

Candidacy for Archivist

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(nominated by the Scientific Board)

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Dear President and Members of the General Assembly,
With this letter I am willing to offer my services to the European Society for the History of Science for the position of Archivist.

My permanent academic affiliation is with the University of Turin in the Department of Mathematics, where I have been associate professor of History of Mathematics (Complementary Mathematics sector) since 2015. Habilitated as full professor of History of Mathematics (sector MAT04) and of History of Science (sector 11C2) in 2019, my research focuses on the dynamics of construction, transmission and socialization of tacit and explicit knowledge from international, national and local perspectives. The research ranges from the history of Italian 'schools' of mathematics, directed by Segre and Peano, to the history of mathematics education, social and gender history. My interests are increasingly dedicated to the study of relationships between science and power, and in particular to the phenomenon of racial persecution and emigration of Italian mathematicians and scientists in the period 1938-1945. I authored and edited more than 100 publications, participated in national and international research projects and networks, and organized regularly meetings, both nationally and internationally.

In the last two years I had the pleasure to serve the ESHS as PR officer (2018-2020). In this position, I tried to think up new ways to sustain the cooperative atmosphere within our community and to propagate the ESHS mission. As a board member of the Italian Society of History of Science and the Italian Society of History of Mathematics, and thanks to my experience of international partnerships I was delighted to assist the ESHS in achieving the closest possible collaboration with Italian societies and institutions in the organization of the Bologna conference, in particular after the choice to turn it in a virtual event, because of the pandemic Covid emergency.

I cooperated with the Newsletter editor and with the Webmaster in rendering the ESHS website an even more efficient tool. For example, special sections of the website were created to post news and information about prizes, awards, archival research projects, season schools and teaching projects in history of science, and to moderate petitions.

Finally, as a quite young scholar myself, I sustained the efforts to shape a network of young scholars who shall contribute to the society's projects and activities, by putting at ESHS's disposal my own network of contacts with young historians of science and science education in Italy and South America.

Both as Secretary and then as PR officer of the ESHS, I had the opportunity to follow - and to some extent to contribute to - the efforts of the presidents and scientific board to highlight the Society's identity. Serving the ESHS as Archivist is therefore not only a stimulating intellectual adventure, but above all a way to continue to serve the ESHS and to support its on-going projects and research initiatives.

We all know that the ESHS was created in France in 2003. However, when I started my first term as Secretary, official documents concerning the life and activity of the Society (Statutes, statements about the changes in the Council, minutes of Council meetings,

receipts, etc.) were preserved only in a paper archive (7 folders, until now held at the Department of Mathematics of the Turin University). Some of these important documents were in a bad state of conservation. In addition to this tiny handful of paper sources, there were a number of scanned documents circulating somewhat by chance. I thus contacted past presidents and secretaries and gathered many official documents that were then digitized. Starting from the conviction that the conferences were perhaps the most important contribution that our Society has made to the history of science and that it be our duty to preserve their respective materials, in November 2017 I asked the organizers for copies of the programs and the book of abstracts. All this material was made accessible on our website.

On this front there is however still much work to be done. It would be important to complete (and to organize in a systematic way) the archives of our Society, both as far as conference materials are concerned and with reference to other official documentation, which is still fragmentary regarding the beginnings of the ESHS. Robert Fox kindly offered his help in order to implement the paper archive of the ESHS putting at our disposal a selection of documents concerning the foundation and the first years of activity. Also, during the General Assembly in Prague Fabio Bevilacqua and Annette Vogt called attention to the usefulness of gathering photos and pictures of the Society's meetings. The contribution of all members, and especially of those who attended the first meetings of the Society, is asked, in order to construct such an iconographic archive.

I am an archive person. A significant part of my energy and scholarly work has focused on archival research: in this vein I am delighted to put my experience and interests at the service of the society and to work towards keeping the archives of the ESHS in good order. This task has however to be fulfilled in relation to all members of the Scientific Board, the actions of survey and conservation of archival sources being by their very nature a collective effort. Collaboration with the webmaster will be for example crucial in organizing, preserving, and providing access to information and materials in archives through digital forms.

I thank you for your attention, and regard it an honour to be considered as a candidate for the position of Archivist.