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# ”Nunca vamos fazer o que se fazia antes, o que facían os nosos vellos”: Conceptions of ”authenticity” within contemporary expressions of Galician ”traditional” music and dance

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## Resumen

This paper explores ”traditional” music and dance expression in Galicia, along with contemporary conceptions of ”authenticity” in current forms of musical transmission and practice. It examines how ”traditional” culture is passed down through ”formal” instruction in urban cultural centers and associations, particularly in Santiago de Compostela, and is enacted both in participatory music and dance gatherings, known as foliadas, as well as in staged folkloric performances. The study also considers the repertoires of this cultural knowledge, which are based in recollidas - the documentation of ”informal” music, song and dance practices of *os vellos* (elderly generations) in rural communities. Given that *os vellos* represent the origin and revered repository of Galician music and dance expression in its ”organic” and ”informal” state, the present paper examines how younger generations involved in urban foliadas perceive the documentation, transmission and execution of these ”authentic” expressions. The issue brings forth the ongoing debate between the dichotomies of rurality versus urbanity and informal versus formal cultural transmission. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with foliada participants in Santiago de Compostela, this paper explores both a pride in contemporary forms of cultural expression and a nostalgic yearning for how *os vellos* once played music and danced. Thus, this paper will discuss complex themes such as ”tradition,” ”contemporaneity,” ”authenticity,” and the contradictory ideologies that surround them. It will also address inconsistencies between mourning the loss of ”traditional” expressions of venerable *vellos* and the methods used today to ”save” tradition. Ultimately, this paper aims to delve into the historical perceptions of ”authenticity,” notions of musical mourning, and contemplate the contemporary practices surrounding the safeguarding of Galician music and dance.

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**Contraseña:** tradition, contemporaneity, authenticity, cultural transmission