

Lieber describes her approach to translation as attempting “to capture not only the literary elegance of the JPA poems but also their playfulness, evocativeness, and dynamism,” and “at the minimum . . . to be readable, clear, and modestly ‘faithful’ renderings of the original” (13). She has chosen to emphasize “features that would have been conspicuous in the performance of these poems—part of their lived reality beyond the words on the page” (14). This approach is certainly not a challenge that every translator would take on, and some readers might even have preferred a different, more philologically exact, translation style, but Lieber’s has the not insignificant advantage of furnishing a translation that is easily readable. The absence of Aramaic texts facing the English version (à la Loeb Classical Library) is easily remedied by resorting to the indispensable Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (cal.huc.edu), under the rubric Palestinian Aramaic 53420 Piyutim (SYAP).

Scholars of Judaism in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages will certainly appreciate Lieber’s effort in offering all of this textual material to them in conveniently accessible form. Almost every student of Judaism in those eras, regardless of academic specialty, is likely to find something of interest and value in the poems that she has translated. The wedding and funeral poetry, reflections of “real life,” will certainly attract social and cultural historians; others will be unable to resist the parodic Purim poetry, some of which is characterized by a decidedly anti-Christian bias; historians of biblical interpretation will study the poems that retell biblical stories in an unusual fashion. And from a broader perspective, this first translation may also serve to stimulate further study of this corpus, as well as other Aramaic and Hebrew poetry from late antiquity, as a wider academic audience becomes aware of its existence and contents.

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LENA LIEPE, *A Case for the Middle Ages: The Public Display of Medieval Church Art in Sweden, 1847–1943*. (Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien Handlingar: Antikvariska Serien 55.) Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, 2018. Pp. 258. 230 kr. ISBN: 978-9-1740-2461-6. doi:10.1086/709384

This tastefully designed and well-written book discusses the early emergence of interest in medieval church art in Sweden. Lena Liepe has traced the public display of medieval church art during the century after the Museum of National Antiquities (today Historiska Museet) in Stockholm first opened its doors in 1847. The book analyzes the shifting perspectives from which the art works were presented and focuses on the people who have played a central role in this development. Liepe explains that the primary aim of her study was to find out how the display of medieval church art reflects changing paradigms: “What kind of knowledge about [church objects] was constructed and communicated through their presentation in the museum galleries and exhibition halls?” (19). She discusses not only the National Museum in Stockholm but also the Historical Museum of Lund University and several provincial museums, where developments partly ran parallel and partly diverged from those in the capital. The book presents a century of museology in Sweden without losing sight of international contexts, offering the reader multiple insights into the way a modernizing Lutheran nation finds its place in European cultural history through identification with its medieval—and thus Roman Catholic—past. The book is richly illustrated with intriguing and hitherto unpublished black-and-white photographs and numerous ground plans.

There are many reasons why the Swedes should be among the first European nations to have attached great value to the heritage derived from medieval churches. The survival rate of medieval art works is among the highest in Europe, particularly concerning Romanesque and early Gothic sculpture, often with largely original polychromy. In fact, the Swedish stock

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of high medieval Madonna sculptures and crucifixes has been estimated to be the largest on the Continent (Aron Andersson, *Silberne Abendmahlsgeräte in Schweden* [1956], p. 16; the classic study on this subject is Peter Tångeberg's from 1989). In addition, around 450 late Gothic altarpieces are preserved across the country, and these indeed reflect the entire "retable landscape" of northern Europe, consisting of both locally produced works and imported triptychs from northern Germany and the Low Countries. The reasons for the Swedish wealth of medieval church art must largely be sought in a mild transition to Lutheran Protestantism during the sixteenth century. Sweden never saw large-scale Iconoclasm and many church interiors only changed slowly and gradually over time. Laurentius Petri, who drew up the Swedish Church Order in 1571, decidedly followed the traditional Lutheran policy with church furnishings and images being considered neutral *adiaphora*, which left many medieval art works untouched.

In *A Case for the Middle Ages*, developments are picked up in the nineteenth century, an age of religious renewal and developing national identity. At that time, everywhere in Sweden (except for the island of Gotland!), medieval churches were demolished and replaced by large, bright buildings that were considered suitable for a modern Lutheran state church. As a result, a massive stock of medieval art works that had remained in the churches through the Reformation became orphaned. Remarkably, many were reinstalled in the new churches, while many others were transferred to museums that had been founded shortly before. Chapter 1 discusses the beginnings of the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm, where the museum's first director, Bror Emil Hildebrand, adopted a strictly chronological approach according to periods. Chapter 2 narrates how the collection was incorporated in 1866 into the National Museum, where the church art was exhibited in a grand Church Hall that resembled a huge medieval basilica. Hans Hildebrand, who took over as director from his father in 1878, then changed the structure of the display into a typological one by reorganizing the artworks according to formal similarities. Hildebrand was also a prolific author on Swedish medieval art and culture whose three-volume magnum opus, *Sveriges medeltid. Kulturhistorisk skildring* (1898–1903) may be regarded as the Nordic answer to Viollet-le-Duc. During the first decades of the twentieth century another giant of Swedish medieval art history, Carl R. af Ugglas, would follow suit.

In chapter 3, Liepe studies several exhibitions of medieval church art held in Strängnäs (1910), Härnösand (1912), Malmö (1914), and Gothenburg (1923). In these endeavors the focus was shifted to the aesthetic qualities of the artworks and attempts were made to re-create their original appearance inside a simulated medieval church, an approach that took its inspiration from international models such as the Renaissance galleries created by Wilhelm von Bode at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin. Chapter 4 narrates how this contextualizing tendency was somewhat loosened when a new Museum of National Antiquities was planned, because it was feared that the authenticity of the objects in re-created church interiors could become compromised. Chapters 5 and 6 shift the focus from the Swedish capital to museums elsewhere in the country—regional museums, Liepe reveals, that presented the works primarily as testimonies to local history. These include the Historical Museum of the University of Lund, where Otto Rydbeck created a contextualizing display of church art in 1918, and several medieval churches that were musealized, such as Enånger (Hälsingland) and Murberget (Ångermanland). The final chapter returns to Stockholm, where a new church art display at the Museum of National Antiquities in the present premises was inaugurated in 1943. Liepe describes how here an attempt was made to let the objects narrate the national history, an endeavor that was doomed to fail since so many medieval art works in Sweden were imported from overseas.

A Case for the Middle Ages is important for offering in-depth analysis of Swedish museology in an age of rethinking national identity and of emerging art history. It is a valuable source for (art) historians with interest in a country that is all too often overlooked in

international scholarship. Reading about so many early initiatives to display medieval church art in museums and in temporary exhibitions, as well as the deep scholarship of the people involved, one may ask how this legacy has lived on since then. Here, one must conclude that the picture is rather sobering. No exhibitions of church art of the ambition level of those mentioned in the 1910s and 1920s have been organized since the Second World War, and moreover, all important collections of medieval church art in Sweden still must do without a proper scientific catalogue to date. Fruitful collaborations between museums and universities have been very few. Let us hope that this attractive book will help reminding today's scholars of the early and energetic start of medieval art history in Sweden. This is something the country should take pride in and that could provide a solid base for future studies, catalogues, and exhibitions that render Swedish medieval art the attention it deserves.

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HARRY LÖNNROTH, ed., *Philology Matters!: Essays on the Art of Reading Slowly*. (Medieval and Renaissance Authors and Texts 19.) Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017. Pp. xxv, 223; 15 color figures and 5 tables. \$114. ISBN: 978-9-0043-1511-2. Table of contents available online at <https://brill.com/view/title/33001?format=HC>. doi:10.1086/709658

Philology Matters! includes ten essays by mostly well-known scholars in their fields of research, spanning a wide range of topics, including the relationship between philology and cultural issues (Helge Jordheim); recent digital initiatives in the field of Old Danish philology, such as Old Danish online resources, the Dictionary of Old Danish, and online Old Danish texts (Marita Akhøj Nielsen); and the proposal to establish a discipline to elaborate on the common roots of philology and translation studies (Harry Lönnroth and Nestori Siponkoski, “Philology of Translation”—more on this below).

Although the present writer is not an expert on most of the fields of research in the collected essays, it can be asserted without a doubt that nearly all of them make valuable contributions to their own disciplines. However, in my opinion, a different assessment must be reserved for the cohesiveness of the collection, which, in the editor's own words, should address “philology and its relevance in time” (xiv). According to Lönnroth, the contributors are concerned with the following paramount problems: “What is this thing called philology? How should it be pursued today? . . . The core of this book is the question of the scholarly and social relevance of philology within the humanities today. Has philology had its day or could it be that it is now more important than ever? . . . What do we think about the philology of today and tomorrow?” (xvi).

Personally, I am deeply convinced that philology matters and—in an age in which humanities are under attack and the internet favors the dissemination of all sorts of manipulated messages—a philological education is likely to be more important than ever. Yet, surprisingly, the authors themselves do not even seem to agree on the meaning of the polysemic keyword *philology*, which is essential to the whole volume.

Many of the contributors (Massimiliano Bampi, Maja Bäckvall, Odd Einar Haugen, Lino Leonardi, Outi Merisalo, Nielsen, and Karl G. Johansson, to some extent) use “philology” in a strictly technical sense, that of “textual criticism,” while the others propose a range of wider meanings of the term. Lönnroth and Siponkoski use Sheldon Pollock's definition of philology, as “the discipline of making sense of texts” (137). Jonas Carlquist takes his “point of departure from Calvert Watkins' definition of philology: ‘the meaning of language forms as these depend on the linkage of signs to the context in which they occur’” (75). In the nominalist approach of her overview, Helge Jordheim traverses (or rather lists) very different ideas of philology, from