

Prof. Dr. **Maria Luisa Portocarrero**, University of Coimbra, Portugal

The philosophical work of Maria Luísa Portocarrero has always been deeply influenced by hermeneutics, and namely by the works of Gadamer and Ricoeur.

Working with Gadamerian references, Portocarrero, since her book *O preconceito em H.-G. Gadamer: sentido de uma reabilitação* ["The prejudgement in H.-G. Gadamer"] (1995), until the most recent *Rituais hermenêuticos da convivência. A atualidade de H.- G. Gadamer* [Convivial Hermeneutic Rituals] (2020) has addressed the field of hermeneutic rationality and the way in which it reminds the West that the calculating model of thinking translates into a "rationality of means to an end" that forgets the fundamental goals of the human community and of human authenticity. The endless desire of a "productive society," created by modern rationality, leads to the absence of meaning: the meaning of what we are, and what we do, in short, the meaning of our lives. Gadamer's teaching is this: we must detach from the paradigm of the individualist *Cogito*, in order to learn "not to be always right." In our pluralistic society characterized by the absence of consensus and strong convictions, there is an unprecedented opportunity to reinterpret tradition in this way, namely, in its repressed, unused potential.

With Ricoeur, Portocarrero states that something more can be added. From her book *A hermenêutica do conflito em P. Ricoeur* ["The Hermeneutics of Conflict in P. Ricoeur"] (1992), until the recent *Testemunho, Atestação e Conflito. Balizas da Antropologia hermenêutica de Paul Ricoeur* [Testimony, Attestation and Conflict. Beacons of Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Anthropology] (2021), it is the study of the internal unity of Paul Ricoeur's philosophical thought that is at stake. Often seen as dispersed and moving from one theme to another, in fact, Ricoeur's long path of philosophical thinking requires different approaches, since the philosopher considers that the new *cogito* does not understand himself immediately, as was the case with the traditional *cogito*. It is through the testimony of the capabilities and vulnerabilities of the situated person in the world, of its works, actions, and historical decisions, that we can understand the eminently ethical character of the person. The necessary path to understand the human way of being must be sought out through signs, texts, and history, which leads us to consider language, forms of action, historiography, memory, and institutions in order to try to understand ourselves better.