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The history of Portugal is tied to the sea and the role that cod fishing played in that. Cod fishing was one of [our] main industries in the early modern era. Cod fishing off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland was, beginning in the early years of the 16th century, a very important source [of food] for [Portugal's] domestic market. It [has been] very important since that era because the Portuguese have had a scarcity [of] foodstuffs so salted cod is very important for supply[ing] the market. It begins with a wider movement of the European people – the Basques, the French people, the [British]. But the Portuguese were one of the first [to fish the Grand Banks].

I'm not sure if Portugal was the leadership country for [fishing and exploration], but Portugal was the major market [for cod]. In fact in the early modern era, Portugal had one of the largest fleets, but never [over-harvested] the fishery because our naval power was not the strong[est] in Europe. The British Navy, the French, even [the] Spanish, over[came] our power in the fight over the Newfoundland fishing grounds. Portugal, in all of its history, [has had] a great dependence on imports for salted cod and our market was — still is, I suppose — the largest market in the world.

Now a days, the Portuguese [still] eat so much salt[ed] cod and we eat at the same time fresh fish and frozen fish. That's why we are the high[est] consumer in the world of fish in general. This is a strange cultural attitude. It relegates in the past, of course, but we have no rational explanation for this. However, the most probable explanation could be the historical tradition of consumption and the historical tradition of our religion [and] culture because the days of absence of eating pork and other foodstuffs. We used to eat [salted] and [dried] cod, and now a days, the young generation, are consuming lesser [amounts] of salt[ed] cod. This is a cultural change. I don't know exactly why, but it changed its religion.

[The Maritime Museum of Ílhavo] is very important because it's a place of memory of [the] cod fishing industry. This is an homage, a tribute to the fishermen of the mythical *White Fleet*, the Portuguese fleet that [harvested] the Grand Banks every year during the 20th century until 1974. It was a very strange phenomenon because most of the other countries gave up this kind of fishing around the Second World War and we kept fishing until 1974. This tradition was very connected [to] the Portuguese dictatorship regime [of] Salazar that ends in 1974. Our museum is a tribute and a form of explanation of evoking this patrimony and evoking the fishermen. It's a place of memory; however, we need a discourse to educat[e] people for what happens now with [the] Atlantic cod in the Grand Banks and to [create] environmental education of the seas.

During the Portuguese dictatorship regime of Salazar, between 1926 and 1974 — the longest dictatorship regime in Europe in the 20th century — the fishing and the maritime industries in general were very well protected because it was a symbolic education of the Golden Age times of the Portuguese discoveries and that insinuation of recovering of a glorious past was an ideological point and issue. But the cod fishing industry was so

protected for this main reason, for supplying the domestic market. Portugal was a poor country. [That has] changed now, fortunately, but in the past, in the middle of the 20th century when the cod fishing industry [was at] its high[est] point, the Salazar regime protect[ed] it so much. That's why all over the world we had the high[est] interest [in] this mythical *White Fleet* fishermen – fishing with hand lines and so on. All of this was very primitive, but very interesting and now we can evoke it in an aesthetic point of view.

It's very important [to keep our sea-faring tradition alive] because our main port in Aveiro was the main port for cod fish, so it's a tribute, a local tribute and it's important in preserving our cultural heritage, our identity. The Portuguese identity is very strongly connected with the seas, with sea culture and we must keep and give this tradition to the young[er] generations.

The audience [for the Maritime Museum of Ílhavo] is very young in general. [Most visitors] are young people from high schools, but we have also adults, old people connected with the sea – captains, fishermen – and foreign people that visit us – Americans, Canadian, French, and Spanish.

I hope [that the future will be] different. That's what I hope. I hope that we have the intelligence for preserving the species [of fish], especially the most commercially valuable species like the Atlantic cod, but we have a problem now. The problem is how to maintain high levels of exploration, industrial exploration and high levels of environment[al] education. We need to improve [these efforts].

I suppose the future is always good because we must believe [in] the future, but we must build it every day. The social and cultural function of maritime museums – museums have identity and memory – is a very high responsibility function because we must care about this memory. We must translate it to tell it for the new generation and we must also, at the same time, do some environment[al] education for the new generations because that's the main point of our survival.