WOMEN, *FADO* AND *CANTE* HERITAGE: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN PORTUGUESE CIVIL SOCIETY

Maria Espírito Santo

Maria de São José Côrte-Real

INTRODUCING HERITAGE FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

"The past is never dead. It is not even past," Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett recalled recently, citing William Faulkner (1951).[1] Heritage, she stressed in the journal *Ethnomusicology* in 1995, is a "value added" industry. It is "The Time Machine" coined a century before by Herbert George Wells in his novel in 1895 (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995: 370). As a social concept, heritage was valued differently by left- and right-wing dictatorships in the 20th century; it is still promoted worldwide in the 21st century, leaving ambiguous feelings among culture bearers. This paper is the result of collaborative ethnographic research with two veteran female singers of *fado* and *cante* in Portugal – Ada de Castro and Joaquina Fralda, respectively. In it we highlight ideas of critical thinking, social responsibility, media literacy, emotional intelligence and informed debate, in line with the 21st century skills mindset promoted by the OECD.[2] After contextualizing UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage (henceforth ICH) program and the two inscribed musical categories from Portugal (fado and cante), we give voice to these singers. The aim of this paper is to discuss the ways in which these women have consented to, and actively participated in the presentation of, fado and cante, in the interest of strengthening the resilience of Portuguese civil society.

Heritage involves sets of attitudes and relationships among both individuals and groups. It is important as it ties people to their past, and that of others, commonly, though not exclusively, in a manner characterized by veneration, worship, and con-nection with previous objects, places and/or practices (Harrison 2013; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995 and 2004; Ronström 2014). As UNESCO developed after World War II, the concept of heritage gained institutional and emotional weight. The *Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage* was created in 1972 to protect tangible heritage, mostly buildings and places in nature. A quarter century later, long after ethnomusicologists Bruno Nettl (Nettl 1985: 124) and John Blacking (Blacking 1987: 112) remind the world of the need to preserve intangible heritage

in the form of performances and creations, the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* was ratified (2003). Its task was to promote safeguarding, sensibility and action, encouraging respect for communities, groups and individuals; to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels about the importance of ICH; and to facilitate international cooperation and assistance. Policymakers and taxpayers alike were called upon to support this intellectual enterprise of global reach.

Critical research in heritage studies revealed UNESCO to be instrumentalizing heritage as a commodity and producing asymmetries. As metacultural phenomena, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett stresses, "world heritage lists arise from operations that convert selected aspects of localized descent heritage into a translocal consent heritage – the heritage of humanity" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 57).[3] The "pressure to codify the operations to create universal standards, obscures the historically and culturally specific character of heritage policy and practices" (ibid. 61). That is why metacultural artefacts, on and off the ICH list, become or reflect tools of governmental power. By supporting one musical category instead of others, the city councils of Lisbon and Serpa exerted power over fado and cante, using them as tools for political representation. Musicians and entrepreneurs within these genres, discriminated in favor of at the expense of peers in other genres, became ideologically engaged and benefited financially. In the aftermath of colonial and postcolonial uses of music, which have only begun to be studied in Portugal, UNESCO's metacultural artefacts, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett coins them, result from heritage protocols that "do not generally account for a conscious, reflexive subject. They speak of collective creation. Performers are carriers, transmitters, and bearers of traditions, terms which connote a passive medium, conduit, or vessel, without volition, intention, or subjectivity" (ibid. 58). Heritage artefacts represent renewed potential for profit within the national and global tourist economy. By choosing some music categories and avoiding others, UNESCO's symbolic validation ultimately continues old nationalist, dictatorial and colonial, autocratic and propagandistic models in Portugal. Acceptance of the notion of heritage as "a given and trans-historical fact, existing always and in most cultures" and the intimate relation between the heritage item and "the process of abstraction characteristic of western capitalist modernity" exacerbate "increasingly fetishistic relational patterns between humans and between humans and things" (González 2020: 35, our translation). While the world heritage concept facilitates local, regional and national competition and international visibility, it engenders trauma and delusion in local experience, as sensitively expressed by our collaborators.[4]

In the centuries-old notion of heritage "are always inscribed relations of domination, hierarchies, beliefs – in short, a doxa that governs the social order and that varies according to times and places," reminded Mário Vieira de Carvalho (Vieira de Carvalho 2018: 15, our translation). Today, heritage processes and productions meet ideological and financial market demands in the interest of global cultural integration – though, paradoxically, also, of alleged diversity. "Historical constructions," reminded Timothy Rice (Rice 1987: 480), stress that expressive behaviors were used to build both nations and international organizations. In this respect, we underscore long-established claims about symbolic systems as "historically constructed, socially maintained and individually applied" (Geertz 1973: 364). These notions are inscribed in two sets of processes: those "of change with the passage of time" and those "of re-encountering and recreating the forms and legacy of the past in each moment of the present" (Rice 1987: 474). This perspective helps to unveil certain constructed symbolic systems of the past as they are recreated in the present. Our main interest is to understand how the heritage of women, fado and cante still serve to constrain civil representations in Portugal. Focuses of this paper are thus the revelations made during the conversations of the researchers with the singers and the ways in which they can help to strengthen resilience in civil society.

THE SUCCESSFUL *FADO* AND *CANTE* APPLICATIONS

Between 2011 and 2019, Portugal listed eight items as ICH, from musical practices, to gastronomy, crafts, nature conservation initiatives and festivities.[5] Fado, the solo song accompanied by guitar, among other possible instruments, classified as the national song by the Portuguese national dictatorship in the 20th century, was the first expressive practice to be inscribed, in 2011. *Cante alentejano,* the polyphonic, mostly male, choral practice from a southern rural area of Portugal, also particularly cherished by the 20th century dictatorship, followed three years later, in 2014. The symbolism of the first nominations carried the political re-use of these musical categories in the renewed narratives of regional and national representation.

Though fado had been a marker of Portuguese identity increasingly explored during the last decades of the right-wing national dictatorship, until 1974, since the birth of democracy it had managed to escape major political appropriations (Côrte-Real 2000, 2002, Espírito Santo, Côrte-Real 2019). While its rebirth as a symbol of the nation triggers memories for many people, many more remain unfamiliar with fado's political

symbolism. Though some of the older initiatives were studied, knowledge of them has mostly remained hidden due to a lack of references in the mainstream literature. Our collaborators were discomforted as they recalled veiled political uses of fado and cante, as though the freedom of expression earned with democracy was not enough to deconstruct nationalist plots still sustaining these music categories (see Espírito Santo, Côrte-Real 2019). Portugal began its application for UNESCO ICH recognition of fado in 2005.[6] The application committee included experts and an advisory group whose members were recognized fado practitioners and representatives of related organizations. The acceptance of "Fado, Urban Popular Song of Portugal" was announced at the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee in Bali, Indonesia in November 2011.

As a musical category, fado has origins in source materials as diverse as music manuscripts, early printed editions of compositions for voice and piano, drawings, paintings, literature and other works of the performing, literary and visual arts increasingly popular beginning in the late 19th century, mainly for nationalist purposes, in Portugal. It was attested as a musical practice among the lower classes at harbor and other neighborhood bars as well as in aristocratic and bourgeois venues. Popular theatres in Lisbon and other urban and rural environments – some of which were associated with prostitution and others with philanthropy (in events that raised money for health and other welfare causes) – are also referred to as places of fado. Fado has been associated with aspects of Portuguese identity and, as such, has been highly politicized. While is typically sung by a solo voice, either male or female, accompanied by a pear-shaped guitar with twelve paired strings (the "Portuguese guitar") and an acoustic guitar, shaped like an "8" with six strings, it can also be performed by a solo voice and any instrumental accompaniment. It is based on a widespread amateur practice of informal performance, which has evolved into the professionalization of singers and musicians. The professionalization process has taken shape differently at different times: the rules were stricter during the dictatorship, under the pressure of censorship, and are freer in the democratic era. There has always been interaction between learned/professional and amateur fado practitioners.

Few anthropological or ethnomusicological studies have been produced about fado. The history-centered writings of Rui Vieira Nery, son of recognized fado guitarist Raul Nery (1921-2012), are some of the most recent (2004, 2010). Two older references on history and repertoire, associated with Lisbon and revised by anthropologist

Joaquim Pais de Brito in the 1980s, continue to influence knowledge of this musical practice today. These are *História do Fado* by Pinto de Carvalho (Carvalho 1903) and *A Triste Canção do Sul b*y Alberto Pimentel (Pimentel 1904), published in facsimile editions between 1982 and 2016, and 1989 and 2016, respectively, and again re-published in facsimile in 2016 thanks to a partnership between Museu do Fado and editor Bela e o Monstro/Rapsódia Final, as part of a UNESCO safeguarding initiative. From the same anthropological school there is a study about fado practice and memory in an old neighborhood of Lisbon (Costa, Guerreiro 1984). Among the few studies published abroad, that of Petra Heldet de Sousa from Germany focused on nationalist dimensions of this music tradition (1982, 1988). Only more recently did Portuguese ethnomusicologists take an interest in fado (Castelo Branco 1994, Côrte-Real 1991, 2000, 2002, and Côrte-Real, Espírito Santo 2019), interrogating its associations with identity and calling attention to the relationship between cultural policy, musical expression, and the building and maintenance of subliminal nationalist constructs. Meanwhile, the exhibition *Fado, Vozes e Sombras* in 1994, and the publication of a book of the same name (Brito 1994) were important for increasing fado's visibility. American ethnomusicologist Lila Ellen Gray (Gray 2005, 2013) focuses on affect in fado performance, describing how music categories acquire meaning and value in connection to discourses of class, gender and nation. A project coordinated by Salwa Castelo-Branco at the Institute of Ethnomusicology of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa created an open access repository of musical transcriptions annotated with historical-contextual information. At the same institution, doctoral research by Maria Espírito Santo, in process, addresses the symbolic performance of the Portuguese nation through fado, analysing from an ethno-symbolic perspective (Smith 2009) how fado, as a musical category representing the nation, has been characterized in the *longue durée*. A collection of early recordings of fado curated by the record editor Tradisom was recently acquired by the Universidade de Aveiro. It was built around the so-called Bruce Bastin collection of early recordings, first acquired by Bastin from an anonymous collector from Oporto, then purchased by the Portuguese state in 2008/9, and deposited in the Museum of Fado in Lisbon. With so many documents located and areas for academic inquiry identified (foremost among them, fado's appropriation for purposes of nation-building), fado represents a privileged field for study.

"Cante Alentejano, Polyphonic Singing from Alentejo, Southern Portugal," was inscribed in 2014, on the third anniversary of the UNESCO inscription of fado.[7] Cante is

a form of traditional multipart singing. The songs, known emically as *modas,* constitute a vast repertoire of traditional poetry and ornamented polyphonic singing of popular genesis. Choral groups vary in size, from just a few to as many as twenty or even thirty singers. Men's groups predominate. Voices are organized in three parts: the solo voices *ponto* and *alto* and the choral ensemble. The ponto, in a middle register, begins singing, followed by the alto, a voice in the upper range that doubles the melody at a third or tenth above the ponto, adding ornaments in a kind of free style singing. The remaining voices sing the stanzas in parallel thirds, while the alto is heard above the group. Fernando Lopes Graça distinguished two phases in the development of cante alentejano: the origins in the medieval period, and the modern period marked by "songs with a major-minor tonality, rhythmic symmetry and morphological simplicity" (Graça 1953: 43, our translation). This expressive practice studied early on by Dias Nunes (Nunes 1891), later by António Marvão (Marvão 1965, 1997) and currently by some ethnomusicologists (Piñero, Pestana, Oliveira 2017), is locally said to have started as an informal, spontaneous break into song that took place in the countryside. It would accompany agricultural labor – namely the harvests that characterized most of the work activity in Alentejo. The tasks of harvesting, weeding and olive-picking, as well as celebrations, are most commonly associated with this choral practice. Though both men and women performed agricultural labor, until recently male choral groups received more media attention.

OLD PERFORMERS, SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

The two performers who collaborated in this study made it clear that their individual agreement mattered at various moments in the process of getting fado and cante recognized as parts of the heritage of humanity. First, their very personal privacy was challenged and, in different ways, both women agreed to offer not only even part of their body look but, as well, much of their energy to the cause of each symbolic music practice they embraced. And then, for the global dimension of UNESCO, both of them testified, accepting to personally sign the, thus signified, nomination consents, as stated at the R4 criterion in the list for the UNESCO's "Inscription on the Representative List."[8]

Long before UNESCO recognized the two music categories of fado and cante, the Portuguese government had targeted them as objects of cultural policy with international scope. This took place during the right-wing dictatorship of Estado Novo, which

ruled Portugal from 1933 to 1974. A vast and complex apparatus, not yet fully understood, enforced nationalistic dictatorial discipline and indoctrination through music in Portugal. Like a disciplined pedagogy meant to produce a polished interpretation of a classical string quartet, this much larger system managed to teach Portuguese national identity through popular/folk music. The results are still visible nationally and internationally. So-called folklore became an international instrument of ideological coercion, as music and dance became tools of rooted and convincing persuasion. State censorship controlled musical expressive behavior for political purposes (Côrte-Real 2000). The state controlled all performance venues, dividing music into high vs. popular culture. Anglophone popular music was mostly forbidden and, in Lisbon, in addition to fado and *marchas*,[9] all kinds of popular music were reduced to the vague categories of *bailes* (balls) and *variedades* (literally, "varieties"). Fado and cante were subject to guidelines not only in terms of repertoire, as literary and musical texts were closely monitored; but also in terms of performance aesthetics and structure, as performers' visual appearance (including costuming), gesture and vocal delivery as well as place of performance were tightly regulated. As markers of national identity, certain types of music were supported to the exclusion of others as part of the dictatorial strategy (ibid.).

Gender stigmatization was visible not only in public and professional settings, but also in familiar, private ones, in both urban and rural spaces. Rural male labor was staged (Mareco 2017: 94) in a subtly propagandistic manner that was simultaneously laudatory and didactic. Deprived of rights previously acquired, women suffered when forced to comply with nominally religious principles (among many others, those related to Christian marital status, for example). The right to divorce, legalized in republican Portugal in 1911 and lost with the national dictatorship, is but one such example. Unconditional dependence on, and obedience to, one's husband was among the new rules imposed by the Estado Novo. The narratives of our interlocutors Ada and Joaquina, both unmarried by choice, show the importance of historical-national context for understanding the musical expressive behaviors recently "rediscovered" and revived as markers of identity in Portugal. The re-creation of past forms and legacies in the present is far from an ideologically neutral process.

Beginning in the 1930s, the dictatorial regime established specific rules for singers and fado houses. Fado was increasingly invoked as an image of Portugal, especially to seduce the international eye (Côrte-Real 2000), particularly through a network of

stages in Lisbon on which Ada starred – though few are aware of this, to Ada's regret. Regarding cante alentejano, the first formal choral groups began to appear in the 1920s, proliferating in association with corporate institutions like the *Casas do Povo* (Houses of the People).[10] The first performance of a formalized choral group, at the São Luís Theatre in Lisbon in 1937, was organized for the elites of the capital, and attended by the minister of National Education and the director of state radio, the Emissora National. In this period the dictatorship's intense propaganda imposed the idea that cante is of masculine essence and proceeded to exclude women for over forty years.

ADA DE CASTRO: UNVEILING *FADO* TRADITION ON BEHALF OF THE STATE

Ada de Castro lived fado in an intense way in the last decade and a half of the dictatorship, from her debut in 1960 to the fall of the regime in 1974. She was so caught up in the ideologic discourse of the national dictatorship that her narratives and expressions still denote it today. Her many belongings at home, from photos, to records, dresses, shawls, shoes, earrings and gifts, her whispers, and even her shouts reveal her identity and feelings, alternatingly proud of and disillusioned by the Portuguese nation, continue to impress us. Many unresolved questions that arose in our conversations began to be explained thanks to the media literacy that she enabled us to develop, navigating artistic, social, historical and political means to better cope with and strengthen intergenerational resilience. In traumatized, though clarifying, moments, the ultimate symbolic achievement of representing the nation itself seems to have eclipsed her current personality.

Through long-term fieldwork, Maria Espírito Santo developed an intimate friendship with Ada, meeting with her every week beginning in July 2018. As she learned, as a performer of fado, Ada was required to both *consent to,* as the Latin root of the word tells us, *to feel with*, *to plainly agree with* and *to present* the "national song", through revivified presentational performances of its mythical founder Maria Severa, on behalf of the romantic narrative espoused by the dictatorship (see Turino 2008 on presentational performance). Early in her experience as fadista, Ada learned to "consent" to the dictatorship's cultural agenda by actively constructing the most conspicuous and perhaps most effective symbol of the nation: fado. At the end of her career, Ada consented to this form of cultural construction of the nation in an even more formal way, on a global scale. The first "consent" was during the dictatorship, while the sec-

ond was during an allegedly mature phase of democracy, in which the freedom of expression earned in the revolution of 1974 was already in its thirty-sixth year. The first "consent" was an embodied one, as Ada reincarnated the founding singer of fado – the near-mythical Maria Severa. To do so, she transformed her appearance, de-colouring, an action that reverted her previous enthusiastic option, in a time in which colouring hair meant, in Lisbon, a socially challenging position her hair. The intensity of this symbolic transformation was such that still today she trembles when telling the story.[11] At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the political use of fado came into fashion again, as it had been during the dictatorship which was deposed in 1974. Now Ada's "consent" was a formal one: the signing of the nomination of fado to UNESCO's ICH list in 2010. As her name is the first in alphabetical order, it appears first in the long list of 98.[12]

In her role representing fado on behalf of the Portuguese nation, Ada divided her attention between performing and gatekeeping. As a singer, she reincarnated Severa, wearing the red and black skirt and low-cut white blouse of the woman depicted in the famous painting *O Fado* by José Malhoa, first exhibited as *Bajo el Encanto* in Buenos Aires in 1910 (fig. 1). Ada also performed her own interpretations of what was then referred to as the national song on many national and international stages, in a form of diplomatic service. As a gatekeeper, Ada was a member of the jury of the competition for the Amateur Fado Contest in the popular culture festival known as Spring Market, a fado initiative that emerged from the same festival, previously called April Market, in the 1960s (Côrte-Real 2000 and 2002). The Amateur Fado Contest was national in scope and took place throughout the year from 1969 to 1974. It involved personnel from the government casting singers throughout the country and culminated in a fado performance in an impressive waterside restaurant in front of Empire Square in Lisbon, on the north bank of the river Tagus. This event helped to establish popular expressive symbols of Portuguese nationalism (ibid.).

Remaining unmarried throughout her life, Ada devoted it wholly to fado in a seven-phase career path, as follows: 1) recognition as a fado singer, which took place at the restaurant *Solar da Hermínia*, where the owner, her godmother Hermínia Silva, gave her the symbolic shawl, initiating her into fado and acknowledging her peers' acceptance; 2) a month of pre-professional training necessary to gain the status of fadista at the restaurant *Nau Catrineta*, in Graça; 3) additional training at the restaurant *O Faia,* in Bairro Alto beginning in March 1960, at the age of 23; only after work-

ing there for a year did Ada finally get the right to acquire her professional card, the document attesting the profession of singer;[13] 4) recognition as a professional fado singer and immediate recruitment as a public figure; 5) invitation to perform at the prestigious restaurant *Folclore*, used by the State as a guesthouse, and to represent Portuguese gastronomy, folklore and fado to foreigners (she would work there for twelve years, beginning in 1961); 6) cultural diplomacy in and out of Portugal, in both live and recorded performances, until 1974; 7) less frequent fado performances after 1974, primarily for private events. In newly democratic Portugal, the national symbol of the dictatorial era was censured for its associations with the former regime. To Ada's regret, the venues where she performed before the coup d'état of April 25, 1974 were and still are systematically ignored publicly and in the current historiography of fado, in both literary and oral accounts.[14]

Ada recorded more than 560 fados and marchas and earned several international awards. In 2010, the Career Prize granted by the Amália Rodrigues Foundation marked the end of her professional career. However, she continues to sing occasionally because, as she says, "fado was not learned, it was not just a profession; it lives inside me as long as I live." Facing the liberation of fado from its role as national identity marker at the troubled beginning of the democratic era, Ada limited her public appearances, and she continues to tread lightly around the subject today, knowing that part of the story – the dictatorial, nationalist instrumentalization of fado – remains silenced. Still, Ada learned how to live with the taboo – she actually recalls having earned more money after 1974 than before. Thirty-seven years after the fall of the dictatorship, when fado was publicly voted (now with the international validation of UNESCO) to again serve as national symbol, as advocated by the mayor of the capital, current prime minister António Costa, Ada was outraged: "It is the same but worse!" she cried, pointing out that the government was essentially resurrecting the kinds of events she had starred in during the dictatorship, but under a different banner. And Ada, sadly, characterizes it as "of much less quality".

THE *NEW SOUL* OF JOAQUINA FRALDA

Unmarried like Ada and a few years younger, Joaquina Fralda is a veteran singer of cante alentejano. She is a founding member and current president of the choral group *Alma Nova* (New Soul) from Ferreira do Alentejo, a rural village in southern Portugal. We made contact with Joaquina during the pandemic in the summer of 2021. Alma

Nova is one of the very few women's cante choirs in Alentejo. Like Ada, Joaquina signed an individual statement of support for UNESCO ICH.[15] Her statement is among the fifty-six shown on the internet in support of nomination of cante as UNESCO ICH, most of which were made by choral group leaders.

Joaquina was born in 1942 in Figueira dos Cavaleiros, a village in the municipality of Ferreira do Alentejo, in Baixo Alentejo. From her narratives, we identified five stages of her life in music: 1) growing up in the countryside, she learned modas from her family, as they were transmitted from older members to younger ones. From a young age she worked in the fields; as she recalls, her labor was always accompanied by music; 2) in Joaquina's adulthood, women were forbidden to sing in public places that were not their place of employment, so the women in Alentejo could sing only in the fields while they worked. Unlike men, they were forbidden to sing in taverns, the buildings of local organizations, and village squares. Even at home, the practice of singing together was lost as women were too busy caring for children and doing domestic chores; 3) after the fall of the dictatorship – especially after the 1980s – women began to perform cante in both mixed-gender groups and all-female groups (Mareco 2017). It was then that Joaquina began dreaming of joining a group; 4) the choral group Alma Nova was founded in 2004, during a pilgrimage of women from Ferreira do Alentejo to the Fátima Sanctuary, in the month of May, to worship Our Lady. The first public performance of Alma Nova occurred in Ferreira do Alentejo, at a party organized at the Retirement Centre;[16] 5) after fifteen years of rehearsals and other forms of musically mediated sociability, Joaquina says that membership in a choral group is the cure for loneliness. She never married and never had children, so the activities of choral groups offered her the opportunity to enjoy sociability in daily life.[17]

Ada and Joaquina consented to the appropriation of a musical tradition for political purposes and publicly promoted it in performance during both dictatorial and democratic times. Neither of them married, and both remained intensely devoted to their musical activities throughout life. While Ada recalls her fado career being busiest before 1974, Joaquina sung more in the democratic era due to the government censorship that forbade women's singing in formal groups during the dictatorship. Both Ada and Joaquina performed songs symbolically charged with attributes of national and regional identity. By collaborating with string musicians and other singers respectively, Ada and Joaquina expressed their ability to empathize musically, and to engage socially.

ADA'S AND JOAQUINA'S SONGS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Ada and Joaquina sing songs that invite listeners to think about subjects related to love and celebratory events. While listening to their songs, be they fados or modas, one who understands the language is compelled to take part in their pleasurable expressive behavior, relating emotional intelligence and thinking. The repertoires of both women include lyrics alluding to the singer's own feelings and compassion for others.

Audio example 1 is the fado *Rosa Caída* (*Fallen Rose*), about loss and rebirth. As she says, it is especially meaningful in Ada's repertoire. It was at the door of the restaurant *O Faia*, in 1960, that the iconic fado singer and composer Alfredo Marceneiro suggested she record it. A fado tango with lyrics by Joaquim da Silva Borges and music by Joaquim Campos, it was one of the first fados in her repertoire and one of her most recognized successes. It speaks of jealousy and the disillusions of love through the personification of a rose that is plucked up and falls, but which regains life, becoming again what it was before. The vocal characteristics of the young Ada demonstrated here were, according to the people who recruited her to an important position in the state cultural service, "perfect for fado." Ada characterizes her own sound as rough, deep and innate (that is, with her from birth); we would add that it is characterized by a sweet timbre, with careful narration and clear articulation of the words. The instrumental accompaniment of Portuguese guitar and acoustic guitar (*viola*), is performed at a high standard. An intricate instrumental melodic dialogue introduces the voice before shifting to an accompaniment role. The Portuguese guitar ornaments the voice, while the *viola* provides harmonic and rhythmic support.

Audio example 2 is the moda *Cante ao Menino* (*Song to the Baby Boy*), from the Christmas repertoire, performed by the choral group Alma Nova on December 11, 2016 at the Church of São Luís in Faro do Alentejo, a parish in the municipality of Cuba, also in Baixo Alentejo.[18] This moda mentions stars, the pine tree and the cradle that announce the birth of *Deus Menino* (the God-Child). The voices come together singing "all are by His side on Christmas night" in response to the verses that the soloists (*ponto* and *alto*) sing in alternation.

CONTRIBUTING TO INFORMED DEBATE

Consistent with the 21st century skills mindset, we agree with Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

გუნდი ალმა ნოვა *[ახალი სული]* საგუნდო ჯგუფების მე-6 შეხვედრაზე – *Comemorar Abril* [აპრილის აღნიშვნა უკავშირდება რევოლუციას, რომელმაც დაასრულა დიქტატურა პორტუგალიაში 1974 წელს]. ფოტო: ანტონიო კასკუეირა. 2019 წ. ფოტო გადმოგვცა ავტორმა.

Choral group *Alma Nova [New Soul]* at 6th Meeting of Choral Groups *Comemorar Abril* [Commemorating April, meaning the Revolution that ended the Dictatorship in Portugal in 1974]. Photo by António Casqueira 2019, provided by the author.

that it is critically important to interrupt the feedback loop or media bubble that is still the model in many countries, including the illiberal democracies of central and eastern Europe (2021). Elementary- and secondary-level education in Portugal is still largely directed by the state. The testimonies of the fado and cante singers discussed here pointed to their search for media literacy and their efforts to critically question received information. To highlight the functions and roles of both singers we end this paper giving voice to both, so that credible and evidentiary information can contribute to informed debate, in the interest of strengthening civil society. About the tradition of fado, Ada de Castro revised the established narrative; regarding the near-mythical "original" singer Severa, she recalled her own good fortune at having been chosen to represent her:

> "It's in the fado that sadness and sorrow are sung, so fado became the song of Lisbon and saudade[19]. I think fado was more inspired by men because of Desco-

> brimentos (the Portuguese "Renaissance," which pioneered exploration of the world by sea). Then there's the figure of Severa. Nobody ever heard Severa sing, but she's talked about! She is my favorite fado singer of all time and me singing dressed like her, representing Portugal was a great pleasure and a great fortune!"

About the tradition of cante, UNESCO ICH, and women's access to singing, Joaquina Fralda critically points out her position:

> "Cante alentejano is music of the people, but women have the same rights as men. I'm glad they sing now! I didn't marry. It was my destiny... that's how it is. Women are still discriminated against in everything. It's not about winning anything... it's just about having fun with what you sing. Nothing changed with the heritage recognition. Nothing. Now we're stuck. Of course, we can sing. We get support from the city council, but it's not enough. We still have to go around asking [for support] in the shops and of the farmers. So, I don't think it's been much use, but I don't know, we'll see with time."

As part of the research for this study, we documented various roles played by Ada de Castro and Joaquina Fralda, respectively, in relation to fado and cante alentejano. In their stories, the functions of symbolic representation and aesthetic pleasure articulated in UNESCO ICH recognition merged with individual personalities and life narratives. Though the bubble of world heritage is constraining and rooted in conservative, narrow forms of nationalism, there is evidence that these women managed to emerge from it, breaking the loop. By consenting to, presenting and commenting on symbols of national heritage, they help us to contribute to the building of a resilient civil society in Portugal. Above all, we are grateful for the generosity with which they share feelings and empathize with others.

NOTES:

1. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Professor Emerita of Performance Studies at New York University, anthropologist, folklorist and museum studies specialist, delivered the cited talk, titled "The Future of Museums in a Post-Pandemic World," at the Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies, University of Texas, Austin in 2021. Her lecture was informed by the critical framework of "21st century skills," which is promoted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and which inspired this paper's structure. See https://www.

youtube.com/watch?v=oEQdFdBuR84 (accessed 08.15.2021).

2. The cover story of the December 18, 2006 issue of *Time* magazine was called "How to Build a Student for the 21st Century." In hopes of a better future, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development continues to enforce this concept today. See https://www.oecd.org/site/educeri21st/40756908.pdf (accessed 12.13.2021). The point of this framework is to produce citizens prepared to build a strong global economy, who "think their way through abstract problems, work in teams, distinguish good information from bad…" (Fadel 2008: 5) and participate in critical thinking, social responsibility, media literacy, emotional intelligence and informed debate.
3. On the distinction between "descent" and "consent" heritage see Sollors (1988).
4. Curiously, world heritage recognition is not distributed evenly throughout the world. The UNESCO ICH website shows the number of items that each country has listed. As of September 15, 2021, France had listed twenty-three items; the UK, USA, Canada and Australia had not ratified the convention; the Netherlands had one, Spain – twenty, and Georgia – four. To debate the reasons that some countries ratified or did not ratify the convention and how they decided whether or not to nominate items and which ones, is critical but beyond the scope of this paper.
5. The inscribed items are Fado, Urban Popular Song of Portugal (2011); Mediterranean Diet (2013); Cante Alentejano, Polyphonic Singing from Alentejo, Southern Portugal (2014); Manufacture of Cowbells (2015); Falconry, a Living Human Heritage (2016); Bisalhães Black Pottery Manufacturing Process (2016); Craftmanship of Estremoz Clay Figures (2017); and Winter Festivities, Carnival of Podence (2019).
6. The application was completed by a partnership between the Institute of Ethnomusicology – Center for Studies in Music and Dance (INET-md) of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), a Consultant Committee of the Museum of Fado, and the Lisbon City Council, supported by the Portuguese Ministry of Culture.
7. The application of cante was submitted by the Town Council of Serpa in March 2013, developed under the direction of Casa do Cante, through its director, Paulo Lima, in collaboration with Salwa Castelo-Branco from NOVA FCSH and a number of associations: MODA - Associação do Cante Alentejano, Confraria do Cante Alentejano, Casa do Alentejo in Lisbon and the regional tourist department, the Entidade Regional de Turismo do Alentejo e Ribatejo.
8. See https://ich.unesco.org/en/procedure-of-inscription-00809#inscription-on-the-representative-list (accessed 15.01.2022).
9. *Marcha* is a genre of music, either vocal or instrumental, usually in 4/4 meter, which accompanies military and popular street performances. The closest equivalent in English is "march."
10. *Casas do Povo,* literally "Houses of the People" were the primary element of the corporate organization of rural labor during the Estado Novo in Portugal, created by Decree-Law No.

23 051 of 23 September 1933.

11. In 1960 tourism was developing and the dictatorial frenzy was at its peak in Lisbon; the colonial war was about to start in the African Portuguese colonies, despite international disapproval. To balance the unfavourable press internationally, the Portuguese state promoted tourism – including the musical representation of the country – to its own citizens and foreign visitors alike.
12. "FADO, HERITAGE OF HUMANITY STATEMENT: Ada de Castro, Singer, acknowledges the importance of the heritage of fado. In 1982 she was elected *Melhor Fadista do Ano* / Fado Singer of the Year and is a living symbol of this, Lisbon's urban song. Ada de Castro hereby declares her deep interest and commitment to the Safeguarding Plan of the Application of Fado for the Representative List of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Lisbon, 6 June 2010".
13. A recommendation letter was a precondition for application for license from the Secretariado Nacional de Informação – SNI (National Secretariat for Information, the dictatorial cultural affairs agency responsible for censorship policies). The requirement for a license, or professional card, strengthened the control exercised over many musical practices. Obtaining the professional card was essential for musicians: the examination of its use and its eventual confiscation were among the regular censorial activities of the National Union of Musicians (Côrte-Real 2000: 76-77).
14. Ada mentions that with a critical tone of regret, saying that "nobody knows that this existed because of the 25th of April, because it belonged to the old government". Traumatized historiography has prevented the recognition of the dictatorial uses of fado in the democratic era.
15. "I, Joaquina Maria Brites Fralda, chair of the *Alma Nova* of Ferreira do Alentejo Choral Group, hereby declare that I support the candidature of the Cante Alentejano for inclusion in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The choral group hopes that its candidacy will serve to raise the profile and give strength to cante and the women who sing it. Ferreira do Alentejo 4.1.2014".
16. Since then, they have occasionally been invited to perform outside their village. In general, they travel outside their municipality about seven or eight times a year, for festivals and meetings of choral groups from Alentejo.
17. The group halted their activities in March 2020 due to the covid-19 pandemic. In the time we spent with Joaquina in the summer of 2021, we found her very nostalgic for the weekly rehearsals, missing the time she spent, as president, preparing for their most important regular engagements, such as the *Cante ao Menino.*
18. The recording was made by António Casqueira, who kindly shared the audio file.
19. The notion of *Saudade* represents a nationalist construct associated with the Estado Novo. It is said to be untranslatable from Portuguese and pertains to nostalgia for the homeland and associated feelings.

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