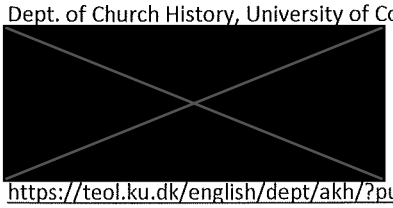
Nils Holger Petersen, PhD,
Associate Professor of Church History emeritus, composer (member of Danish Composers' Society),
Editor for Music, *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (De Gruyter, Berlin-Boston) 2004–2024.
Dept. of Church History, University of Copenhagen,

https://teol.ku.dk/english/dept/akh/?pure=en/persons/152085
https://www.ucy.ac.cy/netmar/dr-nils-holger-petersen/
https://komponistbasen.dk/node/8824

To Professor Luísa Cymbron, Executive President of CESEM, Lisboa, Portugal

Evaluation of the CESEM annual report for 2024

The CESEM consists of 5 research groups, 1. Early Music Studies, 2. Music in the Modern Period, 3. Contemporary Music, 4. Critical Theory and Communication, and 5. Education and Human Development.

The summary of CESEM's annual report for 2024 lists five projects at the CESEM in 2024 funded by the *FCT* (*Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia*), of which two ended that year. Further it lists two explorative projects organized as part of CESEM's participation in the *IN2PAST: the Associate Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Heritage, Arts, Sustainability and Territory*, in which CESEM is also highly involved organizationally, one of these projects ending and one beginning in 2024. In addition to this, three projects connected to CESEM's section in *Lisbon Polytechnic* have been running in 2024, one ending and two opening in 2024. Moreover, in 2024 CESEM has been involved in five international projects (funded by the EU), two of which ended and three of which began in 2024. Altogether, these projects manifest the extraordinary level of research activity of the CESEM in 2024.

It is important to emphasize that the involvement in such – often relatively short-term – projects is also telling about the scientific openness and flexibility of the CESEM, since applications and new angles in the various directions of these projects requires and involves new and creative thinking of individual researchers as well as strong scientific leadership. These projects cover the entire timespan of CESEM's research, involving both historical and modern society-related questions.

The five research groups (listed above) constitute the backbone of CESEM and its scientific output. However, the overall figures as well as the graphic representations of CESEM's output as well as its funding between 2013 and 2024 are highly interesting overall indicators of the general level of CESEM's scientific production. On the whole, as also remarked in the report, 2024 has been a very productive year, viewed quantitatively. Generally, one must be careful in attaching too much attention to individual ups and downs in the various categories, since the dividing lines between years are rather random in relation to the actual work carried out; the timespan between the submission of an article or a book manuscript and its actual appearance in print (or even online) may often be long, especially in the humanities (due to editorial work, not least when involving peer review) and thus it is important to look at longer lines rather than comparing one or two years separately. Taken as a whole, the quantitative output of CESEM is impressive. One might ask if there are special reasons for the rather marked drop (over a few years) in the number of papers in international and national conferences with peer review. This could simply reflect a changed scientific

strategy, whereas the actual scientific output in journals and book production has been very stable, in 2024 undoubtedly reflecting work done in the early 2020s.

Obviously, the figures and graphs concerning the scientific output must be compared with the number of researchers and the amount of funding. Here again, it is necessary to note that increases in funding (such as in 2024) cannot be reflected in the scientific output for the same year but will likely show in the next couple of years. It is part of the nature of scholarly work that important results take, not only creativity and energy, but also time, and that stability of funding for the same reason is important for the scientific outcome.

What in the end is more important than numbers is, of course, the quality of the produced scholarship, including also the research education taking place under the auspices of CESEM. It remains clear that CESEM produces numerous doctoral as well as master dissertations, thus that it is highly involved in furthering young and promising scholars in their early-stage careers. This also comes to the fore through CESEM's participation in EU funded projects, the Erasmus+ and Cost Action programs.

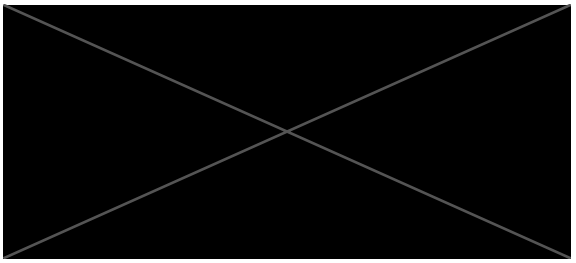
The sub-reports from the five research groups confirm and deepen what is represented in the overall figures and graphs of the report and provide much information about the contents of the research and the activities. CESEM importantly manifests a balance between theoretical and practical research as well as active artistic practices in the form of concerts and composition. It includes editorial work on the musical heritage, including very important digital editorial practice, the establishing of databases that in the modern world constitute completely invaluable tools for further research. The quality of the scholarly output in the form of articles and books is, obviously, difficult to assess, based on a report. However, indications of high quality are found in looking into which publishing houses and scholarly international journals are found in the publication lists. Here, publishing houses such as Oxford University Press, Brepols and Palgrave Macmillan, as well as journals such as Études grégoriennes, Music & Letters, Opera Quarterly and Musica Hodie among many others, tell me that the general level of scholarly output is internationally recognized and at a high scientific level.

Interdisciplinarity is mentioned a few times in the report, mainly in the context of the contemporary parts of CESEM's research activities. A number of the specific projects, in which CESEM is involved, seem in themselves to be interdisciplinary by their very basic themes, this is explicit in the title of the IN2PAST project ii), but is clearly the case also in the FCT-funded project v) and in the international project ii) (a COST Action).

Altogether, CESEM appears as a well-functioning and highly competitive research institution, also in 2024. Collaborational projects, interdisciplinarity combined with a keen attention to the preservation of cultural heritage, and in making it available to contemporary interests, importantly characterizes CESEM. CESEM's combination of music history, music's societal importance and influence, as well as intellectual discourses on music, makes it an important and wide-ranging research venture. Combined with its proven record of scientific output and its innovative research agenda, CESEM is both internationally unique in its construction and design, and a highly well-functioning large research institution.

Copenhagen 17 May 2025 Nils Holger Petersen

University of Sheffield | School of Languages, Arts and Societies

Professor Nicola Dibben
Director of Research for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities
School of Lan ua es Arts and Societies


23 May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Evaluation of the CESEM annual report 2024

The CESEM annual report 2024 sets out the centre's activities and achievements over the previous twelve months. Data on the Centre's research outputs and activities are helpfully tabulated and contextualised in a narrative report. I welcome the opportunity to reflect on this information to help highlight strengths and opportunities. The Centre is clearly a major investment which has provided significant capacity for research in the broad field of music studies. Indeed, over the course of its existence the breadth of research has expanded such that its focus is better reflected in the recent name change to 'CESEM - Centro de Estudos em Música/Centre for Music Studies' (email from Paulo Ferreira de Castro to the External Advisory Board, 8 April 2025).

The Centre has continued to make an active and substantial contribution to knowledge across its five research groups, 1. Early Music Studies, 2. Music in the Modern Period, 3. Contemporary Music, 4. Critical Theory and Communication, and 5. Education and Human Development. This includes a number of externally funded projects. Annual data on research outputs reflects much longer-term activities: publication date can be far from submission date, and production date, for example, meaning that the 'work' that produced outputs is rarely located in the year that the publication is available. For that reason it makes sense to look at the data holistically, and from that perspective the rate of output production is appropriate.

There are three minor points for consideration.

First, whether there is anything significant about the decrease in activity at conferences with peer reviewing, i.e. whether this is a deliberate strategy or an unintended consequence of some other shift within the centre.

Second, the overall quantity of production appears to go down very slightly while the amount of funding has gone up (2023-24), and it might be worth reflecting on whether there are specific reasons for that, e.g. it may be the start of new funded projects which one would expect to bear fruit in later years.

Third, I note that there is a slightly higher incidence of book chapter publication than journal publication type in more recent years and that given journal articles can often have more stringent peer review processes (albeit this is a generalisation), it would be worth reflecting on whether that balance is the best one to ensure production of the highest quality outputs.

As a general comment, it is always easier to talk about research productivity (quantity) than it is to evidence research quality, albeit sensible multiple proxies of research quality of outputs are presented in the report. It would be a bonus to hear about the new discoveries/new methods themselves (the new contribution to knowledge).

The research activity in CESEM is having societal impacts on cultural life and the musical and cultural heritage industries. I note there is some consultancy activity, some press/media coverage and that the majority of engagement with the public seems to be dissemination, rather than participatory approaches. Exceptions to this may be the areas of Education and Human Development. Future reports could more explicitly identify societal impacts from the research and pathways to them, where appropriate to do so.

CESEM evidently constitutes an active research environment which ensures the sustainability of a rich music research community nationally and beyond. Having a stable foundation, in the form of a centre with this longevity and tenured/open-ended contract staff, has evidently provided an environment in which researchers are able to engage in productive collaboration and idea generation leading to successful outcomes including high quality research outputs and responsiveness to funding opportunities. It is also reflected in the award of significant prizes this year.

It is increasingly important that CESEM obtain external funding and in that light there is scope for CESEM to reflect on its past success in obtaining funding and the mechanisms it has in place to do this in the future. For example, CESEM could reflect on whether the number of research funding applications and success rate is appropriate (the report does not have data on this), and by what means CESEM supports researchers to apply for funding successfully. I note the report says

relatively little about its mechanisms for supporting and developing staff, about inclusion and/or infrastructure but this may be because there have not been changes that warranted reporting perhaps.

CESEM is making important contributions to the wider discipline through its leadership in particular areas. The IN2PAST consortium is a good example of this, where CESEM's role as a founding member is helping preserve and promote cultural heritage, in addition to studying it. The work in Digital Musicology is playing an important role in digitisation, preservation, and to some extent by carrying out broader digital-musicology related research and communication activity. Given developments in the field of Digital Humanities, and external funding agendas, this would seem to be an area of increasing opportunity.

CESEM seems well-connected within the academic and cultural heritage communities. During 2024 it has played an important role in continuing to host doctoral students and international researchers. CESEM has further opportunities to contribute to the discipline via its leadership in collaborative research. The report does not explicitly reflect on CESEM's implicit strengths in collaborative research and connecting with other stakeholders but there is scope for it to do this by reflecting on the way it convenes teams.

Lastly, the 2024 report notes the job insecurity for newly qualified doctoral students and early career staff. One way CESEM could think about this is by reflecting on the extent to which CESEM currently understands and wants/needs to align with external skills needs in music and the cultural heritage sector and to build more collaboration with external stakeholders into research projects in anticipation of the future employment of the excellent researchers it trains.

Overall CESEM's 2024 annual report is a testament to a great deal of high quality research which is making a major contribution to the music and cultural heritage sectors.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Dibben
Professor in Music and member of the external Advisory Board.

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DELLA BASILICATA
DIPARTIMENTO PER L'INNOVAZIONE UMANISTICA, SCIENTIFICA E SOCIALE
UFFICIO DIDATTICA

Dinko Fabris
Professore di Musicologia e Storia della Musica
Università della Basilicata, Italy
Professor of Early Music, ACPA Doctoral Studies
University of Leiden, NL
Past President International Musicological Society

EVALUATION OF THE CESEM ANNUAL REPORT 2024

In 2024 I started my role as External Adviser on the CESEM Board. However, I had known CESEM for years for its many activities that represent the best of scientific research in musicology in Portugal at an international level. My direct experience confirmed my ideas about this important Centre, which also in 2024 carried out a truly fundamental activity for music research and its dissemination.
I recall the basic lines of CESEM's action. There are five Research Groups:
1) Early Music Studies (chair João Pedro d'Alvarenga, recently promoted to the title of Agregado)
2) Music in the Modern Period (chair Marco Brescia, assistant Luzia Rocha)
3) Contemporary Music (chair Isabel Pires)
4) Critical Theory and Communication (chair João Pedro Cachopo)
5) Education and Human Development (chair Ana Isabel Pereira)
Each of the research groups produced an impressive amount of activity in 2024, documented by meetings, seminars, conferences and publications, both nationally and internationally. But despite the fact that the groups have proven to be successful in raising a large amount of funding for their research, it is alarming to note that even some of the project leaders (as in the case of Marco Brescia and Luzia Rocha) still do not have stable academic jobs.
Each group also formed subgroups and other parallel activities. For example, the Music in Modern Period group includes the internationally collaborative project on Musical Iconography and the Critical Theory and Communication group includes three Research Clusters: CYSMUS (Music and Cyberculture); 2) NEMI (Music in the Press); 3) NPM (Thought and Music).

Through the five Research Groups CESEM's span research, digital innovation, cultural heritage preservation, and artistic production, confirming its role as a leading institution in musicology and performance studies. In addition CESEM has continued its participation as a founding member of IN2PAST consortium (Associate Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Heritage, Arts, Sustainability, and Territory). Other peculiar involvement of CESEM is in digital humanities: digitization and creation of databases, music editions, automatic analysis, including a special project on Evara's historic soundscape. The contribution of CESEM to the present creative performance landscape in Portugal is also massive: concerts, recordings, creative events from early music to the contemporary stage.

The results of this impressive research output confirms the role of CESEM as a reputated and highly competitive Institute at international level. I hope that its action can also be reinforced with adequate funding from 2025 onwards to allow these extraordinary achievements to be reinforced.

Matera 29 may 2025

Dinko Fabris