systematic coverage. In a series of short subsections, he moves through the legal principles guiding the establishment of an inquisition, the qualifications required of inquisitors, the duration of their appointment, the method of their selection, and so forth. He also specifies how inquisitors were expected to treat various categories of heretics and their supporters: *credentes*, *fautores*, *receptatores*, *defensores*, and *relapsi*. The process of an inquisition is also described, from opening sermon to final judgment. What gets treated here are officially prescribed forms of practice. There is no discussion of how prescribed practices were actually carried out and possibly modified in real situations, except in cases where a later pronouncement responded explicitly to some problem that had arisen in carrying out certain procedures.

Drawing on the standard and authoritative sources that created the office of papal inquisitor, Bivolarov presents a sound and thorough summary of how an inquisition was expected to operate in theory. Students looking for a clear description of the underlying legal framework of inquisitorial operations will be well served by this final chapter. In summarizing the results of his study, Bivolarov stresses its value as a basis on which scholars can build. He alludes to a few insights that his own diligent reading of these foundational sources has yielded, but he largely limits himself in this book to cataloging the sources themselves. The utility of his book as a reference work is, unfortunately, somewhat undercut by the decision to include only an index of proper names. Anyone looking to trace an idea or theme through the sources that Bivolarov has assembled will find no help here.

Michael D. Bailey, Iowa State University

Virginia Blanton, Veronica O'Mara, and Patricia Stoop, eds., *Nuns' Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Hull Dialogue*. (Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts 26.) Turnhout: Brepols, 2013. Pp. xxxiv, 370; 25 black-and-white figures and 6 tables. €90. ISBN: 978-2-503-53972-0.

Table of contents available online at http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod_id=IS-9782503539720-1 (accessed 19 August 2015); doi:10.1086/684321

This beautifully produced and generously illustrated volume brings together seventeen essays and an introduction from scholars working on the broad question of northern European nuns' literacies and literary habits across the medieval period. The chapters collected here are developed from the original contributions to the first of three (thus far) themed conferences, which was held in June 2011 at the University of Hull (see the website for information about the 2012 University of Missouri–Kansas City conference and the 2013 Ruusbroec Institute of the Universiteit Antwerpen conference, http://www.nuns-literacies.org/). Subtitled *The Hull Dialogue*, the volume's aim is to bring into conversation research on the wide range of literary practices nuns engaged in as "writers, readers, patrons, owners, benefactors, or inheritors of books" (xv), in both Latin and the vernacular languages, across a broad geographical diversity, and through the long medieval period, roughly the eighth to the mid-sixteenth century. The capacious approach proceeds through a series of case studies "across time and place," as the editors note (xv), structuring the scholarly dialogue and introducing important research not traditionally well represented in English-language studies.

The editors acknowledge in the introduction some of the scholarly issues complicating this broadly inclusive "dialogue": most evidently, an emphasis on both a comparative approach and individual textual examples from across a vast cultural, geographic, and historical sweep creates potential confusion around the use of terms and key concepts, at the very least. The introduction effectively distinguishes the terms and questions under discussion, identifying the issues that framed the inquiries and acknowledging the distinct

contexts that shape the essays without erasing the differences in cultural or geographic—not to mention historic—conditions. For instance, as the editors concede, in a collection like this, even the concept of "nun" needs to be addressed, which they do by admitting a broadly inclusive definition: "all enclosed or semi-enclosed female religious that either follow a rule or live their lives communally following a ritualized pattern of devotional and liturgical activities" (xix).

The contributions are divided into four thematic sections. The first, "Literacy and Nuns: Finding and Interpreting the Evidence," collects five essays grouped broadly around the issues of textual and archival evidence. The "test cases" (xxiii) in this section investigate early female readers of Jerome's letters in Quedlinburg (Helene Scheck); textual evidence for the literacy and literary agency of the 12C Abbess Petronilla de Chemillé (Bruce L. Venarde); female scribal activity and the case for identification of the scribal work of Mathilde von Neuffen in twelfth-century Zwiefalten (Alison I. Beach); pragmatic literacy, record keeping, and convent management in fifteenth-century England (Marilyn Oliva); and, in more general terms, some of the difficulties in assessing evidence for female scribal activity in late-medieval England (Veronica O'Mara).

The second section, "Language and Literacy: Latin and the Vernacular," presents three essays that shift the focus from the larger theoretical questions about how to interpret scarce evidence addressed in the first section to investigations where substantially more evidence exists. The chapters consider the case for nuns' Latin literacy in northern Europe with particular reference to the Birgittines of Vadstena (Monica Hedlund); the evidence for "a bivalent literacy," that is, a textual fluidity between Latin and the vernacular, in Viennese convents (Cynthia J. Cyrus) and in the Low Countries in convents influenced by the practice of *devotio moderna* (Thom Mertens).

The largest section in the volume is the third, "Literate Nuns: Reading and Writing in the Convent," with seven chapters, the first three of which focus on nuns' literary habits in medieval England. Organized chronologically, these essays discuss the evidence for the education of Anglo-Saxon nuns in the early period of English religious life and the esteem in which they were held by their contemporaries (Lisa M. C. Weston); two fourteenth-century versions of the life of Ælflæd in the context of late Anglo-Saxon nuns' Latin literacy (Stephanie Hollis); and a selection of legendaries containing narratives of local or national saints as evidence of late-medieval English nuns' reading practices (Virginia Blanton). Subsequent essays in the section examine nuns in medieval Prague in the context of the court of Bohemia and multilingual textual practice (Alfred Thomas); nuns' devotional texts as evidence for sophisticated reading abilities in late-medieval Germany (Regina Dorothea Schiewer); the use of Latin in vernacular table readings among the Birgittine sisters at Vadstena Abbey (Jonas Carlquist); and officeholding in Vadstena Abbey as contributing to the development of nuns' literacy (Ingela Hedström).

The final section, "Authorship and Nuns: Writing by the Nun for the Nun," consists of two essays only. The first returns to the topic of *devotio moderna* with a specific focus on the role of the sister book among nuns of the Low Countries and the books as evidence of Latin literacy specifically (Wybren Scheepsma), while the second presents evidence for the contributions nuns in the Low Countries made to the important transmission of sermon material (Patricia Stoop).

Bringing together so many approaches and critical traditions can create some difficulty in presentation and organization: my one criticism of the collection concerns the overwhelmingly dense footnotes in the introduction, for instance, and in several of the essays. In these cases the footnotes are used to provide exhaustive bibliographic information—useful and important, certainly, but potentially distracting and overwhelming on the page. As the intent of many of the footnotes seems to be to demonstrate the range of the field and the critical conversations in which the chapters intervene, a larger bibliography organized

thematically around questions for "further reading" might have been more effective. But this is a small criticism and shouldn't detract from the many accomplishments of this rich and multiply diverse collection. Bridging national, geographic, and historical boundaries, these essays are a welcome addition to ongoing scholarship on female literacy, convent scribal and literary activity, and medieval religious practices.

Jacqueline Jenkins, University of Calgary

John K. Bollard, ed. and trans., and Anthony Griffiths, photographer, *Englynion y Beddau: The Stanzas of the Graves*. Llanrwst, UK: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2015. Paper. Pp. 144; many color figures and 1 map. £12. ISBN: 978-1-84527-509-9.
doi:10.1086/684372

Englynion y Beddau: The Stanzas of the Graves is the fourth and latest in a series of "illustrated translations" of medieval Welsh texts produced by John K. Bollard and Anthony Griffiths. Through the accompaniment of Griffiths's atmospheric photographs, these books seek to contextualize within the Welsh landscape the tales—and in this case, the verse—that they present. In this way the book may be useful for the academic reader, but it is also attractive for a more popular audience.

A collection of elegies commemorating heroes through the description of their grave sites, the *Englynion y Beddau* take their name from a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century title added to the earliest and most extensive series of the verses, those of the thirteenth-century Black Book of Carmarthen (National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 1). Additional stanzas are found in three later manuscripts, and these are traditionally arranged into three further series. This practice is somewhat problematic due to the number of stanzas in Series II and IV (five and one, respectively), and in the case of Series II, the context of the stanzas within other poems. Nevertheless, the composite nature of the *beddau* stanzas (hinted at already by their incorporation into other poetry) perhaps encourages inclusiveness, and the traditional practice is followed here, with text and translation provided for all four series. The texts themselves have been updated to a Modern Welsh orthography, which has the potential benefit of opening them up to readers of Modern Welsh but also the problem of being necessarily inconsistent in order to preserve the original rhyme of some stanzas (14). It may also lead to errors and confusion, such as in the case of *caffodd* (71), which properly updated would be *caffod*, though neither form is a word in Modern Welsh. The modernized texts are also less useful as editions for academic readers. This problem aside, Bollard has provided useful textual notes, which do make reference to the texts as found in the manuscripts.

While Griffiths was responsible for capturing the spirit of the scenery of Wales, with each of his photographs captioned with the location in which it was taken and the stanza number to which it pertains, Bollard produced the English translations, as well as notes, commentary, and an afterword which serves as a comprehensive introduction to the *beddau* stanzas. Indeed, in some ways this book provides a nice overview of Welsh literature more broadly. The nature of the text means that there was an opportunity to gather together within the notes and commentary quite a large body of material pertaining to the people and places of Welsh tradition, and this is what Bollard has done. Importantly, he has made these notes accessible for the nonacademic reader. While the work in many ways builds upon Thomas Jones's "The Black Book of Carmarthen 'Stanzas of the Graves'" (Sir John Rhŷs Memorial Lecture, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 53 (1967): 97–137), the information is at times more detailed here; the inclusion of the text and translation of two additional Black Book poems (*Boddi Maes Gwyddneu*, 65, and *Gwallawg a'r Ŵydd*, 68)