

INTRODUCTION

Joana de Jesus, the Portuguese Nun

The subject of my book is a Portuguese Cistercian nun, Joana de Jesus (1617–1681), who wrote an autobiographical mystical text. However, the most famous Portuguese nun is still Mariana Alcoforado (1640–1723), probably the fictional author of the *Lettres Portugaises*.¹ This book – an ardent correspondence between a cloistered nun and a French aristocrat – had wide appeal in the European literary scene of its time. Madame de Sevigné, a seventeenth-century French author, even identified the noun ‘Portugaise’ with a particular literary genre: the writing of passionate love letters.² The *Lettres Portugaises* also had a peculiar effect as far as Portuguese feminist theory was concerned. In the 1970s, just before the Carnation Revolution, *Novas Cartas Portuguesas* (*New Portuguese Letters*) appeared. In this book, three Portuguese women writers discuss the dictatorship, the colonial war, and the intellectual minority³ – almost a certain minor age or the Kantian *Unmündigkeit* – Portuguese women were still experiencing.⁴ These ‘Portuguese Letters’ – both old and new – marked the surge of both a Portuguese feminine character and feminist production.

Feminist scholars, however, neglected to study real seventeenth-century Portuguese nuns (who wrote theological ‘love letters’ to Christ) and their communities, despite the intellectual fame of their fictional counterparts. Joana de Jesus is one of the still-unstudied female authors in Portugal whose theological work, albeit in

1 Eugene Asse, ed., *Lettres de Mlle Aïsse : prec. de deux notices biographiques et litteraires* (Paris : Charpentier, 1873). See also Anna Klobucka, *The Portuguese Nun: The Formation of a National Myth* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2000).

2 Jean DeJan, “Lettres Portugaises,” in *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, ed. Peter France (Oxford/ New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 457.

3 “Minority” is the approximated English equivalent of the French “minorité” or the Portuguese “menoridade”.

4 Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta, and Maria Velho da Costa, *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*, ed. Ana Luísa Amaral. (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 2010). See also Darlene Sadlier, *The Question of How: Women Writers and New Portuguese Literature* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989), 7.

manuscript form, has circulated in at least two religious convents in central and southern Portugal. Her work bears a philosophical witness to the mystical experience, insofar as Joana tries to reflect upon the nature and configurations of her relation to the God-Man whilst paying attention to the Catholic renewal movements and, more indirectly, to the social changes that Portugal experienced in the Early Modern period.

The goal of this book is, therefore, to provide the first historical and philosophical reflection upon the life and work of Joana de Jesus. The Portuguese nun merely describes her relation to the God-Man; however, a systematization of some of the notions she mentions but fails to theorize further is lacking. From my reading, one central term emerges – the notion of ‘anxiousness’ (*ancias*).⁵ This notion is very important because it is reiterated more than 70 times throughout the whole manuscript, as the cause, sensation, and product of the mystical contact with God. It collides with and complements notions such as desire and love, lack and mourning, but it distinguishes itself from these insofar as anxiousness (as I will later show) is a more embodied concept. Likewise, anxiousness can be seen as a distinct theme in Joana’s mystical tradition, taking into consideration that Teresa of Ávila, Joana’s main intellectual point of reference, uses this notion very parsimoniously. That being said, my aim in studying the notion of anxiousness in Joana de Jesus is to show how this Portuguese nun erected a foundational concept of mystical experience that can be read from a historical, philosophical, theological, and feminist perspective. Unfortunately there are few sources of Joana’s life and work remaining. The data gathered concerning the historical figure of the Portuguese nun is mainly based on her writings, which include some letters she receives from her family. I am indeed reflecting upon the fictional (literary, auto/biographical) constructed ‘Joana’ and the notion of anxiousness related to her written mystical experience. I shall argue that anxiousness may provide a useful insight into the wider discussion of religious and philosophical subjectivity from a feminist perspective.⁶

5 Joana de Jesus writes ‘ancias’ and ‘ancias amorozas’ The current Portuguese orthography would write ‘ânsias’ and ‘ânsias amorosas.’ In these key notions I maintain Joana’s orthography.’

6 For a critical of subjectivity in the field of religious studies in the past decennia see Constance M. Furey, “Body, Society and Subjectivity in Religious Studies,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80, no. 1 (2012): 7–33., Maren Lorenz und Antja Flüchter within the 26. Tagung des Arbeitskreises Geschlechtergeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit (28–30.10.2021) apud Diemer and Graab, Tagungsbericht: Körper, In: H-Soz-Kult, 05.01.2022, www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/fdkn-127798. (Accessed on 29.09.2023) and Lise Paulsen Galal “Between Representation and Subjectivity”, *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* 6, 2 (2020): 449–472, doi: <https://doi.org/10.30965/23642807-00602011>

Firstly, in this introductory chapter I am going to briefly introduce Joana de Jesus and her work. Secondly, I shall demonstrate what the focus of my analysis will be. Thirdly, I will conduct a state-of-the-art of early modern female authors in Portugal, with a discussion of the impact of Northern mysticism on Portugal and its nationalistic polemic. Before I conclude by outlining the following chapters, I will discuss the theoretical framework, sources, and methods that underlie my own approaches.

Joana Freire de Albuquerque and Joana de Jesus

Joana was born Freire de Albuquerque in Mioma, a village next to Sátão, in inland Portugal in 1617. According to her autobiographical account, Joana moved to Lorvão in order to be a nun of the Cistercian Convent of Lorvão, situated close to Coimbra, in central Portugal. Unfortunately the exact date of her move is unknown. There she lived and started corresponding with Vivardo de Vasconcelos, who would become her confessor in Lisbon. In 1659, at his invitation, she moved to Lisbon to live in a Recollect of Discalced Bernardins⁷. It was in 1661 that she started writing her *Life*, a work that was interrupted in 1668 when she returned to Lorvão. Later, under the protection of her sisters who lived at this Cistercian convent and the protection of a new confessor, António da Conceição, Joana continued writing descriptions of her visions of Christ and of her sickness that provided such an encounter. She died in 1681 on the 20th of August, Saint Bernard's Day, according to the obituary.⁸

Joana's writings are gathered in two manuscripts: the *Notebook* – the original – and the *Life* – a *Copy* that was intended for publication. The *Notebook* claims to be authored by Joana de Jesus, while the *Copy* mentions Joana Freire de Albuquerque. As I will show, the two manuscripts are quite similar except for certain parts, which were deleted from the original text. In her account, Joana describes her visions of Christ together with daily events surrounding her illness and contact with her companions and family.. In the present research I will just transcribe and translate passages of both manuscripts. The Portuguese edition appears as the inaugural title of the series “Do women Care?” by The Institute of Philosophical Studies (IEF) at the University of Coimbra, and the English Translation is expected as the number 141 at the Series “Other Voices in European Early Modern History” by the Iter Press, distributed by U. Chicago Press.⁹

7 For more on the use of the term ‘recollect’, see the introduction to chapter 2 below.

8 “Memorial das Vidas e Obitos das Religiosas deste Mosteiro,” Torre do Tombo National Archives, Ordem de Cister, Mosteiro de Lorvão, book 310, Accessed February 27, 2012, PT/TT/MSML/A/L310, <http://digitarq.dgarq.gov.pt/details?id=4616414>.

9 Cfr “Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, <https://www.uc.pt/fluc/ief/publica/> and “Other Voices in European Early Modern History” “The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series” <https://othervoiceineme.co>

Joana's Contribution: Anxiousness

In my reading, a main theme surfaces throughout Joana's life and writing: the notion of 'ancias' (anxiousness).¹⁰ This theme of anxiousness is not so common in Teresa, whose influence and observant spirit permeates Joana's writing. However, it can be traced, for instance, to John of the Cross, whose work mentions 'ancias' associated with passing through one's soul's Dark Night. In the first stanza, John of the Cross writes:

*On a dark night,
Kindled in love with yearnings
—oh, happy chance!—
I went forth without being observed,
My house being now at rest.*¹¹

The theme of 'love with yearnings' is recurrent throughout John of the Cross⁶⁵³² to meet God. Perhaps here lies the subtle difference between Portuguese and Spanish. Peers translates 'ansia' as 'yearnings'. While in Spanish 'ancias' is only desire, in Portuguese there is an added sense of greediness, voraciousness, and, in the plural form, affliction.¹² Indeed it is these latter senses that Joana brings into her description of meeting the God-Man. Her 'ancias' is formulated in a less poetic and much more concrete way, as stated in this passage in the beginning of her account:

m/othervoice-toronto.html#Spanish_Portuguese%20Authors/Texts. (Accessed: 29 September 2023).

- 10 Cf. Jeannine Poitrey, *Vocabulario de Santa Teresa* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, Fundación Universitaria Española, 1983).
- 11 John of the Cross, *Dark night of the soul*, third revised edition translated and edited, with an introduction, by E. Allison Peers (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, [1994]), 14. http://www.ccel.org/ccel/john_cross/dark_night.pdf Accessed on November 11 2012. *En una noche oscura, / con ansias en amores inflamada, / ¡oh dichosa ventura! / salí sin ser notada, / estando ya mi casa sosegada.* San Juan de la Cruz, *Subida del Monte Carmelo* in *Escritores del siglo XVI: San Juan de la Cruz, Fray Pedro Malon de Chaide, Fray Hernando de Zarate* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1948), 8: 1. On the Dark Night see, for example, the work of Jesús Martí Ballester, *Una nueva lectura de 'Noche Oscura' de San Juan de la Cruz* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2008).
- 12 “‘ânsia s.f.’ (1537C Leão 78) 1 manifestação física provocada pela contracção do epigástrico [...] 2. sensação de desconforto físico causada por uma pressão na região peitoral [...] 3. conjunto de fenómenos mórbidos que antecedem a morte; agonia, estertor [...] 4. p.ext. profundo mal-estar provocado por cansaço, moléstia ou aborrecimento; ansiedade [...] 5. ansiedade provocada pela dúvida [...] 6. fig. m.q. ANSEIO e ETIM. lat. tar. anxia, ae ‘angústia, inquietação.’” Antônio Houaiss, Mauro de Salles Villar, Francisco Manoel de Mello Franco, and Instituto Antônio Houaiss de Lexicografia, *Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2001), 1: 296.

Não foi por pouco o tempo em que de dia e de noite estava padecendo* esta suave aflição* que tenho dito com huma ancia tão crecida que me faltava o folguo* para respirar. E como sempre estava apeteendo a soledade e ritiro era largo o tempo que tomava para a oração, e parece que o Senhor compadecido do disvelo com que aquella alma o desejava me dava dipois de estar algum espaço com aquella ancia amororosa, huma suavidade* que me cercava toda, e a meu parecer [ANTT 11v] era como hum orvalho puro e dillicadissimo em que minha alma se hia pasando* e embebendo* toda, e loguo com grande força que me fasião a qual não podia riszistir me começava a recolher ao intirior aonde ficavão metidas todas as potencias*, e alli por hum modo admiravel se me começava a descubrir* hum mundo tão dilatado* que me paricia não tinha limite, nem fim. [ANTT 11r-v]

It was not for a short time that, day and night, I was patiating*¹³ this soft affliction* that I have described with an anxiousness so heightened that I lacked the air* to breathe. And, as I was always desiring solitude and withdrawal, long was the time that I took for prayer. It seems that the Lord, moved to compassion towards the caring that that soul aimed for, gave me after these [sic] some space with that loving anxiousness, a softness* that surrounded me wholly and it seemed to me [ANTT 11v] a most delicate and pure dew through which my soul passed* and absorbed* whole into and immediately with great strength that was exerted upon me, which it could not resist, I started to recollect myself within, where all the potencies were dwelt* into and there in an admirable way a world so dilated* that it seemed not limitless or endless started to discover* itself before me. [ANTT 11r-v]

From this statement it is possible to bring forward a tentative and provisory definition of this state. Anxiousness might be seen here as the psychosomatic cause, condition, and effect of her intellectual and emotional experience with the Divine, the basis for molding and writing her subjectivity. As I will discuss in the fourth chapter, anxiousness is the cause of Joana's contact with the Divine: she 'has' anxiousness; it is less a state and more a subject's possession, as the Romance languages allow.

Nonetheless a question remains: Why translate 'ancias' into anxiousness and not into anxiety, anguish, or Angst? First of all, this is due to the fact that there are the abstract nouns 'ansiedade' (anxiety) and 'angústia' (anguish) in the Portuguese language to describe such feelings, and Joana has chosen not to use them. Secondly, 'ancias' is a noun derived from the adjective 'ansioso/a', lat. 'anxius/a'.¹⁴ As shown

13 On the question of 'patiate', see the glossary and section 3.2.

14 Antônio Houaiss, Mauro de Salles Villar, Francisco Manoel de Mello Franco, and Instituto Antônio Houaiss de Lexicografia, *Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2001), 1: 296

by Saskia Murk-Jansen's thesis, the transition from affective to speculative mysticism is activated by the abstraction of nouns and verbs.¹⁵ Thus, using 'anxiety' would mean getting farther from Joana's usage of language. Thirdly, the concepts 'anxiety' and 'anguish' are too easily connected with their modern use in psychology and philosophy, and using 'anxiousness' provides a new ground for opening the discussion. Linguistically speaking, the use of suffixes plays an important role here. According to Zandvoort and other grammaticians, the suffixes *-ty* and *-ness* are considered equivalent, but the latter differs from the former in its closer relationship to the adjective.¹⁶

Anxiousness does not relate merely to a cultural European history or its mystical tradition, as will be discussed in previous chapters of this book; it also conflates a theological and philosophical assessment of the anxious experience. In his multi-volume history of mysticism, Bernard McGinn argues for the significance and distinctness constituted by religious women's voices, which foreshadowed the eruption of a vernacular theology, a 'concurrent knowledge' to both scholasticism and monastic theology.¹⁷ Likewise, in Joana's day, there was a connection between post-Triden-

15 Saskia Murk-Jansen, *The Measure of Mystic Thought: A Study of Hadewijch's Mengeldichten* (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1991).

16 R.W.R. Zandvoort and Jan Ek, *A Handbook of English Grammar*, 7th ed. (London: Longman, 1975), 19. Most English adjectives can form nouns by adding the active (originally Old English) suffix *-ness*, and these nouns denote either a state or quality (*cleverness, happiness*) or an instance of a state or quality (*a kindness*). The suffix *-ty* (often in the form *-ity*) represents via Old French a Latin noun ending *-tas* or *-itas*, and is very common in English (e.g., *honesty, notoriety, prosperity, sanity, stupidity*); some forms also denote an instance of the quality in the way that some *-ness* nouns do (*an ability, an ambiguity, a curiosity, a fatality, a subtlety, a variety*). In most cases parallel nouns in *-ness* (*ableness, curiousness, honestness*, etc.) are not normally used, but in other cases a form in *-ty* has developed a special meaning or a sense of remoteness from the adjective that leaves room for an alternative in *-ness*, e.g., *casualty / casualness, clarity / clearness, crudity / crudeness, enormity / enormousness, ingenuity (from ingenious) / ingenuousness (from ingenuous), nicety / niceness, purity (with sexual overtones) / pureness, preciousity (used of literary or artistic style) / preciousness, specialty / specialness*. Some adjectives of Latinate origin that might have been expected to have forms in *-ty* in fact do not, and *-ness* forms are used instead, e.g., *facetiousness, massiveness, naturalness, seriousness, tediousness*. Conversely there are nouns in *-ty* for which no corresponding adjectives exist in English, e.g., *celerity, fidelity, integrity, utility*. See '*-ty* and *-ness*,' in *Pocket Fowler's Modern English Usage*, ed. Robert Allen (Oxford/ New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Oxford University Press, "Oxford Reference Online," accessed July 1, 2010, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t30.e4403>. See also D.G. Miller, *Latin Suffixal Derivatives in English and their Indo-European Ancestry*. Oxford Linguistics (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

17 On vernacular theology as 'concurrent knowledge' see Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200–1350)* (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 3: 19, and Bernard McGinn "Meister Eckhart and the Begines in the Context of Vernacular Theology," in *Meister Eckhart and the Beguine Mystics: Hadewijch of Brabant, Mechthild of*

tine Portuguese vernacular theology and its concurrence with the Second Scholasticism that prevailed in the Portuguese intellectual panorama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, mainly through her confessors who had had university training, as I will demonstrate throughout this book. This being said, and taking into account that scholarship in the field of Portuguese women writers is still in the inventory phase, Joana de Jesus can be considered one of the first female voices in Baroque Portugal with theological and philosophical relevance.¹⁸

Embedding Joana de Jesus in Previous Scholarship

Little has been written on Joana de Jesus until now. It is Sílvia Lima in his research on mystical love who acknowledges Joana de Jesus as a major figure in Portuguese theoreticism.¹⁹ My present study is the first research carried out on Joana de Jesus and the concept of anxiousness.²⁰ However, important research has been done, namely in the field of women writers and mysticism in early modern Portugal, which has proved to be crucial to my own reading of Joana de Jesus. Here I will proceed with a brief acknowledgment of the studies concerning Portuguese women religious writers – the ongoing inventorying, historical, and literary studies related to the sources. Later I will sketch out the wider discussion on Portuguese mysticism. Here I am

Magdeburg, and Marguerite Porete, ed. Bernard McGinn (New York: Continuum, 1994), 4–14. Joana Serrado, “Competing Church and Competing Knowledge in Hadewijch of Antwerp. The Critique of Scholastic Method in the Beguines Circle” (paper presented at the International Colloquium ‘L’Église chez les mystiques rhénans et Nicolas de Cues,’ May 9 and 10, 2006). On the concept of vernacular theology see also N. Watson, “Censorship and Cultural Change in Late Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel’s Constitutions of 1409,” in *Speculum* 70, no. 4 (October 1995): 822–864, and Elizabeth Robertson et al., “Cluster 1: Vernacular Theologies and Medieval Studies,” in “Literary History and the Religious Turn,” ed. Bruce Holsinger, *English Language Notes* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 77–140.

- 18 For a recent overview of Baroque as a cultural category, see: John Lyons (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of the Baroque*, Oxford, O.U.P., 2018.
- 19 Sílvia Lima, “Amor Místico,” in *Obras Completas* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2002), 1: 677–678, 697. On Sílvia Lima, see ‘Reception of Joana de Jesus’s life and work’ in chap. 1.
- 20 In the course of my doctoral research I have published two articles on the Cistercian Nun: Joana Serrado, “Escrever: a écriture féminine em Joana de Jesus, Mística do Lorvão,” in ‘Idade Média e Filosofia – I Colóquio da Sociedade Portuguesa de Filosofia Medieval, 21–22 de Abril de 2006’, in *Mediaevalia. Textos e estudos* (2007): 99–110, and Joana Serrado, “Joana de Jesus (1617–1681). Ânias amorosas a partir de João 20:17” in *In A Voz e os Silêncios. Religião e Textualidades Femininas*, ed. by Maria Filomena Andrade, João Luís Fontes and Tiago Pires Marques, pp. 49–62. Lisboa, Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa. <http://hdl.handle.net/10400.14/17991>. ISBN 978-972-8361-61-7.

mainly interested in the old but necessary discussion of the national and geographical identity of mysticism. As we will see, two problematic questions are posed by the scholarship: the issues of gender and nation in the mystical experience.

Religious Early Modern Women Writers in Portugal

In this subsection I will mention three major lines in the study of early modern women writers that have been achieved in Portuguese-speaking scholarship.

Inventorying

The canon of women writers, in particular prior to the twentieth century, is still under development, mainly by twenty-first century literary scholars and historians.²¹ The Portuguese canon is no exception. The Portuguese members of this project, Teresa de Almeida and Vanda Anastácio, began working on the inventory

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- 21 See the International Projects held by the Women Writers' Networks, <http://www.womenwriters.nl/>, and The Brown University of Women Writers Project, <http://www.wwp.brown.edu/>, both accessed on October 30, 2013. An important outlet for Portuguese women writers has been *Revista das Escritoras Ibericas*, UNED. Since my doctoral research, important bibliography appeared on Baroque Portuguese women. Here is a selected version from 2016 to 2023. 2016: Hermann, Jacqueline and Martins, William de Souza (eds) *Poderes do sagrado: Europa católica, América Ibérica, África e Oriente portugueses (séculos XVI – XVIII)*, R. J. Multifoco 2016 and José Fernandes. *Soror Isabel do Menino Jesus: vida e obra de uma escritora mística, 1673–1752*. Doctoral Thesis in History at the Universidade Clássica de Lisboa, 2016. 2018 : Dimitri Almeida, Anastácio, Vanda. and Perez, M.D.M. *Mulheres em rede: convergências lusófonas = Mujeres en red*. Berlin Münster: LIT and Zulmira Santos "Norma e «imitação»: existe um modelo de santidade feminina no Brasil da época moderna?", in Zarri, Gabriela, Scattigno, Anna, and Concetta, Bianca (eds) *Scrittura carismi istituzionali. Percorsi di vita religiosa in età moderna. Studi per Gabriella Zarri: Biit: Libri*. Edizine de Storia e Letteratura. (Accessed: 9 October 2022); 2019: Anabela Galhardo Couto 'Centro e Margens no discurso amoroso de autoria feminina do período barroco: percursos e questões', in *Estudos sobre as Mulheres. Conhecimentos itinerantes, percursos partilhados*. Lisboa: Universidade Aberta Portuguesa, pp. 31–48; 2020: Helena Queirós, 'Genre, agentivité et performance du corps: la construction d'une rhétorique de l'exceptionnalité féminine dans des biographies spirituelles portugaises du XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles', *E-rea* [Preprint]; 2021 : Bethencourt, Francisco, *Gendering the Portuguese-Speaking World – From the Middle Ages to the Present*, Leuven, Brill and Maria Luisa Jacquinet "Religiosidad femenina y discurso eclesiástico en Portugal durante el Siglo de las Luces. Algunas notas – Dialnet", in *Las mujeres en el discurso eclesiástico: España, Francia, Portugal e Italia (siglos XVI–XVIII)*, 2021 pp. 201–224. 2023: Carla Avelino 2022. „A difusão da produção textual de pendor espiritual nos tempos modernos". *POLISSEMA – Revista De Letras Do ISCAP* 1 (22):109–24. <https://doi.org/10.34630/polissema.v1i22.4792>. My own contributions: "Playing Cards with Christ: Mariana da Purificação", *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 12(1), pp. 144–151 and "Three Willful Characters in Search of God: Political Identity and Visionary Action

of modern and early modern writers; Isabel Morujão's work is dedicated to the writings of women from religious communities. Morujão's bibliographic catalogue of women writers and their published works shows that 39 written books by women were published in Portugal during the seventeenth century.²² The majority of these were authored by Maria do Céu (1658–1753) and Violante do Céu (1601/07–1693). These two religious women from Lisbon were already known for their baroque poetry and dramaturgy.²³ An anthology published later in 2005 by the Gulbenkian Foundation mentions other names besides Clara do Santíssimo Sacramento, such as Madalena da Glória and the 'fictional' Sórora Mariana Alcoforado.²⁴ In 2013 Paula Almeida presented a PhD thesis on *vitae* written in Portugal, in which the name of Joana Freire de Albuquerque appears.²⁵ In addition, and as the fruit of pioneering work on Portuguese women writers, texts by other female writers continue to be rediscovered and edited, and a new anthology of women writers has just been released.²⁶

in Seventeenth-Century Portugal., in Roe, Jeremy and Andrews, Jean (eds) *Representing Women's Political Identity in the Early Modern Iberian World*. London: Routledge, pp. 11–23

- 22 Isabel Morujão, *Contributo Para uma Bibliografia Cronológica da Literatura Monástica Feminina Portuguesa dos Séculos XVII e XVIII: Impressos*, vol. 1 (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1995), <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/4720.pdf>. See also João Francisco Marques, António Camões Gouveia, eds., *História Religiosa de Portugal*, vol. 2, *Humanismos e Reformas* (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2000); Carlos Moreira Azevedo, ed., *Dicionário de História Religiosa de Portugal*, 4 vols. (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2000–2001).
- 23 Isabel Morujão, "Verdades do tempo e máximas do século: Dois manuscritos de Soror Maria do Céu," in *Revista da Faculdade de Letras: Línguas e Literaturas*, II série, 9:299–307, accessed May 5, 2011, <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/2651.pdf>. *História Crítica da Literatura Portuguesa*, vol. 3, *Maneirismo e Barroco*, ed. José Adriano de Carvalho and Maria Lucília Gonçalves Pires (Lisbon: Verbo, 2005).
- 24 Isabel Allegro de Magalhães et al., "Literatura de conventos autoria feminina," in *Boletim Cultural da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian: História e antologia da Literatura Portuguesa. Século XVIII*. 32 (August, 2005): 7–98.
- 25 Paula Cristina Almeida Mendes, "'Porque aqui se vem retratados os passos por onde se caminha para o Céu': a escrita e a edição de 'Vidas' de santos e de 'Vidas' devotas em Portugal (séculos XVI – XVIII)" (PhD diss., Universidade do Porto, 2013). [I thank the author for sharing her thesis before it was published online.] See also *Paradigmas de Papel: a escrita e a edição de 'Vidas' de Santos e de 'Vidas' devotas em Portugal (séculos XVI-XVIII)*. Porto: Centro de Investigação Transdisciplinar Cultura, Espaço e Memória, 2017.
- 26 Vanda Anastácio et al., *Uma antologia Improvável? A Escrita das Mulheres (1495–1830)*, ed. Vanda Anastácio (Lisbon: Relógio de Água, 2013).

Literary Approach

Female religious writings have been traditionally identified as spiritual autobiographies studied within the spectrum of literary studies.²⁷ In 1986 Mafalda Férin da Cunha analyzed the autobiography of Antónia Margarida Castelo-Branco (whose religious name was Sórora Clara do Santíssimo Sacramento) as a literary work, and this analysis concentrates on the discussion of genre.²⁸ This thesis also presents a list of twenty-one spiritual autobiographies concurrently mentioned, including references to Joana's *Life* (the *Copy*). Férin da Cunha briefly mentions the appearance of the themes of godly love, nuptial encounter, the sacred heart, salvation of souls from Purgatory, visions of the Trinity, saints, the Holy Sacrament, and the Virgin Mary in Joana's work, as in the writings of other seventeenth-century nuns such as Mariana da Purificação, Mariana do Rosário, Rosa Maria do Menino Jesus, and Maria da Assunção.²⁹ The majority of Portuguese women writers wrote in Portuguese, though some of their works were written in Latin.³⁰

Historical Approach

Likewise, cultural historians have devoted themselves to the study of early modern spiritual writings by Portuguese women from different perspectives. I will mention three cases here. In the first, the Brazilian historian Lígia Bellini and her group have researched the social life of several monasteries in early modern Portugal. The main themes of Bellini's research are the transmission of knowledge and the practices of writing and spirituality in the construction of authority.³¹ In the second case, the

27 Isabel Allegro de Magalhães et al., "Literatura de conventos autoria feminina," in *Boletim Cultural da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian: História e antologia da Literatura Portuguesa. Século XVIII*. 32 (August, 2005): 7–98.

28 Mafalda Maria Férin Cunha, "A Fiel e Verdadeira relação que dá dos sucessos de sua vida a Criatura Mais Ingrata a Seu Creador...: Um género, um texto único," (unpublished master's thesis, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1992).

29 Cunha, "A Fiel e Verdadeira," 27–38.

30 Jane Stevenson, "8 Women Latin Poets in Spain and Portugal," in *Women Latin Poets: Language, Gender, and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 199–223. For an overview of Portuguese Literature in English Language see T.F. Earle, Cláudia Pazos Alonzo and Stephen Parkinson, eds., *A Companion to Portuguese Literature* (Woodbridge :Rochester, NY: Tamesis, 2009).

31 Lígia Bellini, "Penas, e glorias, pezar, e prazer: espiritualidade e vida monástica feminina em Portugal no Antigo Regime," in Lígia Bellini, Evergton Sales Souza and Gabriela dos Reis Sampaio, eds., *Formas de crer. Ensaios de história religiosa do mundo luso-afro-brasileiro, séculos XIV – XXI* (Salvador: EDUFBA; Corrupio, 2006), 81–105; Bellini, "Cultura escrita, oralidade, e género em conventos portugueses (séc. XVII e XVIII)," in *Tempo*, vol. 15, no. 29 (2010): 211–23; Bellini, "Spirituality and women's monastic life in seventeenth and eighteenth-cen-

PhD research of Gilberto Moiteiro concentrates on the female Dominican community of Aveiro.³² He studies their observance by focusing deeply on the notion of 'tears' as a social and spiritual practice.³³ Finally, the work of the Portuguese literary historian Pedro Villas-Boas Tavares deals with heresy. In his work on the reception of Miguel Molinos in Portugal, he mentions the appearance of several 'beatae' throughout the seventeenth century who were connected to a wider understanding of Portuguese 'molinosism'. Of these three scholars, Villas-Boas Tavares is the only one who refers to Joana's writings.³⁴

Mysticism: Recollection, Politicization, and Borders

Joana de Jesus is indebted to a spiritual and mystical tradition in which both vernacular and Spanish influence is of great relevance to the blossoming of women authors on the Iberian Peninsula.³⁵ There are several trends that church and cultural historians have studied, mainly in Spain. For the present study of Joana, my

tury Portugal," in *Portuguese Studies* (Review of Modern Humanities Research Association, London) 21 (2005): 13–33; Bellini, "Vida monástica e práticas da escrita entre mulheres em Portugal e no Antigo Regime," in *Campus Social* 3/4 (2006/2007): 209–218; Bellini, "Cultura religiosa e heresia em Portugal no Antigo Regime: notas para uma interpretação do molinosismo," in *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* (2006): 187–203; Bellini, "Espiritualidade, autoridade e vida conventual feminina em Portugal no Antigo Regime" (paper presented at the conference *Fazendo Gênero, Simpósio Temático* no. 24, held by Universidade de Santa Catarina on August 28–30, 2006, accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.fazendogenero.ufsc.br/7/st_24_B.html).

- 32 Gilberto Coralejo Moiteiro, "As dominicanas de Aveiro (c1450-1525): Memória e identidade de uma comunidade textual" (PhD diss., Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2013).
- 33 Gilberto Coralejo Moiteiro, "As lágrimas na hagiografia do Mosteiro de Aveiro: expressão de uma comunidade emocional" in *Olhares sobre a História. Estudos oferecidos a Iria Gonçalves*, ed. Maria do Rosário Themudo Barata and Luís Krus; coord. Amélia Aguiar Andrade, Hermenegildo Fernandes, and João Luís Fontes (Lisbon: Caleidoscópio, 2009), 391–411, and "Concepções e técnicas corporais na edificação do discurso hagiográfico. O caso das santas de Aveiro," in *Cadernos de Literatura Medieval*, no. 3, *Hagiografia Medieval*, coord. Ana Maria Machado (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, forthcoming).
- 34 Pedro Villas-Boas Tavares, *Beatas, Inquisidores e Teólogos: Reação Portuguesa a Miguel Molinos* (Lisbon: FLUP/Universidade do Porto, 2002), 202, III and VI. Also, "Caminhos e Invenções da Santidade Feminina em Portugal nos Séculos XVII e XVIII: Alguns, Dados, Problemas e Sugestões," in *Via Spiritus* 3 (1996): 163–215.
- 35 Bernard McGinn reconstructs the emergence of a new mysticism around the thirteenth century, when a 'new form of languages and modes of representation of mystical consciousness' appeared, written by women. McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism*, 3: 12. On the vernacular in Dutch, Italian and English traditions see also the recent volume, Bernard McGinn, "The Varieties of Vernacular Mysticism (1350–1550)," in *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christianity* (New York: Crossroads, 2012).

point of departure is the research that has been done around themes such as recollection ('recogimiento'), ecstatic devotion, and the influence of 'Northern' authors in the south.

Recollection and the Politicization of Scholarship

Joana de Jesus belongs to a Spanish tradition and vocabulary through the influence of Teresa of Ávila and Luís de Granada. Joana's spiritual visions of the Divinity are achieved through mental withdrawals referred to as 'recollimientos' (recollections). Like Teresa of Ávila, Joana develops a new mode of prayer, one in which we may consider recollection as a moment of such union with the Divinity.

The classic study concerning early modern religious thought in Portugal was published by José Sebastião da Silva Dias in 1960.³⁶ However, he did not mention Joana de Jesus; rather, this author contextualized Portuguese history within Iberian scholarship, which would later be enlivened by the work of Erasmianism in Spain.³⁷ In 1975, Melquiades Andrés Martín made the first historiographical attempt to trace a system of 'recogimiento' peculiar to the Iberian Peninsula.³⁸

In *Los Recogidos* (*The Recollected*), Martín and his team intend to demonstrate how this concept was crucial and innovative in sixteenth-century spirituality, beyond famous authors such as Osuna or Bernardino Laredino, whose books were mentioned by Teresa. The spiritual characteristics of this movement were one's own annihilation through the practice of self-knowledge, the invocation of the soul's centre, the *imitatio Christi*, and mental prayer (also a synonym of 'recogimiento' prayer).³⁹ Francisco of Osuna was considered the greatest exemplar of this group, one of many within the Iberian tradition. In doing this, Martín is continuing the task first undertaken by the nineteenth-century literary scholar Menéndez y Pelayo, who, in his

36 José Sebastião da Silva Dias, *Correntes do sentimento religioso em Portugal*, 2 vol. (séculos XVI a XVIII), (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1960). See also his other works: *A Política Cultural da Época de D. João III* (Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos Universidade de Coimbra, 1969); *Camões no Portugal de quinhentos* (Lisbon: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa, Ministério da Educação e Ciência, 1981); *O erasmismo e a Inquisição em Portugal: o processo de Fr. Valentim da Luz* (Coimbra: Instituto de História e Teoria das Ideias, Universidade de Coimbra, 1975).

37 Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmus y España: Estudios sobre la Historia Espiritual del Siglo XVI* [Érasme et l'Espagne], 2nd ed., corrected and expanded, trans. Antonio Alatorre (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966).

38 Melquiades Andrés Martín, *Los Recogidos: Nueva Visión de la Mística Española (1500–1700)* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española Seminario Suárez, 1975). For a review see Jose C. Nieto, "Review: [Untitled]; Los Recogidos. Nueva Vision de la Mistica Espanola (1500–1700)," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8, no. 1 (April 1977): 125–126, accessed May 27, 2011, doi: 10.2307/2540145.

39 Martín, *Los Recogidos*, 16.

Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles (*History of the Spanish Heterodoxies*), distinguishes a true Spanish mystical tradition from a 'Beguine' and a 'Northern' influence, which culminated in sects such as the 'Lutheran', 'Alumbradist', and 'Quietist' movements in Spain.⁴⁰ These names were less technical and more offensive denominations, created mainly by their opponents. While the Lutherans negated the presence of Christ in Communion and the Quietists could achieve total grace without any effort or work, the Alumbrados (Illuminated) were those who experienced the spirit of Christ in a straightforward way, bypassing the presence of Christ in the Eucharist (at least according to their inquisitors). Nevertheless, all of these religious movements were present in a contemplative experience such as that of recollection.

This nationalistic tendency is the fruit of both Franco's regime, which regulated university scholarship, and its appropriation by Spanish Catholic theologians, with their reading of a true original 'Hispanic' mysticism. Academic research done outside Spain privileged foreign influence in Spanish mysticism, and this assumption was not well favored in a nationalistic regime.⁴¹

Antonio Márquez's work pursued a historical and philosophical analysis of the Alumbrados.⁴² In the historical part, he underlined the relationships and similarities between the Recogidos and the heretics. In the philosophical part, he maintains that the Eros-Thanatos conflict was also present among the Spanish mystics (both within the Alumbrados and the Recogidos), and that this tradition even survived in the context of twentieth-century social movements. This controversial argument led to a revised and augmented edition with a preface, in which the author offers a defense of his work.⁴³ After this work, research on the Alumbrados continued to be carried out by historians and theologians, namely those interested in the inquisitional history of Spain.⁴⁴

40 Marcelino Menandez y Pelayo, "Sectas Místicas. Alumbrados. Quietistas. Miguel de Molinos, Embustes y Milagrerías," in *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (Madrid: Librería Católica, reprinted 1965–67), 2: 521–585.

41 Pierre Groult, *Les Mystiques des Pays-Bas et la Littérature Espagnole du Seizième Siècle* (Louvain: Uystpruyt, 1927); Jean Orcibal, *La Rencontre du Carmel Thérésien avec les Mystiques du Nord*, vol. 70 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959); Helmut Hatzfeld, *Estudios literarios sobre mística española* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos [c. 1955]) and Helmut Hatzfeld, *Estudios sobre el Barroco* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1966).

42 Antonio Márquez, *Los Alumbrados; Orígenes y Filosofía, 1525–1559*, La Otra Historia de España; 2nd ed., corrected and expanded, vol. 4 (Madrid: Taurus, 1980); Charles F. Fraker, "Review: [Untitled]; Los Alumbrados: Orígenes y Filosofía (1525–1559)," *Hispanic Review* 44, no. 3 (Summer, 1976): 286–289.

43 Márquez, *Los Alumbrados*.

44 Juan Gallego-Benot, 'La noche oscura de san Juan de la Cruz en el alumbradismo tardío sevillano', *Hipogrifo: Revista de literatura y cultura del Siglo de Oro*, vol. 11, no. 1, (2023) pp. 961–972. <https://doi.org/10.13035/H.2023.11.01.55>. Fowler, J.J. '9 Assembling Alumbradismo: The Evolution of a Heretical Construct', in *After Conversion*, (Leiden, Brill, 2016), pp. 251–282.

In Portugal the situation is similar. In 2009, António Vítor Ribeiro completed a PhD thesis on the Alumbrados and the prophetic movements from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries in Portugal.⁴⁵ By analyzing several case studies based on inquisitional processes, Ribeiro shows a kaleidoscopic religious life in Portugal, which is also akin to the wider spectrum of political prophecy, the phenomenon of Sebastianism. Sebastianism was the mythic belief in the return of the Portuguese king Sebastian from the desert sands of Ksar El Kibir, where he participated in the crusades against the Moors in 1578. The return of the king would bring back the Portuguese independence usurped by the Spanish crown after his disappearance.⁴⁶

The study of recollection mysticism has recently experienced a new intake, leaving aside the study of 'alumbradism'. American scholars have continued this research into the spiritual dimension of recollection, similar to the work done by Di Salvo.⁴⁷ William Short, for instance, inscribes 'recollection' in Franciscan spirituality.⁴⁸ Jessica A. Boon's research on Bernardino de Laredo focuses on his linguistic contribution to recollection. However, her most recent research goes beyond the spirituality of prayer, heading into the physiology of the soul.⁴⁹

Mercedes García-Arenal and Felipe Pereda, "A propósito de los alumbrados: Confesionalidad y disidencia religiosa en el mundo ibérico," in *La corónica: A Journal of Medieval Hispanic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures* 41, no. 1 (Fall, 2012): 109–148. The classical works on alumbrados are of Alvaro Huerga, *Historia de los Alumbrados (1570–1630)*, vol. 3 (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1978), Alaistair Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth Century Spain: The Alumbrados*. (Cambridge: J. Clarke, 1992), Pedro Santanoja, *La Herejía de los Alumbrados y la Espiritualidad en la España del Siglo XVI: Inquisición y Sociedad* ([Valencia]: Generalitat Valenciana, cop. 2001), Alaistair Hamilton "The Alumbrados: Dejamiento and its practitioners," in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hillary Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 103–126.

- 45 António Vítor Ribeiro, *O auto dos místicos: alumbrados, profecias, aparições e inquisidores (séculos XVI-XVIII)* (PhD diss., Universidade de Coimbra, 2009).
- 46 On the phenomenon of Sebastianism, see the classic Joel Serrão, *Do Sebastianismo ao Socialismo* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1969).
- 47 Angelo J. Di Salvo, *The Spiritual Literature of Recollection in Spain (1500–1620): The Reform of the Inner Person*. Texts and Studies in Religion 84 (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1999); Di Salvo, *Spanish devotional and meditative literature of Renaissance Spain* (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 2005).
- 48 William J Short, "From Contemplation to Inquisition: The Franciscan Practice of Recollection in Sixteenth-Century Spain," in *Franciscans at Prayer*, ed. Timothy J. Johnson (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 449–474.
- 49 Jessica A. Boon, *The mystical language of recollection: Bernardino de Laredo and the 'Subida del Monte Sion'* (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2004); Boon, "Medical Bodies, Mystical Bodies: Medieval Physiological Theory in the Recollection Mysticism of Bernardino De Laredo," in *Viator* 39, no. 2 (2008): 245–267; Boon, *The Mystical Science of the Soul: Medieval Cognition in Bernardino De Laredo's Recollection Method* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012). I thank the author making me available her dissertation.

Southern vs. Northern Mysticism

Joana de Jesus' work is directly related to the Iberian mysticism of recollection, and that same mysticism also derives from an older and wider tradition that can be traced to what some authors have called 'Northern' influences.⁵⁰ Here I will analyze the most recent scholarship done in the area regarding this old polemic.

The article by Eulógio Pacho in *Fuentes Neerlandesas de la Mística Española* (Dutch Sources of Spanish Mysticism) distinguishes the mystical texts from the ascetical ones, with the latter having compelled Spanish thought much more strongly, a conclusion which Silva Dias had already reached in his book. Despite being controversial in splitting the practice and the theory of mysticism, this article gives a powerful insight into the connections between North and South. For Pacho, the so-called 'mystical' authors – who had a higher experience and/or theorized about their experience with God – show only indirectly their reminiscent presence in sixteenth-century texts. The Iberian authors were indeed under the strong influence of the Devotio Moderna and the Rhineland mystics. Pacho even compares the impact of the Spanish translation of the Carthusian Hugo of Balma's *Sol de Contemplativos* (*The Contemplatives' Sun*, and the original Latin *Viae Sion Lugent*) on sixteenth-century spirituality to the repercussions that Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* and Peter Lombard's *Sententias* had in mediaeval philosophy.⁵¹ Nevertheless, Pacho argues that these texts were not intended to establish a doctrine, but were instead practical 'handbooks' of prayer technique. Neither were these mere descriptions of personal experiences. In the Spanish literature, the author mentions Sister Maria de Santo Domingo (better known as 'Beata' – pious woman – of Piedrahita) as an exception, possibly due to her connection with the Alumbrados.⁵² If there was any Dutch or Flemish 'influence' upon themes, vocabulary, and lexicon, this occurred especially in the cases of some authors who lived and read in Flanders – as was the case of Francisco de Osuna. With greater legitimacy, Pacho says that we can speak of a 'crystallization' of medieval patristic themes, which were abundantly quoted by Spanish authors.

Regarding the situation in Portugal, scholars have been more cautious in establishing the presence of Northern authors. Alluding to the early printed books produced in Portugal on the broadly conceived concept of spirituality, José Adriano

50 Miguel Norbert Ubarri and Lieve Behiels, *Fuentes Neerlandesas de la Mística Española*, vol. 37 (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2005); Miguel Norbert Ubarri, *Jan van Ruusbroec y Juan de la Cruz, la mística en diálogo* (Madrid: EDE, 2007).

51 Eulógio Pacho, "Simiente Neerlandesa en la Espiritualidad Clásica Española," in *Fuentes Neerlandesas de la Mística Española*, ed. Miguel Norbert Ubarri and Lieve Behiels, vol. 37 (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2005), 28.

52 Pacho, "Simiente Neerlandesa.," 29.

Freitas de Carvalho also shows the Portuguese preference for Northern books.⁵³ This scholar pointed out the circulation of Portuguese and Spanish translations of Henry Suso (1295–1366), John Tauler (c.1300–1361), Thomas a Kempis (1380–1471), Hendrik Herp (1400–1477), the French Louis de Blois (1506–1566), and Nicholas of Esch (1507–1578). Nevertheless, among the 1,891 books recorded by José Adriano de Carvalho that were published in Portugal (either in Castilian or in Portuguese) in the sixteenth-century, the ‘Northern authors’ comprise just over one percent. In another book, the same scholar points out the influence of Gertrude of Helfta in Spain and Mechthild of Hackeborn in early modern Spanish spirituality.⁵⁴

There were important Portuguese mystical (or spiritual) male authors who have marked the intellectual life of early modern Portugal – namely, the Augustinians Sebastião Toscano (1515–1583) and Tomé de Jesus (1529–1582); the Capuchin Agostinho Cruz (1540–1619); the Franciscan António Chagas (1631–1682); and the Oratorian Manuel Bernardes (1644–1710).⁵⁵ The ‘Northern’ influences on Manuel Bernardes have already been researched.⁵⁶ These Portuguese authors, however, had been recognized, published, and circulated in Joana’s time, although there is no proof that Joana had read them.

Ecstatic Devotion and Female Mystics

In the twenty-first century, Portuguese mysticism is still seen as being part of an ‘Hispanic Mysticism’. José Adriano Freitas de Carvalho draws a sketch of mystical authors in early modern Portugal.⁵⁷ Freitas de Carvalho mentions female mystics

53 José Adriano Moreira de Freitas Carvalho, *Bibliografia Cronológica da Literatura de Espiritualidade em Portugal 1501–1700*, vol. 2 (Oporto: Instituto de Cultura Portuguesa, 1988).

54 José Adriano Moreira de Freitas de Carvalho, *Gertrudes de Helfta e Espanha: contribuição para o estudo da história da espiritualidade peninsular nos séculos XVI e XVII* (Oporto: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1981).

55 Maria Lurdes Belchior, José Adriano Freitas de Carvalho and Fernando Cristóvão, ed., *Antologia de Espirituais Portugueses* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2004). For a more idiosyncratic approach to Portuguese mystics, and a crucial work in the development of Portuguese philosophy in the twentieth century, see Dalila Pereira da Costa, *Os místicos portugueses do século XVI* (Oporto: Lello Editores, 1986).

56 Eugénia Magalhães, “Erotismo e Metáfora no discurso místico: autorres portugueses do Renascimento e do Barroco”, (Lisbon: PhD thesis, 2016) Maria Clara Rezende Teixeira Constantino, *A Espiritualidade Germânica no Padre Manuel Bernardes*, coleção de Teses, vol. 2 (Marília: Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Marília, 1963).

57 José Adriano Freitas de Carvalho, “Traditions, Life Experiences and Orientations in Portuguese Mysticism (1513–1630),” in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hillary Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 39–70. See also José Adriano Freitas Carvalho and Maria de Lourdes Belchior Pontes, “Portugal (16e-18e siècles),” in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascétique et Mystique* (Paris: Beauchesne, cols. 1958–1973), 12: 958–973.

taken from the *Agiolégio Lusitano* (*Lusitane Hagiologium*): the Clarisses Briolanja de Santa Clara (d. 1590), Clemência Baptista (d. 1611), and Mariana do Lado (d. 1628), among others, but not Joana.⁵⁸ However, these are what he calls examples of “ecstatic devotion,” and he does not focus on writings authored by women.

As I shall show below, Joana's life and work is marked by the validity of her visions. For that reason, it is important to show previous research done on certain mystics whose visions have been also subject to a validation process. Maria da Visitação (b. 1551) was the Portuguese nun who served as the archetype for being a ‘fake’ female mystic and misleading reputable biographers, such as the renowned Dominican Fray Luis de Granada. According to Isabelle Poutrin, this case served as an example of the distrust of mystical accounts throughout the seventeenth century.⁵⁹ Recent scholarship also shows the political activity of Maria da Visitação, as seen in her support of Portuguese independence from Spain, and gives emphasis to the prophetic and semiotic dimension of her ‘fake’ wounds. Like Maria da Visitação, many other Portuguese women, whose holy status was not recognized, were condemned by the Inquisition.⁶⁰

Joana de Jesus and Portuguese Early Modern Mysticism

Up until this point I have worked with two major themes that may help to situate my own research on Joana de Jesus, namely: the question of early modern Portuguese women religious authors, and the problems surrounding Iberian mysticism. I am following the previous studies insofar as I try to integrate Joana de Jesus in a

58 Carvalho, “Traditions, Life Experiences,” 51–52.

59 Isabelle Poutrin, *Le Voile et La Plume : Autobiographie et Sainteté Féminine dans l'Espagne Moderne* (Madrid : Casa de Velázquez, 1995), 57. On Maria da Visitação see : Fray Luis de Granada, *Historia De Sor María De La Visitación y Sermón De Las Caídas Públicas*, vol. 9 (Barcelona : J. Flors, 1962); Ana Cristina Gomes and José Augusto Mourão, “A Verdade da Mentira : O Teatro do Corpo. Acerca da Sentença de Soror Maria da Visitação,” in *Praedicatores, Inquisidores – III, I Domenicani e l'Inquisizione Romana, Atti del III Seminario Internazionale Su “I Domenicani e l'Inquisizione*,” ed. Carlo Longo (Rome: Istituto Storico Domenicano, 2008), 559–590 [contains transcription of Maria da Visitação's Process]. See also Ana Cristina Gomes “Apo-teose efêmera e declínio: o caso de Maria da Visitação, a monja dominicana de Lisboa,” in *Monjas Dominicanas. Presença, Arte e Património em Lisboa*, eds. Ana Cristina da Costa Gomes et al. (Lisbon: Alêtheia Editores, 2008), 89–100; Freddy Dominguez “From Saint to Sinner: Sixteenth-Century Perceptions of ‘La Monja de Lisboa,’” in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hillary Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 297–393.

60 Adelaide Filomena Amaro Lopes Cardoso, “As Religiosas e a Inquisição no Século XVII. Quadros da vida da espiritualidade” (Master's thesis, University of Oporto, 2003), 147, <http://repositorio-aberto.up.pt/handle/10216/10852> y. For an overview of Spanish women, see Stephen Haliczer, *Between Exaltation and Infamy: Female Mystics in the Golden Age of Spain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

tradition of recollection mysticism. I include the possible 'Northern' interferences through the Spanish mystical books she acknowledges that she read. The question of heterodoxy and ecstatic devotion will be evoked throughout this research, mainly when I do a close reading of certain passages of her text. My research, however, is concentrated on the construction of the central theme present in Joana's work: the notion of anxiousness. This will be done within a history of mystical ideas. I will necessarily opt for a philosophical and theological analysis of Joana's text, and therefore a rethinking of such a concept in the light of contemporary scholarship on subjectivity.

Theoretical Framework

To think of anxiousness, as will be suggested in this work, is to reflect upon the presence and absence of God, which also sets the basis for a discourse on subjectivity. Anxiousness, as I will argue mainly in the fourth chapter, is a notion in which a (gendered) relationship with the Divine is developed, either in a psychosomatic or ontogenoseological way. From this nonlinear relationship emerges the question of presence and absence – either of God, the Divine, or the sexualized being. I have supported my own reading of Joana's anxiousness with the work of several contemporary authors who have directly or indirectly dealt with this question, in two different disciplines: the historians of mysticism (Bernard McGinn and Michel de Certeau) and the philosophers, first the philosophers of feminist subjects (Simone de Beauvoir and Luce Irigaray) and second the Portuguese philosophers of *saudade* (Dalila Pereira Costa and Paulo Borges). The intersection between these two scholarly clusters has been researched mainly by Amy Hollywood. Now I will briefly introduce these authors and their works, which are present throughout thisbook..

The Historians

For twenty-five years Bernard McGinn worked on his history of mysticism under the overarching theme of 'the presence of God'. In his first volume, he defines mysticism as such:

[M]ysticism as a part of an element of religion; [...] mysticism as a process or way of life; [...] mysticism as an attempt to express a direct consciousness of the presence of God.⁶¹

61 Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century*. In *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1998) 1: XV, XVI.

From this definition, we may extract four main concepts: way, life, direct(ness), and presence. These four become crucial as guidelines for analyzing Joana's anxiousness. Joana's work is a life that becomes a 'way of life', an exemplary method in which the 'directness' of the contact of the woman with God is rendered through the writing. Mysticism becomes Christocentric in Joana insofar as the presence of God is acquired through their nuptial and loving relationship. In this line, Joana can be read alongside the vernacular tradition Bernard McGinn recently developed in his latest volume of this series.⁶²

Michel de Certeau concurs with this view. He says that the search for a path and methodology was something particular to early modern mystics. This French historian, however, emphasizes the role of language in the mystical process. In *La Fable Mystique* (*The Mystic Fable*), De Certeau analyzes the word 'mystics' ('la mystique').⁶³ He argues that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a change occurred: the French adjective 'mystique' (mystic) became a substantive noun, 'la mystique' ('mystics' or the science of mystics). This was due primarily to the bifurcation of the language: the instrumental, professional, artificialized language, which was Latin, and the nationalized, concrete, personal vernaculars. This cultural change developed within a social and economic transformation, namely the rise of the bourgeoisie, from which the women, the poor, and the illiterati remained excluded. They are the subjects of the new language.

Speaking-Hearing – such is the problem circumscribing the particular locus at which the universal project of the 'saints' develops. The objects of the mystics' discourse have the status of symptoms; essentially, they are prayer (from meditation to contemplation) and the 'spiritual' relation (in the form of communal exchanges and 'spiritual guidance'). 'Communication' (communications from God or those established among the saints) is everywhere a void to be filled, and forms the focal point of mystical accounts and treatises. They are writings produced from this lack. The rapture, ambiguity and falsity that plurality spreads throughout the world creates the need to restore dialogue. This colloquium would take place under the sign of the Spirit ('el que habla', the speaker, as St. John of the Cross phrases it), since the 'letter' no longer allows it. How can one hear, through signs transformed into things that which flows from a unique and divine will to speak? How can this desire in search of a thou cross through a language that betrays it by sending the addressee a different message, or by replacing the statement of an idea with utterance by an "I"?⁶⁴

62 McGinn, *The Varieties of Vernacular Mysticism* (1350–1550).

63 Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, [La Fable Mystique], trans. By Michael B. Smith, Religion and Postmodernism, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

64 Michel de Certeau "Mystic Speech" [L'Énonciation mystique], in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi, foreword by Wlad Godzich (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1986), 88.

We may trace in Joana de Jesus the development of a divine communication through the feeling of (loving) anxiousness. The anxious 'I' slowly interrogates an emerging 'You/Thou', evolving into a self-writing: it becomes self because it is written in strict, direct, closed collaboration with the Divinity. The embodied symptomatology of such colloquium is the personal imitation of Christ, which Joana endures, both in the pain of humanity and the joy of partaking in the revealed yet unuttered mysteries. This emergent 'I' does not make God absent, but rather attests his presence.

The Philosophers

It is in the presence of the subject, however, particularly in the female subject, that Simone de Beauvoir is interested. Written in the light of Existentialism, a philosophical movement in which this French philosopher was one of the most important figures, De Beauvoir's *Le Deuxième Sexe* (*The Second Sex*) takes a closer look at the phenomenon of mysticism.⁶⁵ This happens in the chapter titled "Justifications," in which she deals with women's authority in a patriarchal society. Though supporting the action taken by a Teresa of Ávila or a Joan of Arc, the French philosopher points out that Madame Guyon and all of Teresa's 'minor sisters' have only perpetuated the inferior and negative 'definition' of women, embracing mystical discourse as an instigator of the dominance of 'confessors' and the patriarchal imagery of God, serving as a kind of female guerrilla in the religious discourse of authentic existence.

This striving for the (female) subject's presence through transcendence together with de Beauvoir's ambiguity towards mystical women serves as a starting point to ponder Joana's writing and the notion of anxiousness in the economy of transcendence. Both chronologically and typologically, Joana de Jesus is situated between Teresa and Guyon. The Portuguese nun also strove for the same intellectual and affective goals the other religious women held. Joana's actions and anxiousness could be read both with and against de Beauvoir's notion of female transcendence, as we shall see in the last chapter.

Another canonical figure in the history of feminist philosophy is Luce Irigaray. Educated both in linguistics and psychoanalysis, Irigaray broke away from a Lacanian tradition in the *Speculum of the Other Woman* (*Speculum de l'autre femme*), where, through a palimpsestic process of writing often called mimicry, she rewrites canonical philosophical tradition, searching for the place of women and sexual difference.⁶⁶

65 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, [*Le Deuxième Sexe*], trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, intro. Judith Thurman (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 2011).

66 Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, [*Speculum de l'autre femme*], trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985). On mimicry see Ping Xu, "Irigaray's Mimicry and the Problem of Essentialism," *Hypatia*, vol. 10, no. 4 (Autumn, 1995): 76–89.

Contrary to de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray always saw in the 'place of the Mystérique' the hysterical, mystical, and mysterious as the (only) way for women's subjectivity to be heard in a patriarchal society.

Amy Hollywood, an American scholar, is an heir to the historical mysticism scholarship developed by Bernard McGinn and the philosophy of sexual difference developed by the second and third feminist waves. She is motivated by the questions of authority, embodiment, and sexual identity in Medieval and Early Modern mystical texts.⁶⁷ In her second book, *Sensible Ecstasy*, Hollywood extends her historical research into a twentieth-century philosophical debate.⁶⁸ Hollywood's concern is to evaluate the presence of mysticism, as written and performed by Medieval women, in the work of French philosophers such as Georges Bataille, Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, and others. Notions of sexuality, desire, and identity show ambivalence in the way the forgotten mystics were used and misused by these authors. More recently, in her compilation of articles featured in *Acute Melancholia: Christian Mysticism and Contemporary Historiography*, Hollywood continues her twofold research.⁶⁹ The issue here is how feminist philosophers see, construct, and develop their own intellectual history in relation to less intellectual experiences such as mysticism. In this sense, a history of female mystics could never be separated from a philosophical investigation of female subjectivity.

Similar to feminist philosophy that aims to reconstruct a subjectivity without forgetting gender and sexual difference, Portuguese philosophy aims at a related project: that philosophy has a language and an identity, and Portuguese thought has a singular expression.

The romantic tendency of searching for 'a Portuguese philosophy' bears its fruits in the twentieth century, in both the nationalistic and the progressive spectrums. Some philosophers like Dalila Pereira da Costa paid some attention to the male tradition of Portuguese mystics.⁷⁰ But many authors have written about the *saudade* (yearning, desire, longing) as a crucial theme in the philosophical realm of Portuguese culture that enables the appearance of a new knowledge and a new subjectivity favorable to the Portuguese expression. *Saudade* has been a crucial theme to subjectivity insofar it claims a philosophical reflection on time.

Would the work of Joana de Jesus, and especially her notion of anxiousness, be able to dialogue with the rewriting of the presence of God and the Subject, tasks

67 Amy Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife: Mechthild of Magdeburg, Marguerite Porete, and Meister Eckhart*, Studies in Spirituality and Theology, vol. 1 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995).

68 Amy M. Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy: Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History*, Religion and Postmodernism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

69 Amy M. Hollywood, *Acute Melancholia: Christian Mysticism and Contemporary Historiography* (Columbia University Press, forthcoming).

70 Dalila Pereira da Costa, *Os místicos portugueses do século XVI* (Oporto: Lello Editores, 1986).

which the history of mysticism and both feminist and Portuguese philosophy try to accomplish?

Methodology: Appropriation or Poaching

Feminists and historians receive the mystical tradition and try to rewrite the notion of subjectivity in an intense hermeneutical process of construction, destruction, and reconstruction of the past. The Dutch cultural historian, Willem Frijhoff, presents the concept of appropriation ('toeëigening').⁷¹ It discusses several layers of what appropriating can mean: to become our own possession, or to lead to divine justice (in a reformed dogmatic context); but appropriating can also be a transmission of cultural goods to provide another meaning in another context. Appropriation could also mean 'creolization', or a process where one dominant and one weaker power enter into contact with each other and something new is created. Frijhoff also points out different perspectives, e.g., where the patient, actor, or spectator in a museum becomes part of, or appropriates in his own way, what is given by others. Acculturation, assimilation, or reception do not transmit the same activeness appropriation brings. It is also a bottom-up approach and not a top-down one; it does not come from the world of norms, but rather the world of practices. The Dutch scholar presents the following definition:

Appropriation is the process of interpretation with which groups or individuals give their own meaning to bearers of meaning that are handed to them, imposed on them or prescribed by others, in order to make these bearers of meaning acceptable, endurable, bearable or dignified.⁷²

Frijhoff's view on appropriation and practice is indebted to the work of De Certeau, an author already mentioned. In his book, *L'Invention du Quotidien* (*The Practices of Everyday Life*), the French scholar develops this idea of appropriation together with other concepts, namely the military notion of tactics and the nomadic technique of poaching.⁷³ Tactics differ from strategy in that the latter is the prerogative of the stronger, of those who hold power, mainly through visualization and space. This is

71 Willem Frijhoff, "Toeëigening: van bezitsdrang naar betekenisgeven," in *Trajecta*, vol. 6, no. 2, (1997): 99–118.

72 "Toeëigening is dus het proces van zingeving waarmee groepen of individuele personen de betekenisdragers die door anderen worden aangereikt, opgelegd of voorgeschreven, met een eigen betekenis invullen en zo voor zichzelf acceptabel, leefbaar, dragelijk of menswaardig maken." Frijhoff, "Toeëigening," 108.

73 Michel de Certeau, *The practices of everyday life*, [*L'Invention du Quotidien*], trans. Steven Randall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 29–44, 165–176.

always a “calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships.” Tactics, on the contrary, “do not obey to [sic] the place, for they are not defined or identified by it.”⁷⁴ What is at stake is the displacement of the agent, hiding and play in the place of the other, seizing the opportunity, by surprise, to attack, and, through that impetus, to evade them.

De Certeau sees the act of reading as a sort of poaching, not a simple consumption or reception. Readers do not assimilate and are not informed or appropriated in the passive way, but rather transform the texts by fleeing to ‘another world’. They are “travellers, they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves.”⁷⁵

Throughout my book I will use different methods according to the discipline I am working with. In the historical part (chapters one and two), I will inscribe Joana de Jesus in her context by reading Joana’s texts in relation either to her social context or to the history of mystical ideas. The second part (chapter three) will focus on the text: I will be doing a close reading and interpretation, taking into consideration the same early modern context to analyze how and where the theme of anxiousness occurs. The last part (chapter four) will be devoted to rethinking the same anxiousness in dialogue with feminist and Portuguese contemporary philosophy. This last task, as I will argue, bears in mind the challenges of appropriating or poaching, as Willem Frijhoff and Michel De Certeau have warned respectively. Instead, the fourth chapter intends to escape to a chronic (either anachronic, synchronic, or diachronic) reading.⁷⁶ The dialogue with contemporary feminist theory provides a new way to intervene in (rather than read, preserve, or canonize) older texts like Joana’s manuscript or other mystics’ writings as events under what I call a ‘kairologic’ approach. ‘Kairos’ is a rhetorical device of seizing the opportunity, looking for a ‘situational context’ where a dynamic meaning can be achieved.⁷⁷ ‘Kairologic’ also means another way of expressing time: not like Chronos, the Greek god who devours his children, but rather the tactical, cunning god who tricks and plays on the instant, making it now. The opportunity, which is etymologically also a gap, an entrance, is the possibility of seizing the moment provided by knowledge, either of the historical or more scien-

74 Certeau, *The practices of everyday life*, 22, 35–36.

75 Certeau, *The practices of everyday life*, 174.

76 Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, [Cours de linguistique générale], trans. Wade Baskin, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 91–100.

77 James L. Kinneavy, “Kairos: A Neglected Concept in Classical Rhetoric,” in *Rhetoric and Praxis*, ed. Jean Dietz Moss (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1986), 79–105.

tific kind.⁷⁸ This being said, despite being a seventeenth-century notion, it is only now, in the twenty-first century, that it is possible for Joana de Jesus' anxiousness to be grasped, as a result of the accomplishments in feminist philosophy and Portuguese philosophy.

Outline of the Book

This book develops itself around the life and work of Joana and her notion of 'anxiousness'. Due to its interdisciplinary intent, it is divided into three parts: the exploration of the historical context (chapters two and three), the theological and philosophical analysis of Joana's discourse (chapter four), and the dialogue between anxiousness, feminist theory, and the Portuguese *saudade* (chapter five).

In the second chapter, I introduce the life and work of Joana de Jesus. Likewise I will mention the main characters referred to in her autobiographical writing: her confessors, her sisters, and her fellow nuns in early modern Portugal. There I will focus on the source that will be the basis of my reading – her texts. In this chapter, by reflecting upon the genre issue (auto/biography vs. autohagiography), the text defines its uniqueness and exemplarity (as imitation and following the example) or even its authorship and authority. Here I argue that this text belongs to a mystical, literary, philosophical, and historical tradition.

In the second chapter, I contextualize Joana's thinking within the intellectual tradition of recollection mysticism. The meaning of recollection goes further than being a 'faculty of the soul' and a knowledge potency, as it contains a social renewal project within the Catholic Reformation. Moreover, to be recollected (i.e., to withdraw)⁷⁹ was also a state that women could avail themselves of, besides marriage, the monastery, or the single life/widowhood. It empowered women to choose another way where they could develop their own religious and intellectual path.

The situations of anxiousness are present throughout Joana's text. The third chapter will focus on an analysis of how the mystic constructs and develops this emotion-state. Here I distinguish the moments of 'encounter', 'operation of love', and 'notice', and relate Joana's unique vocabulary to her European sources. Anxiousness can be theological, but it can also be a philosophical emotion that encompasses a notion of embodiment, nature, and time. I will argue that 'ancias' is a key notion in understanding how Joana acknowledges the presence of the Divine while devel-

78 Carolyne R. Miller, "Kairos in the Rhetoric of Science," in *A Rhetoric of doing: Essays on written discourse in honor of James L. Kinneavy*, ed. Stephen Paul Witte and Neil Nakadate (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press), 310–327.

79 For more on the use of the term 'recollected', see the introduction to chapter 2 below.

oping a sense of her own presence (and absence) with the incarnated God and her own subjectivity.

The passage from the study of anxiousness in Joana into the dialogue with contemporary notions of subjectivity will be dealt with in the concluding and reflective chapter, chapter four. There I read Joana's sense of anxiousness in dialogue with feminist philosophers such as Simone de Beauvoir and Luce Irigaray as well as the philosophers who dealt with Portuguese tradition of *saudade*. In response to de Beauvoir's valorization of female transcendence and her ambivalence toward quiet and unquiet mystical experience, as expressed in Teresa and Guyon, I argue that Joana's anxiousness and its art of patiating/patency can be seen as a correlative to the search for agency. With Luce Irigaray's notion of (forgetting) air and the (need to) breathe, in her critique of Heidegger's (and male) philosophical tradition, I will juxtapose Joana's anxiousness as the lack of air being a positive moment in her acknowledgment of the incarnated God and her own subjectivity through 'daughtership'. Finally, I will discuss 'ancias' together with the Portuguese notion of *saudade* (yearning) in the context of Portuguese philosophy. Both concepts deal with a time of absence and presence. However, 'ancias' can deepen in eschatological and redemptive urgency to the sense of mourning that *saudade* already contains.

