

Article

Portraying Urban Change in Alfama (Lisbon): How Local Socio-Spatial Practices Shape Heritage

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Abstract

Alfama, a neighborhood whose history dates to Lisbon’s origins, held simultaneously the power and burden of representing the “old Lisbon.” It is recognized as a territory that was never a part of the efforts to modernize the city but also through its inherent values. The latter derives exactly from the nostalgic images it projects and through which the city’s history is kept alive. As part of a city’s ecosystem and embroiling global phenomena, the neighborhood faces inevitable changes, affecting both the closely intertwined urban fabric and socio-cultural aspects to shape a landscape of tangible and intangible heritage. Based on a multidisciplinary and humanistic approach, the article portrays the urban change in the neighborhood through a spatial and ethnographic lens, along different scales and angles, contributing with a critical dimension to understanding urban development processes. We examine how Alfama has been dealing with political intentions steered by economic prosperity and global influences. Thus, we look at policies fostering urban regeneration and tourism development and describe impacts on the territory and responses where traces of the community’s resilience emerge. We further discuss how increased tourism led to a “touristification” scenario and implied local responses. Namely, the community has been activating specific mechanisms and leveraging certain socio-spatial features to cope with the process of change. Some examples highlight how the community is adapting practices of space and social interactions to take advantage of the new possibilities brought up by tourism, while defending its core socio-spatial networks, in a continuous process of heritage creation.

Keywords

Alfama; alley; heritage (re)invention; neighborhood resilience; Portugal; urban change; urban heritage

Issue

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1. Introduction

Lisbon is a city of historical, “traditional,” and “popular” neighborhoods. The narrative was constructed throughout the 20th century and intertwined with cultural policies promoted by the totalitarian regime Estado Novo (1933–1974). During this period, a complex process of cultural production of an urban narrative was initiated, associated with the city’s old neighborhoods’—Alfama, Madragoa, Castelo, Mouraria, Bica, and Bairro Alto—“popular” identity. The conception frames demographic

features of the population together with certain occupations, such as street vendors, watermen, servants/maids, washerwomen, sailors, and certain practices, namely feasts and leisure activities, music and dancing, *arraiais*, parades (e.g., *marchas*), street games, and songs (fado; Cordeiro, 2003). The *marchas* (a parade/competition between neighborhoods taking place yearly on the 12th of June in one of Lisbon’s main avenues) illustrate how these practices were endorsed by the municipality and fetched to attract the attention of the entire city (Cordeiro, 1997). Local associations, located within the

neighborhoods, played a role as well in the ritualization of such practices and values, towards the creation of “new” traditions. On the other hand, these “new popular traditions” proclaim a sort of urban status quo, which the city’s old neighborhoods are expected to validate.

Alfama is one of the most emblematic neighborhoods within this “old Lisbon.” Its winding narrow streets and alleys evoke the city’s foundational structure and dictate extreme proximity—even porosity—between the public and private space (street and home). The local associations, highly influential in the 1980–1990s, further fostered a highly dense network of social interactions, deemed as tight as the urban fabric (Costa, 1999; Costa & Guerreiro, 1984). Alfama’s social interactions and “social types” (namely the *alfamista*) and public and semi-public festive and performative practices, such as the Santos Populares fest and the fado, have put the neighborhood at the forefront when it comes to typifying the most “traditional and popular” side of Lisbon. Indeed, recognized as a legitimate representative of the historical side of the city, Alfama legitimates key traits of Lisbon’s history and identity. As a result, it has been attracting visitors from within and outside the city’s borders for over several decades but particularly in recent decades.

The intensification of tourism and the pressure caused by a growing number of visitors have deserved scholars’ attention, often highlighting the most negative and disruptive elements of change. Lisbon, like other cities in Southern Europe (Tulumello & Alegretti, 2021), has been exposed to gentrification, touristification, and financialization (Mendes, 2017; Sequera & Nofre, 2020), buy-to-let investment, and tourism-driven displacement (Cocola-Gant & Gago, 2021) becoming a true “battleground” (Cocola-Gant, 2016) of investment speculation. Alfama experiences a process of urban change led by tourism backed by several other factors, such as urban policies and social vulnerabilities (Benis, 2011; Gago, 2018). However, a response uttered within the neighborhood reveals particular means to adapt to change, by finding new possibilities for leveraging tourism, pushing back initiatives to further promote the specialization of uses, and maintaining and strengthening the relationship with the neighborhood through the local associations.

While tourism can accelerate urban change and increase the risk of heritage erosion, namely through the pressure it presents to the local community in terms of shaking preexisting livelihoods, this is just one side of the narrative. Change is part of a city’s urban development and tourism is just another component of the complexities surrounding this continuous process. Tourism can be beneficial to local communities, specifically from an economic and cultural perspective, as it creates new job opportunities, can strengthen local identities, and supports the reactivation (i.e., fosters validation) of heritage (Spirou, 2011).

Many studies focusing on urban change processes in Lisbon and Alfama were enclosed within a disciplinary

perspective, overlooking potentially overlapping dimensions. They tend to place the neighborhood not at crossroads but already at a point of no return, at the end of a cycle, while proposing advancements in the conceptualization of external triggers for urban change and impacts on the territory or by looking at urban policies and financialization (Mendes, 2017; Sequera & Nofre, 2020), socio-demographic aspects, and parallelisms with other neighborhoods (Baptista et al., 2018). However, the idea of a local response, i.e., the community’s adaptation to urban change, was often disregarded and when mentioned is simplified to report unstructured attempts of backlash. Conversely, relevant sociological and ethnographic studies (Costa, 1985, 1999; Costa & Guerreiro, 1984), depicting the neighborhood in the 1980 and the 1990s shed light on current phenomena. Several stereotypes embedded in a narrative linked to the “authentic,” “original,” and “traditional” result from leaps of change. In this regard, there are multiple examples of top-down initiatives and policies that led to the reinforcement of local identities, while aiming at territorial cohesion and attracting visitors.

In this article, we look at heritage as an inherently socio-spatial construction and focus on identifying practices, which regardless of the pressure of change have been employed in the process of adaptation to tourism, meaning sometimes their own reinvention. Additionally, we identified a research gap that can be tackled through an approach that relies on the complementarity of ethnographic work and spatial analysis, to describe the interplay between tangible and intangible urban values. We understand that tourism is just another variable in the complex process of change an urban environment constantly undergoes. Therefore, our focus is not on the challenges this wave of tourism poses to the neighborhood; rather, we look at how the community has been reinforcing/adapting local socio-spatial practices to respond to some of these challenges. This perspective is innovative because it does not look at the community as a passive actor in an externally triggered process of change; instead, it attempts to describe to which extent and with what strengths they are willing and able to resist/adapt.

Our guiding question is: How have socio-spatial practices reinforced the community’s capacity to adapt and enabled the (re)invention of heritage? Additionally, we question how these practices interact with the tension between the inside and outside of the residents’ homes (i.e., house and neighborhood), advancing the approach of interpreting in-between spaces. This perspective highlights the community’s capacity to adapt due to local conditions, merging tangible and intangible heritage in a continuous process, rooted in everyday life. We look at urban change not by framing negative impacts (even if they exist and have been widely referred to in several studies) but by addressing the community’s response. Finally, we explore the entanglement between urban forms showcased by the *beco* (alley) and the territorialization of certain socio-cultural practices.

To this end, we focus on three aspects of urban life: the role of the small scales of the street (Fontes, 2020) in structuring everyday life and enabling socio-spatial practices, the adaptation of those socio-spatial practices in response to challenges brought up by the growth of tourism (visitors and tourist-related uses/activities), and the definitions of inside/outside insider/outsider and how they are negotiated within the neighborhood at several borderlines and scales (e.g., the home and the narrow street, the neighborhood, and the city).

The methodology employed is qualitative and multidisciplinary, combining urban planning and urban anthropology. Fieldwork is the main source of data in this research and includes spatial data collection (photographic materials, spatial survey outcomes, and mappings), direct and participant observation, informal interviews, and conversations with locals and visitors. The resulting data was collected, registered, and analyzed in field notes and a fieldwork diary (mainly) between 2018 and 2020. The interdisciplinary approach, bridging spatial analysis and urban ethnography, enables addressing the spatial and social aspects shaping heritage values in this specific territory while grasping the underlying processes of adaptation to urban change.

In the next section, we briefly introduce urban change in relation to tourism growth. The following sections are devoted to presenting the cases, aiming to portray different forms of adaptation to change and heritage creation processes. In Section 5, we propose an analysis based on structuring aspects of urban life in Alfama and advance a conceptualization, defining and identifying mechanisms of resilience. Section 6 is devoted to final remarks and underscoring key takeaways.

2. Urban Change Accelerated by Tourism

By looking at statistics provided by Statistics Portugal (2005, 2020), we perceive a rapid growth of tourism in Lisbon around the time the first author conducted fieldwork in Alfama (2018–2020). Lisbon Airport presented 10.4 million visitors in 2004 and 15.7 million in 2019. The number of tourists staying in hotels reached 21.6 million in Portugal (2019), 25.2% of those within the metropolitan region of Lisbon (about 5.4 million). In 2004, the numbers were 10.9 million in Portugal and 20.5% of those in Lisbon (2.2 million).

Alfama is a magnet for urban tourism. Due to its inherent features and practices, the neighborhood is recognized for representing foundational aspects and myths around the city's identity, which extrapolate to a Portuguese identity narrative, recalling the simple life of the working classes and the hidden beauty of everydayness (Araújo, 1939). While tourism is not a new activity in the neighborhood, due to the accelerated growth of visitors in Lisbon, Alfama has been in the spotlight by becoming one of the main tourist attractions. The situation has been labeled a touristification scenario (Baptista et al., 2018; Gago, 2018) as the neighborhood undertakes

a process of transformation, which has led to the specialization of uses, producing monofunctional structures of commerce and services, exclusively oriented to the satisfaction of the visitors' expectations/needs. In the process, the neighborhood's dynamics were affected; for instance, the local community became gradually deprived of accessing services and the housing market and consequently, vulnerable to experiencing tourism-driven displacement (Cocola-Gant & Gago, 2021).

In several contexts around the globe and restated in the case of Lisbon (Mendes, 2014) and Alfama (Benis, 2011; Costa, 1999; Gago, 2018), the cause of gentrification has been traced back to urban renewal policies. The historical core of Lisbon, including the downtown area and Bairro Alto, undergoes similar changes. Notwithstanding, there are particular manifestations of impacts, specific to each of the city's neighborhoods (Baptista et al., 2018; Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017; Gago, 2018; Mendes, 2016). The growth of tourism in Lisbon, which statistics demonstrate is linked to urban strategies and policies fostering urban renewal, enabled an ideal scenario for the sprawl of short rental accommodation.

To describe how tourism led to urban change in this neighborhood, we have been pointing out key aspects, but we should still refer to the lack of capacity or willingness the local community presents to resist change. We challenge this view by pointing out that together with a low capacity to face the pressure of change, there is an adaptation process in motion. This is still valid when, in the aftermath, many residents left the neighborhood where they feel they belong, struggling to push back the growth of the phenomenon or/while finding ways to get profit out of it.

3. The *Beco* as an Enabler of In-Between Spaces

Alfama and Mouraria are considered reminiscent of Lisbon's medieval times due to their street network layout (França, 2008). It consists of winding narrow streets, which adapt to the castle hill's topography and are structured to gradually filter access to the inner core of the neighborhood. Particularly in Alfama, this filtering occurs firstly at the neighborhood scale and secondly at the quartier scale, where the small scales of the street, showcased by the *beco*, can be found. The scale of these streets and alleys, together with the scale of the buildings within, presenting one door one home after the other, produce the need to negotiate privacy as a primary value to inhabit this territory (Fontes, 2020, p. 135):

Curtains create a fluttering and sometimes ineffective barrier towards the domestic space. Opened windows and shutters reveal the entire space from the living room to the kitchen, where someone is preparing lunch, betrayed by the sounds and noises of pots, pans and crockery being operated. Just before lunch and dinner, one can expect to be embroiled into experiencing someone else's domestic life from the street.

While walking around the neighborhood, the sound of the television makes it almost possible to follow the news. The smell of food invades the streets, not only from the restaurants in the surroundings, but from all over. Kitchens and home-cooked meals are exposed by the sense of smell, revealing their existence inside the buildings around. The picturesque scale in the neighborhood allows the simultaneous perception of multiple events of a similar nature. At each step, one perceives a new recipe fresh from a nearby oven or stove.

In this context, certain socio-spatial practices have been activated or recreated to cope with the growth of tourism. Thus, we deem it relevant to explore how local practices were leveraged by the community while adapting to a touristification scenario and, additionally, we advocate that they project the future of the neighborhood as traits of its tangible and intangible heritage.

The threshold (*soleira*) and the wicket (*postigo*) are key elements of the small buildings' facades' design. Beyond aesthetic value, they simultaneously highlight a border between the house and the street and present a possibility to overstep it (Figures 1–3). The threshold is an ambiguous space between the interior and the exterior, as it is often appropriated by the resident to keep some personal belongings, as well as by those passing by (e.g., to sit). As for the wicket, it enables an additional source of natural light, especially praised considering the narrow and dense fabric, but it is also a key element in the interactions between the neighbors (Figure 3). Usually, neighbors are not admitted into the domestic and private space, rather they belong in a secondary circle, within which the basis for ordinary interactions is established at the border between the house and the street. In this way, the norms shaping the community's expectations

in terms of social interactions are established. Neighbors meet, greet, talk, and gossip using these two architectural features as enablers of particular forms of social interactions and porosities between private and public spaces.

The border between private and public space appears extremely relevant not only due to the narrow proportions (of the homes and streets) but also because of the meanings the community builds over it. As domestic spaces turn to the outside, inhabitants institute control over space by adding barriers to protect privacy and redrawing the border with public space in a very dynamic manner. The concept of territorial depth applies as it encompasses measuring control over public space, by focusing on identifying barriers that enlarge the border to private space in an attempt to manage privacy and scrutinize access (Habraken, 1998).

In the case of Alfama, territorial depth was characterized by the thickening of the border space between the home and the alleys, fostered by the proximity in which these two separated but mergeable worlds coexist. It is defined through subjective barriers, which imprint control over space based on explicit or implicit presence (i.e., self or personal belongings), implying scrutiny and protecting one's home privacy (Fontes, 2020). Moreover, dwellings on the ground floor are especially exposed to this form of ambiguous permeability between public and private realms. At the ground floor level, the proximity to the street is not only obvious but also unavoidable. Therefore, living on the ground floor entails specificities converging on the issue of privacy and its need to preserve it. The idea of a domesticated street (*calle domesticada*; Monteys et al., 2012) depends only so much on the functions installed there, whereas the density of activities and the porosity between public and private spaces are paramount to bringing the street alive. In Alfama, living on the ground floor heightens the exposure to



Figure 1. Door wicket and threshold, Alfama, January 2020.



Figure 2. Door wicket, Alfama, February 2019.



Figure 3. Neighbors talking through a door wicket, Alfama, January 2017.

particular dynamics that occur at the border between the house and the street (Fontes, 2020).

The Beco do Surra is paradigmatic for finding potted plants at buildings' front doors, resembling small gardens. This practice (not exclusive to this alley and not exclusive to this neighborhood) is enacted by two neighbors, whose street appropriations nourish a friendship based on their devotion to these plants (Figure 4). Beyond the display of decorative elements animating the street view, this practice is a mechanism for managing the border without public space. It materializes and symbolizes an additional barrier, creating a sort of semi-private in-between space for interacting with the outside. Other practices observed by the author Catarina Fontes, such as sweeping the street in front of the house, displaying furniture (Figure 5), or drying clothes (Figure 6) express similar forms of control over public space. Through them, local inhabitants project norms and values, i.e., implicitly state what can be shared in public space and what is kept private, towards shaping cultural patterns.

When we observe the universe of Alfama's alleys, the particular meanings of community-driven socio-spatial practices imprinted on the territory stand out. Alleys are not exclusively ways of enabling access, but they are cumulatively living places in the extension of the house. The street might become a "shared living room," where socialization takes place the same way it could happen inside one's home, should this be the "social contract" (Fontes, 2020). The thickening of the border, simultaneously merging and separating in and outside, finds expressiveness at the scale of the neighborhood, because of a relative consensus based on which the community's experience of living in close proximity is structured. Additionally, it provides a separation between visitors and residents due to a territoriality process. This also allows for distinguishing the neighborhood from its sur-

roundings, as it appears circumscribed within the radius that these socio-spatial practices reach (Fontes, 2020).

While residents and tourists co-exist, their roles do not merge. Those who belong are able to decode norms and meanings for social interaction, while those who are visiting are identified as foreigners. For those admitted as part of the community, the limits to domestic space are asserted in the interpretation of more or less physical/symbolic borders, although their negotiation is an uninterrupted and dynamic construction. Due to sheltering socio-spatial practices generating unique meanings, the alleys are at the grassroots of urban heritage creation. This process runs in parallel with the admission of visitors (tourists).

3.1. The Extreme Case of Santos Populares Fest

The need to negotiate boards between public and private space on a daily basis becomes ever more pressing in the month of June. Yearly, in this month, a street fest takes place and takes over Lisbon's neighborhood's everydayness. Alfama is one of the main stages for the event or series of events, organized by the local community i.e., families, friends, and neighbors, in a partially spontaneous and improvised manner.

The Santos Populares festivities work as a mechanism for the cultural exaltation of historical neighborhoods in the city and are produced with a high intention of being presented to the outside, to visitors (Cordeiro, 1997). In Alfama, the aim to attract tourists and visitors oriented towards economic gain is assumed by the community (Costa & Guerreiro, 1984).

The festivities include several moments, however, in this article, we will focus on the *arraiais*. An extreme simplification could mean describing the *arraiais* as a music and food fest invading the neighborhoods' alleys. In fact, they are a cultural celebration through which



Figure 4. Beco do Surra, Alfama, November 2017.



Figure 5. Largo de São Miguel, Alfama, August 2018.



Figure 6. Beco da Cardosa, Alfama, January 2018.

the community revives, reinforces, and expresses to visitors traces of a common identity. During this time, the neighborhood turns, in an even more categorical way, to its streets. Particularly, to appropriate the aforementioned in-between space, revalidating the elastic thick border between the house and the street (Figures 7 and 8). The mechanisms employed to mediate the transition between public and private space enlarge the in-between space towards an extreme situation (during the fest). The renewed meanings express particular ways residents and visitors interact within this borderline space, when the neighborhood turns (even more) towards its narrow streets and squares, offering the multiplication of the places to eat, sit, and dance, due to temporary improvised stalls, pieces of furniture that compose a chaotic and cheerful atmosphere for socializing:

The Beco da Corvinha and the Escadinhas de São Miguel towards the square were the heart of the party. The density of stalls and *retiros* followed the entire route in the direction of the square, allowing everyone to get drinks and food. Some were specially built to include small makeshift dining rooms with long tables and mismatched chairs. There was no room for competition, the attractiveness this party signifies to the neighborhood is undeniable. Although expected and accepted at this time of the year, the amount of people gathering throughout the narrow streets and crossing them at a slow pace, while eating, drinking and dancing to the music resembled a massive invasion of the neighborhood. Erupting from a light and cheerful atmosphere, some family tensions were perceivable, especially dealing with running the improvised business. In one of the stalls, at the end of Beco da Corvinha, the service was informal. Husband and wife split efforts between the counter (installed next to the parents'/in-laws' house) and serving the

unpretentious tables. They also shared the tasks in the grill, installed at a corner of the alley. The single page menu was available in Portuguese and English. The service was rather messy; the woman brought dishes and the husband came and removed them explaining “my father-in-law already complains that I broke all the dishes, the sardines come on the bread.” Then came sardines on the bread, with plates and he clarified the inconsistency “that’s it, how the woman wants it.” There was a constant and frenetic coming and going, bringing and taking whatever was needed at the in-laws’ house—the party’s warehouse. At the end of the meal, the bill was settled and rounded up straight on the table. (Fontes, 2020, p. 139)

Residents are not only the hosts of the party but also host the visitors at their homes within the acceptable limits of their privacy. The description above shows an extreme level of porosity between the street and the house. The rules for interaction are established by those hosting and commissioning an in-between space. However, the dynamics behind it, making this special moment admissible and allowed, are built on a day-to-day basis. The inadvertent creation and daily reproduction of these in-between places of shared consensus set the background for the community fest. Moreover, this is still handled and organized from family to family, from house to house, and turned to the outside. The result is an intense animation of all the arteries at the heart of the neighborhood and a shared experience involving residents and visitors and living between the inside and the outside of the homes, streets, and neighborhood.

During this particularly creative month, residents demonstrate how they excel at exercising control over space by conjuring actions of material and symbolic transformation over it. The latter are supported by local norms and a kind of local ethical judgment reproduced and ritu-



Figure 7. Escadinhas de São Miguel, Alfama, June 2019.



Figure 8. Escadinhas de São Miguel, Alfama, June 2019.

alized at the neighborhood scale. To this end, the porosity between public and private space is not only admissible but also fundamental in the construction of these memorable moments, a part of a collective memory.

4. Ladies Selling *Ginja*, (Re)Inventing Heritage

The *ginja* is associated with a specific area around Rossio (Lisbon) and with the after-work routine. Even nowadays, it is sold in a small shop and drunk at the counter or around the corner. However, its consecration as Lisbon's drink seems linked to the standardization of certain practices as traditions in order to animate tourist activities. In Alfama, some retired ladies had an increase in their monthly rent and found a way to compensate for the additional expense. It all started after one of the Santos Populares fests. Some ladies decided to continue selling drinks at their doorsteps to people passing by. This practice, common during the festivities, was extended throughout the year, as visitors continued crossing the neighborhood's narrow streets and the opportunity to expand the business arose. With the increasing number of tourists and the consolidation of the *ginja* (also known as *ginjinha*) as the typical drink in Lisbon, an idea became a current practice (Fontes, 2020).

Later in the summer of 2018, there were more and more ladies selling *ginja* spread throughout the neighborhood, either using the doorsteps immediately at their homes or transporting privately owned umbrellas and tables to establish a stall at a strategic point (Figures 9 and 10).

The two main squares, especially positioned to maximize the profit, became a stage of disputes over the right to establish informal stalls in private spaces. Indeed, local power needed to intervene in the attempt to regulate the practice after the summer of 2018. Around this time, the practice was no longer exclusive to older women. Nonetheless, it was still personified in the neighborhood's women, dressed in colorful aprons and equipped with colorful kitchen towels to sell the idea of a home-made typical liquor to whoever wanted to believe it.

While the practice was embraced by tourism, its authenticity might be questionable. No doubt it became a tourist experience, having several tour guides arranging with the women the day and time to visit their doorsteps and making it a highlight of the tour. On the other hand, these ladies were acquiring the *ginja* from the same source and further selling the idea of a homely produced good and locally rooted tradition, €1 a tiny plastic cup filled with constructed ideas sold to the outside. The neighborhood's narrow streets are a key feature. The closeness to public space together with the residents' flexible interpretation of a border create and multiply the possibilities to leverage in-between spaces. This particular practice, rooted in the *arraiais'* improvised informality of commercial exchanges, was reinvented in light of the new values and circumstances. Furthermore, it proliferated, as accepted by both local residents and visitors, towards shaping a new tradition.

In adaptation to change, brought around by the increasing demand/chance for tourist activities, the selling *ginja* practice is a reinvention of the informal selling



Figure 9. Escadinhas de Santo Estêvão, Alfama, July 2019.



Figure 10. Beco da Cardoso, Alfama, December 2018.

practices taking place during the fest and everyday social appropriations in the narrow small streets. Perhaps witnessing the establishment of this socio-spatial practice was witnessing the start of a tradition carved locally and employing existing mechanisms.

5. Fado, the Experience of Locality

Fado is a genre of urban popular song, which dates back to the 19th century (Nery, 2010). It emerges bound to territorial roots. Both the location for its performance, always associated with the names of the historical and typical neighborhoods of the city—Alfama, Bairro Alto, Mouraria, and Madragoa—and the meaning of the performance itself, composed by verbal, musical, facial, and bodily expressions, and the place's ambience (Castelo-Branco, 1994) translate into ways of communicating with the outside, comprehending complex and more or less rigid systems of codification and providing "commercial openness" balanced out with the preservation of its authenticity. Moreover, the "popular" sociability is bound to fado's practices, as it is mostly performed in the neighborhood's taverns, but also in streets, small squares, alleys, and local associations (*coletividades*; Costa & Guerreiro, 1984).

These popular urban spaces (*coletividades*) promoted the merging of social classes due to the spatial and social context enabling authentic performances. The oldest and most vulnerable districts in the city—today's old Lisbon—were then populated by migrants, coming from other cities to work in the industry that settled to live in modest old buildings. It is also worth mentioning that fado is "identified and associated with a woman who meets the conditions to project herself as her founding myth: a prostitute Maria Severa" (Brito, 1999, p. 26), who lovingly relates to an aristocrat, Count of Vimioso. This relationship, dating from mid-19th century, symbolizes the encounter between contrasting classes and performance spaces—the tavern and the palace, and the "articulation between the two camps that oppose the social pyramid, aristocracy and people, and draws two trajectories that fill to this day the history of social and cultural practices of fado, and the means in which it is produced" (Brito, 1999). In other words, this tension between the representations of the authentic to outsiders, inspired by the idea of a romantic relationship immersed in the night of the poor, decadent, dark, and shady neighborhood fosters the narrative placing fado as a performative form of inter-class (and intercultural) communication.

Fado has always been an object of tourist consumption, cumulatively by aristocrats and bourgeois of the same city, tourists on the road, all of them outsiders to the neighborhood. Indeed, it plays a significant role as a tourist attraction, as this kind of popular music is a powerful symbol of local cultural identity. Gray (2011, pp. 144–145) calls this subgenre, "place-name-fado...whose lyrics celebrate aspects of the city of Lisbon

and its neighborhoods," meaning that "Lisbon exists almost symbiotically with the musical genre of fado; endless fados celebrate the city, literally singing it into affective sonorous being" (Gray, 2011, p. 142). Indeed, the history of Lisbon (after the 19th century) could be written alongside fado's history, as fado is embedded in Lisbon's cultural *patine* (Suttles, 1984).

In Alfama, the informal practice of fado, sometimes clandestine, has never died, namely within local associations or in the most iconic taverns (Gray, 2011, p. 149), places between the public and the private (Foroughanfar, 2020). Similar to the alleys in the sense that they function as in-between spaces, they simultaneously promote the merging and separation between private and public spaces and spheres of life in the neighborhood. Furthermore, just like the fest in June they also enlarge the neighborhood's borders towards the city by particularly opening it to the outside and contributing to its "visitability" (Costa, 1999). In the following description, we portray such practices in the present:

I walked down to Adicense to join the sports club/local association's 103rd anniversary commemorative lunch. At 1 pm, the long tables were prepared and the members together with family and friends had just begun to sit. The atmosphere was familiar; cooks, photographers, fado singers, athletes and partners communicated enthusiastically before the president kicked off the event. Representatives of other local associations who had competed in tournaments were also present. At my table, the conversation revolved around the nostalgia of childhoods lived in the neighborhood: the fado *castiço*, the gatherings, the *matinés* at Adicense, and the Carnival. In the meantime, the fish pasta was served with steak on the bread (*bifana*) as an alternative. Trophies were handed over to the athletes; there were surprises and tributes to several characters of the club, which elevated the session to a very emotional level. Some were led to tears when reliving childhood moments and the importance of the club in their personal and professional trajectories. Then fado began in an appropriately emotional atmosphere. First, the musicians holding the Portuguese guitar and guitar take their places to play along with performances of several singers (*fadistas*). After the first songs, there was a break to sing, for the third time, congratulations to Adicense, without forgetting any of the other birthdays at the event. Then came the rice pudding and birthday cake. Two more *fadistas* followed. One of them thanked the club for the tribute paid to him in honor of his 45-year career in Fado; in gratitude, he made himself available to sing, pro bono, on any occasion at the club. After the last performance of the afternoon, the president announced that the board had decided to cover the lunch for everyone, generating a general emotion. Many stood up to make donations. (Fontes, 2020, p. 204)

Nowadays, fado's popularity, deeply emplaced in the city soundscape (Gray, 2011), was amplified by its international validation through the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (2011). It is mostly performed in tourism-oriented places, done professionally and sometimes animated with the help of folkloric dances. *Casas de fado* as well as restaurants are examples of the latter, whereas taverns (*tascas*) still host amateur fado: "One feels how to sing, based on a personal experience of locality, as felt in relation to neighborhood, to the city of Lisbon and to a sense of Portugal's place within the rest of the world." (Gray, 2011, p. 142). The Museum of Fado, installed in one of the main squares of the neighborhood, represents the ultimate border with the outside since local inhabitants recognize this facility as merely tourism-oriented (Benis, 2011).

6. Urban Heritage: Old and Reinvented Practices

In order to situate these socio-spatial practices in terms of what they represent to the neighborhood and city's identity—urban heritage—our analysis focuses on three structuring aspects of urban life in Alfama.

Firstly, the crucial importance that the small scales of the street (Fontes, 2020) held in structuring everyday life, particularly by managing a constant tension between public and private spaces, which impacts the ways residents, as insiders, interact with visitors—outsiders (Vidal, 2014)—in a continuous reinvention of meanings for accessibility, proximity, and soft culture (Gray, 2018). This is a defining aspect when it comes to introducing Lisbon, as a historical city based on the authenticity features of its traditional and picturesque neighborhoods also characterized by a sense of commonality among neighbors and acquaintances involved in interpersonal networks, which define communities (Lofland, 1998). The fado and Santos Populares fest are perhaps the most prominent examples of heritage value, however, the core components of a heritage landscape entail the small-scale streets and homes pushing domestic life towards publicly accessible spaces and resultant practices of space. Authenticity, a defining element of heritage, consequently, derives from the link between performative practices and territorial context.

Secondly, the territorialization of sociocultural, performative practices bound to these alleys. It is manifested either in a perceivable continuity with the past while adapting to new times (fado, Santos Populares fest), or reinvented to create "new traditions" while re-appropriation existing practices and leveraging new opportunities brought up by tourism (the ladies selling *ginja*).

Thirdly, the visitor's role in the reproduction of practices experienced in the interplay between the inside and outside. This "elastic frontier" (Fontes, 2020, p. 109), acts simultaneously in two dimensions, i.e., it enables the socio-spatial conditions to an exacerbation of proximity towards an extreme level, while fil-

tering access to the neighborhood's core, enclosing the most private mechanisms of social life, namely those related to domestic life. The frontiers between public and private space unfold into several dimensions of urban life—commercial/economic, spatial/social, and symbolic—to create in-between spaces at various scales (Fontes, 2020). Contrary to the idea of a community-neighborhood closed in on itself, we perceive that in-between spaces leverage the connections to the outside and become a condition for the survival of certain local practices. Besides, they have been shaping this territory while managing the featured narrow space and setting limits on privacy and social interactions. These processes occur as well in other historical neighborhoods (Cordeiro, 1997). These neighborhoods of Lisbon are symbolically constructed as visible, visitable (Costa, 1999) long-lasting tourist objects featuring the neighborhood's name and a homogeneous identity, not completely real, not completely false but intentionally projected to the outside.

Mechanisms of resilience are the adaptation process local socio-spatial practices undergo to respond to change, in order to defend privacy and in a context where the street is understood as an extension of private space. They establish borderlines and emphasize the tourist's role as a visitor—Tourists and local inhabitants are not living together but rather side by side. They can also signify profiting from tourism, leveraging tourism to acquire an additional source of income or a connection to the neighborhood when the home has been settled elsewhere, namely using the local associations as in-between spaces.

Our reflections on how socio-spatial practices shape urban heritage mirroring the community's resilience to urban change point out (a) the imbrication between tangible and intangible urban dimensions of heritage, towards an integrated vision, which comprises built environment and culture, urban fabric features, sociocultural and representational practices, and how they contribute to the definition of "picturesque" and "traditional" referred to as "popular" in the case of Lisbon's historical neighborhood; and (b) the interplay between inside and outside the neighborhood, which is tackled from two perspectives linked to the relationship between local residents and visitors. The *alfamista* becomes a particular style of urban sociability (Costa, 1999), although originally it is a rural immigrant who has adapted to and/or reinvented a certain framework of local interaction. The local associations, fado, and the Santos Populares fest function as socio-spatial platforms by linking the neighborhood to and with the outside becoming in-between spaces.

The socio-spatial practices can be divided into those that happen within the neighborhood, enabled by small scales of the street network (Fontes, 2020) and those that connect the neighborhood to the outside, strengthening the inhabitants' voice to claim certain control over externally induced urban change. In the first

category, we find mechanisms that mediate the transition between home and street and establish a borderline of what is acceptable in terms of pushing one's home privacy; the second includes mechanisms that strengthen the community by connecting it and simultaneously distancing it from the rest of the city.

We argue that these practices were and are, per se, part of the neighborhood's heritage landscape because they are generating meanings that are specific to this place. Meanings are imprinted on tangible features of the urban fabric and evoke intangible practices, expressing local values performed and established through everyday life. Therefore, Alfama's socio-spatial practices contribute to its "uniqueness," in many ways a synonym of authenticity.

7. Conclusions

Alfama was described in the 1990s as a "popular" neighborhood (Costa, 1999). In this context, the adjective "popular" emphasizes how features of a community add meanings to territories. The term "popular" stands for the unquestionable and ambivalent bond between inhabitants and the inhabited space. The sense of belonging the community manifests is strong enough to entangle the neighborhood's descriptions with the values it imprints on it. This is particularly relevant to express the meaning of heritage as material representations of the territory appear described through their relation to intangible practices and are also amplified due to a mutual contextualization of meanings. Indeed, the fear of voiding contextual meanings by disregarding the link between community and space is a background story for researchers and heritage practitioners, who expect and anticipate or just believe they witness an irremediable process of change.

In this article, we examine urban change triggered by tourism while focusing on the adaptation of local socio-spatial practices towards describing community-led resilience mechanisms, as artefacts of urban heritage. The case of the ladies selling *ginja* is paradigmatic. Even if it is relatively recent, it comprehends traits of local identity, by deriving from the appropriation of enabled in-between spaces. Moreover, this case is an example of how change is a condition in urban environments and responses often entail the reinvention of socio-spatial practices. Indeed, while the mechanisms of resilience mirror in a straightforward manner the uniqueness of Alfama, the triggers of change are mostly external and affect the whole city. Regardless of focusing on the macro or on the microscale, we might find that the origin is a common one; however, this does not imply that local meanings and impacts of the phenomenon are completely predictable or redundant.

This expression of locality linked to the entanglement between the urban fabric and social interactions acts as a generator of heritage because it embroils local socio-spatial practices that translate into local cul-

tural identities. Thus, (fostering) their projection into the future is, per se, safeguarding urban heritage and might mean accepting the assimilation of old and reinvented practices in a continuous process of heritage creation.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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