

EPILOGUE – THINKING ANXIOUSNESS

This study aims to investigate the notion of anxiousness in the narrative of the Portuguese Cistercian nun, Joana de Jesus. This endeavor was an interdisciplinary effort that crossed histories of concepts and ideas, mysticism, theology, feminist theory, and Portuguese philosophy, and which was based upon the autobiographical texts of Joana Freire de Albuquerque, also known as Joana de Jesus. My main goal was to contextualize, analyze, and think about the notion of *ancias* (anxiousness), which Joana de Jesus presents in an unsystematic way throughout her work.

In the introduction, I presented the goal of studying Joana de Jesus and discussed previous scholarship done around early modern women mystics and recollection mysticism in Portugal. Likewise, I displayed a theoretical framework within history, philosophy, and feminist theory that enabled me to give a contextualized and contemporary reading of Joana de Jesus. Frijhoff's *appropriation* and de Certeau's *poaching* were notions that made possible the reassessing of seventeenth-century Cistercian Portuguese mysticism together with Francophone feminist theory and Portuguese theories of *saudade* (yearning, desire).

The first chapter provided an overview of Joana de Jesus' life in seventeenth-century Portugal and her family background: her familial ties to the Cistercian order and low nobility status in a homeland subjugated by Spain. I have also described her reception, which occurred mainly through the eighteenth-century *Hagiologium* and the nineteenth-century monograph on the nuns of Lórvão. Here I have also dealt with the question of the classification of Joana's text. Abandoning the autobiography as a possible genre, I tried to demonstrate that the category of self-writing could be the most helpful to describe Joana de Jesus' corpus. The mystical hearing of the God-Man's body and reading Teresa de Jesus' work allowed Joana to acquire her own signature and develop a writing of gendered subjectivity. Likewise, in Joana de Jesus' writing both the spirit of Augustine and the 'quietist' prayer tone of Madame de Guyon could be felt.

I have placed Joana de Jesus' self-narrative within the context of the Iberian mysticism of Teresa of Ávila and Luis de Granada, the direct sources of her recollection mysticism. In this current of thought, recollection could be seen as: 1) a psychological faculty (memory) based on 'Northern' mysticism and the conflicting distinction

of 'affective' and 'speculative' mysticism derived from Gerson's approach to mysticism; 2) a social and religious movement within the Catholic Reformation that was also seen in the Cistercian Order; and 3) a religious although individual movement of 'Recollects' (houses) where religious women such as Joana could develop their own networks of power and sociability.

Throughout the four sections of the third chapter, "Situations of Anxiousness," I have analyzed the excerpts in which Joana deals with a possible construction of anxiousness. In the first section, I searched the Latin tradition of 'anxietas' and authors closer to Joana who have worked with such a notion. In the second section, I systematized the language of encounter in which Joana thinks of the dogmas of *filialio*, Incarnation, and Trinity. In the third section, I commented upon her imagery of anxiousness, in which the notion of 'patiating' bestows another possibility of agency. Finally, in the fourth section, I showed how her visionary experiences also contain a revelatory need and a gnoseological performance, where her own singular subjectivity is achieved alongside her participation in the saints' lives and, in particular, in the Mariological cult.

I have concluded my research with a chapter on Joana's possible contribution to contemporary questions on the presence of subjectivity in both French-speaking feminists and Portuguese philosophy on *saudade*. Anxiousness can be seen as a new concept in dialogue with the work of Simone de Beauvoir and Luce Irigaray, where these philosophers discuss subjectivity, freedom, value, authorship, transcendence, nature, and the body as more or less related to mystical experience. Likewise, the several theories of *saudade* provided a cultural grounding to anxiousness, which could be seen as another contribution to the theories of time: a time that mourns not the past or a future to come, as *saudade* does, but instead is an urgent and bodily anxious-to-You now. Anxiousness enhances a subjectivity that is in constant search and remembrance of eternal salvation in the instant of desire. Anxiousness overcomes and turns the *saudoso* subject – the one who is looking to the past or to the future – into a redemptive and expectant present, where now the impossible becomes tangible.

My main objective here was to show that Joana de Jesus, the seventeenth-century Portuguese Cistercian, could be read with and after contemporary feminist theory and Portuguese philosophy – two alternative philosophical traditions that persist in rethinking the subject respectively as a sexual composite and as a vernacular-bound referent. I do hope that Joana's work, albeit unknown, can somehow evoke seemingly new (though also already known) questions that still stir twenty-first century philosophy.