

GLOBAL REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH UNITS ON PHILOSOPHY

Coordinator s General Report

The first and probably the most important impression we gather from the whole evaluations (there were twelve) is the institutional consolidation of the subject. Thanks to the support given by JNICT and reinforced by FCT, Philosophy stopped being a purely individual activity limited to the reading and writing of author essays. Presently Philosophy is part of an increasing number of team research projects. This is due to the essential financial support given and previous evaluations. During the present evaluation, the UP Philosophy Institute indicated that the evaluation panel's previous recommendations were important for a better organization of their research.

The second impression is based on the existence of an "area of excellence" clearly more developed than other research. It is not accidental that the four Centres considered excellent belonged to UL, UNLO, UC and UP. It is noticeable the full restructuring of the Centre at UC. According to the panel the evaluation was done in much better conditions.

The third impression is based on the research done by small teams outside Lisbon and Porto. The panel valued this tendency for decentralization. We have noticed there is a new interest for history of sciences in general and history of Portuguese sciences in particular. However, we still consider this interest insufficient.

The above demonstrate a remarkable development of the subject. In quantity, quality and specialization, from the Greek and Latin Philosophy to logic and the Philosophy of the language. Furthermore, philosophical research shows a healthy diversity in schools of thought and methodologies. Its internationalisation continues at a pace no one could predict a few years ago.

Philosophy is in an upward phase of institutional consolidation. This can be seen in the research results.

Nevertheless, this consolidation has some negative aspects. We think that the most relevant of them is the excess of reference works like dictionaries (As mentioned in other reports) in detriment of a more diverse and complete research. Although dictionaries are a positive team effort, the panel observed that they were often repeating previously acquired knowledge, instead of encouraging the production of new knowledge. It is desirable that we think about further supporting this kind of activity.

Another negative aspect is the relative lack of importance Philosophy of science has in most of the Centres visited. Although History of Philosophy is an important part of any philosophical work, phenomenology and hermeneutic orientations can be the basis for excellent research. The dialogue with scientific thought is necessary for the constant renewal a living Philosophy requires.

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