

## EDITORIAL

### REFLECTION, PRODUCTION, WISDOM

#### SVMMA Editorial Board

e-mail: [revistasvmma.ircvm@ub.edu](mailto:revistasvmma.ircvm@ub.edu)

doi: 10.1344/Svmma2013.2.10

---

The first issue of *SVMMA-Journal of Medieval Cultures* included an article by the master Martí de Riquer. Before the release of the second issue, he has left us quietly at the stunning age of one hundred years old. With his passing, we have lost not only what we usually regard as a man of learning, but also one of those personalities that embody an era: the era of those we call intellectuals, rarely out of conviction –as is the case here– and sometimes –most of them, actually– by convention. Why was Martí de Riquer a true intellectual? Because he was a scholar in that field of history which lies at the basis of medieval culture –he was indeed a great expert, what we would call today an specialist–; we could even say that he was a genuine sage in the strongest and most traditional sense of the word. However, describing him as a scholar and a specialist does not do him justice. Martí de Riquer belonged to the era of men who were curious about knowledge; who moved through a world that allowed them to explore many fields at a time; who could become acquainted with different disciplines due to a thirst for knowledge that knew no boundaries. That sort of universality, it goes without saying, is unattainable now. It has been said in many ways that our culture identifies communication with information, while knowledge is sadly disregarded and falls through the cracks of time. In this situation, many of us, aware of the insufficiency of our knowledge in front of the relentless flow of ‘information’ within our reach, feel somewhat nostalgic, powerless even, when we picture a world, so different from that of our own speciality, in which both wisdom and ignorance were still possible. It seems more and more likely that our current path is wrong. We strive to be immensely productive (productivity takes precedence over quality and even truth) and contribute to publications that, in the field of the so-called Humanities as in so many others, have to be quickly edited (the journal you are reading, an electronic journal, is proof of this). Why does edition have to be quick, why does the distribution of a journal have to be immediate? Because what we do, what we write –and sometimes what we allow ourselves to think– must be made public without delay and quickly reviewed by our peers; everything must happen almost instantly, which sometimes leads us to a lack of reflection upon the certainty and even the propriety of the words we leave behind. In our action- and efficiency-driven world –in the image of a production-consumption system–, even knowledge must advance so fast, that we continuously budget our time in order to make the most of it, and thus we end up in a race without a goal. Even worse than that is our ignorance, motivated by contempt or lack of curiosity, of the contributions of our colleagues in the field of

medieval cultures. It probably stands to reason that our Institute (IRCVM) and, therefore, this journal *SVMMMA*, its channel of expression, have their aim in providing the means to listen to, read, reflect upon and discuss precisely those topics which we sometimes brush aside on the excuse of the lack of time, thus impoverishing ourselves more and more in the falsely safe corner of our speciality.

The questions we should pose are: can we get back that curiosity, that healthy intellectual nosiness of men who, beyond the knowledge they already had, could produce more, as Martí de Riquer and so many others did in the way of true sages, in a time so different from our own? And still, can we allow ourselves to look at, or better yet, admire, what happens beyond our small intellectual territory? Will we always restrict ourselves to accept –due to apathy, carelessness or lack of time– what information tools spoon-feed to us without any critical contribution on our side? Will we teach young people to face the task of acquiring and producing knowledge in that way? Will we know how to do it? And if we do, will it be worth it? Is that what our society demands?