribes', 35–36.

62 Fein, 'Four Scribes', 39.

63 Wright, *Specimens*, vii. See Matthews, *Making of ME*, 9, 12, 30, 43, for this term's currency in antiquarian discourse. For Percy and Warton, see above.

64 Fein, *Studies*, 10.

65 Pearsall, review of Fein, *Studies*, 403; Fein, *Studies*, 10.

66 Cannon, *Grounds*, 2, 143.

67 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 18; Corrie, 'Circulation', 427, 441–442; Taylor, 'Manual to Miscellany', 8–9. Turville-Petre (*England the Nation*) isolates fifty years of this stretch, while Hanna describes a 'broad cultural continuum covering the reigns of three Edwards and about a century, 1270–1370' (*London Literature*, 4).

68 Corrie, 'Circulation', 427; cf. Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, 94–102, 120–121; Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 26–32; Frankis, 'Social Context', 72.

69 Lerer, 'Idea of the Anthology', 1253.

70 *Ibid.*, 1253, 1261.

71 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 11.

72 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 21

73 Tschann and Parkes, *Facsimile of Digby 86*.

74 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 26; Corrie, 'Circulation', 438–441.

75 Frankis, 'Social Context', 72; cf. Corrie, 'Circulation', 441; Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, 182.

76 Frankis, 'Social Context', 70–71; cf. Taylor, 'Manual to Miscellany', 8; Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 28. For Harley 913, see Cartlidge ('Festivity') and Turville-Petre (*England the Nation*, 155–175), who also examines Additional 46919 (185–192); cf. Reimer, *Works of Herebert*, 7–11; Nelson, *Lyric Tactics*, 59–87.

77 Bell and Couch, *Texts and Contexts*.

78 Fein, *Auchinleck Manuscript*.

79 Taylor, *Textual Situations*, 76–136.

80 Scase, *Making of Vernon*; Fein, *Essays on Audelay*.

81 Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 1, 5–6; Hanna, 'Miscellaneity', 47.

82 Lerer's 'Idea of the Anthology' (1253) references Wogan-Browne et. al.'s *Idea of the Vernacular* on this point.

83 Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 3.

84 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*.

85 Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 4–5.

86 *Ibid.*, 2.

87 O'Donnell, 'Retractations', 169.

88 Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 6; O'Donnell, 'Retractations', 170, 172.

89 Nichols and Wenzel, *Whole Book*, 3.

90 O'Donnell, 'Retractations', 171.

91 O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 60.

92 Busby, 'Multilingualism', 50–53.

93 Butterfield, 'Afterword', 303.

94 Hanna, 'Miscellaneity', 47, 50, 47.

95 Lerer, 'Idea of the Anthology', 1259.

96 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 14.

97 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 18.

98 Frankis, 'Social Context', 74.

99 *Ibid.*, 74.

100 Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, 198; Fein, *Studies*, 9.

101 Busby, 'Multilingualism', 54–55.

102 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 276–277.

103 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 3.

104 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 264.
105 Wallace, *CHMEL*, xvi.
106 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 10.
107 *Ibid.*, 2.
108 *Ibid.*, 264; Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 3
109 Gillespie, 'Booklet Theory'. Recent research on Digby, Vernon, Auchinleck, and Harley 978 confirms as much.
110 Frankis, 'Social Context', 72.
111 Newman, *Crossover*, 257, viii.
112 *Ibid.*, 11, 37, ix, 111.
113 *Ibid.*, 257–258.
114 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 28.
115 Tschann and Parkes, *Facsimile of Digby 86*, xi, lvi–lix.
116 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 19, 28; Frankis, 'Social Context', 182.
117 Fein, 'Literary Scribes'; Fisher, *Scribal Authorship*.
118 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 19.
119 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 16.
120 *Ibid.*, 1.
121 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 5.
122 For anonymity and impersonality as 'distinctive qualities' (8), see Oliver, *Poems without Names*, 3, 11–40.
123 Griffin, 'Anonymity and Authorship'; Scase, 'Bill-Casting', explores an earlier mode of anonymous publication.
124 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 19–20.
125 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 18, 31; Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, 182; Corrie, 'Circulation', 441–442; Frankis, 'Social Context', 72.
126 Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*.
127 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 266.
128 Von Contzen and Bernau, *Sanctity as Literature*; von Contzen, 'Introduction', 10.
129 Frankis, 'Social Context', 72
130 Cannon, *Grounds*, 11–12.
131 *Ibid.*
132 Scahill, 'Trilingualism', 18.
133 Sanok, 'Forms of Community', 212–217.
134 Bell, 'England and its Saints'.
135 Breckenridge, 'Mapping Identity', 330.
136 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 266–268.
137 Cannon, *Grounds*, 143, 156, 11–12.
138 *Ibid.*, 11.
139 Hanna, 'ME Books', 174.
140 *Ibid.*
141 Howe, *Writing the Map*, x, 3, 16.
142 *Ibid.*, ix–x, 4–5.
143 *Ibid.*, 20.
144 Boffey and Thompson, 'Choice of Texts'.

145 Scase, *Manuscript Geography*, 1.

146 *Ibid*., 3, 10, 2.

147 Salter, *Fourteenth-Century Poetry*, 52–85 ('Mappings').

148 Beadle, 'Prolegomena', 89–92; Riddy, *Essays Celebrating LALME*.

149 Pearsall, 'Epilogue', 273.

150 Scase, *Manuscript Geography*, 2–3, 6; Thompson, 'West of West Midlands'.

151 Lawton, 'Mapping Performance', 2.

152 The subject heading 'geography in literature' ('medieval' is one of three variants) was introduced in 1994: http://id.loc.gov/authorities/subjects/sh94005295.html, accessed 14 January 2020. Prominent subfield works so classified include Lynch, *Chaucer's Cultural Geography*; Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge*; and Wallace, *Premodern Places*.

153 Scase, *Manuscript Geography*, 1.

154 Barrett, *Against All England,* 14, xii, 17, 1.

155 *Ibid*., 1.

156 *Ibid*., 16–17.

157 *Ibid*., 17; Lavezzo, 'Introduction', xix; Cohen, 'Infinite Realms', 5.

158 Lavezzo, 'Introduction', xix; Cohen, 'Infinite Realms', 4; Cohen, *Cultural Diversity*, back cover.

159 Birkholz, *King's Two Maps*; Birkholz, 'Mapping Medieval Utopia'; etc.

160 Lilley, *Mapping Medieval Geographies*, 4, 8, 13.

161 Tomasch, 'Geographic Desire', 5.

162 See Birkholz, 'The Vernacular Map'.

163 Edward Reed (1912), qtd. in Fein, 'Compilation', 67.

164 Fein, 'Compilation', 69, 68.

165 *Ibid*., 68.

166 O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 54; cf. Ker, *Facsimile*, xvi.

167 Fein, 'Compilation', 69–70; cf. O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 57.

168 O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 54.

169 Fein, 'Compilation', 69.

170 *Ibid*., 68.

171 *Ibid*., 72 (emphasis added), commenting on Dane, 'Textual Autonomy'.

172 Fein, 'Compilation', 69 (emphasis added).

173 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 70, 68.

174 Fein, 'Compilation', 69.

175 O'Donnell, 'Retractations', 172.

176 *Ibid*., 171.

177 *Ibid*., 171–72.

178 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 264.

179 O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 55.

180 Ker, *Facsimile*, x. The recipes detail '*Vorte make cynople*' [How to make Red Vermillion] (#10), '*Vorte temprene asure*' [How to Temper Azure] (#11), etc.

181 Fein, 'Four Scribes', 33–36.

182 O'Rourke, 'Imagining', 60.
183 Boffey and Edwards, 'Taxonomy', 277.
184 Matthews, *Making of ME*; Matthews, *Medievalism*.
185 Fein, 'Compilation', 93.
186 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 11.
187 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 11; Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 3.
188 Pearsall, 'Whole Book', 27.
189 Tomasch, 'Geographic Desire', 5, 10.
190 *Ibid.*, 2, 10, 5.
191 Lilley, *Mapping Medieval Geographies*, 4, 13. For this term's centrality to 'spatial literary studies', see Tally, 'Textual Geographies'.
192 Putter, 'Organisation', 84, 100.
193 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, 3; Revard, 'Oppositional Thematics', 95.
194 Connolly and Radulescu, *Insular Books*, iv; O'Donnell, 'Retractations', 169.
195 Bahr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, 3.