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Interview with Moisés de Lemos Martins



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http://www.eracareers.pt/opportunities/index.aspx?task=showMember&jobID=33263&juriID=7394&lang=en&idc=4.

How has the notion of crisis entered discourses about higher education and research?

When I talk about crisis, I am referring to the crisis of the human, a contemporary *mal de vivre*, which is associated with the experience of technology, from network communication to biotechnology, and with the conversion of our lives to the logic of the global marketplace. My point of view is inscribed in a theory of culture that interprets communication as the generalised form of culture. I have expounded this view in *Crise no Castelo da Cultura* [*Crisis in the Castle of Culture*] (Coimbra and São Paulo, 2011), a volume that put together studies in communication carried out over a decade.

Following from what we may term the "thinking of difference" — from Nietzsche to Foucault and Lyotard, and from Derrida to Deleuze and Baudrillard — my point of view questions the precarious condition of those who wander through a "night of time" where history is stored in gigabytes, emotions are processed in bytes, bodies are composed of pixels, and the whole of life (material goods, bodies and souls) is converted into economic and financial value. Our daily lives may well be stuck in the mud of boredom, for the screens do not leave us alone, they agitate us, excite us and inevitably mobilise us towards the global marketplace, in a movement in which the word recedes before the torrent of technological images, and we lose our secure ground, a stable identity, any known and controllable territory.

The "clandestine king" of our times, to use Simmel's expression, are, in fact, the technologies of information. They connect individuals globally and create, in them, the brain that they need: (1) that of mobile individuals, that is, of individuals that assume a nomadic, precarious condition devoid of social rights; (2) individuals that are ready for mobilization, i.e., ready to do any job, permanently responding to the demands of the market; (3) that of competitive individuals, with a keen sense of the logic of production; (4) and that of performers, that is, doers, accomplishers.

Mobile, ready to be mobilised, competitive and performers, that is, apt to work for the market, and also for the database, the ranking and the statistics, i.e., whatever the theodicy of the market designates as "quality" and "excellence". Information technologies can program us that way, they can give us that brain, they which have constituted themselves, among us, as a space of control.

Traditional metaphysics was founded on the word, a space of promise. And the promise entailed a future and offered guarantees for it. That metaphysics of unity has finished in the West: we no longer launch a purpose forward (into the future), basing it on a lost origin. It is to the present that we are now mobilised. The words of the promise (centred on the future) have been replaced with the numbers of the promise (which, generally speaking, in the West are mostly the numbers of the crisis): those of the Gross National Product (GNP) that do not grow, or grow negatively; those of the Balance of Trade with chronic unbalances between exports and imports; those of the deficit, internal and external; those of unemployment; those of the aged population; those of social inequalities, which are spreading; those of the dramatic fall in demographic rates… These are numbers of the present which, in the West, spell its crisis. Priests, lawyers and politicians no longer organise life in the West, because the crisis has obscured the present so that the horizon has become invisible; the promise is now held by economists, engineers and managers. They are our magicians – the magicians of the present time.

It is in this context of technologic mobilization towards the global marketplace, with cultures in decay and through landscapes of ruins, that we witness the discourses of crisis being extended to higher education and research. We can see that, for example, through the application of marketing ideas to the educational system. Today, at universities, the notion that we should only offer products that are likely to be purchased is widespread. As soon as teaching is converted into commerce, instructors, now recycled into clerks and consultants, become dependent upon the choices and decisions of commercial directors, i.e., the heads of schools and faculties, who centralise the direction of such commerce. The assessment of

the product, its "profile", is determined from the top down, according to bureaucratic criteria, dependent upon the laws of the market, of commerce and of marketing, and of their media visibility. As a consequence, the teaching projects that are considered more "fragile", those aimed at a restricted number of consumers, are mercilessly eliminated.

And the same happens with the great majority of fundamental research projects, projects that do not answer exclusively to practical social needs nor reflect solely the indecorous conviction that we are entitled to everything and that everything has a price. Furthermore, publishers do not even want to hear about publishing fundamental research, for fear of having no readers. And the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT — Portugal's Science and Technology Foundation) is equally hostile to it, in the name of a civil society that would struggle to understand the funding of something that has no social utility.

I believe universities have, for a long time now, been catering for average students. And that strategic option is analogous with the idea of equally average professors. That may be the source of the systematic campaign of devaluation of thinking at higher education institutions. The idea of an index of productivity and the permanent call of the pedagogic process, shaped into e-platforms, bureaucratise and infantilise professors. Both ideas translate a dull concept of "excellence" and "quality". Both are devoid of grandeur: they possess no ethical exigency, nor do they possess the face and the reasoning of professors and students. What is stimulated there are average sensibilities, which remain connected to conservative values, be they ethic, narrative, pedagogic or scientific, and which repeat thoughtless operative mechanisms to exhaustion.

Conceived for average students and professors, in the classroom, higher education becomes melancholic: with no gravitas, no concern for the state we have arrived in; the impossibility to intervene in the course of events becomes more accentuated; and thought struggles to survive.

A class, these days, is no longer an exercise in looking. Nothing is likely to encourage a calm look, nothing is likely to move one into dancing. A class, today, must have a regular beat, like narrative hiccups, with successive gusts of transparencies and slides. Or it can work like an automatic watering system, the voice of the professor dubbed in the background by images in a PowerPoint presentation. In the classroom, a commercial style has become generalised, either as a commercial ad or as a promotion film. In both cases the aim is the same: the search for immediate communication and the search for meaning at a fast speed. Classes cannot, in fact, compare badly with the rhythm of advertising communication. It could be said that encouraging a calm look, and moving one's thinking into a dancing rhythm, would make for a slow boring class for which no one has patience.

Thought sinks, and with it the very academic ideal sinks. That is, universities sink by way of melancholic blows. It is vital to combat melancholy — that aesthetic mermaid whose desires are fulfilled with operative mobilisation, with no thought nor social or political engagement — with the ethic criterion of critical unrest. I believe universities should be seen as places of unbounded freedom, as places of a democracy to come. Above all, universities embody a principle of critical resistance and a potential for dissidence, guided by what Jacques Derrida called "a thinking of justice". I believe that is the mission of universities. It is their ultimate job to safeguard the possibilities of the adventure of thought, and to

transform both teaching and research into an idea without which the present is a pure form from which all potential has disappeared.

How has it been used to construct problems and offer putative solutions in the discourses of politicians, research institutions, universities and the European Union regarding the Social Sciences and the Humanities?

Our time has accelerated mostly with the explosion of technology, and we have been alienated from our historical condition. At all levels of the human condition, the objective is now the marketplace. For that reason, what is happening to us, through the current policies for teaching and researching, is technological control and an accelerated mobilization towards the marketplace, which is also affecting the Social and the Human Sciences.

In this context, I would like to call to mind a text by Heidegger about technique, written in 1954. Thinking about the nature of technique, Heidegger recalls the Aristotelian tradition to point out that technique entails a "causa materialis", a "causa formalis", a "causa finalis" and a "causa efficiens". He uses as an example the making of a chalice, which entails a material, for example, silver — "causa materialis"; a shape, for example that of a goblet – "causa formalis"; a purpose, for example, religious — "causa finalis"; and a craftsperson, who produces the effect by making the chalice — "causa efficiens". It is the case, however, that in the era of technique (a modernity of "means without ends", as Agamben warns), the "causa finalis" disappears, it ceases to be a causality, and the "causa efficiens" changes nature. The focus is not on the craftsperson any more, as Heidegger notes, but on "efficacy and the efficiency of making", that is, the social utility of the production process. It can then be said that the "causa efficiens" requires operativity and efficacy; the "causa efficiens" is no longer the craftsperson, but a product of the market, a commodity.

When transposed to the higher education system, Heidegger's reading means that the citizen, learned and instructed in an area of knowledge, becomes the chalice. In that case, the students are the material ("causa materialis"); the course, be it graduate, masters or doctorate, is the shape ("causa formalis"); an informed, critical, participative and community-minded citizen is the religious system ("causa finalis"); and the professor is the craftsperson, who "makes" the graduate, master or doctor ("causa efficiens"). However, with technological mobilisation and the demands of the market, the "causa efficiens" no longer contemplates professors, and students are but goods. Both are technologically mobilised towards the market, and in the process, become disarticulated as citizens and stranded in their corporation or tribe, which have replaced the community. It is demanded from them that they move from country to country and from university to university. They must be competitive and entrepreneurial, promote self-employment or employment in general, for instance through spin-offs. And they must be performers. In the meantime, the crowd of doctoral and post-doctoral students grows, young people with no other academic alternative but the redemptive search for a research scholarship which will allow them to wander from conference to conference, from journal to journal, from research project to research project, chasing after a top place in some ranking. And the same is to be expected from their defunct professors.

As I see it, we are facing a "crisis of experience", a diagnosis made in the 1930s by Walter Benjamin, and more recently by Giorgio Agamben. Nowadays we live in a numb state, and our "commitment with the epoch and the ideas behind it" is increasingly smaller, as Walter Benjamin emphasised. We are alienated from our historic condition and hopelessly muddling through a quotidian turned into its noisy media rendition. Our times, however, appear to be happy ones; times that take comfort in the bosom of technology, the media and shopping centres; a bosom that provides tranquil trips and risk-free adventures, a fantastic aesthetic experience into the kingdom of commodities, a kingdom of consumption, evasion and exoticism.

If we are to believe Paul Celan, time requires several accents: acute for actuality, grave for historicity and circumflex for eternity — the circumflex accent being a sign of expansion. It is my conviction, however, that time has lost all its accents. Historicity, the grave accent of time, the accent of our responsibility for our state and the state of the world, is today a "disease". Actuality, the acute accent of time, has been transformed by the media into *fait-divers*. And eternity, the circumflex accent that expands time, is just a fragment in the torrent in which, downstream, all the names that spoke of an absolute presence (of a fundamental principle) go: essence, substance, subject, conscience, existence, God, human, transcendence, as Jacques Derrida pointed out.

I believe this is the "malady" of our time, a time when accents are missing, a time unfinished by a horizon of redemption. And universities also suffer from that malady. With the market – the financial market and the job market — thundering fantastically above their heads, universities tumble down to the *plateau* of news, without ever creating hope. The news today at universities is commercial ideology: universities are companies; education is a service; teaching and research are business opportunities; professors are clerks or consultants; students are clients. And all that is given us to chew on, like a symbolic chewing gum or a smuggled lolly, is the promise of an unlikely social success: the news becomes the excellence of courses and professors, measured with a handful of indicators of a production marks sheet, but thoughtless; news is the rates of demand for a particular institution and the entry marks for a course; news is the rates of success and employability of former students. I would say, along with Alexandre O'Neill's caustic verses, that news is the scurrying of news: "News is devouring! There it goes down the gut that will swallow every and all! There it goes, there it went! Not even the work of entrails holds news… Heartless news!"

It is doubtless the scurrying of news, and it is also the recitation of the same tale. But as we know, every mythical narrative is melancholic, it only takes flight where reality is absent or cracked. As Giorgio Agamben well observed, this is a time of "means without ends". And because it is a time of means without ends, nothing is more natural than that universities also live hopelessly, in permanent suffering for a finality, with the social and human sciences unable to escape technological control or the mobilisation towards the market.

I would like to mention, in this context, the present debate around the Portuguese language, which at times, approaches a hallucinated messianic narrative. In an interview given to the website *Inteligência Económica* (*Economic Intelligence*), on the occasion of the launch of *Potencial Económico da Língua Portuguesa* (*The Economic Potential of the Portuguese*

Language), Luís Reto, the Dean of ISCTE-IUL, who coordinated the study, does not hide his enthusiasm: "This is the time of the Portuguese language" (http://inteligenciaeconomica.com.pt). And immediately positioning the Portuguese language in the route of economy, he warns that navigation will, from now on, be towards a new cultural archive in which the language is a "product" and has "economic value", and its importance is evaluated in terms of a percentage in the GNP. Thrown in the sea of its own transformation "into an economic world power", the destiny of the Portuguese language is, on the one hand, "the Lusophone community", and on the other, "the value created outwards, towards a networked economy".

How does the crisis discourse in education and research intertwine with other crisis discourses (cultural, financial, political)?

It was the spirit of modernity, based on the principles of historicity and eschatology, which led the idea of historical time and became a reason for hope. As I see it, when we talk about information technologies, that idea of historical time still echoes, standing as the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, and in the Tower of Babel as the universal communication of that knowledge.

The university imaginary was a modern imaginary since its medieval origin, by dreaming of the universalisation of knowledge, as well as the universalisation of the scientific community. The figures that, from the start, have mobilised the university are the figures of emancipation and mastery of history. By dreaming of the universalisation of knowledge, and the universalisation of its transmission, the university presents itself, from its beginning, as a eschatological form, a utopian and hopeful form of facing time.

The dream that the university embodied in the 13th century presupposed that people's lives were organised into a meaningful history, fulfilling the promise of the absolute relation that had been dreamt in immemorial time. In that time of cathedrals with long stone needles aiming for the skies, culture was all the truth of the university. But who demands culture from teaching and from research today? What is asked of them is "quality", and all quality has to be of use. Teaching and science that are not useful seem to be forever doomed. From an ethical point of view, it is doubtless a significant change.

In our information society, the university acts more and more like any other media. For the press there was also a time when the veracity of the news was all its value. Today, however, the chief editor or the director of a newspaper does not require that information be true. What s/he wants is for it to be exciting. If it is not exciting, it is not useful. And if it is not useful, there is no point in publishing it.

We live in a time when only that which is effective seems to be socially justifiable; that which is instrumental, which, in a few words, serves the designs of pragmatic reason. Today everybody suffers from this generalised conviction that we are entitled to everything: to respect, to self-expression, to a diploma, to a job, to social success. And it is the school, and more particularly the university, that must fight this battle and make sure this dream comes true: a promise of success, which is synonym with winning every time.

To control its market behaviour and its efficacy, higher education decided to dive into convoluted processes of self-assessment, internal and external. It insistently asks courses

what happened to their graduates. It forces professors, in an organised and systematic way, to deal with an endless number of academic roadblocks justified by "pedagogic supervision" and "quality". It imposes a rate of scientific production on researchers, and it plans to align them into a ranking of academic irradiance measured by the "impact factors" of citations of their work and the journals they publish in. It asks of students that they control their professors' performance, in case their interest in "quality" wanes in favour of critical and scientific activities.

By serving the market as the only master and obeying the demands of competitiveness, as if liberal reason were the rightful tribunal where academic excellence is judged, the university ended up by losing its centre and began working according to lines of thinking that are not its own, in a continuously schizophrenic state.

Students no longer fail, the university does. The university has decided to deny itself. It denies itself by organising regular consultations with students to register their opinions about their professors and the courses' syllabi. It denies itself, when all it wants to do is communicate, listen, when it wants pedagogy and supervision, and neglects its obligation to teach.

It is a fact that the university does not sufficiently promote the desired social mobility, and in this sense, its contribution to the democratisation of the country is limited — in fact, what our politicians do today is advise young people to leave the country, to emigrate.

It is also a fact that the scientific discourse is now one among many, and can no longer stand as the court of reason. In fact, the hegemonic liberal ideology has done everything it can to discredit any pedagogic and scientific discourse that is not subsumed by the necessities of economic development and of creating jobs.

It is also true that higher education seems incapable of responding to the increasing pressure of social demands: the need for economic development, the need to create jobs, to modernise the country, the need for technological innovation, international competitiveness, the need to promote social cohesion by fighting ethnic and gender asymmetries and encouraging the inclusion of minorities, the need to fight media and digital illiteracy.

In a time that is distant from the immaterial, a time of want, "without rock, cape or quay" (Sophia de Mello Breyner), the university is no longer that other language that destroys appearances and enlightens us. In a landscape of ruins, where gods and humans have lost their splendour, the university is less and less an exercise in memory and a reservoir of care. The university finds it difficult to stand for dreams and openness to the world.

Having lost its centrality, the university has suffered increased social pressure. And, stunned, it accepts that students stop being students (with the obligation to learn) and become worshiped as "youth"; stunned, it accepts that culture and research surrender to the cult of technology and the future per se; stunned, it mobilises itself towards an erroneous idea of success.

This means that teaching drowns in institutional bureaucracy, in a process called "quality control procedure", something amorphous, with no real "body", without the time of the "other", with no ethical requirement; this also means that research lays in the market

and in competition all hope for redemption, and succumbs to commercial ideology; this also means that the service it does to the community is often pragmatic, a compulsion towards business, an indecorous rush, which in turn feeds the generalised conviction that we are entitled to everything and that everything has a price.

And however, as I see it, the university cannot give in to the idea that academic policies are restricted to management strategies, and that the demands for growth are settled with responses of an exclusively technical and instrumental nature. For the task of the university is to learn and teach how to look, but also to learn and teach how to think. To learn and teach how to look means to get the eye used to calmness, to patience, allow things to approach us; learn how to reserve judgement, how to surround and take on the particular case from every angle, as Nietzsche has taught us. And to learn and teach how to think means, to continue to use Nietzsche's words, to learn and to teach a technique, a plan of study, a will to master something — for thinking should be learned like dancing is learned, like a type of dance…

How is the role of the state in research and education being revised and with what implications? How is the scope of freedom and creative potential of researchers being affected in a context where markets seem to rule?

Let us focus on the university. Over the last decade, we've been witnessing, in Portuguese public universities, the implementation and adherence to corrective and orthopaedic procedures, which certify, in teaching and in research, routine and conformity, efficiency and utility, and which section the academic quotidian and surround it in a dourness that freezes the slightest hint of life and imagination with positive and administrative knowledge. On the other hand, in the governing of universities, "managerial and economic" models triumph over "classic collegial models", as Teresa Ruão concluded in her doctoral thesis in Media Studies at the University of Minho, which she finished in 2008. Also, still according to Teresa Ruão, as the university followed "models of management close to those of the private sector", its identity acquired "a more instrumental format" and communication became increasingly "controlled to produce strategic results". To control communication in order to produce strategic results is, these days, the job of the Press Offices of universities, also known as Communication and Image Offices, which are instruments to administer, in the public sphere, the policies of the institutions of higher education. From this point of view, communication, and more specifically, persuasive communication, is not, in any way, a modest activity of thought, erected to repair cultural catastrophes. It is, on the contrary, a fortress, reason armed with bayonets, and a bear hug, which frustrates any ideas that may still prevail about the innocence of language and the muteness of power.

I believe that language is imbued with power, which is the same to say that science and pedagogy, which are languages, are imbued with power. That is, the beautiful ideal inspired by Habermas, which Michael Oakshott, for example, applies to the university, of making participative, dialogic, cooperative and conversational language its mission and its destiny, as well as the search for the universals of communication, deserves no enthusiasm, and mostly nor trust.

In our modernity, which is the age of generalised communication (the age of the mass media, and of social networks), universities have seen the preoccupations with productivity,

financial responsibility and strategic management defeat the values of autonomy and public service.

The university thus reflects the discomfort of our modernity. Furthermore, if we look closely at the way it works, we can even say that the university greatly contributes to this social uneasiness. At a greater scale than any other institution, the university has made its own the founding myth of our liberal society, a society where people and knowledge circulate freely, and where redemption through talent and merit is promised to a horde of people who are helplessly condemned to oblivion and anonymity. At the same time that it promises that redemption, the university exacerbates individualism and condemns multitudes to the most radical impotence.

There was a time, not that remote, when we could speak of the "eternal mission" and of the "permanent objectives" of the university. Back then, the idea of truth organised people's lives as both the origin and the end of a meaningful story. In such a world, the main objective of the university was research, because the truth can only be reached by those who look for it systematically. But truth was much more than science, so the university had a second objective: to serve culture and to manage to educate a person in his or her entirety. And as truth can be transmitted, the university had to devote itself to teaching. Even the teaching of a profession was thought in terms of a complete education.

But the unconditional search for truth is no longer our thing. It is liberal reason that rules the world now. Liberal reason, that which Lyotard simply called "the system". And the system, up until recently (up until the Wall Street crash in 2008), might not have allowed for peace, but it guaranteed safety; might not have promised progress, but it guaranteed growth. By what means? Doubtlessly by the market and by competition. The system did not have others. And it still does not have them, even if today it does not even manage to guarantee safety, let alone growth.

To the question "How is the scope of freedom and creative potential of researchers being affected in a context where markets seem to rule?", I would answer by insisting on the nature of the information technologies. They connect individuals globally in real time and create in them the brains that they need, the brains of mobile individuals, ready to be mobilised, competitive and performative, that is, apt to work in the market, and also apt for the database and the ranking, and everything that the theodicy of the market calls "quality" and "excellence".

And I conclude my point of view by invoking a document written by Licínio Pereira in 1997 and presented over a decade ago to the Senate of the University of Minho. In that document, he suggested an internationalisation of the university based on the following ideas: the digital revolution threatens to make the professor-actor obsolete; globalisation conditions competition in the academic world (the best universities attract the best students and the best professors, so the best projects are consolidated and strengthened, while the weak ones disappear); the paradigm of the society of knowledge quickly renders traditional education out of date, and it is now more important to acquire bases, methodologies and skills that can generate a culture of change and creativity, than to "learn without investing". Under these circumstances, those who lead in information technology and "grab

the potential of multimedia products" have a good chance to succeed in the challenge of internationalisation.

From this perspective, the strategy of internationalisation of the university, in the terms that was formulated, meant three things:

1. Information does not need communication. In fact, that is what it is about when information does not have a real body, is not open to the time of the "other", and has no ethical exigency.
2. It is by becoming slaves of time that we avoid exclusion. In fact, to deposit in the market and in competition all the hopes for security and growth is to succumb to the system, that is, to submit teaching and research to mere management strategies.
3. Pragmatism contradicts culture. In reality, what else is it about, when innovation, characterised by information technology and multimedia products, is set against tradition, understood as research, culture and teaching, that is, when, in a few words, it is set against the permanent objectives of the university?

What drives research policies? The Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation cites Germany as a model and claims that the way it can help the Portuguese scientific community to be successful in European projects is by promoting a "greater alignment with European programmes". To what extent are core countries setting standards, research areas and priorities, and how can that impact on the social sciences and the humanities, which are context-specific?

There is, in fact, a serious problem with whom or what regulates research, namely the priority themes of research, the problems that are worth researching, and the research that justifies funding. That which is today absolutely clear to the scientific community, both national and international, is that whoever funds research also determines what is worth being researched, the theoretical and methodological paradigms that must be used, the language the research must be carried out in, the rules that have to be observed in the assessment of the research, and finally, from which geo-cultural region the researchers who do the assessment must hail from. Today, the scientific community has no illusions in this respect: those who vindicate research freedom concerning the subject, the question, the language or the theoretic and methodological paradigms of the research will not be funded. It is true that, these days, no country is interested in anything other than operative and instrumental science. For in the time of world economy there seems to be nothing beyond alliances, solidarity and cohesion achieved via the economy, the dynamics of the market, political commitments and technical and scientific cosmopolitism. The quality that is demanded from science today is exhausted in the word "excellence", which serves the designs of a utilitarian, product-oriented and mercantile reason, of a science devoid of the complexity of the human, because it is without memory, without responsibility and without conscience.

I believe that both the assessment of research centres and the assessment of projects in all scientific areas that the Portuguese state has been promoting for over twelve years, through FCT, are processes that enlighten us about the rationale behind the scientific and technologic policies that they support. By imposing, on Portuguese researchers, English as

the only language for research, and by handing in the scientific assessment exclusively to foreign researchers who predominantly come from an Anglo-Saxon geo-cultural area (which, at least in the social and in the human sciences, is contrary to the strategic options of cooperation on the part of the national community, which privileges the Lusophone and the Ibero-American contexts), by obsessively valuing the publication of articles in journals with an impact factor as the main criteria for assessing scientific merit, and by creating scientific councils without consulting the academic community, the Portuguese state, in my opinion, is withdrawing the country from the company of developed nations.

This international "help" in research (with language, with the questions to deal with, with the assessment teams, and with the theoretical models it follows), required by the Portuguese government (via FCT) is all too similar to that of a country dependent upon "external financial assistance". Also in science the situation is that of financial "rescue", with the European Comission, as the funding institution, establishing the way of doing science, and the Portuguese government, in a submissive attitude, following external interests instead of the interests of the Portuguese community.

A particularly harmful example of this scientific "rescue" for the interests of the Portuguese scientific community were the cooperation agreements established, in October 2006, between the Portuguese government and three American institutions: the MIT, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of Texas at Austin. Those protocols originated a series of programmes of scientific and technological cooperation, which includes international research and postgraduate programmes funded by the Portuguese government, in all likelihood with European money. The government moved a significant amount of capital from the doctoral and postdoctoral support funds of national universities to American universities, with no benefit for Portugal.

The government established this strategy of internationalisation of the sciences in Portugal against the strategies of international cooperation that were already in place in the research centres, and also against the very processes that FCT established to assess the quality and the merit of the research groups that exist in the country. Thinking in particular about the agreement made by the Portuguese government with the University of Texas at Austin, it strikes me as surprising that the Portuguese government would choose The New University of Lisbon and the University of Porto as partners for that American university for research projects and doctoral programmes in digital and multimedia communication, when these particular Portuguese universities do not have research centres that have been assessed as being "excellent" in that area.

This adherence of the organization model of science in Portugal to foreign models (let us bear in mind that the scientific areas have recently been redefined according to the model of the European Research Council, and that the researchers assessing the Portuguese scientific production are also members of this Council), according to FCT, aims at turning Portugal into a partner that will help reinforce Europe's competitive capacity in the world scene. But it is significant that we find, in the report produced in late December 2011 by the Scientific Council of Social Sciences and Humanities of FCT, presided by José Mattoso, a letter that is directed to the Head of FCT and signed by 88 professors and researchers in

Economy, demanding "plurality and interdisciplinary openness in the research in Economy". But the exposure of the "impoverishing narrowness of the studies in this area", as well as the hostility towards diversity in favour of the submission of quality to the loyalty to a hegemonic canon, in the assessment of research projects by FCT, is not a reality specific to Economy. It is, after all, the law that is enforced on the whole of Social and the Human Sciences.

Braga, University of Minho, October 28, 2013