

Celtic Music Festivals in Portugal: Europeanisation, Urban Regeneration, and Regional Development¹

**SUSANA MORENO-FERNÁNDEZ and
SALWA EL-SHAWAN CASTELO-BRANCO**

Abstract

This article addresses the interceltic festivals of Porto (1986–2008) and Sendim in Terra de Miranda (since 2000), situated in northwestern and northeastern Portugal, respectively, from the perspective of European heritage festivals. It examines how these two festivals were used to promote tourism, urban regeneration, rural development, image-making, and place branding. We argue that the interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim are entangled with the Europeanisation of Portugal, involving new possibilities for identification with Europe's Atlantic fringe, a space that is symbolised by the Celtic imaginary.

Susana Moreno-Fernández is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology with tenure at the Music Department of the University of Valladolid in Valladolid, Spain, and a member of the Board of Directors of SIBE-Sociedad de Etnomusicología and SEdeM-Sociedad Española de Musicología. Her research focuses on the musical traditions of Portugal and Spain, cross-border and transnational musical and cultural processes, musical instruments, music and identity, music festivals and other celebrations.

Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco is Professor Emerita of Ethnomusicology at the Nova University of Lisbon in Lisbon, Portugal. She is the past president of the International Council for Traditional Music and the Institute of Ethnomusicology – Centre for Studies in Music and Dance, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Nova University of Lisbon. She has conducted field and archival research in Portugal, Egypt, and Oman resulting in publications on cultural politics, music nationalism, the politics and aesthetics of heritage, music media, and music and conflict.

1. This paper is a partial result of two funded research projects led by the authors, namely, *O celtismo e as suas repercussões na música na Galiza e no norte de Portugal* (Ref.: PTDC/EAT-MMU/114263/2009), funded by Fundação Para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Governo de Portugal, coordinated by Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco at the Institute of Ethnomusicology-Centre for Studies in Music and Dance, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Nova University of Lisbon (Portugal); and *Turismo y procesos de espectacularización en las tradiciones musicales ibéricas contemporáneas* (Proyectos I+D+i -Modalidades «Retos Investigación» y «Generación de Conocimiento», Convocatoria 2020, PID2020-115959GB-I00 funded by MCIN/AEI/ 10.13039/501100011033), coordinated by Susana Moreno Fernández at the University of Valladolid (Spain). We are grateful to the funding agencies, to the research team of each of the projects, and to the generosity of our research collaborators.

Resumo

Este artigo aborda os festivais intercélticos do Porto (1986–2008) e de Sendim, na Terra de Miranda (desde 2000), no noroeste e nordeste de Portugal, respectivamente, desde a perspectiva dos festivais patrimoniais europeus. Examina o modo como estes dois festivais foram mobilizados para promover o turismo, a regeneração urbana, o desenvolvimento rural, assim como para redefinir a imagem e a identidade local. Argumentamos que ambos os festivais entrelaçam-se com o processo de europeização de Portugal, oferecendo novas possibilidades de identificação com a franja Atlântica da Europa, um espaço simbolizado pelo imaginário celta.

Resumen

Este artículo presenta un análisis de dos festivales de “música celta” que han sido significativos en Portugal: el Festival Intercéltico do Porto (1986–2008) y el Festival Intercéltico de Sendim, en Terra de Miranda (desde 2000) situados en el noroeste y el nordeste de Portugal respectivamente. Realizamos una aproximación a estos eventos como ejemplos de festivales del patrimonio europeo con cierto atractivo turístico que han sido utilizados estratégicamente para promover la regeneración urbana de Oporto y el desarrollo rural de la Terra de Miranda, así como para redefinir la imagen y la identidad local de ambas áreas portuguesas. Defendemos igualmente que los festivales intercélticos de Oporto y Sendim se encuentran entrelazados desde su origen con el proceso de europeización de Portugal, durante el cual emergieron nuevas posibilidades de identificación con el Arco Atlántico de Europa, un espacio que se encuentra simbólicamente representado por el imaginario celta.

INTRODUCTION

In January 1986, Portugal became a full member of the then European Economic Community (EEC). The country had applied for integration in the EEC in 1977, three years following the *coup d'état* on 25 April 1974, ending the country's authoritarian and colonial regime led by António de Oliveira Salazar that had lasted for more than four decades (1933–1974). Portugal then sought a new international position as a Western, Atlantic, and European country (Teixeira 2017:22–23).² The “European option” constituted a “national goal” and a strategy that influenced the country's future in political, economic, social, and cultural terms (ibid.:22–24). Membership in the EEC launched a process of Europeanisation that involved the country's integration in a transnational system of authority, the implementation of policies informed by European norms, as well as structural changes in the economy, politics, and society (Featherstone and Kazamis 2000) that also affected cultural practices. In addition, it entailed the redefinition of modes of “identifying with the territory and the people” (Borneman and Fowler 1997:488) and changes in the ways the Portuguese “identify themselves” (Macedo 2001:12).

In 1986, the same year that Portugal became a member of the EEC, an interceltic music festival was launched in Porto, the main city in the north of the country. An

2. The new European orientation contrasted with the ideology and policies of Salazar's authoritarian regime which was characterised by traditionalist Catholicism, corporatist nationalism, and colonial imperialism (Monteiro and Costa Pinto 2011:65–68). Salazar and his political elites were opposed to Europe's supranational integration movement as it was incompatible with the regime's “autarkic sovereign nationalism” and its imperial interests outside Europe (Mendes 2020:21).

unprecedented event, it inspired other festivals, of which the most important is the Interceltic Festival of Sendim, celebrated since 2000 in the rural region of Terra de Miranda in northeastern Portugal.

This article addresses the interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim from the perspective of European heritage festivals defined as "...sites for the reframing of collective memory and the reinterpretation of the notion of a common European heritage... [and as] opportunities for citizens to negotiate, articulate and transform their European identity... at local level" (Kockel, Craith, Clopot, and Tjarve 2020:1–2). We also consider that heritage festivals constitute tourism events "...given tourism's major and growing economic role, and its sociocultural as well as environmental impacts..." (ibid.:2).³

Drawing on transdisciplinary research within the domain of festival studies, the article also explores how in Portugal, since the 1980s, a decade that saw a festival boom in the country as elsewhere, heritage festivals have been used as tools for promoting urban regeneration, local development, image-making, and place branding. We argue that the interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim are entangled with two intersecting processes. The first concerns the Europeanisation of Portugal, involving new possibilities for identification with Europe's Atlantic fringe—a space symbolised by the Celtic imaginary. The second concerns the regeneration of Porto's city centre, the development of the rural Terra de Miranda, and the reconfiguration of the image and identity of both areas.

PERSPECTIVES ON FESTIVALS

The phenomenon of "festivals" has been problematised by scholars from different disciplines of the social sciences, mainly related to event management and tourism studies (Getz 2010; Mair 2019; and many others). In addition, during the past decade, four scholarly journals in popular music studies and ethnomusicology dedicated special issues to festivals: Flath, Beate, Adam Behr and Martin Cloonan (2019); Laville (2014); Moreno Fernández (2019b); Spencer Espinosa (2020).

As the scholars mentioned above point out, there is no generally accepted definition or typology of "festivals," and the meaning of the term is distinct in different languages. In modern English, the term primarily denotes sacred or secular celebrations or periodically recurring festive events. Donald Getz, who pioneered the systematisation of festival studies, points out that the term "festival" has been "overused and misused" as it has been associated with commercially oriented public entertainment (2012:51). He broadly defines festivals as regularly held "themed, public celebrations" (Getz 2012:51–52). In a more recent definition, Judith Mair emphasises the importance of festivals to the communities that hold them, as privileged sites for social interaction, fostering feelings of belonging and sharing among festivalgoers and local residents (2019:4–5). As these and other authors have shown, festivals can be single or multi-site, for profit or not, and can

3. Some aspects of both festivals are dealt with in two publications in Spanish (Moreno-Fernández 2019a) and Portuguese (Castelo-Branco 2022).

include a competitive component, featuring a local, regional, national, or transnational cultural dimension. Many are place-based, showcasing cultural practices and legacies through multiple performative acts such as music, dance, or parades. Music festivals can focus on one or several genres, musical instruments, or the legacy of a musician.

Increasingly, events named “festivals” are “modern constructions” promoted by local authorities, entrepreneurs, and communities to serve economic, touristic, ideological, social, or political purposes (Stoeltje 1992:261). Many are mobilised in urban regeneration and rural development, place-marketing, and tourist promotion. Funded by local governments and/or private enterprises, a growing number of music festivals are institutionalised and professionalised. As ethnomusicologist Owe Ronström suggests, “festivals can be read as a ‘form of cultural production’” that has developed into a major cultural industry with a significant impact on the cultural economy, and on the music represented, formatting repertoires, as well as the behaviour of musicians and audiences (2016:72, 76).

Since the mid-1980s, and especially following the integration of the country into the EEC in 1986, Portugal has witnessed an increase in the number of music festivals, partaking in the global festival boom, and integrating the “transnational festival geography” (ibid.:74).⁴ Many festivals featured pop-rock, jazz, and other popular music genres (César 2010:492–493). Sponsored by local governments, local tourist boards, voluntary associations, foundations, and private companies, in Portugal, festivals have been used for promoting tourism, as tools for political and cultural action, for the economic and social empowerment of territories, as strategies for place branding, for defending local culture and identity, and for local development and urban regeneration (Abreu 2004; Guerra 2010; Moreno Fernández 2019a:5–6, among others).

The interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim that constitute the focus of this article share some of the above-mentioned attributes of festivals. They are place-based, non-profit annual public events that are celebrated over several days with the aim of attracting tourism, and contributing to urban regeneration (Porto) and rural development (Sendim). Launched in 1986 and 2000 respectively, both events have integrated the circuit of European festivals featuring local, national, and transnational popular and traditional genres branded as “Celtic music,” a controversial notion that has been the subject of debate in the scholarly literature and among festival organisers, musicians, and others.⁵

CELTIC MUSIC AND ITS FESTIVALS

Celtic music is a modern discursive construct that has been mobilised for ideological and commercial purposes, as well as for fostering identification with an imagined “Celtic

4. The earliest music and dance festivals in Portugal were launched in the 1940s by the authoritarian regime of António de Oliveira Salazar to promote Portuguese “folklore” in the country and internationally. In the 1950s, the Gulbenkian Music Festivals (1957–1970) were launched in Lisbon and other cities, incorporating Portugal in the European network of “art” music festivals (Nery 2010:542).

5. Henceforth, the term Celtic music and the derivatives of Celtic will appear without quotation marks.

community” (Chapman 1992:2–3; Kuter 2000; Porter 1998). As a generic term, it identifies music genres and styles that are supposedly rooted in tradition, revitalised during the final decades of the twentieth century, and associated with the Celtic nations, particularly Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and their diasporas, as well as the regions of Galicia and Asturias in northern Spain.⁶ The term is also used to label hybrid musical styles, mixing traditional repertoires from the above-mentioned countries and regions with transnational musical idioms promoted by the folk music movement and the world music industry. The notion of Celtic music is also associated with the use of Gaelic languages, musical instruments such as the Celtic harp, the bagpipe, and the tin whistle (Shahriari 2017:111), as well as dance genres like the Irish jigs and reels, or the Galician dance-music genre known as *muiñeira* (Campos Calvo-Sotelo 2012). However, as Timothy Taylor points out, for festivalgoers “it matters not if what is labelled ‘Celtic’...has any real connection to Ireland, Wales, Brittany, the Isle of Man or Cornwall (the ancient Celtic nations), only that sound and image correspond to what consumers expect the Celtic brand to be” (2014:171). As a market category, Celtic music has been a “structuring force” (Holt 2007:2) in the constitution, by the recording and festival industries, of a field of cultural production and a brand that is used in marketing transnational musical practices globally (Dietler 2006:242–243; Taylor 2014).

As we discuss below, while the promoters of the interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim interrogate the notion of Celtic music, both festivals promote a celticist discourse, mobilising the notion of intercelticism as an ideal that evokes Portugal’s historical connection to and contemporary affinity with the Celtic world, and as a brand that can encompass diverse musical genres and styles represented in both festivals.

Celtic music festivals, sometimes labelled “interceltic festivals,” have been one of the main contexts for the performance of Celtic music. They have proliferated on a global scale as sites for promoting the identification with the Celtic imaginary, providing it with sonic referents. As anthropologist Michael Dietler points out, these festivals “represent a perfect nexus of Celtic Romantic spiritualism, heritage-seeking ethno-nostalgia, and commercialisation that are simultaneously in tension and reinforcing each other” (2006:242). Celtic music festivals also emphasise shared legacies, values and aesthetics, and are connected by a set of routes, tangible and intangible, constructing cultural and economic transnational networks along which artists, audiences, repertoires, ideas, and forms of social behaviour circulate (Ronström 2016:74; Stokes and Bohlman 2003; Symon 2002:195, 197).

In Europe, one of the most significant Celtic music festivals is the Festival Interceltique de Lorient. Celebrated annually since 1971 in the city of Lorient in Brittany, France, it is considered the largest “folk music” festival in Western Europe (Bévant

6. Celtic nations refer to countries and regions in Western Europe where Celtic languages have survived (Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, Cornwall, Isle of Man, and Wales) and where a Celtic historical and cultural legacy has been vindicated. The Spanish regions of Galicia and Asturias, located in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, have been considered by some scholars, musicians, and institutions as Celtic nations.

2009:36), and has inspired many other festivals, several on the Iberian Peninsula,⁷ including the *Festival Intercéltico do Porto* / Interceltic Festival of Porto (IFP).

A TALE OF TWO FESTIVALS

Portugal has rarely figured in discourses on the Celtic imaginary, and with the exception of a recent edited volume (Castelo-Branco, Moreno-Fernández, and Medeiros 2022), has been generally absent from scholarly publications on modern representations of celticity in music, and on Celtic music festivals. At the same time, Celtic music did not figure as a brand for any of the popular music genres and styles that have thrived in the country prior to the 1980s and that have been labelled as “música popular,” “música ligeira” or “música popular portuguesa” (Castelo-Branco 2013; Castelo-Branco and Cidra 2017; Moreira, Cidra, and Castelo-Branco 2017). References to music in Portugal often highlight fado, the genre that most often represents the country abroad. What, then, motivated the launching of a Celtic music festival in Porto in 1986 and in the rural setting of Sendim in 2000? What were the conceptual and ideological bases that sustained these festivals? What musics were represented under the labels Celtic and Interceltic? What was the impact of both events?

The story of the interceltic festivals of Porto and Sendim weaves development strategies, identity politics, individual agency, and transnational cultural flows. It begins in Porto, Portugal’s second largest and most important city that has traditionally rivalled with the capital, Lisbon. Up to the mid twentieth century, Porto’s city centre concentrated on industry, business, services, and cultural activities. However, between the 1960s and the 2010s, Porto declined considerably due to de-industrialisation, the migration of over half of its residents to the suburbs and neighbouring regions, and an aging population (Balsas 2004:397–398; Queirós 2015:163). Since the 1970s, Porto’s Municipality invested in the regeneration of the city centre, later joined by private companies from the 1990s onwards. In addition to rehabilitating buildings, public spaces, and cultural infrastructures (museums, libraries, performing arts schools, performance venues including those where the interceltic festival was held), the Municipality invested in tourism, cultural events, and heritagisation. These initiatives can be framed more generally within one of the strategies of the European Union of supporting cultural programmes as a driving force for developing the economy and tourism, and promoting a European identity anchored on the official discourse of “unity in diversity” (Sassatelli 2002).

One of the goals of the Municipality’s cultural policy was to sponsor an annual programme of cultural activities in the city, including existing and new music festivals and other events, contributing to the formation of audiences and to the attraction of visitors. The inscription, in 1991, of Porto’s historic centre on UNESCO’s World Cultural

7. These include the Festival do Mundo Celta de Ortigueira and the Festival Intercéltico de Morrazo in Galicia (Spain), as well as the Festival Intercéltico de Avilés in Asturias (Spain).

Heritage List was decisive for the valorisation and global projection of the city and region. The Municipality also promoted large cultural events, most notably Porto 2001—European Capital of Culture (Azevedo 2014:15–16).

These measures contributed to reconfiguring Porto's image and identity, to reinforcing its cosmopolitanism and incrementing its attractiveness as a tourist destination, as well as a space for leisure and cultural activities (Balsas 2004:399; Queirós 2007). The rehabilitation of Porto's centre and the investment in the promotion of tourism (Queirós 2007 and 2015) allowed the city to emerge as "...modern, European and cosmopolitan" (Barbosa and Lopes 2019:10). But it also had negative consequences that drew strong criticism from residents, political activists, and scholars who rejected the gentrification and excessive touristification of the historic centre.

It was within this context of rapid transformation that the French Institute of Porto⁸ launched the Interceltic Festival of Porto (IFP) in 1986, a pioneering event in the country, organised with the collaboration of the publisher and promoter of music events, Mundo da Canção. In 1992, Porto's Municipal government institutionalised the IFP, constituting it as a municipal initiative up to 2000.

* * *

The emergence of IFP in Porto was entangled with two intersecting processes. The first concerns the Europeanisation of Portugal, involving new possibilities for identifying with Europe, a space that in this case was symbolised by the Celtic imaginary. In this context, Porto's festival served as a site for the "reframing of collective memory and the reinterpretation of the idea of a common European heritage" (Kockel et al. 2020:1). The second process concerns the regeneration of Porto's centre and the reconfiguration of its image and identity (Azevedo 2014; Queirós 2007). This influenced the selection of indoor venues in the city centre as the space for the festival's celebration, which takes place during the Spring, contrary to similar events in other parts of Europe that are usually celebrated outdoors in the summer.

IFP was shaped by its political, economic, and institutional contexts, as well as by the agency of several individuals who conceived, organised, and promoted the event. The institution Mundo da Canção played an essential role in the festival's organisation and promotion, and guaranteed its continuity (1986–2008). The municipal government of Porto provided financial support for most iterations. Two central figures in the city's cultural milieu during the last quarter of the twentieth century played a fundamental role in launching and guaranteeing the continuity of the IFP: Bernard Despo-madères, director of the Cultural Department of the French Institute of Porto, and Avelino Tavares, founder and director of Mundo da Canção. The first iteration was

8. The French Institute of Porto, founded in 1938, played an important role in the cultural life of the city up to its closing in 2004. Its main mission was the promotion of the French language and culture, and the cooperation between the two countries in the domains of education, science, and artistic creation (please refer to: <https://francearchives.fr/findingaid/fb2fd6c8bb45b94afdb4e6dc3397430c20a08798>).

launched by Despomadères, in substitution of the annual “French Cultural Fortnight” to celebrate Portugal’s entry in the EEC and to “...reflect on our common roots” (interview, 31 May 2014). Taking the Festival of Lorient as a reference, with which both Déspomaderes and Tavares were familiar (Avelino Tavares, interview, 27 January 2011), the festival aimed at creating a space for reflecting on the Celtic imaginary, and for promoting the cultural exchange between the north of Portugal and the Celtic nations.

The festival’s first iteration was organised with the support of the Municipality and other governmental entities. The inaugural concerts took place in two of Porto’s prestigious auditoriums, the Teatro Rivoli and the Auditório Carlos Alberto, located at the city centre and renovated in the 1990s and 2000s. Following a five-year interval that, according to Avelino Tavares, was due to the lack of financial support (*ibid.*), IFP was relaunched in the Spring of 1991. Maintaining the Mundo da Canção as the main organising entity, it was financed by the Department of Culture and Tourism of the newly elected Municipal Government, with a majority of the Socialist Party, that constituted culture and tourism as priorities for the city’s development (Melo 2007). The support of Manuela de Melo, the director of the Municipality’s Department of Culture and Tourism, was fundamental for the festival’s sustainability.

The following nine iterations (1992–2000) saw the festival’s consolidation and its institutionalisation by Porto’s municipal government, as one of the initiatives serving the city’s cultural and touristic promotion. At this stage, the festival’s continuity and success depended on the agency of its founders and the director of the Municipality’s Department for Culture and Tourism. The French Institute of Porto continued to collaborate and the organisation remained in the hands of Mundo da Canção where Mário Correia, an experienced cultural promoter and a scholar of Portuguese traditional and popular musics, was responsible for the festival’s programming between 1992 and 1998. He then resigned from this post and founded the Interceltic Festival of Sendim which will be discussed below.

The final six iterations of the festival in Porto took place between 2002 and 2008 when it ended due to financial and institutional problems. This period coincided with the election of the Social Democratic Party to Porto’s municipal government, and a change in policy. No longer a Municipal initiative, the festival became the sole responsibility of Mundo da Canção. Between 2004 and 2008, the Festival became multi-sited, having been celebrated in Porto, Lisbon, and other localities on continental Portugal and the Azores with the support of Municipalities and private institutions.

* * *

The Interceltic Festival of Porto was an influential event. It created a scene for the performance of the musics associated with the Celtic and interceltic brands, and with the European folk revival. It contributed to the development of a professional structure for the organisation of music events, integrating Portugal into the transnational network of Celtic music festivals. It also inspired several inter/Celtic music festivals that were

launched in the north of Portugal,⁹ providing an ideological and conceptual framework and a programming model, consisting of concerts of European and Portuguese well-known and emergent musicians and groups, “parallel activities” (see below), and jam sessions.

The *Festival Intercéltico de Sendim* / Interceltic Festival of Sendim (IFS), launched in 2000, is a spin-off of Porto’s interceltic festival. Since then, with the exception of the pandemic years (2020 and 2021), it has been celebrated annually, figuring regularly in Portugal’s Summer festival calendar. Coexisting with the IFP for seven iterations, it was launched and has been organised by Mário Correia, who, as mentioned above, had been IFP’s main programmer between 1992 and 1998.¹⁰ Sendim’s interceltic festival central figure, Correia is its organiser, producer, artistic director, and public relations manager. His agency has been fundamental in the positioning of this event in the circuit of Celtic music festivals on the Iberian Peninsula, and for its sustainability. Integrated in the activities of the *Centro de Música Tradicional Sons da Terra*,¹¹ founded and directed by Correia in Sendim, IFS has been supported by the Municipal Government, the Tourist Board of Northeast Trás-os-Montes, Portuguese companies, the media, local cultural associations,¹² and more recently the INATEL Foundation.

Sendim is a small town with a population of approximately 1200 inhabitants (Censo 2021) situated in Terra de Miranda, an interior rural and historically isolated and underdeveloped area in the region of Trás-os-Montes, in northeastern Portugal bordering with Spain. As with other rural areas of the country’s interior, since the 1960s, it has seen a massive exodus to cities in Portugal and abroad, leaving behind an aging population. The region is also affected by low birthrates, de-ruralisation, and problems in the agricultural sector (Pereiro 2018:69–70).

Terra de Miranda, where Sendim is situated, is characterised by a distinctive history, culture, and language. Ethnographers and folklorists have highlighted the region’s archaic culture, including music and dance genres and practices, such as ballads, stick dances (*dança dos paulitos*), as well as musical instruments like the pipe and tabor, and the local bagpipe. Their publications often emphasise the similarity between this region’s traditions and those documented in Spain, especially in bordering areas.

9. Examples of the Celtic music festivals celebrated in Portugal include: Festival Folk Celta in Ponte da Barca, Festival de Música Celta in Viana do Castelo, Festival Celtirock in Pitões das Júnias, and Douro Celtic Fest in Vila Nova de Gaia.

10. Mário Correia (b. 1952) is a native of Porto. He moved to Sendim in 1998 where he launched the IFS in 2000 and founded the *Centro de Música Tradicional Sons da Terra* in 2001.

11. *Sons da Terra* is an archive and research centre that is supported by the Municipal Government, and more recently by the Fundação INATEL, to promote and safeguard the music and culture of Terra de Miranda. Most of the work is carried out by Mário Correia who organises events, documents, archives, and publishes CDs and books on local musics.

12. One of the most important local associations, Mirai Qu’Alforjas—Associação de Juventude de Sendim, co-organised IFS’s first seven iterations.

In 1999, the locally spoken *mirandês* was recognised by the Portuguese parliament as Portugal's second official language. This recognition was instrumental in stimulating the Municipal government and local cultural associations to vindicate Terra de Miranda's identity, promote regional heritage, and foster sociocultural and economic development, primarily through tourism (Pereiro 2018; Raposo 2004). Since the late 1990s, old and newly invented fiestas, festivals, pilgrimages, fairs and other celebrations showcasing local culture and heritage proliferated, attracting local residents, festivalgoers, migrants who return for their holidays, and tourists. It was within this context that IFS was launched in Sendim, in August 2000, the month in which most Portuguese and other Europeans take their annual vacation.

The Sendim Festival integrated the Municipal plan to use cultural and natural heritage to attract tourism, considered by local authorities as a way of fostering the economic, social, and cultural development of the Terra de Miranda (Concelho 2014). The presidents of Sendim's Parish and the Municipality in which it is located emphasise the importance of the IFS as part of the strategy designed to raise the town's visibility and to attract tourism, bringing social, economic, and cultural benefits (Artur Nunes, email, 23 November 2016; Rodrigues 2001:6).

THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF INTERCELTICISM

The celticist discourse promoted by IFP's and IFS's mentors corresponds to one of the "forms of celticism" defined by Dietler as "the recent attempt during the 1990s to create a sense of pan-European cultural identity in the context of the evolving European Union based upon a purportedly shared Celtic past" (2006:239). The organisers of the IFP and the IFS promoted a celticist discourse, mobilising the notion of intercelticism as an ideal that evokes Portugal's historical connection to, and contemporary affinity with, the Celtic world, and as a brand that can encompass diverse musical genres and styles represented in both festivals.

Since it was launched, IFP promoted a discourse on the Celtic imaginary that grounded the Festival conceptually and ideologically. Considering the process of Europeanisation that was taking place and inspired by the pioneering Interceltic Festival of Lorient, the first iteration of Porto's interceltic festival aimed at creating a space for reflecting on the Celtic legacy that is supposedly shared by northern Portugal and the Celtic nations. IFP also attempted to promote cultural and musical exchange across the European space, informed by the ideal of intercelticism that grounds Lorient's festival.

The second series of the journal *Mundo da Canção*,¹³ published annually in conjunction with Porto's interceltic festival between 1992 and 2008 by the homonymous

13. *Mundo da Canção* contained the IFP's programme of concerts and parallel activities, biographies, discographies and photos of, and interviews with, the featured musicians and groups, essays and bibliographies promoting the celticist discourse and other relevant topics, practical information for festivalgoers, and advertisements.

institution, was instrumental in disseminating the ideal of intercelticism. The celticist discourse promoted through this publication is based on the argument of the French historian and archeologist Venceslas Kruta that the Celts were “the first to constitute a real European aggregate, uniting populations of several territories through culture” (Kruta cited in Anonymous 1992:21–22). Kruta’s discourse, shared by other authors, assumes that Celtic heritage, shared by Galicia and the north of Portugal, “remains alive” (ibid.:22) and is reflected in the continuity of “musical instruments, rhythms, and melodies that are similar to those of territories that are profoundly marked by Celtic traditions” (ibid.:21). The idea of a supposedly common Celtic heritage assumed to be still alive and representative of the “first Europe” was fundamental to the launching of IFP and was sustained throughout the festival.

In addition to the celticist discourse, the legitimation of IFP drew on the atlanticist discourse, arguing that the Atlantic coast of Western Europe is characterised by common cultural traces that go back to pre-historic times. This area was institutionalised in 1989 through the Atlantic Arc Commission that aimed at promoting regional interests in the European Union.¹⁴ From the perspective of Manuela de Melo, the Atlantic Arc Commission represents “a concerted effort...linked to the current political and economic situation in Europe...[an area] that shares common traditions, influenced by the culture of the Celts” (1992:19). According to an anonymous editorial published in *Mundo da Canção*, it constituted an “undeniable right to difference so claimed by the peoples of the Atlantic Arc” (Anonymous 1992:21). The common “cultural roots” evoked by the festival’s programme and by the discourse that grounded it were also seen by the festival’s organisers as “powerful factors in the resistance against homogenisation and cultural uniformity, [and in] safeguarding and preserving...identities” (Anonymous 1995:13).

Throughout its seventeen iterations, Porto’s interceltic festival was established as one of the major annual events in the city. It was also constituted as a brand that promoted and repositioned Porto and the north of Portugal in the space of Celtic nations and regions. Through the Festival, “Porto turned necessarily northward...in order to counterbalance Lisbon’s importance” (Mário Correia, interview, 8 December 2017). On the other hand, the label Celtic was also used as a marketing strategy to emphasise IFP’s uniqueness, and its distinction from “folk festivals”, thus creating a Celtic music community of fans in Portugal and contributing to positioning Porto as an attractive city for festival and event tourism.

As in IFP, in IFS, intercelticism was used as a marketing strategy, inscribing this small-scale event held in Sendim in the transnational circuit of Celtic music festivals. For Mário Correia, IFS’s mentor, intercelticism is “an expression of celtitude..., an attitude that has the Celtic imaginary as its main reference,” justifying the inclusion of musics resulting from cultural exchange across distant areas (Correia 2013:155, 159). In

14. The Atlantic Arc Commission was established in 1989 in Faro, Portugal. It includes Ireland, United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Portugal (<https://cpmr-atlantic.org/who-we-are/>).

programming Sendim's festival, he gives priority to the musics of "countries and regions that share a common Celtic past," preferably the Celtic nations, as well as the Atlantic Arc and its diasporas (ibid.). The celticist discourse has been promoted primarily by Mário Correia through his public presentations and the Festival's journal *Trad & Folk*¹⁵ which he directed and published between 2001 and 2014. This discourse has been used to vindicate Terra de Miranda's identity, emphasising its difference from the rest of the country, and its historical and cultural connections with the neighbouring regions of Spain with which it shares several cooperation and socioeconomic development programmes.

SOUNDING INTERCELTICISM

In both festivals, the "interceltic" discourse was sounded through a programming strategy combining paid evening concerts and free parallel activities throughout the day, sometimes extending to the evening. These concerts featured music groups and soloists from the Celtic nations, including neighbouring Galicia, Asturias, and other Spanish regions, marketed under the labels of Celtic music, folk music, folk revival, roots music, or world music. These were paired with Portuguese groups and soloists associated with the Portuguese folk music revival movement that emerged following the 1974 revolution, locally subsumed by the generic category *música popular portuguesa* (Castelo-Branco 2013; as illustrated in Figure 1, Cidra and Castelo-Branco 2017). While largely following the model established by IFP, Sendim's interceltic festival also featured musicians and groups from Terra de Miranda that represent the region's emblematic "traditional" instruments and genres such as the local bagpipe and stick dances (see Figure 2). The programme also included musicians and groups from diverse Spanish regions, reinforcing the ideal of an "Iberian folk music" (*folk ibérico*) that has been disseminated by some musicians, promoters, journalists, and festival organisers. It also expanded the geographic representation of European Celtic music by including groups from the US, Canada, and Japan.

The interceltic discourse was also promoted through "parallel activities" that were offered for free to festivalgoers and other audiences. During the first decade of Porto's interceltic festival, these activities showcased Celtic history and culture through lectures, film screenings, exhibitions; book, record and crafts fairs; and competitions. In Sendim, the festival was also used as a space for "celebrating the land and its people" (Correia 2002:3), including music, culture, language, and landscape, giving visibility and adding value to little-known local musicians and music and dance groups in this isolated region, as well as to the *Centro de Música Tradicional Sons da Terra*. The parallel activities took place in different venues throughout the town and its suburbs, including workshops of local dances (see Figure 3), nature walks, and tributes to local traditional musicians, events in which CDs published by the *Centro* were featured.

15. Most of the contents of *Trad & Folk* are similar to those of *Mundo da Canção*. In addition, this journal also includes information on the activities of the *Centro Sons da Terra*; essays on the culture, language, music practices and musicians of the Terra de Miranda, and practical information for festivalgoers.



Figure 1. Cover page of the booklet announcing the programme of the seventh Interceltic Festival of Porto, March 1996.

In both festivals, but especially in Sendim, following, and occasionally parallel to the formal programme, some musicians and festivalgoers jammed together in a convivial atmosphere. While in Porto these informal sessions took place in bars and hotels in the



Figure 3. A workshop of local dances integrating the Interceltic Festival of Sendim, August 2012. Photo: Susana Moreno Fernández (used with permission).

of Breton music and a pioneer of the “Celtic music movement” (Wilkinson 2011:233). Other prominent musicians and bands from the Celtic nations featured in both festivals include: The Chieftains, Andy Irvine, Gwendal, Boys of the Lough, Fairport Convention, Bagad Kemper, and Dervish. Prominent bands and musicians associated with the Celtic and folk music movements in neighbouring Spain also participated in both festivals, such as Milladoiro, Emilio Cao, Carlos Núñez, and Kepa Junkera. As for the Portuguese folk music revival groups the most salient are: Vai de Roda, Brigada Vitor Jara, Júlio Pereira, and Galandum Galundaina. In addition, Sendim’s festivals showcased local groups such as Lenga Lenga-Gaiteiros de Sendim and Trasca.

As for the audiences of both festivals, although there has been no systematic study, articles in newspapers and in the festivals’ journals, and interviews with festival organisers indicate that IFP and IFS drew a relatively young audience that was attracted by the international folk revival movement and its repercussions in Portugal. Several of Porto’s festival promoters highlighted this event’s popularity, recalling regularly sold out performances (Manuela de Melo, Mário Correia and Júlio Moreira, interview, 8 December 2017). This pioneering festival contributed to the formation of an audience in Portugal for the musics associated with the interceltic label, some of whom later became regular attendees of similar festivals, including that of Sendim, which also attracted festivalgoers from the neighbouring regions of Spain. According to Correia, during the past decade, there has been a decrease in the number of festivalgoers, and their age range has tended to

increase, a development that he attributes to the proliferation of festivals, including Celtic music festivals, and that has stimulated him to consider the “reinvention” of this festival (Correia 2012 and interview, 27 December 2016).

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The two interceltic music festivals analysed in this article were strategically used by local governments, institutions, and other agents to promote Porto and Terra de Miranda as tourist destinations, to contribute to urban regeneration and rural development, and to create a new image and place-identity. In the case of Sendim, the festival was also part of a strategy aimed at placing this traditionally isolated town and the Terra de Miranda on the map by valorising its heritage and lifestyles, and reaffirming its distinct identity.

Porto’s pioneering interceltic music festival launched a new space for the performance, circulation, and exchange of musicians, sounds, and ideas, incorporating the north of Portugal in the European Celtic “‘festivalscape’, a dense and intricate network spreading from large cities to small, remote villages” (Ronström 2016:74). This space was extended to other inter/Celtic music festivals celebrated in the north of Portugal. Sendim’s interceltic festival also nurtured collaboration with musicians and institutions across the bordering regions of Spain, fostering the ideal of an “Iberian folk” music. In all, Porto’s and Sendim’s interceltic festivals can be read as part of the process of the Europeanisation of Portugal, using the celticist and atlanticist discourses to defend a common cultural heritage, and identifying the north of Portugal with Europe’s Celtic fringe.

References

- Abreu, Paula. 2004. “Músicas em movimento. Dos contextos, tempos e geografias da performance musical em Portugal.” *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* 70. Online version, published 1 October 2012. <http://journals.openedition.org/rccs/1055> (accessed 8 September 2022).
- Anonymous. 1992. “Editorial.” *Mundo da Canção – 3º Festival Intercéltico do Porto*, 20–21.
- Anonymous. 1995. “Editorial.” *Mundo da Canção – 6º Festival Intercéltico do Porto*, 13.
- Azevedo, Natália. 2014. *Políticas culturais, turismo e desenvolvimento local na Área Metropolitana do Porto: Fragmentos de um estudo de caso (1980–2001)*. Porto: Afrontamento.
- Balsas, Carlos. 2004. “City Centre Regeneration in the Context of the 2001 European Capital of Culture in Porto.” *Local Economy* 19(4):396–410.
- Barbosa, Inês, and João Teixeira Lopes. 2019. “Descodificar as paredes da cidade: da crítica à gentrificação ao direito da habitação no Porto.” *Sociologia: Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto* 38:6–29.

- Bévant, Yann. 2009. "Nations in Tune: the influence of Irish music on the Breton music revival in the 1960s and 1970s." *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 29: 30–44.
- Borneman, John, and Nick Fowler. 1997. "Europeanization." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26:417–514.
- Campos Calvo-Sotelo, Javier. 2012. "Los Hijos de Ossian: completando el modelo analítico de la música celta." In *Current Issues in Music Research. Copyright, Power and Transnational Music Processes*, ed. Susana Moreno Fernández et al., 193–212. Lisboa: Edições Colibri.
- Castelo-Branco, Salwa El-Shawan, and Rui Cidra. 2017. "Música Popular (Portugal)." In *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Genres: Europe*, ed. Paolo Prato and David Horn, 508–509. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Castelo-Branco, Salwa El-Shawan, Susana Moreno-Fernández, and António Medeiros, eds. 2022. *Outros celtas: Celtismo, modernidade e música global em Portugal e Espanha*. Lisboa: Tinta da China.
- Castelo-Branco, Salwa El-Shawan. 2013. "The Politics of Music Categorization in Portugal." In *The Cambridge History of World Music*, ed. Philip Bohlman, 661–677. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Censos 2021. Instituto Nacional de Estatística. https://censos.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xlang=pt&xpgid=censos21_dados&xpid=CENSOS21 (accessed 8 September 2022).
- César, António João et al. 2010. "Festival." In *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Volume 2, dir. Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, 492–497. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores-Temas e debates.
- Chapman, Malcolm. 1992. *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth*. London: Macmillan.
- Concelho Local de Ação Social de Miranda do Douro. 2014. *Diagnóstico Social. Abril 2014*. https://www.cm-mdouro.pt/uploads/writer_file/document/62/Diagnostico-Social-2014-FINAL.pdf (accessed 8 September 2022).
- Correia, Mário. 2002. "Celebrar a Terra e as Gentes." *Trad&Folk* 2. 3º Festival Intercéltico de Sendim:3–4.
- Correia, Mário. 2012. "(Re)inventar a festa...." *Trad&Folk* 15. 13º Festival Intercéltico de Sendim:3.
- . 2013. "Interceltismo: uma expressão de celtitude." In *Actas do VI Congresso Transfronteiriço de Cultura Celta, Ponte da Barca 15 e 16 de Junho de 2012*, coord. Fátima Lobo, 155–159. Ponte da Barca: Câmara Municipal de Ponte da Barca.
- Dietler, Michael. 2006. "Celticism, Celtitude, and Celticity: The consumption of the past in the age of globalization." In *Celtes et Gaulois, l'Archéologie face à l'Histoire, I: Celtes et Gaulois dans l'histoire, l'historiographie et l'idéologie moderne. Actes de la table ronde de Leipzig 16-17 juin 2005*, dir. S. Rieckhoff, 237–248. Glux-en-Glenne: Bibracte, Centre Archéologique Européen.
- Featherstone, Chris, and George Kazamias. 2000. "Introduction: Southern Europe and the Process of 'Europeanization'." *South European Society and Politics* 5(2):1–24.

- Flath, Beate, Adam Behr, and Martin Cloonan, eds. 2019. "Pop Music Festivals and (Cultural) Policies." Special issue, *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music* 9(1). https://iaspmjournal.net/index.php/IASPM_Journal/issue/view/67 (accessed 8 September 2022).
- Getz, Donald. 2010. "The Nature and Scope of Festival Studies." *International Journal of Event Management Research* 5(1):1–47.
- . 2012. *Event Studies. Theory, Research and Policy for Planned Events*. London and New York: Routledge, 2nd ed.
- Guerra, Paula. 2010. "A instável leveza do rock: Gênese, dinâmica e consolidação do rock alternativo em Portugal (1980–2010)." PhD dissertation, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto.
- Holt, Fabian. 2007. *Genre in Popular Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kockel, Ullrich, Cristina Clopot, Baiba Tjarve, and Máiréad Nic Craith. 2020. "Heritages, Identities, and Europe: Exploring Cultural Forms and Expressions." In *Heritage and Festivals in Europe: Performing Identities*, ed. Ulrich Kockel et al., 1–17. London: Routledge.
- Kuter, Lois. 2000. "Celtic Music." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, Volume 8: Europe, ed. Timothy Rice, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen, 319–323. London: Routledge.
- Laville, Yann, coord. 2014. Festivalisation(s). Special Issue, *Cahiers d'ethnomusicologie* 27.
- Macedo, Helder. 2001. "Sociedade pós-moderna, globalização e europeização do mundo Português." *Letras* 23, Literatura Portuguesa e Pós Colonialismo: Produção, Recepção e Pós Colonialismo:11–16.
- Mair, Judith, ed. 2019. *The Routledge Handbook of Festivals*. New York: Routledge.
- Melo, Manuela de. 1992. "Nota de abertura." *Mundo da Canção – 3º Festival Intercéltico do Porto*, 19.
- . 2007. "A gestão cultural do território." In *A gestão cultural do território*, ed. José Portugal and Susana Marques, 39–50. Porto: Setepés.
- Mendes, Pedro Emanuel. 2020. "Percepções e imagens na política externa do Estado Novo Português: a importância do triângulo identitário." *DADOS* 63(3):1–35. <https://www.scielo.br/j/dados/a/f4mB3txxSmhN4CL8J9Rmjcf/?lang=p>.
- Monteiro, Nuno, and António Costa Pinto. 2011. "Cultural Myths and Portuguese National Identity." In *Contemporary Portugal: Politics, Society and Culture*, ed. António Costa Pinto, 55–72. Social Sciences. Monographs. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Moreira, Pedro, Rui Cidra, and Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco. 2017. "Música Ligeira." In *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Genres: Europe*, ed. Paolo Prato and David Horn, 503–504. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Moreno Fernández, Susana. 2019a. "El Festival Intercéltico de Sendim. Trayectoria, caracterización e impactos locales." In *Aproximaciones al estudio de las dinámicas e impactos de las celebraciones musicales en España y Portugal*. Special issue,

- TRANS. Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 23 <https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/572/el-festival-interceltico-de-sendim-trayectoria-caracterizacion-e-impactos-locales> (accessed 8 September 2022).
- . 2019b. Aproximaciones al estudio de las dinámicas e impactos de las celebraciones musicales en España y Portugal. Special issue, *TRANS. Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 23 <https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/publicacion/25/trans-23-2019> (accessed 8 September 2022).
- Nery, Rui Vieira. 2010. “Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.” In *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século XX*, Volume 2, ed. Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, 535–548. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores-Temas e debates.
- Pereiro, Xerardo. 2018. “Abordagem exploratória do turismo rural de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (Portugal).” *Análise Social* 53(226):58–87.
- Porter, James. 1998. “Introduction: Locating Celtic Music (and Song).” *Western Folklore* 57(4):205–224.
- Queirós, João. 2007. *O lugar da cultura nas políticas de reabilitação de centros urbanos: apontamentos a partir do caso do Porto*. Porto: Instituto de Sociologia da Universidade do Porto.
- . 2015. *No centro, à margem: Sociologia de intervenções urbanísticas e habitacionais do estado no centro histórico do Porto*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.
- Raposo, Paulo. 2004. “Do ritual ao espectáculo. ‘Caretos’, intelectuais, turistas e media.” In *Outros Trópicos. Novos destinos turísticos. Novos terrenos da antropologia*, coord. Maria Cordeira da Silva, 137–154. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.
- Rodrigues, António. 2001. “Biba la nuossa Bila.” *Trad & Folk* 1. 2º Festival Intercéltico de Sendim:6.
- Ronström, Owe. 2016. “Four Facets of Festivalization.” *Puls: Musik-och dansetnologisk tidskrift / Journal for Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology* 1:67–83.
- Sassatelli, Monica. 2002. “Imagined Europe: The Shaping of European Cultural Identity through European Cultural Policy.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 4: 435–451.
- Shahriari, Andrew. 2017. *Popular World Music*. New York: Routledge.
- Spencer Espinosa, Christian, ed. 2020. La festivalización de la música en América Latina (1990–2020). Special issue, *Revista Argentina de Musicología* 21(2). <https://ojs.aamusicologia.ar/index.php/ram/issue/view/21> (accessed 8 September 2022).
- Stoeltje, Beverly J. 1992. “Festival.” In *Folklore, Cultural Performances and Popular Entertainments*, ed. Richard Bauman, 262–271. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stokes, Martin, and Philip V. Bohlman, eds. 2003. *Celtic Modern: Music at the Global Fringe*. Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford: Scarecrow Press.
- Symon, Peter. 2002. “From Blas to Bothy Culture: The Musical Re-making of Celtic Culture in a Hebridean Festival.” In *Celtic Geographies: Old Culture, New Times*, ed. David C. Harvey et al., 192–207. London and New York: Routledge.

- Taylor, Timothy. 2014. "Fields, Genres, Brands." *Culture, Theory and Critique* 55(2): 159–174.
- Teixeira, Nuno Severiano. 2017. "Portugal e a integração europeia, 1974–2015: uma introdução histórica." In *A Europeização da Democracia Portuguesa*, ed. Nuno Severiano Teixeira and António Costa Pinto, 19–34. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais.
- Wilkinson, Desi. 2011. "Celtic Music." In *Companion to Irish Music*, ed. Fintan Vallely, 117–118. Cork: Cork University Press.

Interviews and personal communications

- Artur Nunes. Email communication with Susana Moreno-Fernández. 23 November 2016.
- Avelino Tavares. Interview by Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco and Susana Moreno-Fernández. Porto, 27 January 2011.
- Bernard Despomadères. Interview by Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco. Porto, 31 May 2014.
- Manuela de Melo, Mário Correia, Júlio Moreira. Interview by Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco. Porto, 8 de December 2017.
- Mário Correia. Interview by Susana Moreno-Fernández. 27 December 2016.