

## EDITORIAL

### SVMMA Editorial Board

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

doi: [10.1344/Svmma2020.15.10](https://doi.org/10.1344/Svmma2020.15.10)

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The pandemic we are facing has shaped the publication process of this issue, much of which was carried out during the lockdown period we were forced to endure.

It has been a strange time, full of uncertainties and changes in our habits. Adapting teaching, research, and management to digital media has not been easy for anyone. Attention to our families, the elderly and the young, and the reality of being confined to our homes has affected us on an emotional level and also our ability to work, especially intellectually.

However, there was also a silver lining. Forced seclusion gave us time for reflection, time to observe, to reorganise certain aspects of our lives. The sudden stop in our daily activities made us realise that perhaps everything was going too fast and that we need to have some time to ourselves. Above all, it has made us appreciate the little things that we often overlook.

A kiss, a hug, a conversation with friends or a walk have become cherished and sought-after experiences. Far from the front line against Covid-19, those of us who stayed at home, in our private cloister, went through moments of joy and sadness, of distress and solidarity with those who were worse off than us.

Ultimately, we all looked for ways to do something that would allow us to overcome the situation and deal with it in the best possible way. The arts, thought, creativity, and the Humanities in general found expression via social media as never before and brought to our homes the most varied examples of artistic and human endeavours. The effort that many of us were making to incorporate the Humanities into the digital world has received a definitive push that can no longer be reversed.

History, with its desire to find arguments in the past that help us understand the present, has also contributed its share to this struggle for life. At the Institute for Research on Medieval Cultures (IRCVM) we decided that it was necessary to disseminate medieval sources related to past epidemics. Thus, we set up a blog under the title *Epidemics and Infectious Diseases in the Middle Ages: Documents, Artistic and Literary Representations*, to provide the public with high-quality information on how medieval society reacted to epidemics (<https://epidemiesedatmitjana.wordpress.com/>).

Researchers from various disciplines have generously contributed their writings, which are the result of years of research, have analysed literary texts, historical, and philological sources, and all this has allowed us to see that our ancestors faced similar situations to ours, without having our current understanding of science.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought out the best and the worst in each of us, the lights and the shadows of every human being and every society. From SVMMA we choose to focus on the best. Courage to all and stay strong!

