

# WORDS BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: A HUNDRED-SIDED CRISIS

Coord.: José Reis  
A collective work by CES



# WORDS BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: A HUNDRED-SIDED CRISIS

Coord.: José Reis  
A collective work by CES



Centro de Estudos Sociais  
Universidade de Coimbra



UNIVERSIDADE DE  
COIMBRA



Organização  
das Nações Unidas  
para a Educação,  
a Ciência e a Cultura



Universidade de  
Coimbra - Alta e Sã  
inscrita na Lista do Património  
Mundial em 2013



PROGRAMA OPERACIONAL COMPLEXIDADE E INOVAÇÃO



UNIÃO EUROPEIA

Fundo Europeu  
de Desenvolvimento Regional



Fundação  
para a Ciência  
e a Tecnologia

# WORDS BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: A HUNDRED-SIDED CRISIS

## Editor

José Reis

## Publisher

Centre for Social Studies  
University of Coimbra

## Scientific Review

Ana Cordeiro Santos, António Sousa Ribeiro, Carlos Fortuna, João Rodrigues,  
José Castro Caldas, José Reis, Pedro Hespanha, Vítor Neves

## Linguistic Revision

João Paulo Moreira

## Editorial Assistant

Rita Kacia Oliveira

## Design and Pagination

André Queda

December, 2020

This work is funded by ERDF Funds through the Competitiveness Factors Operational Programme - COMPETE and by National Funds through the FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology within the UIDB/50012/2020 project.

The data and opinions included in this publication are the exclusive responsibility of its authors.

## ISBN

978-989-8847-28-7

# POETRY

Maria Irene Ramalho

Plato banned the poets from his ideal city supposedly because poetry lies. But poetry cannot lie because it nothing says.

Plato was a great admirer of Homer and the Greek tragedians. For the education of the guardians of his ideal city, however, Plato was willing to admit only poetry in praise of the gods and heroes. In Plato's ideal city law and reason would rule; no room for pleasure or pain, feeling or passion, argument or critique. Poetry does seem to pose a problem for Plato. Unlike philosophy, which alone in the *Republic* is said to serve justice and good, poetry interrupts the status quo and causes disquietude.

But that is precisely why poetry stands to this day as part of the solution.

Someone said that language is fossil poetry. In the beginning the word coincided exactly with the thing. It accurately said what is. Later, the word started blabbering mere information from afar. Only in poetry worthy of the name does the word go on questioning its own accu-

racy. If it does not interrupt, question, resist and disquiet, poetry fails to fulfil its role as major interpellator.

Poetry – no embellishment or consolation, rather interruption and questioning – does not speak the truth which philosophy claims to speak. Poetry rather interpellates and questions the truth. The quarrel between philosophy and poetry that we hear about in Plato's *Republic* goes on today, regrettably, after so much dispute on the two, three or four cultures, between the (Social) Sciences and the Humanities.

But if Newton's binomial is as beautiful as the Venus de Milo, the Venus de Milo is as true as Newton's binomial. We cannot do without either of them in this our difficult human journey towards a better world.

Indeed, poetry does not lie at all. Poetry speaks itself. And, by speaking itself, poetry says the world. Let it be heard loud and clear!