

## EDITORIAL

### SVMMA Editorial Board

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We present the first issue of *SVMMA*, an electronic journal of medieval studies that aims to gather a fraction of the considerable amount of works that researchers produce worldwide on the different aspects that shaped the European Middle Ages, and make it available to the interested public within our cultural environment. This proposal is grounded in the firm conviction that the Middle Ages were not a long period of darkness, loss of aesthetic canons and cultural setback, as Renaissance thinkers would have us believe and several ill-informed people still maintain today. The promoters of this journal, whose methodological standpoints are as distant from the naive enthusiasm of Romantic historians as from the hypercriticism of positivist intellectuals, believe that, between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries took place a series of material and spiritual processes that were the crucible and the matrix of Western culture. It was then that vernacular languages appeared, national states were created, universities were founded and the conceptual frameworks that modelled the new science and the major thought systems, which have progressively and definitively decoupled philosophy and theology, were built.

The series of reflections, which, based on different disciplinary approaches, converge upon that complex and dense historical phenomenon that were the Middle Ages, is virtually boundless. The Institute for Research on Medieval Cultures (IRCVM), for which this journal will be an outreach platform, tries to display this multidisciplinary reality. Only the interaction between the methods of history, archaeology, art history, the history of law, the history of economy, philology, philosophy, heuristics, historiography and literature allow the complexity of medieval cultures to be both understood and made understandable. Hence, we offer this means of communication to all those who share this kind of global perspective.

*SVMMA* is born within the context of IRCVM, interdisciplinary in nature, and with the firm determination to become a reference journal for international medievalism. Among its various sections you will find *Papers* conveying the research on the Middle Ages; *Sources*, a collection of texts, images and archaeological materials; and *Reviews* accounting for the main bibliographic contributions received. The contents will always form a well-balanced miscellany. Periodically, however, some issues will be devoted to a monographic topic, the contributions then forming the *Dossier* section, which will be preceded by the so-called *Tribune* introducing them. This last

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\* Unless otherwise specified, the English translation of texts and quotations is by PangurBàn Ltd.

section, in any case, will enjoy a certain flexibility and will thus be used in order to debate papers that have aroused controversy or to publish several reflections on our fields of study. Finally, the *Library* and the *News* sections will keep the readers apprised of the research activities carried out by IRCVM members and the events organized by the Institute.

*SVMMA* is published in an electronic open access format, showing a strong commitment to the free diffusion of science and culture, which should facilitate its reading worldwide. On the other hand, we decided to publish every work both in its original language and in a full English version, so that non-English scientific literature may reach the international community, thus enhancing its diffusion.

With *SVMMA* we intend to contribute to the diffusion of knowledge in all those fields the expertise of our authors and collaborators allows us. For the moment, we place at the disposal of the readers, whether interested, expert or aficionados, this first issue, which every six months will be followed, we hope, by many others. That will ultimately depend on the welcome that you, our friendly reader, provide to this intellectual endeavour, as demanding as it is gratifying.

The editorial board of the journal would like to acknowledge the efforts of all those who have made *SVMMA* possible, from those who participated in the first kick-off meetings to the authors, advisors, reviewers, designers, translators, proof readers and editors, who, with their often unseen work, have put all their expertise and work capability to the task of setting in motion this initiative. To all of them, thank you very much.