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Assessment and recommendations for *The Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT)*

I have read the Report of the Unit for 2011-2012 and the activities of the Unit are impressive at every level: research, popularizations, contacts with the top Research Centers and University Departments in the world, publications in the best journals and with prestigious publishers, and educational activities.

One of the most important criteria to assess the status of a research unit, is the progress it has made with respect to what the unit had expressed as its own aims. Thus, I would like to proceed my assessment by taking into consideration what I had written in my Report of 2011 and what the Unit itself had expressed as its own aims.

I would like to note that this particular assessment is made within a very different Europe than what it was in 2011. The economic crisis has brought dramatic changes in the Universities, and funding coming from national institutions has been greatly curtailed, hitting the humanities more seriously than any other discipline. This, I feel, should be seriously taken into consideration, so that one can have an even greater appreciation of the achievements of the Unit.

1. Perhaps the most significant observation is that the Unit has shown very specific instances of further improving what it had started and that it got involved in all kinds of additional activities as well. Through the work of all the people associated with it, specific members of the Unit have made their presence felt with publications in top international publishers and the best journals, and the international community of historians of science and technology is increasingly coming to recognize the Unit as being one of the few research centers in Europe with excellent quality. Concerning the quality of the work pursued and the themes that the researchers of the Unit are "opening up", it is my conviction that it is a matter of a couple of years before the Unit establishes itself as the standard place for the study a number of issues. Examples of this are the issues around early modern science, Jesuit science, questions related to popularization of science and technology, problems in the philosophy and history of science of the 20th century as well as themes in the history of science and technology in peripheral localities, including colonial contexts and science under dictatorship! A very impressive set of themes, indeed.

2. It should be stressed that the Unit has definitely managed in these two years to further build its profile vis-a-vis the re-articulation of the balance between local and international themes. Almost all similar Units and Research Centers in many countries of Europe -- and this is especially so of those of the Periphery-- have the same dilemma: should one give emphasis on local themes which may be of limited interest to members of the international community of historians of science and technology, or should one produce scholarship on what interests the members of the international community, in which case the "local" Unit or Center acquires a profile which has very little to do with its local context. There is no prescription on how such a balance could be achieved and most scholars hotly debate this issue every time they discuss the kinds of research agendas they plan to initiate and the kinds of junior staff they plan to appoint. It is my conviction that the Unit is, perhaps among the 3-4 such Units and Research Centers in Europe that has been able to strike such a good balance between the local and international themes.
3. The members of the Unit are continuing to be very active in the educational aspects of history of science and technology both in the undergraduate as well as the graduate level. Though the economic crisis in Europe has brought about some very serious cuts in the humanities, it has been observed that the humanities become very popular among young people since a great number of them try to understand the present situation --and rightly so-- through their study of various disciplines in the humanities as well as the social sciences. This is a serious challenge for historians and philosophers of science and technology and one has to be particularly persuasive to young people in order to convince them that through the study of the past one can have a better understanding of the present without being partisan about such an understanding. Looking at the educational activities of the members of the Unit, I see that they have been particularly active in this front as well and the work of some postgraduate students that I have read, give further credence of what I have been arguing.
4. I would like to stress that all the postdoctoral fellows and advanced doctoral students that I came in contact with, have immensely impressed me with their work. They are very much attuned to the contemporary debates within the community of historians of science and technology, they are discussing particularly interesting questions, their arguments are clearly expressed, and they have been very actively in the search of a great variety of archival material. These people are representatives of a new generation of researchers, and their overall quality is surely not independent of the input of the members of the Unit.
5. The Unit has strengthened its ties with the international community, the continuing participation of a large number of researchers in the activities of STEP (Science and Technology at the European Periphery) as well as in the network of Tensions of Europe are well documented. Furthermore, it is, basically, due to the efforts of the members of the Unit that the next meeting of STEP as well as of the European Society for the History of Science will take place in Lisbon.

6. The finances of similar institutions throughout Europe are in a dire situation. Such a situation does not provide conditions for an optimistic future. However, I am convinced that an even more serious danger is the bureaucracy that is becoming almost unmanageable. This has been my experience in Greece. The lack of funding has been almost simultaneous with the creation of all kinds of administrative procedures --a great deal of which is totally useless. Researchers of excellent standing and with a lot to give, are in almost continuous meetings, filling endless forms and writing reports that I am convinced no one reads. The supposedly new situation where everything is being assessed has led to the creation of all kinds of indicators, most of which mean absolutely nothing except being numbers with no reference with what is actually going on in the Universities and Research Centers. Perhaps the administration today, should be thinking ways to ease this burden from the researchers and, in this way, give them the time to be more creative. Needless to say, that what I write in this paragraph has been my experience in Greece, and all of what is written may not apply in Portugal.

Kostas Gavroglu



Report on the activity of the *Centro Interuniversitario de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia* (CIUHCT)

In a report written in October 2010, which assessed the activity *Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia* (CIUHCT) in 2010, I highlighted three characteristics that were particularly relevant when looking at the work done by CIUHCT's members. After reading of the results obtained in the last two years, it is clear that the CIUHCT remains prominent for its commendable work to consolidate the **history of science as an autonomous academic discipline in Portugal**, for its stunning success in all the strategies followed to increase the **internationalization** of the group and its successful commitment to **interdisciplinary approach** to research.

The work of consolidating the history of science as an academic discipline in Portugal that CIUHCT has been developing for years and with particular intensity in the last two, deserves attention for two reasons. First, because it ensures the presence in Portugal of an academic discipline that in recent decades has achieved an important development in European universities. Second, because CIUHCT's members work has contributed to show the importance for national and international of the understanding of all forms of scientific practices and ideas developed in geographical contexts usually absent in the histories of science written from or looking at the places considered as producers of scientific knowledge. For these reasons, it seems particularly important to underline some activities developed by CIUHCT's members in areas as the training new researchers, through the supervision of Phd and MsC theses (4 in 2011 and 8 in 2012); the organization of scientific meetings involving several Portuguese academic and cultural institutions (universities, libraries, museums, academies and scientific societies, etc.), or the transfer of results through national and international publications or by means of exhibitions aimed at a wide range of audiences.

CIUHCT's activity in the last two years shows that the internationalization remains one of its main objectives and also an achievement easily verifiable. More than half of the publications have been made in international magazines and publishers and the presence of team members in international scientific meetings is confirmed by the more than two hundred contributions. It is also relevant their active participation as organizers of international meetings and working groups. Worth mentioning here is CIUHCT's members active role in the groups Science and Technology in the European Periphery (STEP) and ToE (Tensions of Europe), two international projects that for years have served to connect local communities of historians of science and promoting the circulation of local studies over linguistic barriers and encouraging comparative studies.

As already mentioned in above mentioned former report, besides the diversity of backgrounds and career paths of CIUHCT's members, the methodological and thematic diversity of research projects shows a clever strategy to build up bridges between very different work areas. Along lines of research in classics topics like astronomy, scientific institutions or scientific biographies, CIUHCT's members have successfully open research lines in very innovative areas within the historiography of science such as popularization of science or circulation and appropriation of knowledge between centers and peripheries. It is also extremely valuable CIUHCT's efforts to contribute from the historical research to the study, conservation and dissemination of scientific heritage and material culture of science, as shown by their work on scientific collections and its close collaboration with museums and conservators. At this point, it deserves to be underlined CIUHCT's active participation in museum exhibition design. Besides being a way to raise awareness of scientific heritage to the general public, it is also an exceptional means of disseminating historical research results and offer to general audience arguments for a critical reflection about the role of science and technology in contemporary societies.

Dr. Antonio García Belmar

Alicante, May 5th, 2013



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REPORT ON THE 2011-2012 ACTIVITY OF THE CENTRO INTERUNIVERSITARIO DE HISTÓRIA DAS CIENCIAS E DA TECNOLOGIA (CIUHCT)

The CIUHCT is a well-known Portuguese centre of research based on the two universities of Lisbon (University of Lisbon, New University of Lisbon). The centre paves the way for the study of a variety of subjects in the history of science, the history of medicine and the history of technology from the XVIIth century to the XXth century. The centre is able to promote pure research in such fields and periods and also to organize activities of their application, either for educational purposes or for the public understanding of science. It is worth pointing out that few units in the world are able to be active in such a number of fields.

The main objective of the centre is to study the specific role of Portuguese people in the development of science and technology, not only in Portugal but in Europe and the world. This also includes the comparative studies of science and technology in different countries. As already stated, in the last decade, the CIUHCT has managed to introduce Portuguese subjects in the current historiography of science and technology.

The 2011-2012 activity should be considered in this context. The members of the two groups have continued to develop a very relevant activity. The number of papers and books published is significant, as is the number of students and doctoral theses presented, and the quality of the papers and the orientation of the programs of research and education constitute an excellent achievement. Mention should also be made of the papers published in *Centaurus*, *Imago Mundi*, *Llull*, *Culture and Cosmos*, *Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics*, *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences*, *Annals of Science, Science & Education*, *Host*, *History of Science*, *Paedagogia Historica*, *Revista de Historia Industrial*, *Notes & Records of the Royal Society*, *Technology & Culture*, *Journal of Engineering Studies*, *British Journal for the History of Science*.

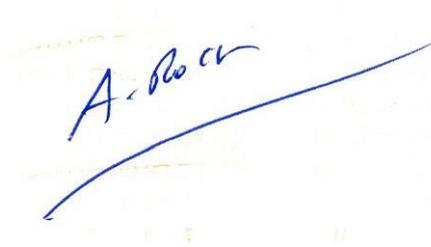
The results concerning the publications of the members of CIUHCT during 2011 and 2012 are really relevant; not only for the number but also for the progress made, 2012 being an especially productive year. This may only be an effect of this particular year, but I am convinced that the whole result marks a tendency towards maturity and consolidation.

It is also necessary to mention the important presence of Portuguese scholars –many of them young scholars- at international events. This is another sign of the progress of the CIUHCT. At the same time, several

members of CIUHCT form part of international organizations, such as STEP, INES, SHOT, or ESHS, in which they play an important role. Finally, a number of international congresses or seminars have taken place in Portugal, confirming the confidence of the international community in CIUHCT members.

It should be remembered that another relevant activity is centred on scientific heritage, in relation with special Portuguese archives and collections. In this sense, the members of the group belonging to the Museum of Science of the University of Lisbon play a very important role. Another initiative is the promotion of the study of the university heritage, a crucial subject at the present time.

In conclusion, I can confidently state that the CIUHCT is one of the outstanding centres for the history of science in Europe. The 2011-2012 activity reflects the actual maturity of the projects undertaken. In my opinion, the CIHCT merits the highest evaluation in order to ensure its economic resources and to continue to provide the same high standard for both its national and international activity.



Barcelona, 25th April 2013

**Report on the activities in 2013
of the Centro Interuniversitário de História das
Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT)**



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After a period of two years I am again submitting a report on the impressive activities of the **Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT)**, and as in 2011 I must begin my analysis by expressing my admiration for the very elaborate, professional, original and particularly comprehensive international work that is being done here. With reference to the established continuity we may make a comparison between 2011 and 2013 concerning its spectrum of topics, its methodological direction, its visibility in the international community, its networking and teaching situation. Such a comparison, we may say in advance, will underline the fact that the CIUHCT is not only continuing in its successful work: it has also enhanced, by several degrees, the status that it had already achieved.

The history of science (and one cannot actually speak of a single history) is today an expanding field, for many reasons, and it is of vital importance for a small country such as Portugal to share in the development of the global debate concerning the importance of knowledge from the perspective of the history of science. This is achieved magnificently in the CIUHCT at a wide range of different levels. It is already resulting in the creation of a “Centro” that can truly claim to be a national centre within Portugal, with both national and international impact. Evidence for this is provided by a rich publishing history at both national and international levels, by memorable appearances at international congresses, and by active participation in the highly respected STEP (Science and Technology in the European Periphery) and ToE (Tensions of Europe) international networks. And of course this participation is not a precondition but a result of the international orientation of the CIUHCT.

The fact that the CIUHCT will be the venue for the 2014 meeting of the European Society for the History of Science (ESHS) is an expression of the high standard that has now been achieved but also of the international reputation that the CIUHCT already enjoys.

The basis for all these interrelated activities is a serious research endeavour that has the necessary breadth to generate this degree of visibility. The breadth of content may be reduced to four major concepts, and it is with reference to these that the activities and research conducted in the CIUHCT may be almost ideally classified:

1. Circulation of scientific and technological knowledge
2. Local embedding of scientific and technological practices
3. History of sciences and technology based on crossing cultures: printed, manuscript, oral and material sources
4. History of science and technology in an interdisciplinary context – art, architecture, literature, cinema, ethics, philosophy

An elegant classification thus corresponds to a solid breadth of interest, and this facilitates an approach that is simultaneously both open and concentrated. This conceptualization is impressive not only because it fits the interdisciplinarity between history and science that is required in the history of science, but also in that it builds transdisciplinary bridges. This direction should be strongly emphasized since in terms of both content and methodology it seems very promising for the future and favours approaches that are also being contemplated elsewhere.

The integrative capability of the Institute in respect of a variety of current topics and new methodologies is remarkable, particularly in terms of its interweaving of local, national, international and global questions. Its publication output, from both a national and an international perspective, is commendable. And here it should be emphasized that publications in the national language should not be suppressed in the pursuit of internationality. The international dimension of publications and their range of topics is impressive, but it has not been achieved through sacrificing the potential that the national language and orientation affords; on the contrary, productivity here strikes an excellent balance between research that is, in essence, internationally positioned and that which is nationally oriented.

The breadth and richness of topics can be used as an asset and not as a disadvantage. For the breadth of content and methodology goes hand in hand with a degree of depth in studies that is essential if research is to be carried out meaningfully. Some people might feel that specialization in a narrow range of topics would constitute professionalization, but professionalization is to be found particularly when a connection is guaranteed between special studies and the broader dimension, since this is a precondition for a Unit to be viewed as a National Unit in the History of Science and Technology.

In general terms the CIUHCT has a genuine capacity to build a community which enrolls promising PhD and post-doctoral students, particularly since international students are already being successfully recruited and supervised.

As I already said in my first report, I was fascinated by the activities that have an external dimension and communicate science successfully, such as the exhibitions and participation in the celebrations of the university's jubilee that were organized by individual colleagues in the CIUHCT.

The fact that, in the midst of the great crisis that is affecting the Portuguese economy, a centre can operate with so much flair and persistence, continuity and creativity, and can even surpass itself, must be afforded the highest degree of praise for what has been achieved.



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