

Editorial

The editorial committee

Life is always full of surprises. Some are good, but many are not. There is no need to stress that since 2019 (the year we relaunched the IARTEM e-journal), the coronavirus pandemic, first perceived as a surprise (and later as a chronic calamity), has affected every aspect of our ordinary way of life.

This catastrophe has in particular impacted our research community. If, in 2020, the e-journal could publish its usual number of papers, the situation was different in 2021 and there has been a sort of air gap and a sharp decrease in the number of articles we published. Sorry, we could not avoid that. Furthermore, according to a well described phenomenon (nefarious events often occur in series), the e-journal platform has been stricken by a series of technical problems. The story, however banal, is interesting, because it underlines our high dependence on technical choices upon which we have a limited control.

The platform used by the e-journal (OJS) presents enormous advantages, since it allows the papers published on it to be well referenced online. The publication process follows industrial principles, with very well defined phases, each relying on a strict organisation and specific roles for those responsible for each phase. It is undoubtedly neat and well designed.

However, problems may still occur (and some actually did). The main one is probably that an industrial organisation presupposes a sound technostructure. This is not exactly the case for us: we are researchers from the humanities and, even if some of us have fairly good knowledge of informatics and experience of text processing, we are not professional engineers. And in their great wisdom, the designers of the platform, when they defined the hierarchy of permissions, prevented editors from accessing the inner layers of the system.

So, we cannot compromise the system but nor can we always fix all problems ourselves. As a dynamic but rather small academic association, our means may not always equal our ambition; in particular, we cannot afford to appoint engineers.

The second reason is both transient and more problematic. Our current platform was targeted by hackers and, as a result, there has been a cascade of problems, leading to several interruptions of service.

Fortunately, we are not without resources; technicians from the University of South-Eastern Norway, which supports our e-journal, stepped in and fixed what needed to be fixed. Hopefully the problems are now solved. So, life goes on.

Fortunately, also, articles are beginning to flow again and a new volume opens up. We look forward to publishing in the near future contributions that are currently in the review pipeline and to welcoming new contributions. Even after the pandemic finally comes to an end, education will more and more rely on media and educational resources, all of which will continue to offer interesting research issues.