



J-Reading towards new horizons

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It is now six years since the first issue of J-Reading was published in December 2012: a relatively short span of time, but such as to make an initial, even though very rapid, assessment possible which I consider all the more opportune at the moment in which I have decided to leave its direction, concurrently with my retirement as president of the Italian Association of Geography Teachers (*Associazione Italiana Insegnanti di Geografia*), which I had the honour to be for sixteen years and which fully endorsed the realisation of this editorial endeavour.

I can safely say that the hopes expressed at the moment of the foundation of J-Reading have reached fruition, starting from the fundamental goal assigned to the Journal: that of contributing, within a framework of essential international openness in a globalised world, to the construction of a connection between didactics and research, which is absolutely strategic for the development of the subject, so as to eliminate – or at least to reduce as far as possible – the disconnection existing between the academic world and that of the school. The collaboration between university researchers and school teachers should be strengthened more and more.

I also consider that in these years the Journal has successfully pursued the development of the interdisciplinary role of geography, supporting, in the education to a civil and political

awareness, the value and social usefulness of the discipline, which – like a history of the present – challenges today's situations, framing them in a future vision, in a smaller and smaller globe where different cultures influence each other reciprocally.

It is in this spirit that J-Reading welcomed a new fundamental element: The International Charter on Geographical Education, approved by the general Assembly of the International Geographical Union, held on the occasion of its Congress in Beijing in 2016. The globality of the research-didactics process can be found in an important chapter, all dedicated to *Research in Geographical Education*.

Lastly, it seems to me that the Journal has managed to recognise the diversity of orientations and approaches of contemporary geography, including statistical data processing, the application of new data collection and calculation techniques in computerised cartography and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). The support given by the Esri (*Environmental Systems Research Institute*) and ESA (*European Space Agency*) demonstrates the particular attention that J-Reading gives to technological progress and to the possibilities that this can produce in scientific and didactic fields and in education, as illustrated in this issue of the Journal which is dedicated to GIS applications in various areas of study.

The inclusion of J-Reading in the list of class “A” scientific journals by the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University System and Academic Research (*Agenzia Italiana di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca*; ANVUR) is a cause for particular satisfaction. However, a further source of satisfaction derives from the general appreciation which J-Reading enjoys in the scientific community, as witnessed by the increasingly number of requests by colleagues who intend to publish articles and contributions. It is in fact important to maximise the exchange between researchers in the various scientific contexts and university lecturers and the different schools operating all over the world.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those who with their invaluable commitment have honoured this far from simple endeavour which has been and continues to be a real scientific and cultural challenge. I have focussed on the complimentary results achieved by the Journal since the merit of these is not so much due to my work as that of the Associate Editors (from Joseph Stoltman to Sirpa Tani and Cristiano Giorda), the Scientific Committee and the Referees and the Editorial Committee. I would like to express my sincerest thanks to this expert team of friends and colleagues.

Cristiano Pesaresi (the other Associate Editor) deserves a special thank you, as in these six years he has not only been constantly committed to J-Reading with great dedication, but has also given his precious contribution to it with ideas, innovative proposals and contacts at national and international level. I therefore think that upon my retirement from this happy experience, it is only natural that he will take over the Journal at the highest level. And I am furthermore very happy that the beginning of his direction coincides with an issue focused on GIS, which Cristiano Pesaresi had started to work on so keenly well before knowing that he was to become Editor in Chief, also because he is an important figure in the field of GIS.

Particularly, this number of J-Reading is focussed on some of the contributions presented during the “Esri Italian Conference 2018” (Rome, 16-17 May 2018) as a testimony to the importance of the relationship that we have struck up with companies and institutions. In fact, the “Esri Italian Conference 2018” – dedicated to *The Science of Where: paradigm of Italy 5.0* – provided interesting input in an interdisciplinary key and in terms of GIS innovation.

To the new Editor in Chief and all those contributing in some way to J-Reading I trust that you will continue to valorise the image and presence of geography in the scientific and socio-cultural panorama in a future of ever increasing and well deserved successes.