

# Overseas music in the soundscapes of the cerrado: the captivating Fado in the state of Goiás and in the Federal District, Brazil

**A música D'Além Mar nas paisagens sonoras do cerrado: a envolvimento sentimental do Fado em Goiás e Distrito Federal**

**La musique d'outre-mer dans les paysages sonores du cerrado: l'envoûtant Fado dans l'État de Goiás et dans le District Fédéral, Brésil**

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## Abstract

Wrapped in the webs of an urban geography, a memory, or a tradition, the unclear origins of Fado date back to the 19th century, to episodes experienced in the alleys of Lisbon or in the aristocratic halls, between marginal people and nobles. When Fado became an UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, this Portuguese sound art reached all continents, entering different landscapes and territories around the globe. As a sign of an internationalization process in time and space, this article reflects on the presence of Fado in cities of the Brazilian cerrado in the state of Goiás and the Federal District. Using the qualitative method, the investigated scientific publications in depth: Valente (2008), Barreira (2010), Boscarino Júnior (2010), Cantero (2011), Monteiro (2013), Nunes (2013), Ulhôa (2013), Santos (2020), Silvestre (2015). Theaters, venues, and restaurants are the foundations of the presence of this Portuguese musical genre in the cities studied, with emphasis on its developments in the metropolitan regions of Goiania and Brasilia.



**Keywords:** Caldas Novas. Goiânia. Brasília. Region.

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### Resumo

Envoltas nas teias da geografia urbana, da memória ou da tradição, as origens pouco claras do Fado remontam ao século XIX, a episódios vivenciados nas vielas de Lisboa, ou nos salões aristocráticos, entre marginais e fidalgos. Assim, ao tornar-se Patrimônio Imaterial da Humanidade pela UNESCO, essa arte sonora lusitana alcançou todos os continentes do mundo, ganhou diferentes paisagens e territórios do espaço global. Nesse contexto, como sinal de um processo de internacionalização no tempo e espaço, este artigo apresenta uma reflexão sobre a presença do Fado no cerrado brasileiro, mais especificamente em cidades do estado de Goiás e Distrito Federal. Assim, no que tange ao embasamento teórico deste manuscrito, os procedimentos investigativos iniciaram pelas leituras aprofundadas das publicações já produzidas - Valente (2008), Barreira (2010), Boscarino Júnior (2010), Cantero (2011), Monteiro (2013), Nunes (2013), Ulhôa (2013), Santos (2020), Silvestre (2015) -, sendo este preparado a partir do método qualitativo. Os resultados mostram que teatros, espaços de eventos e restaurantes são os alicerces para a presença do gênero musical lusitano nas cidades do cerrado, com destaque para os desdobramentos nas regiões metropolitanas de Goiânia e Brasília.

**Palavras-chave:** Caldas Novas. Goiânia. Brasília. Região.

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### Résumé

Enveloppées dans les trames d'une géographie urbaine, d'une mémoire ou d'une tradition, les origines floues du Fado remontent au XIXe siècle, à des épisodes vécus dans les ruelles de Lisbonne ou dans les salons aristocratiques, entre des marginaux et des nobles. Lorsque le Fado est devenu un patrimoine culturel immatériel de l'humanité de l'UNESCO, cet art sonore portugais est arrivé à tous les continents, en entrant dans des différents paysages et des territoires du monde entier. Dans ce cadre, en tant que signe d'un processus d'internationalisation dans le temps et dans l'espace, cet article réfléchit sur la présence du Fado dans les villes du cerrado brésilien de l'État de Goiás et du District Fédéral. On utilise donc dans ce manuscrit la méthode de recherche qualitative, faire dialoguer avec Valente (2008), Barreira (2010), Boscarino Júnior (2010), Cantero (2011), Monteiro (2013), Nunes (2013), Ulhôa (2013), Santos (2020), Silvestre (2015). Les résultats de cette recherche montrent que les théâtres, les espaces événementiels et les restaurants sont les fondements de la présence de ce genre musical portugais dans les villes étudiées précitées, notamment dans les régions métropolitaines de Goiânia et Brasília.

**Mots-clés:** Caldas Novas. Goiânia. Brasília. Région.

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## Introduction

Wrapped in the webs of an urban geography, tourism, memory, or tradition, the unclear origins of Fado date back to the 19th century, to episodes experienced in the alleys of Lisbon or in the aristocratic halls, between marginal people and nobles. Transformed into a marketable product, Fado became a UNESCO Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2011. This Portuguese sound art has abolished borders on a continuous discovery journey (SILVESTRE, 2015) and reached all continents, entering different

landscapes and territories around the globe. In this internationalization process, after Fado was nominated an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the tourism department of Portugal “reinforced the role of Fado in the internal and mainly the external promotion of the country, being aware that Fado is one of its main touristic assets” (SILVA, 2015, p. 46). Fado is not only the content that gives voice to a certain city, but a shaping element of the Portuguese identity.

Fado is “today an artistic expression of a unique multidimensionality: it is the song of Lisbon, Portugal... and the world” (RODRIGUES, 2016, p. 9-10). Silvestre (2015, p. 264) points out that although it is “known all over the world and other peoples and languages try to sing it, something is and will be unchangeable: the home of Fado is Portugal, and its cradle, Lisbon”.

Thus, “current Fado musicality is perhaps a combination of all the factors that have been added to it and multiplied more than two centuries ago. The current music scene is the result of this creative plurality” (ROSAL, 2018, p. 299). Therefore, the revival of Fado in the 21st century and the growing urban remodeling of contemporary Lisbon, “whether on behalf of tourism, gentrification or the (re)registration of local identities, transform the interest in the relationship between music and urban space in an important factor in the study of cities”(SÁ, 2015, p. 51).

Moreover, “music is a great vector to strengthen ties and cultivate alliances. Fado, as a symbol of the Portuguese identity, is trying to enter Portuguese-speaking markets” (SILVA, 2015, p. 59), but it has been captivating a growing audience beyond the so-called Lusophone community. As a sign of this internationalization process in time and space, this study reflects on the presence of Fado in cities of the Brazilian Cerrado in the state of Goiás and the Federal District.

Fado was a peculiarity of the Portuguese urban scenario, and today it is part of everyday life and leisure, entertainment and gastronomic areas. The geography of the Brazilian Cerrado converges historical, social, economic and cultural factors. According to Chaveiro (2008, p. 95), this convergence is “in movement and can be action – and creation”. According to Gratão (2010, p. 297), the Cerrado has an “exuberant nature, a flowing source of multiple forms and contents” and of Cora Coralina's unsilent verses.

This study's theoretical framework comprises publications by Silvestre (2015), Rosal (2018), Prieto and Fernández (2017), Valente (2008), Barreira (2010), Cantero

(2011), Valente (2013), Monteiro (2013), Nunes (2013), Ulhôa (2013), among others, whose readings were our first investigative procedures. These authors provided us with a rich interdisciplinary conceptual reflection.

We adopted a qualitative method focused on the theoretical details of hard copies and electronic studies. The access to electronic documents, including online texts published in newspapers and entertainment pages, were relevant to this study methodology. We found reports/publications/news reports on the existence of traditional Portuguese music in the Cerrado.

Campos and Vasconcelos (2018, p. 101) state that the information available on the “Internet allows its users to be life-long learners, whether they are aware of it or not, by engaging in abundant research and communication processes.” Therefore, the electronic sources provided current textual information about Fado music in cities in the state of Goiás and the Federal District.

### **Fado, the overseas music: an interdisciplinary theoretical approach based on Brazilian and foreign authors**

No The most rigorous studies about Fado, its origins and repertoire emerged in the first decade of the 20th century. However, only at the end of this century, the national identity “gained much prominence among critics, journalists, politicians and, above all, in the academic world” (SILVESTRE, 2015, p. 2).

According to Silva (2015, p. 73), this music is “an instrument for building a cultural and tourist mark with an international impact, as far as tourists are potential consumers”. This globalization process is certainly remarkable for artistic activities, such as Fado. Based on this comprehension, Sá (2015, p. 59) points out that, throughout the 20th century – to the beginning of the 21st century – “Fado became one of the basic cultural activities for the competitiveness and development of the Portuguese capital's trademark compared to other global cities”.

Silvestre (2015) states that Fado started to play the main role in several renowned theatrical performances in 2000. Amália Rodrigues appears in this historical process. She is considered a metaphor for the Fado revolution, because she started a

new path and traced new directions and new perspectives of study and analysis of Fado in its relationship with Portugal and the world.

Therefore, it is up to everyone – poets, musicians, composers, singers, researchers or mere Fado lovers – to preserve this heritage, whose tradition runs on the sap of this musical genre and vibrates through the strings of a electric guitar . This musical genre has been praised to the presente

[...] thanks to the commitment, creativity and character of many of its creators, from poets (popular or erudite) to composers, musicians, interpreters, researchers, and permanent popular support. The word "Fado" refers to feelings that translate pain, suffering, longing, which are structuring elements of the Portuguese people. (SILVESTRE, 2015, p. 2).

Fado has a very simple melodic structure; in its origins “it valued the interpretation of those who sang/told it, invoking the communion between the interpreter, musicians, and listeners (ROSAL, 2018, p. 290), hence the phrase that we still hear today: Those who listen to Fado are as singers as Fado singers!". When Fado is sang, it expects the silence and complicity from those who listen to it. When there is noise in the room,

[...] they often call people’s attention: [...] “Silence! Fado will be sung!” For Fado singers, silence in the room is more important than clapping after the presentation. This ritual characteristic makes Fado performance a collective celebration. That is why we can also talk about emotional sharing, rather than a spectacular art. (ROSAL, 2018, p. 295).

This the way “Fado performances have often begun in Lisbon and in other corners of the world. In Santos, an Atlantic city crossed by the Tropic of Capricorn, the same silence is required” (VALENTE, 2008, p. 7). Fado music is traditionally played with two instruments, the viola and the Portuguese guitar – the latter has a fundamental role. However, the Fado we hear today has lost a lot of its narrative character, which described daily life aspects or contradictions of the society (ROSAL, 2018). In this theoretical reflection, Fado

[...] has an added importance in the Portuguese cultural context, due to its national and international prominence. Fado is often called an “authentic” and “pure” music genre, and it means more than the word itself assigns. Considering that Fado has been an expression of the Portuguese culture for over 150 years, no one is indifferent when they hear a Fado singer singing poems “from the heart and soul” (as this is how Fado should be sung) with years of history or simply improvising verses just written or invented (RODRIGUES, 2016, p. 2).

Prieto and Fernández (2017, p. 164) clarify that “Fado is not sad, as sadness is another thing; get close to it to enjoy something that you will find inside you; it is a new and intimate feeling.” Considering this rich, interdisciplinary and complex theoretical framework, we could not write this paper without including Brazilian authors’ research studies on this overseas music. Fado is also a traveler, especially due to the immigration movements of Portuguese people, foreign researchers, and cultural tourists.

Therefore, we highlight the studies developed by Valente (2008), Barreira (2010), Boscarino Júnior (2010), Cantero (2011), Nicolay de Souza (2012), Valente (2013), Monteiro (2013), Nunes (2013), Ulhôa (2013), and Santos (2020). Barreira (2010) points out that many poems, songs, and allegories refer to the meeting of Brazil and Portugal, which have common cultural aspects and academic interests.

Valente (2008, p. 10) defines Fado as a traveling song and highlights “its ability to translate itself over time to stay alive in the soundscape”, emphasizing its poetic license. Nicolay de Souza (2012, p. 67) states that the “Portuguese cultural heritage is found in almost all Brazilian cities, and Fado is in some of them, found in Santos, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Quissamã, which maintain the tradition”.

Boscarino Júnior (2010, p. 515) demonstrates that, in Rio de Janeiro, Fado achieved its highest popularity between “1950 and 1970, a period in which several radio programs emerged aiming at the local Portuguese community, in addition to Fado houses, typical restaurants, regional houses, television programs, among other communication spaces”.

“The ‘traditional’ Fado iconography is widely known even by those who do not have Portuguese ancestry: the black shawl, the indefectible accompaniment to the Portuguese guitar, a half-light stage.” (MONTEIRO, 2013, p. 146). This characterization is not totally seen in Fado performances in venues of the Brazilian

Cerrado: some musicians perform wearing formal clothes, but they are not similar to the traditional costumes of Portuguese Fado singers.

According to Monteiro (2013, p. 161), "the universe of Fado expands by reprocessing its traditional forms, hybridizing itself with other formats and musical matrices". Valente (2013) believes that the presence of Portuguese immigration through music in the Brazilian cultural scene can be tracked by collecting the names of artists who go on tours in Brazilian cities and their repertoires.

“In other words: by knowing the soundscape established by the Portuguese in a detailed way, other particularities about Brazilian culture may be known” (VALENTE, 2013, p. 171). According to Ulhôa (2013), in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Portuguese immigrants in Brazil were proud of being Portuguese because of Fado. The main Portuguese sound art allowed thousands of Portuguese immigrants in Brazil to see themselves as Portuguese. Thus, there is much to explore about

[...] this narrative of the world called Fado, which may scientifically provide other poetic journeys. This is an inexhaustible topic: [...] a scientific [...] view about the countless lyrics performed by artists such as Carminho, Ana Moura, Maria de Lourdes, Manuel Monteiro, Ana Margarida, Raquel Peters, Amália Rodrigues, Marta Alves, Nuno da Câmara Pereira, Jorge Fernando, and others still lack. This large topic still needs to be studied by geography and other areas of knowledge (SANTOS; 2020, p. 169-170).

Some of the singers mentioned above have already performed in Brazil, and others have built their careers in the Brazilian territory. In the core of these reflections, Santos (2020, p. 169) still argues that “in Brazil, there are few scientific studies on Fado, a theme that chimes with space, territories, places, and networks.” It is an open and very fruitful field of study for the Brazilian culture.

### **Fado Sound Landscapes in the Cerrado – Goiás and Federal District**

We could not write about Fado music in the Cerrado of Goiás and the Federal District without mentioning Portuguese restaurants, as they are closely linked in this region. The Lusitanian restaurants are where Fado performances take place. According to Rodrigues (2015, p. 27), “today Fado and gastronomy are definitely two symbiotic poles that complement each other's potential”.

These gastronomic spaces are the Fado houses in the Cerrado, an expression of the Portuguese culture with typical decorations, especially in the neighborhoods of the two metropolitan areas of study region, Goiânia and Brasília, and in cities in the interior of Goiás, such as Santa Helena and Caldas Novas, the latter considered the main hydrothermal tourist destination in Brazil. The restaurants in these cities have Portuguese gastronomy in their menus, such as cod, custard tarts, wine, among others.

Sardo (2013) emphasizes that the proximity between different soundscapes of Portuguese-speaking countries puts music in a very particular place in the post-colonial Portuguese context. Composition of a soundscape Nowadays music influences a large number of people all over the world.

Music is a humanly organized sound that manifests itself in the soundscape and finds the basis to emerge and perpetuate “in a profusion of sounds, cultures, and territories with the most different landscapes, generally linked not only to musical styles, but also to group actions” (TORRES, 2011, p. 77). Soundscape originates in the transformation of the environment into culture.

It “can be understood within the cultural landscape. Investigating the soundscape is to highlight the sounds that are part of the cultural landscape, that is, listening to the natural sounds of a place and to the humanly organized sounds presupposes a union between music and geography. Thus, we understand the soundscape as a geo-musical concept. The soundscape has been investigated in different areas of knowledge, which demonstrates the diversity and breadth of listening perspectives of man-made sounds. (FURLANETTO, 2016, p. 349-350).

Based on this investigative scope, we present below some Fado territories and soundscapes in the Cerrado, which may lead future study possibilities. In Caldas Novas, the main Fado house is the Piano’s Restaurante Português, located in the West sector, in one of the tourist districts of the city. The owner of this establishment

[...] was born in Aveiro, northern Portugal. He arrived in Caldas Novas in 2005, as he married a Brazilian woman, and he opened his commercial establishment in 2008 to promote the Portuguese culture. He clarified: “In 2008 I decided to bring my culture to Brazil and opened a business based on the culture of the country I lived in, and brought a kind of gastronomy that was little known in Caldas Novas. We have now 11 years of history.



(Interview with the owner of the Piano's Bar in Caldas Novas, 2018).”  
(SILVA; SANTOS, 2018, p. 3).

According to the owner, the inhabitants of Caldas Novas are his main customers, and the restaurant decoration was inspired by the most traditional establishments in Portugal (SILVA; SANTOS, 2018). The owner is the one who sings Fado. The performances are not scheduled; Fado is sung according to clients' demands. In Goiânia, capital of the state of Goiás, the restaurant Quinta do Minho is the main soundscape of Fado:

The businesspeople Francisco Severo and Eva Minho will hold another edition of “Nights of Fado”, at Quinta do Minho, located at the Metropolitan Mall, Jardim Goiás. Dinners with typical Portuguese music will take place [...] following the Portuguese tradition. Traditional Portuguese Fado will be performed by the musicians Ricardo Araújo and Junior Pita, led by the singers Nani Medeiros and Marly Gonçalves. (FARIA, 2019, p. 01).

According to Faria (2019), Fado nights take place in this restaurant and are scheduled throughout the year. Since the beginning, the restaurant has tried to faithfully reproduce the way this Portuguese musical genre is played and sung “in the Portuguese Fado houses. The restaurant is decorated with towels on the tables and candles, creating an intimate atmosphere of a Portuguese tavern.” The music is played acoustically without any amplification (FARIA, 2019, p. 2).

“One of the most charming places in Goiânia, Quinta do Minho, is a direct reference of Portugal; it offers an impeccable menu and keeps the treasures of Fado nights”. (CURTA MAIS, 2018, p. 2). Santa Helena is another city in Goiás we need to highlight. In the bar and restaurant Sabores de Portugal, clients are sentimentally captivated by Fado, integrating the Cerrado with the Portuguese cultural environment.

In Brasília, the Brazilian capital, only 202 km from Goiânia, Fado shows take place at Sagres Restaurante, in the Asa Norte region. In this Cerrado region, the whole Portuguese atmosphere “shines through the various Fado lyrics that immortalize it” (SILVESTRE, 2015, p. 205), proving that this music also pulses beyond the coastal regions of Brazil. Fado performances also take place in concert halls and theaters in this region.

In our journey to discover a Cerrado that is open to international music, we found out that the most prominent names of this Portuguese music have performed in Brasilia. The website *Dicas da Capital (Tips of Brasilia)* (2017, p. 1) publicized the Fado singer Carminho's presentation in the Planalto Auditorium of the Ulysses Guimarães Convention Center in Brasilia: the singer “takes the stage with her first songs (Fado and Alma) and the success of the album *Canto*, in which she has an unprecedented partnership with Caetano Veloso and his youngest son, Tom .

Mentioning this Portuguese artist, who has marked her international historical path in the Cerrado, Silva (2015, p. 60) comments that the “Fado singer Carminho in particular has been very cherished by the Brazilian public. She had the opportunity to record with the greatest names of the Brazilian music throughout her career.” In 2019, she canceled concerts in the Brazilian capital and other state capitals for personal reasons.

We also need to highlight Mariza's performance in Brasília, who is “a prominent interpreter of the renewed Portuguese Fado”, according to *G1 Globo* (2012, p. 5). Her concert was a milestone that launched the Portuguese presence in Brazil that year. According to Silva (2015, p. 67), “the Fado singer Mariza is considered the most international Portuguese artist since the sadly missed Amália Rodrigues.” The presence of Fado in Brasília has now reached its peak.

The examples we gave show that the gastronomy production chain associated with Portuguese music in the Cerrado is based on online communication, articulated in a network of territories, inhabitants, tourists, and companies towards the “production, consumption, support and expansion of this activity” (CORIOLANO; BARBOSA, 2012, p. 153). In this link between Fado singers and Fado houses in the Cerrado, De Paula (2017) highlights Nadine Brás's performances. She is from Faro, a city in the Algarve region, in the south of Portugal.

Her concert *Quase um fado* has taken place in Brasilia. Despite her repertoire focused on Fado, her concert, which she started to create in 2014, mixes the Portuguese genre with new styles, by adding the influence of young people who give a new face to Fado songs. [...] Her intention is to walk through the history of Portuguese music and culture. “The concert is a trip through Portugal, due to its roots and musical traditions, with Fado as the only destination”. (FURLANETTO, 2017, p. 2-3).

We found a relationship between traditional Portuguese music and the Cerrado dated from the first decades of the 21st century. We also found Portuguese restaurants in Brasília, Goiânia, Cidade de Goiás, Pirenópolis, among other cities, that are only restaurants, and not venues where Fado singers perform, which indicates that the Fado music has emerged especially between the metropolitan regions of Goiânia and Brasília.

Based on the reports and the news we studied, we believe that Portuguese gastronomy is a fundamental foundation for Fado and has been developing its own identity. This scenario emerges from the new relationships between owners, business workers, inhabitants, and tourists, which give rise to peculiar, cultural territories and landscapes and brings to the Cerrado an international soundscape.

In this scenario, Fado fulfills its role "through the poetic voice, music and memory that are anchored in space representations." (NUNES, 2013, p. 219) It always reinvents ideas and values, as our examples have demonstrated. Before finishing this article, we need to highlight two great artists. The first one is the singer and composer Antonio de Pádua da Silva, known as Pádua Goiano, author of the song Fado de Vila Boa. This song lyrics bring the nostalgia, literature, nature, tradition, and charms of the first capital of the state of Goiás. It reflects the history of the society in the state, with which Pádua identifies himself. His work undoubtedly attests to a strong connection between Fado poetics and the urban aspect of the Cerrado region.

The second one is the singer Irene Coelho, one of the main Fado singers in Brazil. She was born in Rio Claro (interior of the state of São Paulo), a city that is in a transition area between three biomes: "species of Cerrado, Atlantic Forest, and Paludosa Forest (swamp forest)." (ZAMPIN; RIBEIRO, 2013, p. 30).

This Brazilian artist with a Portuguese heart was a singer, broadcaster, and publicist, a figurehead for the Portuguese colony (CANTERO, 2011). Cantero (2011, p. 96) argues that "Irene Coelho is a giant artistic heritage of everything related to Portugal in Brazil" and she has done a lot for Fado. On this matter, Silvestre (2015) states that Fado, usually segregated, gained a new dimension, freeing itself from the matrix stigma. Today, it is the song of a country, the form of expression of a people in its peculiar way of understanding the world. We must preserve this literary and musical heritage, like any other art in the world.

This article shows that traditional Portuguese music is also present in different urban areas of the Brazilian Cerrado, especially in the state of Goiás and the Federal District. Fado has established itself and has been part of gastronomic establishments, enchanting inhabitants and tourists in Lisbon – the “cradle of Fado”, as Silveira (2015, p. 264) states – as well as in other corners of the world, including the cities of the Brazilian Cerrado.

### **Final remark**

This article is based on an interdisciplinary reflection, including geography, tourism, literature, art, history, and other fields. We identified the presence of Fado in the urban spaces of the Cerrado of the state of Goiás and the Federal District. We chose this region for a primary research because some cities have an immense cultural, economic and social value for their population.

In the literature review, most Brazilian researchers and scholars who aimed/aims to understand the connection between Fado and Brazil and even Portugal are from Portuguese universities. We brought a range of Brazilian authors who contributed a lot to the scientific knowledge of this musical genre and are references of a musicality that arrived in different stages, landscapes, places, and Brazilian territories.

These researchers mainly studied the trajectory of Fado in Brazil as a Portuguese popular song and its relationship with Portuguese immigrants established in the country during the 20th century. These studies also included new approaches to tourism, urban geography, art, economics, literature, music schools, and other areas of knowledge. These theoretical contributions confirm the interdisciplinarity of this article.

In the context investigated, Fado appears mainly in gastronomic spaces and in places where people get together, especially in a region with a high rate of urbanization in the Brazilian Cerrado, between the metropolitan landscapes of Goiânia and Brasília. The taste for Fado has left the coast towards the interior of Brazil, appearing in the publications of the main newspapers, social networks, and different electronic entertainment media in these cities.

In the current context, when Fado was considered an UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, on November 27, 2011 in Bali, Indonesia, the Lusitanian music reached the commercial territories of the Brazilian Cerrado and other corners of the world. This allowed people to travel into the depths of a cultural and musical poetics that had its origins in the neighborhoods of Lisbon, whose contemporary soul is in the daily lives of the Portuguese people, in poetry, in the waves of the radio Amália FM, and in the tourist market.

### Research Funding

This study is partially funded by the Brazilian Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) – Finance Code 001 (Partnership no. 817164/2015 CAPES/PROAP). This work is the result of the research project: “Tourism and Territorial Strategies in the Cerrado: destinations and cities in Goiás”, developed at the State University of Goiás - UEG.

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**Artigo recebido em: 05 de janeiro de 2022.**

**Artigo aceito em: 17 de novembro de 2022.**

**Artigo publicado em: 01 de janeiro de 2023.**