

IN MEMORIAM



Isabel Maria Narra de Figueiredo 1959–2023

by João Filipe Queiró*

This is a brief testimony about Isabel Narra de Figueiredo.

I met her for the first time 46 years ago, when she started her university studies. Hers was a very strong class, with several future university professors and researchers. And already she stood out. Later she obtained her doctorate in Paris, returning then to Coimbra and to a career in which she built a remarkable body of scientific work.

Her subject was always Applied Analysis, moving gradually from problems in Mechanics to medical applications, in imaging and diagnostics, with substantial results and national and international recognition.

I remember the occasion, around 15 years ago, when Isabel came to see me, to talk about a letter she had just received from an Israeli company that wanted to invest in her ideas. I wonder how many Portuguese scientists, especially in a fundamental area, may have experienced this type of situation. Isabel wished to discuss how to deal with the letter. I suggested some people she might contact, both inside and outside the University. Shortly

afterwards, she began her long and fruitful collaboration with the firm Critical Software.

She always had a youthful attitude and the corresponding energy in her scientific work. All those who knew her can testify to that.

In the second part of her career, and particularly in the last decade, Isabel added to her research activities — which she never interrupted — a dimension of service to the academic community. Apart from positions in scientific societies, she became President of CIM — the International Centre for Mathematics — an important organization gathering research units from all over Portugal. She was also the director of the Coimbra Mathematics Library, which can seem a minor position until we recall that this is the best mathematical library in the country, and probably in the Iberian peninsula.

By her continued efforts, dynamism and scientific activity, Isabel reached a high level of recognition, both in Portugal and abroad. That is the testimony I wish to leave here.

Based on a short improvised speech made at Isabel Narra de Figueiredo's funeral on 8 September 2023.

* Universidade de Coimbra