

CEHR contests the «Weak» rating proposed by the Panel, considering that the evaluation is based on a set of contradictions, support insufficiencies and even factual errors. Besides the issues concerning CEHR's scope, the pointed-out weaknesses are mainly the internationalization and the post-graduate training, with an additional reference to knowledge transfer.

1. About the site visit, we register the huge restraint and pernicious effects on the overall visit caused by the disparity between the parameters set by FCT, via email on the 18th April 2019, and the mandatory rules made known by the Panel as soon as they arrived. The email announced an initial gathering with all team members, up to an hour long, followed by partial meetings (PhD students, Junior, Post-doc and Senior Integrated researchers).

In an email dated 16th May 2019, via FCT, the Panel requested the presence of “representatives from each line of research” allowing “all researchers to feel represented”. All of them, including some Collaborators, were invited to attend and participate in the initial gathering. However, the Panel imposed that the Coordinator's presentation, with the projection of a short video, should be immediately followed by the first partial meeting with the Senior Integrated Researchers, thus impeding any other “interaction between the Evaluation Panel and the Unit's Team”, as indicated in the email of April 18th.

The entire visit was conditioned by the profound unrest caused by that decision and by the manifest breaking of the equal opportunities rule, in agreement with the proceedings followed by the Panel in other site visits.

2. The research scope and the scientific approaches carried out in CEHR were questioned from an epistemological point of view. The field of religious history developed in CEHR is clear: the history of societies, taking religion as an instance of observation. CEHR never intended to be, nor was it seen by its peers and by the successive national and international evaluations, as a religious studies' nor a *religionswissenschaft* unit. CEHR is a unit of History, and it presented itself as such to the evaluation. It is not centred in the study of religions as such, but in the historicity of the religious phenomena and of the forms through which social groups experience them.

Sustained in concepts, theories and problematics of the social and human sciences (eg. the adoption of global history and the application of the gender methodology to the religious history), the generated research innovates in the formulation and deepening of study objects such as spiritualities, minorities and religious diversification, architecture and religious heritage, religious elites, clergy and civil service, reform and secularization, public assistance and social state.

In many areas, CEHR members did and are still doing pioneering work in Portugal, introducing problems and themes in the research agenda. Also because of that, they are sought after to supervise post-graduate studies, integrate PhD Programmes and work with researchers from all the public universities in the country dedicated to History. This dynamic of cooperation and partnership with other units was completely disregarded by the Panel, despite being part of the FCT's evaluation criteria and being valued by the Panel in several other units.

CEHR assumes itself and is identified in the national scientific landscape as a platform of convergence and collaboration, as it is clearly assessed by several indicators in the application.

The Panel, in a very tenuous allusion to the Strategic Plan 2018-22, acknowledges the digital humanities as a new approach. In reality, digital humanities in the referred plan intend to consolidate and extend a long-established investment as, moreover, the report assumes when it refers itself to the Portal de História Religiosa and to the platform PAPIR.

3. On the topic of internationalization, the report applies a bibliometric criterion: only two publications in English, of which only one in a renowned publisher and hardly related to CEHR's work fields. However, that research is integrated in one of CEHR's 5 main contributions enlisted in the application (4.2), *Modernity and religion*, namely in the theme of *Catholicism and authoritarian corporatism* and represents the potentialities of that area and the impact of the work of the Integrated members, in collaboration with researchers from other units. The other publication in English took place in a peer-reviewed journal, indexed on Scopus, representing the CEHR's Integrated members capacity to network in the Asian research universe. And the publications in Portuguese have a high social and scientific impact, as demonstrated in the case of *Ordens Religiosas em Portugal*, a pioneer work, validated, used and developed in the framework of later international projects, such as *CLAUSTRA* and *PAISAJES ESPIRITUALES*.

The participation of the team members and of the Unit itself in international research networks was completely devaluated by the Panel, ignoring what is stated in the application (4.4), namely, protocols (Macau and Mexico) and institutional affiliations in networks based in Europe (CREDIC, CIHEC, EuARe, ICARUS) and in South America (AHILA), basis for research meetings, conferences and papers in Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Chile. The participation in international projects (4.2) was also ignored, the same happening with the international congresses and conferences organized by CEHR or with those where its members were invited to, as documented in the nuclear *Curricula* on the application, in the description of the working groups and in the presentation and documentation made available to the Panel on the day of the site visit. In the CEHR's successive External Advisory Boards there were foreign researchers working in Spain, United Kingdom, Mexico and Brazil. In the application, the interaction with 120 researchers from foreign units was registered (4.4).

Lusitania Sacra, a double-blind peer-reviewed journal (issued on paper and on open-access) published under the evaluated period 17 articles in Spanish, 6 in English, 5 in French and 1 in Italian. These 29 articles attest to the journal as an international reference in the field. Its Scientific Board is composed by researchers from several European countries and from the USA. The international quality of the journal demonstrates CEHR's scientific merit and the impact of its research.

As in the case of several other R&D Units, CEHR's openness to the lusophone world represents an added value and integrates an internationalization strategy. It is not a limitation, nor a mere historical link. Moreover, in the last evaluation, the Panel recommended the dynamization of the collaboration with countries like Brazil, which CEHR did.

4. On the advanced training, the report registers CEHR's participation in one inter-university PhD programme, but omits other programmes, namely the Master and PhD degree on History and Culture of Religions, in collaboration with the Faculdade de Letras-Universidade de Lisboa, and the Master and PhD degree on Religious Studies, in the Universidade Católica Portuguesa (UCP) (4.4 and 10.3). The Panel called into question CEHR's capacity to support training, an incorrect argument which also arises from this omission.

The participation of the Unit in two of those PhD programmes is not processed on a basis of individual invitation to CEHR members. As stated in the application, the two programmes are a joint organization between different universities, CEHR representing UCP and being a founding and fully-fledged member. PIUDHist arose from a competitive FCT call, was submitted to regular international evaluation and the Unit's Coordinator was member of the first Directive Commission.

The report identifies 16 supervisions in the 2013-17 period. But it devalues the 7 supervisions with FCT scholarships. 8 FCT Post-doc fellowships add to that (4.4). The 15 FCT grants were assigned in competitive calls, merit of the candidates and of their working programmes, of the advisors and of the conditions provided by CEHR which, in 2013, only had 24 integrated PhD researchers.

In several cases the supervisions and scholarships concern students with initial training developed outside the UCP, whom considered CEHR, with its Integrated researchers, as the research space where they could develop their projects, as recognized by panels from 15 competitive calls. The presence of these researchers in CEHR, some with graduate training in foreign universities, attests to the CEHR's leadership capacity in its specialized field, to the quality of the advisors that it provides, to the scientific merit of its team and to the attraction capacity of its projects and activities.

The report also considers the disconnection between the "wide varying interests" of the PhD students and CEHR. It is quite evident that the students recognize the appropriateness of the working environment for the completion of their projects based on the research themes (4.2) and thus actively engage in CEHR's working groups, seminars, workshops and publications, where they work together with the other researchers. That fact was emphasized by themselves in the meeting with the Panel. Further, on the place of young researchers and post-docs in the Unit, obliterated from the report, it should be noted that in the site visit they have shown the importance of CEHR in their training and in the supporting of their scientific development career, with explicit references to the teaching and research contracts established in the meantime.

5. The knowledge transfer was also considered weak by the Panel. In a contradictory way, the report recognized, in another point, the work of the religious orders' group concerning the relationship with the civil society. The knowledge transfer and dissemination policy are clearly substantiated in the plan of cooperation with public institutions and society organizations in the fields of heritage and diversification of audiences, through activities such as exhibitions, movie cycles, archive digitalization, website and in the monthly newsletter (4.2).

These elements were in the presentation and documentation provided to the Panel on the day of the site visit.

6. The strategic plan for 2018-22 deserves from the Panel an unsupported classification based in several misunderstandings. The Panel mistakenly refers to the 2013-17 period and its thematic lines as the future, obliterating the necessary evaluation of the strategical objectives, plan of activities and collaborative programmes for 2018-22, widely described in the application (10 and 11) and emphasized in the presentation on the site visit, without the right to a joint discussion. Those lines were the organizational structure of the Unit between 2013-17, but always coexisted with the working groups around projects or activities. For 2018-22, the organization will be based in the working groups and the old organizational lines will constitute themselves as theoretical and methodological framework, transversal to all groups.

We also register the inexistence of any references to the plan of contracting new researchers, a way to contribute to the growth of the scientific employment, nor to the strategy of preservation and dissemination of results and data, including the databases under production, respecting the principles of open science, criteria which were set in the FCT's evaluation guide. The plan to strengthen and expand the strategy of internationalization and to develop the post-graduate training also did not deserve any attention from the Panel.

Considering the above: we must underline and conclude on the inattentive way, and ultimately, on the biased content that the Panel applied to CEHR's evaluation; and request the revision of the rating of all three criteria defined in the Regulations and Evaluation Guide and of the overall quality grade.