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# The Portuguese Way to Santiago and Henrique Moreira's Public Art: The impact of Heritage Education and universal accessibility on an itinerary through the city of Porto<sup>1</sup>

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Abstract. This article explores the problem of accessibility in cultural heritage and its impact on the tourism of the Portuguese Way to Santiago, namely in the city of Porto. We analyse the econometric data that guarantee an objective result regarding universal accessibility and the applicability of a facilitating language along the proposed itineraries promoting heritage education and integrated advancement of information technology to improve the quality of life of citizens and society. The many and varied typology points of interest available to the hiker/pilgrim/tourist in the historic core of Porto allow us to extend the theme by interconnecting with the works of the sculptor Henrique Moreira as identity points of a UNESCO heritage city. We can conclude that the intersection of the Portuguese Way to Santiago and Henrique Moreira's public art in Porto offers a captivating journey enriched by heritage education and universal and inclusive accessibility. By combining tradition with innovation, the itinerary provides a dynamic platform to explore cultural heritage, artistic expression, and the evolving relationship between past and present.

Keywords: Portuguese Way to Santiago; cultural heritage; information technology; universal accessibility; heritage education; Henrique Moreira; city of Porto.

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### **1** Introduction and background

Spread over centuries, the Galician heritage of the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela unites European culture, converging in diverse ways. The Central Portuguese Way and the Coastal Portuguese Way, between the city of Porto and Santiago de Compostela, are two of the many possible European routes, and some of their characteristics are presented here, especially their universal accessibility. In the vicinity of these routes, the hiker establishes a close connection with a rich set of heritage elements that greatly enhance his trip, whatever his ambition. As part of the research project we have been developing [6], we present a new vision of the collection of points of tourist and cultural interest available in the city of Porto, interconnected with some of the works of the sculptor Henrique Moreira: one of the authors who contributed significantly to the identity image of the city of Porto and who has not been appropriately valued. Your role, as a researcher, scholar, or professional in the fields of heritage education, tourism, and cultural preservation, is crucial in ensuring the recognition and preservation of such invaluable cultural heritage.

The itineraries of Santiago de Compostela have deserved a dedicated contribution from various entities over the centuries. The origins of the cult date back to the ninth century with the discovery of the tomb of the Apostle of St. James [4, 14]. Regardless of the religiosity assumed, the walker presupposes accessibility throughout his journey, an issue that crosses the barriers of physical [9, 10, 11] and that must be strongly driven by information and the necessary integration [17].

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda guide member countries towards the functionality of universal accessibility, an inclusive and sustainable community through an interdisciplinary approach, without limits or inhibitions in access to services, information, products, physical space, or knowledge, ensuring a sustainability plan and periodic management [8]. The concept of universal accessibility also provides for a continuous concern with the language of communication; the care for a clear, concise and attractive sharing of information in the most varied technological media so that the reader can easily find what he is looking for and that he understands the content of his reading so that he can benefit from it [5]. Succinctly, the vision of accessibility must be comprehensive and contextualised to human reality, given the fact that "we are physically diverse, we perceive the world through all our senses, and we have different ways of understanding knowledge" [8:25].

An evolution of mentalities and focus allows us to investigate and evaluate the heritage set in the paths to Santiago, define the relevance of each factor, and establish a diagnosis and strategic plan from the point of view of Accessible Tourism [9,10,11] an influencing factor at the cultural, social and economic level in the territories [10].

The possibility for the pilgrim or the tourist to digitally share his experiences [15, 16] can be considered a (symbolic) aspect of universal accessibility. Nevertheless, the information shared by the *Oficina del Peregrino* [18] increasingly visible the growing bond of the community with the original intention of the message of Compostela, the

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European religious and cultural convergence [13], favouring its extension from the religious to the gastronomy, from the built to the landscapes and from Europe to the world.

In the twentieth century, the artistic interpretation of the sculptor Henrique Moreira was one of the fundamental links between the modernisation of the medieval nucleus of the city of Porto and the public circle, providing a composition of living portraits of history and tributes to different members of national society [2]. Considering that Porto's urban image, where a large part of the sculptor's heritage is inserted, is constantly changing due to its risks of natural, socioeconomic and cultural origin [1], an opportunity for active and appealing attitudes towards heritage is identified here, assuming the presentation of guidelines for the valorisation and conservation of the legacy associated with the sculptor. When talking about the works of Henrique Moreira, the focus is mainly on public art that is part of the city's space: spaces that generate value and therefore deserve research, conservation and preservation [2], as well as dissemination, reinforcing the discussion on the need to concretise more about the work of the sculptor Henrique Moreira, fostering heritage education. In this management strategy, the action on universal accessibility is highlighted through inclusive programming, care in signage and other pertinent information in all spaces. In this way, it is intended to provide a message of celebration that is more influential in multicultural opportunities and integration.

Thus, this article was structured throughout the research and analysis of the concept of universal accessibility and its degree of awareness in the educational, tourism and cultural aspects. In methodological terms, an attentive and careful analysis was carried out, and as a review of the literature on the Camino de Santiago - Coastal Portuguese Way and Central Portuguese Way - on the life and work of the sculptor Henrique Moreira, on various cultural heritage and the theme of universal accessibility applied. Statistically, the data provided by the Oficina de Acogida al Peregrino of the Cathedral of Santiago [18] were considered. From there, it was possible to move to the level of analytical data collection, such as accessibility to information, accessibility to architecture, number of walkers and the starting points valued in recent years, transposing quantitative excerpts to tabular models, in order to qualify and clarify the relevant information. To analyse the applicability of the proposed Itinerary of Public Art by Henrique Moreira in the city of Porto, a selection of heritage assets of the town and the author was made, geographically positioned in the vicinity of the Camino Portuguese de Santiago, based on criteria such as tourist value, use, cultural and emotional values. Each point was visited and analysed under the guidance of the Diagnostic Form for Accessibility Assessment that we prepared in Excel format, enabling its econometric treatment. Two new templates were created from the original: the Diagnostic Form for the Assessment of Accessibility to Public Spaces and the Diagnostic Form for the Assessment of Accessibility in Catering.

# 2 An accessibility plan and a possible roadmap for a common heritage

The Central Portuguese Way, between Porto and Valença do Minho, is 127 km long. The theme of universal accessibility in this route is also influenced by recent research, conditioning the real use of all the natural and heritage resources available along its route [10]. The Coastal Way is 149.5 km long between Porto and Valença. With a recognised and uniform identity, this route establishes a close link along the north coast. This path was enhanced through an inter-municipal project, improving a set of infrastructures and creating a strategic plan for communication and support for the walker [7, 3]. The Oficina del Peregrino's statistical information [18] reveals an increase in the total number of pilgrims of Portuguese nationality and exponentially increasing numbers of pilgrims of other nationalities (Fig. 1) in this Way. Likewise, the overall number of pilgrims, in terms of the type of travel, has increased exponentially (Fig. 2).

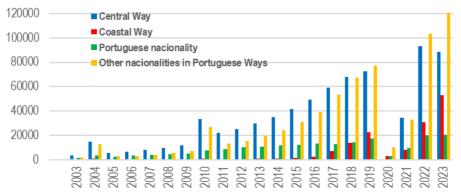
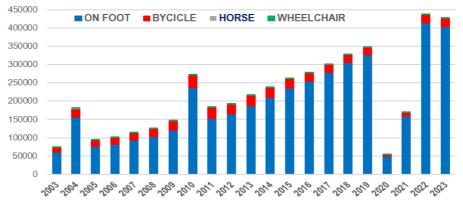


Fig. 1 - Data from Portuguese nationality pilgrims vs. total values of the Portuguese Way (Coastal and Central) from 2003 to 2023. Source: Author from [18].



**Fig. 2** - Evolution of pilgrims in all the Ways according to the type of dislocation from 2003 to 2023. Source: Author from [18].

As a general rule, in both sections, the information accessibility is limited to the existence of directional signs, with variants on the Coastal Portuguese Way, and also using the usual yellow arrows and various versions of scallops or shells. However, information signage is scarce on both routes [12]. Architectural accessibility has many weaknesses in its multiple aspects, both in places of worship and hostels. It should be noted that 10 of the 11 hostels in our study's sample regarding the Central Way were adapted for the current function, with particular attention to maintaining the historical character of the building, but were not adapted in the sense of its accessibility [11].

A common geographical point between the Central Way and the Coastal Way, the city of Porto and its historic centre UNESCO Heritage have been one of the landmarks of choice for the place of departure of the pilgrims as a direct consequence of the dynamism of the tourist aspect of the city and its mythical geography [7]. There has also been a significant increase in the supply of accommodation. The Way in Porto is entirely urban, with a medium degree of unevenness and the only Reception and Monitoring Centre for the walker on the entire Coast Trail, located in the Chapel of Our Lady of Truths, readapted for this purpose [12]. The city offers a vast cultural, religious, remembrance and historical route consisting of 47 elements awarded as "Heritage of the Way". The interest of each component is aroused not only by the associative images but also by their brief historical and artistic framework. Other information such as address, telephone number, and respective hours were also considered, not referring to telephone contacts. This growing interest in the search for the Camino Portuguese and the city of Porto reinforces the social duty to investigate, analyse and promote a whole set of guidelines and opportunities that integrate these itineraries. In this sense, this analysis favours a connection between 3 assets: the Santiago Way, the city of Porto and the sculptor Henrique Moreira, presenting a proposal for the sustainable integration of 10 more points of interest in the Camino Portuguese (Table 1).

New points of interest		Elements we inglinght (" opening dates)		
1	Church of St. Anthony of the Congregados	Two altars in Ançã stone under the entrance choir, one to worship St. Anthony (left side) and the other to Our Lady Help of Christians (right side).		
2	McDonald's Imperial Allies	At the entrance is a bronze creation of the Imperial Eagle, a brand of the former Café Imperial, by Henrique Moreira.		
3	Fountain of Youth	1929* - Marble statue of a nude, smiling female figure seated on a bronze column. The column is flanked by four bronze masks [1].		
4	Abundance	1931* - Bronze statue depicting three young boys, naked, happily supporting a bowl of fruit (Abreu, 1999).		
5	Porto City Council	1957* - 6 <i>Cariátides</i> on the right side of the building and the 2 Atlan- teans that imposingly flank the main entrance of the building (Abreu, 1999).		
6	Trinity Church	1945* - Cast in bronze with a gilded patina and integrated into the high altar, this work illustrates the moment of Pentecost, with Our Lady flanked by the Apostles.		
7	Building of the news- paper O Comércio do Porto	1929* - 8 national provinces of Portugal's ultramarine were personified in granite, heading the building's platband [1].		

 Table 1 - Elements chosen for the stages of the proposed itinerary. Source: Author.

 New points of interest

 Elements we highlight (\* opening dates)

8	Guarany Coffee	1936* - Indium chiselled in bas-relief in marble. It is on the wall on the right side of one of the café's entrances.
9	Lopo Xavier Wool Shop	1940* - 2 colourful high reliefs inside, recreating the family atmosphere and portraying the fabric and wool business.
10	MMGG	1928* - Memorial monument located in Carlos Alberto Square [1].

The selection of the new heritage elements took into account several factors such as: the highlighting of the cultural values of the city of Porto, considering its historical locations, the aesthetic and architectural aspect; the association of emotional values of the city's identity, continuity, symbolism, religious accreditation and social influences in the sculptor's artistic expression; the patrimonial elements associated with use values, such as educational, social, economic and political; the lever of tourism value as a driving element, economic enhancer and dissemination of the 3 assets mentioned; taking advantage of the synergies generated by the services that already exist in the city of Porto, such as accommodation, catering, tourist office, access roads, reception knowhow; the capacity for sustainability of conservation and maintenance actions of the works by the respective guardianships and private owners of the spaces; the diagnosis of universal accessibility, emphasizing the factors of communication, information and education. The journey that we propose through the Itinerary through Public Art by Henrique Moreira and other city heritage begins at the intersection where the Church of Misericórdia, the station of S. Bento, and the Church of St. António dos Congregados are located (Figure 3).



**Fig. 3** - Illustrative map of the Coastal Way and the Central Way intersection, with the Public Art Itinerary by Henrique Moreira. Source: Author.

The analysis of all the variables considered during the diagnostic forms allowed the schematisation of key parameters, facilitating a qualitative conclusion about the degree of accessibility of each of the 10 points (Table 2).

			Architectural issues			Communication Issues		
Typology	Poi	nts of interest	Exterior access	Direct access	Access to the toilet	Identifi- cation of the work on-site	On-site identifi- cation of the au- thor	Digital infor- mation about the work and/or the author
Places of worship	1	St. Anthony of the Con- gregados Church	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Pl	6	Trinity Church	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
Restau- rant snares	2	McDonald's Imperial Al- lies	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative
Res	8	Guarany Cof- fee	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive	Positive
	3	Fountain of Youth	Positive	Positive	-	Negative	Negative	-
	4	Abundance	Positive	Positive	-	Negative	Negative	-
pace	5	Porto City Council	Positive	Positive	-	Negative	Negative	-
Public Spaces	7 Building "O Comércio do Porto"		Positive	-	-	Negative	Negative	-
	9	Lopo Xavier Wool Shop	Positive	Negative	-	Negative	Negative	Positive
	10	MMGG	Positive	Positive	-	Negative	Negative	-

Table 2 - Degree of accessibility of each of the 10 points.

Facilitated by the city of Porto's urban, central and contemporary composition, the external accesses to all points are balanced and adapted to the various audiences. The same does not happen when the objective is to access the interior of the spaces. Both places of worship flank their entrances with small staircases and no access alternatives, placing solid barriers to entry for the public with little mobility. In none of the places of worship was it possible to autonomously identify the existence of toilets. The two food outlets and public space No. 9 have small steps at their entrances, without the existence of facilitating and autonomous access alternatives. Despite the limitation identified above in its direct access, restaurant space No. 2 has an elevator available to the public, promoting accessibility along its two floors and facilitating access to the toilets. Poor accessibility to the toilet area of restaurant space No. 8 was also identified, considering that the only means of access is by stairs. This staircase is made of marble, with no non-slip material.

Table 3 presents some suggestions to make these points, which are elementary to the city, more accessible to many local and tourist audiences and thus enhance each one's valence. Focusing our analysis on the information, we identified severe gaps in information accessibility. Poor visibility of information transposed on paper in places of worship, and lack of orientation maps were identified. The information the Trinity Church provides on its exterior is found in small display cases (glass without anti-reflection), indeed to protect from the weather.

Typology	Points of inter-		Architectural issues			
rypology	est		Direct access	Access to the toilet		
Places of worship	1	St. An- thony of the Congrega- dos Church	Placement of a ramp on one side of the main stair- case or at the alternative access to the sacristy and confessional.	Inclusion of signage in the interior com- plying with the basic standards of infor- mation accessibility (text, Braille and au- dio)		
	6	Trinity Church	Placement of a ramp on one side of the main stair- case	Inclusion of signage in the interior com- plying with the basic standards of infor- mation accessibility (text, Braille, audio)		
Restaurant	2 McDon- ald's Impe- rial Allies		Placement of a ramp at the entrance			
spaces	8	Guarany Coffee	Ramp placement at one of the two entrances	The feasibility of including elevators or adapting other accesses unavailable to the public should be studied.		
Pubic space	9	Lopo & Xavier Wool Store	Placement of a ramp at the entrance			

 Table 3 - Summary of suggestions for improving architectural accessibility. Source: Author.

Depending on the angle of view, the reflection of natural light makes it impossible to read correctly. In the case of the Church of St<sup>o</sup> António dos Congregados, the times of the masses and a brief historical overview of the space are found inside the church, behind the entrance door, and with reduced lettering. There is a total absence of information in any support, namely digital op, in all the spaces evaluated, except the QR Code for the availability of the menus, only in the restaurant spaces.

In the evaluated worship spaces, there is no exhibition of the respective collections or historical information alluding to the city's memory. In the case of the Church of St<sup>o</sup> António dos Congregados, the Order is interested in creating a museum space. Except for restaurant space no. 8, all the remaining 9 points of the itinerary do not have any reference to the works of the sculptor under analysis or to the historical framework of the work.

Considering the identity context of the itinerary's points and the mutual cultural, social, and tourist benefits, the proposals presented in Table 4 will be appropriate in total partnership with the responsible entities and following a common framework to create an identity image of the itinerary itself. All information boards must respect the same image and material approach.

In restaurant spaces and places of worship, it is proposed to place an identity symbol outside the space, facilitating communication along the way. In advance, the visitor is informed that there is a work by Henrique Moreira to visit that place. This same symbol should include a QR Code, facilitating the artwork's location inside the space, an incentive for a visit and as a tool to access complementary information about the work (and eventually about the space). It will also be necessary to provide information when the place is closed and to promote heritage education.

**Table 4** - Summary of proposals for solving the identified information accessibility problems.

 Source: Author.

Typology	Points of interest		Informational Insertion Suggestions
Places of	1	St. Anthony of the Congregados Church	Place a plaque outside the building's entrance indicating the art- work's name, author, and inauguration date. Provide a Braille version and complementary information through a QR Code (textual and audio). The plate's choice of material should con- sider the continuous exposure to climatic factors and the local
worship	6	Trinity Church	environment. Considering that both places already have a place of worship identification plate, the possibility of adapting it should be re- garded as avoiding excessive exposure of signs on the façade of the buildings.
Restaurant Spaces	2	McDonald's Impe- rial Allies	Considered the "most beautiful McDonald's in the world," it is opportune to study the feasibility of exhibiting <i>in situ</i> and on the official website a brief presentation of the space's original func- tionality—Café Imperial—concerning the artistic work of Hen- rique Moreira.
	8	Guarany Coffee	In addition to the existing information board, providing a Braille version and complementary information through QR codes (tex- tual and audio) should be considered.
	3	Fountain of Youth	Placement of a plaque parallel to the public artwork, indicating the name of the work, author, and date of inauguration. Provision of a Braille version and complementary information
	4	Abundance	through QR Code (textual and audio). The choice of hob material should consider the continuous expo-
Public	10	MMGG	sure to climatic factors and the local environment.
Spaces	5	Porto City Coun- cil	Place a plaque outside the entrance of the building indicating the name of the artwork(s), author, and date of inauguration. Provi-
	7	Building of the newspaper O Co- mércio do Porto	sion of a Braille version and complementary information through QR Code (textual and audio).
	9	Lopo & Xavier Wool Store	The choice of hob material should consider the continuous expo- sure to climatic factors and the local environment.

## **3** Discussion and conclusions

Combining the Camino Portuguese de Santiago with Henrique Moreira's public art in Porto offers a rich discovery of heritage, education, and accessibility. The Camino Portuguese, a historic pilgrimage route, intersects with Porto's cityscape, providing a unique backdrop against which to explore cultural heritage. Meanwhile, Henrique Moreira's public artworks add a contemporary dimension to this journey, enriching the experience with modern artistic expressions. Heritage education plays a crucial role in understanding the significance of the pilgrimage route and public art installations. By immersing themselves in the historical and cultural context of the Camino Portuguese Santiago, participants gain insights into the centuries-old tradition of pilgrimage, its spiritual significance, and its impact on the regions it traverses. Similarly, studying Henrique Moreira's work in the context of Porto's artistic landscape fosters an appreciation for contemporary art and its relationship to urban spaces. Universal accessibility further broadens the exploration of this itinerary by offering opportunities for interconnection beyond physical presence. Through the creation of virtual tours, interactive exhibitions, and digital resources, people can access educational materials, historical information, and immersive experiences related to the Camino Portuguese and the work of Henrique Moreira. This accessibility includes diverse audiences, even those who cannot visit the sites in person due to mobility restrictions, distance, or other limitations.

The impact of heritage education and virtual accessibility on this itinerary is multifaceted. Firstly, it fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage, fostering a connection to the past and promoting cultural preservation. Second, it broadens participation by making the experience inclusive and accessible to a broader audience, transcending physical boundaries, and reaching individuals globally. Finally, it promotes tourism and cultural exchange, attracting pilgrims/visitors to Porto and disseminating its cultural treasures worldwide.

Although there are limitations and difficulties in the research, which are related to the scarce studies regarding the practice of universal accessibility by the paths that converge to the city of Compostela, limiting a concrete and attainable strategic plan of the religious aspect with tourism, these limitations and difficulties are increased concerning the future implementation of solutions. Porto's visibility in its aspect of World Heritage and the interconnection proposed in this article would provide a tourist, cultural, and economic-social promotion of the city and the Camino Portuguese de Santiago. It is, therefore, an instrument for constructing a plan to enhance and conserve the heritage of the sculptor Henrique Moreira. This interdisciplinary vision enables its recognition and sustainable management, with the awareness of conservation, preservation, accessibility, and dissemination that local authorities and supervisory bodies should take into account.

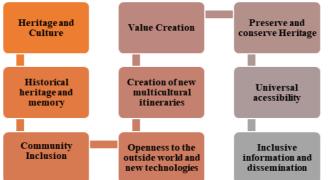


Fig. 4 - Conclusive diagram of the heritage function and the principle of inclusion. Source:Author.

The diagram in Figure 4 illustrates the main conclusion of this article: as a trainer of citizenship and not just as a tourist attraction, heritage should be a growing priority for communities, with the issue of universal accessibility as a central element. The key to success is to adapt the vision of the responsible entities so that they are open to external talent. However, in order to be open to the outside world, it is necessary to understand

it in all its aspects. Strategically making the cultural offer accessible to the entire community ensures that the community will feel increasingly involved and active in and for its heritage in the medium to long term.

We can conclude that the intersection of the Camino Portuguese de Santiago with the public art of Henrique Moreira in Porto offers a captivating route enriched by heritage education and universal and inclusive accessibility. By combining tradition with innovation, the itinerary provides a dynamic platform to explore cultural heritage, artistic expression, and the evolving relationship between past and present. This synergy between the historical route and contemporary artistic interventions enhances the experience of pilgrims and visitors. It strengthens the city's cultural identity, promoting a continuous dialogue between historical heritage and new forms of artistic expression.

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