

# Voices of Empowerment: A Feminist Literary Tour Through Matosinhos, Exploring Florbela Espanca's Poetry

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## Abstract

This paper aims to develop a literary tour in Matosinhos focused on exploring the poetry of Florbela Espanca and her contributions to feminism. The objective is to create a tailored experience that offers visitors an immersive journey into Espanca's world, highlighting her literary works and feminist ideals.

To achieve this objective, the methodology employed includes a literature review to understand Espanca's poetry and its feminist undertones, interviews with local experts and scholars familiar with Espanca's life and work, and fieldwork to explore the cultural and historical and geographical context of Matosinhos.

This paper stems from the project undertaken as a part of ISCAP Master's program in Intercultural Studies for Business at Porto Polytechnic, responding to contemporary trends in tourism that prioritize authentic and personalized experiences over mass tourism. By combining creativity with a niche market approach, the project aims to demonstrate the viability and significance of literary tourism, particularly in celebrating the often overlooked contributions of women writers like Florbela Espanca. Through "FEMME: Exploring Florbela's Matosinhos: a literary tour where poetry and feminism converge," the project underscores the importance of crafting meaningful and inclusive experiences that resonate with travellers seeking intellectual and emotional engagement.

## Keywords

Florbela Espanca · Literary Tourism · Feminism · Experience Economy · Matosinhos

## Resumo

Este artigo pretende desenvolver um passeio literário em Matosinhos centrado na exploração da poesia de Florbela Espanca e dos seus contributos para o feminismo. O objetivo é criar uma experiência personalizada que ofereça aos visitantes uma viagem imersiva ao mundo de Espanca, destacando as suas obras literárias e ideais feministas.

Para atingir este objetivo, a metodologia utilizada inclui uma revisão da literatura para compreender a poesia de Espanca e as suas implicações feministas, entrevistas com especialistas locais e académicos familiarizados com a vida e obra de Espanca, e trabalho de campo para explorar o contexto cultural, histórico e geográfico de Matosinhos.

Este artigo resulta de um projeto realizado no âmbito do Mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios do ISCAP no Politécnico do Porto, respondendo às tendências contemporâneas do turismo que privilegiam as experiências autênticas e personalizadas em detrimento do turismo de massas. Ao combinar a criatividade com uma abordagem de nicho de mercado, o projeto pretende demonstrar a viabilidade e o significado do turismo literário, particularmente na divulgação das contribuições frequentemente negligenciadas de mulheres escritoras como Florbela Espanca. Através de “FEMME: Exploring Florbela’s Matosinhos: a literary tour where poetry and feminism converge”, o projeto sublinha a importância de criar experiências significativas e inclusivas que ressoem junto dos viajantes que procuram um envolvimento intelectual e emocional.

## Palavras-chave

Florbela Espanca · Turismo Literário · Feminismo · Economia da Experiência · Matosinhos

## 1. Introduction

Florbela Espanca remains an indelible name in Portuguese literature where her poetry echoes as a

poignant expression of raw emotion and profound introspection. In the early 20th century, she defied societal norms, crafting verses that resonated with universal themes, etching her name in the annals of Portuguese literary heritage with enduring relevance and significance.

The main objective of this paper is to draw focus on Florbela Espanca, a legendary writer in Portuguese literature who is all but forgotten. This article also aims to explore a literary tourism tour proposal through the eyes of Florbela Espanca and from a feminist perspective, despite her being an openly conservative woman.

The project “FEMME: Exploring Florbela’s Matosinhos: a literary tour where feminism and poetry converge”, presented to obtain a Master’s degree in Intercultural Studies for Business from the Polytechnic of Porto’s Accounting and Business School (ISCAP) served as the basis for this paper. It entails a scholarly exploration of the interplay between poetry and feminism, with a particular focus on the poet Florbela Espanca’s relationship with the city of Matosinhos, a locale of paramount significance in both her personal and artistic realms. Despite Espanca’s profound ties to Matosinhos throughout her adult life, scholarly discourse has predominantly centered on her experiences in Vila Viçosa, thus relegating the former to relative obscurity. Therefore, this endeavor emerges as a pivotal initiative within the cultural tourism sector, specifically within the niche market of literary tourism. Despite Matosinhos’s renown for its gastronomy and leisure tourism offers, literary tourism remains relatively underdeveloped in the city. However, the present paper identifies a plethora of untapped opportunities, particularly those stemming from the exploration of Espanca’s legacy in the city.

The methodology employed, in order to design and propose a literary tour in Matosinhos that delves into Espanca’s poetry and her feminist themes, involved conducting a literature review and comprehensive analysis of Florbela Espanca’s works, supplemented by interviews with local representatives, and field work.

Given that literary tourism constitutes a subset of the broader cultural and creative industries, efforts within this domain seek to foster organic synergies between these sectors by curating distinctive and meaningful experiences. Investment in the cul-

tural and creative industries not only enriches the landscape of experiential offerings but also aims to facilitate transformative encounters for visitors, transcending mere consumption of goods or services.

## 2. Tourism as an Experience: the connection between Economy, Creativity and Literature

Often, pairing the concepts of economy and creativity is not only unromantic but also highly unappealing, as they are commonly perceived as antagonistic, as mentioned by Buitrago and Márquez (2013) in “Orange Economy: An Infinite Opportunity”. However, it’s the connection between economic growth and creativity, the creative and cultural industries that make tourism such a remarkable sector in the national and international economy.

In this sense, companies must start delivering experiences instead of goods and services, as they are no longer enough to satisfy consumers. Experiences are, therefore, the fourth economic offering and a new source of economic value – when purchasing an experience, the consumer not only buys the set of intangible activities and events but also the time enjoying them.

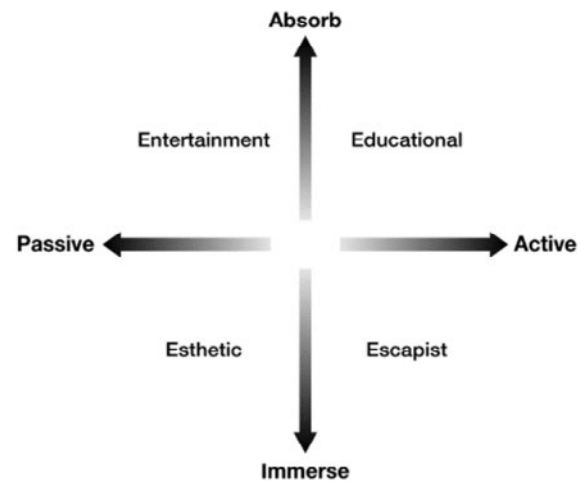
Thus, this fourth economic offering needs to be tailored to each consumer, both psychologically and physically, which means that no experience can be the same for two different people as the sensations are equally unique and depend on one’s physical, mental, and emotional context.

Personalizing experiences can only be achieved by “mass customization” (Pine & Gilmore, 2011), which means that it is crucial to innovate what already exists, instead of mass-producing new goods and services.

Experiences, besides the need to be tailored to the consumer individually, require engaging with the consumer in different, yet compatible, dimensions to have a long-lasting effect – the 4’Es model by Pine & Gilmore (2011) in “Experience Economy: Updated Edition” – Entertainment, Educational, Escapist and Esthetic. These four realms are related to the level of interaction and the level of connection to the environment.

Creativity is, consequently, the engine to create, design and develop memorable, original and individually tailored experiences that meet consumers’ needs, once again, emphasizing the endless oppor-

tunity to value cultural and creative industries and fuel the so-called “orange economy”.



**Figure 1.** The four realms of an Experience. Source: Experience Economy: Updated Edition (2011)

The orange economy or the creative economy refers to the set of economic activities associated with the creation, production, and distribution of cultural and/or artistic content (Buitrago & Márquez, 2013), in which creativity and intellectual capital are the main input to generate jobs and wealth sustainably.

In fact, cultural and creative industries contribute to sustainable economic growth, while keeping traditional principles and preserving a sense of belonging within a community, as they foster the establishment of cultural exchange, intercultural dialogue, and the protection of cultural heritage, while simultaneously being able to integrate in the digital world and benefit from digital advances in technology.

In this sense, it is observable how tourism is also shifting to a more creative practice, increasing the relationship between tourism and creativity. Moreover, creative tourism can be a way of transforming the tourism paradigm and a way of reproducing “mass-customization” into the tourism sector, by modifying the already existent tourism models, delivering to the traveller and tourist a memorable experience and, at the same time, stimulating local economic, social, and cultural development” (Richards, 2009).

Consumers not only demand creativity as part of their tourist experience but also demand to engage

and participate in it, by co-creating and co-designing the experiences themselves, due to the will to be part of it, to communicate and interact with local communities.

Tourists are, therefore, looking for educational and self-development tourism practices, and increasingly avoiding mass tourism destinations, since gaining knowledge has become an important factor when it comes to traveling.

This desire to be part of the community and to understand the local population's perspective allows local communities to contribute to the growth of sustainable tourism practices in their region.

As stated, despite this exponential growth in the tourism sector, the demand for more sustainable and, to a certain extent, niche tourism practices are leading to a greater appreciation of a region's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it must be understood that the delivery of goods and services is no longer enough to captivate and boost the tourism sector, as mentioned by Pine and Gilmore (2011) in the book "Experience Economy: Updated Edition".

This line of reasoning also leads to the growing market of niche markets, such as literary tourism. Literature, therefore, becomes the object of tourist demand, whether it relates to the writer, their literary works, or even the places where they lived, were inspired by, or died (Hoppen *et al.*, 2014).

According to Quinteiro and Marques (2022), literary tourism is motivated by the participants' desire to experience and interact with literary connections related to a place or setting (fictional or real), an author or a literary composition.

Once again, literary works can represent cultural elements of a certain community, allowing the visitor to understand the history and identity of a location, promoting local development, and "[...] cultural hybridization" (Quinteiro & Marques, 2022). Literary tourism, thus, enhances the local culture, by the preservation of the tangible and intangible heritage, as well as investing in the local community.

As a result, literary tourism fosters local growth and cultural hybridization – a synergy of local and worldwide exchanges without being outweighed by the "homogenizing aspect of the global" (Quinteiro and Marques, 2022).

According to Herbert (2001), people are drawn to literary places – a specific location with its meaning

attached to the connection it has to the literary reference (Baleiro & Quinteiro, 2018) – when they fulfil the general and exceptional qualities of a destination.

On the one hand, the general qualities of a location include geographically convenient settings and a wide range of facilities for a more accessible tourism experience. On the other hand, exceptional qualities are the ones that contribute to the attractiveness of the destination by having a strong and deep connection with the author's life more than the location itself.

That being said, even though literary tourism is still perceived as a niche market, broadening to a wider, yet interested, audience will also foster interest in literature, in preserving and protecting local heritage, as well as promoting sustainable and cultural expressions.

The convergence of creative and cultural tourism experiences presents a compelling opportunity to craft a literary route that intricately intertwines the poems and life of Florbela Espanca within the backdrop of Matosinhos, while also engaging with themes of feminism. By leveraging Espanca's poignant verses and her profound connection to Matosinhos, this curated journey offers visitors a multifaceted exploration of the intersection between poetry, place, and gender. Through immersive experiences that plunge into Espanca's literary work and her lived experiences within the city, participants are invited to contemplate the nuances of femininity, identity, and societal norms as depicted in her works. Moreover, such a literary route not only celebrates Espanca's literary legacy but also serves as a platform to amplify narratives of women's empowerment and resilience, thereby enriching cultural discourse and fostering a deeper appreciation for both the artist and the locale.

### 3. The Feminist Movement and Florbela Espanca

How did feminism unfold in Portugal? What were the possibilities for female writers? Did social class have an impact on access to education, writing, and publishing? The answers to these questions are crucial to comprehend how the feminist movement in Portugal enabled the progress of women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in literature and publishing.

In Portugal, the first wave of feminism occurred at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, dedicated to

achieving the right to education, entering the workforce, and consequent economic independence, as well as the right to vote and be elected.

These demands were influenced by the winds of change from the monarchical to the republican regime, which strongly advocated the institutionalization of elections, for example. Even so, Portuguese society was still highly affected by patriarchy, so “one of the essential pillars of political life” (Mariano, 2017) was completely denied to women.

The exclusion of women from the public sphere also resulted in anti-feminist behaviour on the part of society and the media, such as newspapers, books, and Portuguese norms, reinforcing stereotypes and denigrating the term “feminism” by mocking the concept. In fact, due to the lack of understanding of the concept, feminism was a target of hesitation and uncertainty, and, at times, it was also seen as unattainable and utopian (Silva, 1983).

Even though there were numerous claims and issues to address, the feminist movement in Portugal unfolded and developed passively and moderately, without any major revolts or noisy demands, unlike other countries in the European continent. Nonetheless, the feminist movement in Portugal, as it was in different countries throughout Europe, was also dedicated and exclusive to society’s bourgeois elite (Castro & Jesus, 2015).

Portugal was extremely limited by its cultural and socio-political context since the feminist movement was conditioned by the strong presence of the Catholic Church, illiteracy (especially among women), and a slow and unevolved industrial development. Moreover, women had to surrender to the two main roles the Catholic structure of feeling (and Portuguese society) had for them – mother and wife.

Education, therefore, was not a priority for women and, in fact, in 1911, the female illiteracy rate stood at 77% (George, 2022). The progression of women’s education and instruction would challenge and destabilize the concept of marriage and the traditional family model.

Additionally, society also diffused the principle that access to education would masculinize women, causing educated women to be automatically seen as incapable of performing their primordial functions as wives and mothers, which caused a resistance force towards feminism.

Women of the Portuguese elite, unlike their poorer counterparts, insisted on their right to education. This desire extended to leaving behind the confines of the private sphere and actively participating in the public domain alongside men, including joining the workforce and engaging in writing and publishing. Consequently, the literary scene for women was predominantly occupied by elite individuals, despite the limited and precarious access to written culture during the 20th century.

Just as the feminist movement underwent, women initially engaged with written expression passively and under certain conditions, primarily as listeners or readers rather than as active producers of culture (Freitas, 2020).

Frequently female writing careers started in journals, newspapers, or magazines, as these were perceived as inoffensive or even irrelevant to society, making it possible for women to express themselves more freely in this genre of media so that they could have an active voice without being criticized or censored.

The political and legislative context did not facilitate female writers’ work, since the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867 confirmed the subordinate role of the female gender in writing and publishing their literary works, especially to those who were married, as they could not publish any content without their husband’s consent.

In this sense, it is notable how the representation of women in artistic and writing expression is scarce, due to the oppressive patriarchal Portuguese society at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, some women had the privilege and the audacity to stand out for their bravery, courage, and recklessness, as was the case with Florbela Espanca.

Flor Bela Lobo, her original name, was born in Vila Viçosa, in the district of Évora, on 8 December 1894. From an early age, she showed an aptitude for poetic writing, due to her early access to education, becoming even one of the first women in Portugal to attend high school with male peers (Pereira, 2021).

In 1916, four years after she finished high school, Florbela Espanca began to publish her poetry in female magazines and periodicals, such as “*Modas e Bordados*”, starting her writing career.

Unfortunately, her mental and physical health did not go along with her writing progression and so, in

1918, she suffered from an involuntary abortion and multiple moments of mental illness, which contributed to the downfall of her marriage with Alberto Moutinho, whom she married in 1913.

As previously stated, her career began to evolve and so, in 1919, she published her first lyrical collection, the well-known “Livro de Mágoas” and from then on, she wrote and published many other popular books, such as “Livro de Sórora Saudade” (1923) and “Charneca em Flor” (1930).

Florbela Espanca, consciously or unconsciously, had a different attitude, as she let herself be carried away by her emotions not only in a romantic way but also in a fleshly way. Therefore, while she was still married to Alberto Moutinho, she fell in love with António Guimarães, with whom she moved to the city of Matosinhos, in the district of Porto, North of Portugal.

The succession of love encounters was also part of Florbela Espanca and her “amorous sensibility” (Pereira, 2021), which led to adultery, which she committed more than once, divorcing Alberto Moutinho and marrying for the second time with António Guimarães. Only after a few years, in 1925, she divorced António Guimarães and married civilly and religiously in the city of Matosinhos, in the Church of Bom Jesus de Matosinhos, with Mário Lage, one of her former doctors.

Although her origins lie in the south of Portugal, it is a rather overlooked fact that her most decisive years in literary and life terms took place in the city of Matosinhos, where Florbela Espanca lived from the 1920s until her death, by her third suicide attempt, in 1930, on the day she was born.

The publication of her various books was a challenge to the conservative Portuguese population while simultaneously being an awareness of her freedom, autonomy, and independence. Like other female writers, Florbela Espanca also suffered from the lack of recognition of her literary greatness. Although she was noticed, even if this recognition came from negative criticism, critics tried to erase her from the literary movement too.

Furthermore, she challenged the extremely patriarchal system, subverting some behavioural standards imposed on women at the time, even on her literary compositions, since the themes ranged from happiness, sadness, pain, sensuality, eroticism, passion,

and desire – representing women as infinite versions and diversity of roles, which was highly disapproved by society.

However, she never wholeheartedly engaged with feminism or advocated for it. In fact, she identified as a conservative woman, despite endorsing the idea of an empowered, assertive, and liberated woman.

Florbela Espanca’s audacity (and “activism”) went far beyond the way she wrote her poetry, her whole life seemed to be an affront to society. She didn’t surrender to the fate Portuguese society had for women: she wasn’t a mother, she married three times and divorced twice, and she committed adultery – attitudes society didn’t expect from a woman.

And yet, Florbela Espanca did not raise the feminist flag, but she was one of the first women to revolutionize the literary scene in Portugal and also to blaze the trail for her female peers, mainly in such an eagerly male literary framework.

This aversion to the concept of feminism, or almost an anti-feminist perspective, was highly common in Portuguese society and supported by many women in Portugal, as this term was associated with a radical and hysterical movement.

The distortion of the feminist movement was due to the strong presence of society’s misogyny (and, after all, male) perspective, which tried at all costs to ensure that Portuguese women did not, in a way, lose their essence and were never carried away by the foreign winds of change. British women were densely criticized for their supposed extremism and revolutionary noisy behaviour and demands.

For this same reason, Florbela Espanca did not associate herself with the feminist movement but fought to improve conditions for women and the expectations that society had for them. She also shared her convictions in a rather passive and moderate way, as happened with the whole feminist movement in Portugal. In this case, through her poetry, written without taboos, physical or imaginary limitations, giving herself only to what she felt, regardless of whether it pleased the society she was part of.

Florbela Espanca’s feminism was essentially portrayed not just in her life as a woman, but primarily as a writer. Her poetry, renowned for its intricate exploration of the various facets and depths of human existence, particularly the female persona, delved into themes of eroticism, sensuality, love, heartbreak,

pain, and grief. Through her work, she showcased the diverse dimensions of herself and her beliefs as a woman.

According to Silva (2015, p. 16), Florbela Espanca “[...] does not present us a feminist work, but by portraying the quality of being and feeling, she portrays the female figure fully” In fact, the female figure and her desire, sensuality, and passion are mentioned countless times in her poetic compositions, as well as nostalgia, melancholy, pain, and bitterness, indirectly contributing to the expansion and propagation of the feminist movement, albeit in an unacknowledged and even conscious way.

It is from this premise that it becomes vital to revive Florbela Espanca in the literary tourism scenario in the city of Matosinhos, in order not only to broaden this niche market in the city and preserve its cultural heritage but also to understand how 20th-century feminism marked an openly conservative woman.

In order to understand the poet’s impact on the city of Matosinhos and also to understand the value of literary tourism among the population, interviews were used as a qualitative research method. Three participants were interviewed: a representative of the municipality (Câmara Municipal de Matosinhos) and two local people who lived in Florbela Espanca’s house.

Matosinhos influenced the life and work of Florbela Espanca, mainly through the strong presence of elements related to the city in her poems, but also because it served as the setting for her writing. However, Florbela Espanca also influenced the city, and there are now multiple monuments bearing her name and dedicated to her.

Based on the responses provided in the interview conducted with the municipality’s representative prior to the project’s development, which inspired this paper, Matosinhos has several ways to honour the poet, from the “Festa da Poesia” (Poetry Festival) to buildings named after her. Even so, he also mentioned that the way to preserve the figure of Florbela Espanca was through documentary archives open to the public, which demonstrates a passivity in the way Florbela Espanca’s life and work are presented in the city.

In addition, according to the interviews’ results, (Martins, 2023) local people say that there could also

have been other initiatives to keep Florbela Espanca’s name alive in the town, including the preservation of the house where she lived, died, and wrote in the decisive years of her life, possibly becoming a house-museum, which is now private-owned so the town council can not interfere in any changes and transformations the house may go through.

In the interviews, the local population is proud of the impact that Matosinhos had on Florbela Espanca, although they don’t as much about the author.

Even so, there are different initiatives in the city to encourage literary interest, such as “LeV – Literatura em Viagem”, “Encontro de Escritores Matosinhenses” and “Salve a Língua de Camões”, which indicate an openness to literary projects, which could also represent a greater interest in literary tourism projects that actively preserve the name of Florbela Espanca among the local population – paving the way for the following tourism project “FEMME: Exploring Florbela’s Matosinhos. A literary tour where poetry and feminism converge”.

#### **4. FEMME: Exploring Florbela’s Matosinhos. A Literary Tour where poetry and feminism converge**

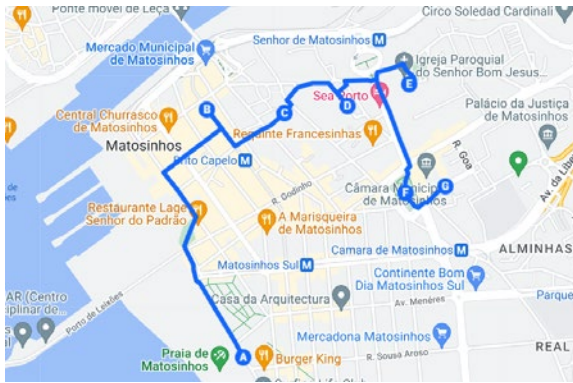
A literary tour is an itinerary with different points of interest (literary places) directly related to an author and/or their literary works (Quinteiro & Marques, 2022), becoming very efficient for tourism promotion and dissemination among travellers as they are designed both for those with previous knowledge of the topic and for those who have not yet learned about the author/literary compositions, arousing the desire to gain that knowledge (Ferreira, 2021).

To efficiently design and develop a literary tour, it is essential to consider several different elements, in order to encourage the introduction of tourism practices in the destination and, therefore, foster economic growth, and employment creation, as well as the protection of local cultural heritage.

“Manual para a Elaboração de Roteiros de Turismo Cultural” by the author Luís Mota Figueira (2013), was the foundation for the creation of the above-mentioned literary tour proposal in the city of Matosinhos, as he divides the process into six different elements to consider when conceiving a route:

1. Preparation;
2. Content ordering;
3. Production of itineraries;
4. Experimentation and testing;
5. Route branding;
6. Marketing strategies.

Thus, the literary tour project “FEMME: Exploring Florbela’s Matosinhos. A literary tour where poetry and feminism converge” has seven stopping points and a total distance of around 3.3 kilometers. The itinerary has a low difficulty level, as the territory is mostly flat, with a maximum and minimum inclination of 36 and 18 meters, respectively.



**Figure 2.** Literary Tour Proposal. Source: Own Elaboration (2023)

This literary tour proposal has the following points of interest:

- A.** Matosinhos Beach – Av. General Norton de Matos;
- B.** Florbela Espanca’s Senior University – Rua de Brito Capelo 168;
- C.** Florbela Espanca’s House – Rua 1º de Dezembro, 540;
- D.** Florbela Espanca Primary School – R. Pombal 4;
- E.** Parish Church of Senhor Bom Jesus de Matosinhos – R. Silva Cunha 107;
- F.** Bust of Florbela Espanca in Basílio Teles Garden – Rua Ló Ferreira;
- G.** Florbela Espanca Municipal Library – Rua de Alfredo Cunha.

This itinerary comprises the above-mentioned route, which will take a total of around 45 (forty-five)

minutes to complete on foot. However, considering the visits to the different sites and their contemplation, as well as the reading of poems proposed for each point of interest<sup>1</sup>, this route could take up to 1h30 (one hour and thirty minutes) to complete.

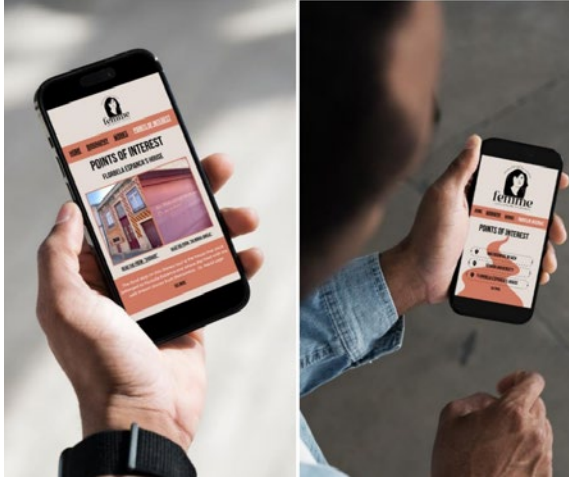
To provide context for this literary walk and help the tourist have a better understanding of Florbela Espanca’s life and work, the main idea is to incorporate textual, visual, and audio elements throughout the whole route in the streets of Matosinhos. This will strengthen the link between the author’s poetic compositions and her feminist accomplishments as a woman in Portugal at the start of the 20th century. In addition, the goal is to create an experience that revolves around Pine and Gilmore’s (2011) 4 E’s model – Entertainment, Education, Escapist, and Esthetic – creating a multi-sensory encounter involving touch, sight, and hearing.

To this end, the main idea was to create plaques and/or QR Codes at the different points of interest alluding to this tour, with the authorization of the Municipality, allowing visitors and tourists would have access to the textual, audio and visual contents which would accompany them through the tour, such as poems, brief descriptions of the places, interpretation of the poems. This would result in the creation of an experience centered around the literary tour, which per se is a sustainable and democratized tourism practice.

Each literary place was chosen either because it has the name of Florbela Espanca in it, such as the Bust, the primary school, the senior university, or the library, or because it was the scenic background of her life or her writing, such as the beach, her house or the church. Therefore, each location would have textual elements (poems) to accompany the literary tour, which were consciously associated with each site according to the theme they portrayed.

<sup>1</sup> Two illustrative poems were chosen for each point of interest, specifically and according to POI sequence. “Tarde no Mar”, “Da minha Janela”, “Versos de orgulho”, “Amar!”, “Vaidade”, “A nossa casa”, “Quem sabe?”, “Ódio”, “Fanatismo”, “Horas Rubras”, “Alma a sangrar”, “Eu”, “Dizeres íntimos”, “Ser poeta”.





**Figure 3.** Digital platform proposal. Source: Own Elaboration (2023)

This literary tour project is, then, intended to have digital and physical strands: while walking through the route, it would be possible to read, learn, and listen to information about the literary places, as well as the monuments and the author's life and poetic compositions to perpetuate the route and create a five-senses experience to the tourist.

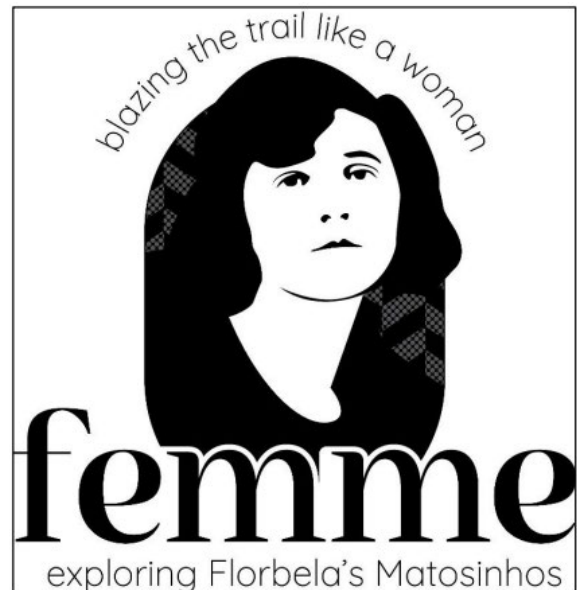
As far as the communication strategy is concerned, it is imperative to define the target audience for the route so that the communication can be tailored to them. Moreover, it was also bearing in mind the target audience that the route proposal was designed and conceived to meet travelers' expectations and needs.

As a literary tourist project, this walk targets literary tourists, who are interested in the author's life and/or literary compositions, as well as high schoolers who already have some previous knowledge of Portuguese literature, senior university students, and also higher education students in the following areas of expertise: Tourism, Portuguese Literature and Gender Studies, as the multidisciplinary and versatility component of the route would give them a deeper understanding of literary tourism, Florbela Espanca, poetry and the feminist movement in Portugal.

The project "FEMME: Exploring Florbela's Matosinhos. A literary tour where poetry and feminism converge" was designed based on the writer's figure, combined with the name of the project and its slogan "Blazing the trail like a woman." The expression "blazing the trail" not only is meant to honor the pioneering contribution of Florbela Espanca in 19<sup>th</sup>

century Portugal but also to play with the word "trail" as this project consists of a literary route. Besides, it was added "like a woman" to resemble the feminist lens presented throughout the tour in the city of Matosinhos.

The logo designed for this project combines text and a drawing to convey its objectives and identity. In this specific project, the design is minimalist, containing only a drawing of Florbela Espanca in the background and the name of the project in the foreground. There is also some texture to the background to allude to the sidewalk present in the Parish Church of Senhor Bom Jesus de Matosinhos. It is important to mention that the logo was made by the local artist Daniel Leal (2023), all rights reserved.



**Figure 4.** Logo and slogan. Source: Daniel Leal, 2023

To understand the context in which this project operates, it is necessary to carry out a SWOT analysis, also to comprehend the viability of the project. In this sense, it was analyzed the project's strengths and weaknesses (internal factors) and also possible threats and opportunities (external factors). Evaluating these four dimensions of the projects, risks and problems can be tackled easily, as well as it facilitates the process of discovering new solutions.

The main strengths are the pioneer aspect of this project in the city of Matosinhos, the digital access, which contributes to its affordability and democra-

tization of culture. When it comes to internal disadvantages, as it is a prototype, it still lacks investments, it would be reliant on sponsors and public funding. However, there are external advantages for this project, such as the increasing demand for sustainable and cultural tourism offerings, a growing interest in women's conditions and status, and partnerships with local authorities. This project, nonetheless, can be threatened by the lack of interest in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century literature and authors and the vast digital tour offerings.

## 5. Conclusions

This literary tour in Matosinhos, dedicated to Florbela Espanca and viewed through a feminist lens, aims primarily to recognize the significance of this female writer in Portuguese literature, both historically and in contemporary times. It proposes to explore the role of women in Portuguese society by examining the life and literary legacy of one of the most eminent writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Florbela Espanca. Concurrently, the tour explored the experience economy within creative industries, such as tourism, in Matosinhos.

This project leads, therefore, to an effective way of fostering the literary scenery of the city of Matosinhos innovatively and sustainably, in a region with several growing initiatives and projects related to tourism and literature.

As previously mentioned, regarding methodologies, a bibliographical review was conducted, analyzing various authors' perspectives on the topic and establishing connections between concepts to create an original and cohesive tour proposal. This process involved applying previously acquired knowledge effectively. Additionally, the design of the literary tour required fieldwork, including interviewing local residents and organizations, visiting different locations, and examining physical materials, even testing the proposed route.

Following the completion of this project, it is evident that "FEMME: Exploring Florbela's Matosinhos. A literary tour where poetry and feminism converge", could serve as an innovative initiative to enrich Matosinhos and its literary reputation. Can Portuguese literature embrace a feminine perspective? Could Matosinhos, typically known for its maritime lifestyle, emerge as a notable destination in literary

tourism? With the development of sustainable, inventive, and inclusive projects, such possibilities arise. This literary route proposal underscores the vast cultural and literary heritage of Matosinhos associated with Florbela Espanca, presenting numerous opportunities waiting to be realized.

However, there were challenges and limitations encountered in the exploration and development of this project in Matosinhos. Communication with the Matosinhos Municipal Council proved to be exceedingly difficult, as there were no knowledgeable personnel available to address interview questions about Florbela Espanca, resulting in vague responses. Additionally, the extensive range of themes to be addressed, particularly in connecting them, posed challenges during the writing and research process. Nonetheless, this project highlights that literature need not be perceived as tedious, dull, or convoluted when approached with a spirit of curiosity, an open mind, and critical engagement.

In conclusion, a literary tourism project centered on the poetry and feminist ideals of Florbela Espanca, specifically highlighting her significant connections to Matosinhos, could serve as a unique and compelling opportunity for branding the city. By shedding light on this overlooked aspect of Espanca's life and crafting a narrative that intertwines her powerful verses with the cultural and historical richness of Matosinhos, the city has the potential to attract visitors seeking a meaningful exploration of literature, feminism, and local heritage. This innovative approach not only enhances the city's cultural identity but also positions Matosinhos as a destination that values the celebration of art, literature, and progressive ideals.

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