

# Drama and Renaissance: The Accounting History Community do not give up!

As some of you might know, I am from Bergamo, a medieval town in the north of Italy, that suddenly became known worldwide as the European epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am writing this Editorial while listening to the notes of a Donizetti Requiem Concert performed at the entrance of the cemetery of the town to bid farewell to the victims of COVID-19. The images of the concert on the television describe very well the way our lives have changed: the people attending the performance are socially distanced and wearing masks, including the chorus.

Following the spread of the virus and consequent lockdowns worldwide, we have all learnt to live and work differently. Both our teaching and research have faced limitations. We have migrated to online teaching with all its challenges, especially for people with few or no experience in remote teaching.

Our accounting research was also affected by the pandemic, especially in its historical dimension. With the University being closed and no direct access to libraries, accounting history researchers could only rely on online sources. Unfortunately, many old books and some papers are not available online, and the suspension of the inter-library loan did not permit us to receive scanned documents. Archival documents were not accessible, as well. Since March 2020, archives have been closed and several of their usual services suspended. All these aspects have impacted the regular proceeding of many accounting history works, postponing submissions and slowing down the resubmissions.

The conferences we usually presented our works have been cancelled, giving us no chance to discuss and collect feedback. Accounting history scholars have missed the opportunity to meet each other and share ideas and discussion. However, I discovered that we have never been so strong a community as we are now!

I have always thought that the accounting history community is something more than a network of scholars, and I have experienced this in the past months. We called messaged and emailed to support each other, and this was really important for all of us. In our research, we are used to looking at the environment and lives of people generating the historical accounting documents we explore. In the same way, it was natural for us to gather as a community of people experiencing a common and worldwide drama. Personally speaking, I want to express special thanks to all of you from the depths of my heart: you let me feel part of an alive and supportive community.

Now it is time for a renaissance, and I think that the recent Italian Society of Accounting History (ISAH) Webinar Series represents a good re-start! As I have emphasised on previous occasions, before the pandemic, the realisation of accounting history webinars was a goal of 'Accounting and Cultures', and the Board of ISAH was sympathetic to this idea. The series of webinars aim to offer platforms to discuss accounting history papers in a friendly contest and represent an excellent opportunity to nurture young scholars. For this reason, the journal offers the opportunity to fast track webinar presenters.

The first webinar was held in June, and it had more than seventy people from all over the world watching, while the second one will be on 13 July (see details of the programme on this issue). Looking forward to seeing you on that occasion, I hope you to enjoy reading this '*Accounting and Cultures*' issue.

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