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AN IBERIAN SEARCH: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SUFI
MYSTICISM'S PRESENCE IN THE POSTMODERN POETRY OF
CLARA JANÉS AND JOAQUIM PESSOA

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by

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Dedications

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to everyone who helped me, listened to me, babied me and otherwise kept me going during the process of researching, planning and writing. Thank you all so very, very much.

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In this dissertation, I develop the notion of the presence and influence of an Iberian Sufi mystical process in the poetry of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. I also further define these poets' role in the development of postmodernism in the Iberian Peninsula.

In Chapter I, I give the reader a general idea of who Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa are. I then summarize five points of postmodernism which are the most revealing and important for the study of their work: the decentralization of the "master narrative;" the idea of "kitsch" art and deconstruction; Kristeva's notions of intertextuality, the collage, chora and feminist discourse; Eagleton's socialist discourse of discontent; the ideas about the development of the postmodern in the Iberian peninsula in the work of Debicki, Guimarães, Holloway and several other critics. Afterwards, I utilize the work of

a Spanish poet, Ana Rossetti, and a Portuguese one, Vasco Graça Moura, whose poetries exemplify the particular unfolding of postmodernism in peninsular poetry. In Chapter II, I summarize critical work done on the poetry of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. I also expand on that work, suggesting the possibility of a Sufi presence and influence in Janés' work, particularly over the last 20 years, and in Pessoa's work from c. 1980 to c. 1995. Chapter III is a summary of mystical thought in the Iberian Peninsula. I pay special attention to Ibn 'Arabi's modification of the Persian Sufi mystical process and San Juan's application of that modified process in his work. Chapter IV is dedicated to an analysis of the presence and influence of the Sufi mystical process in Clara Janés' work. In particular, the poetic collections *Vivir*, *Creciente Fértil*, *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* and *Arcángel de sombra* are studied. Chapter V fulfills the same function, but in this case I study two of Joaquim Pessoa's works, *Os Olhos de Isa* and *À Mesa do Amor*. In both Chapters IV and V, I argue for the simultaneous existence of a Sufi mystical discourse matched with an anti-hegemonic one. In the case of Clara Janés, the anti-hegemonic discourse is feminist in nature, while in Joaquim Pessoa's case, the discourse is an anti-traditionalist, anti-government one. The concluding chapter deals with the issue of whether or not this Sufi-influenced poetry may still be considered "postmodern."

Beyond the postmodern theories studied and applied here, I also use the work of several critics in both Sufi and Christian Mysticism, such as Nurbakhsh's *Encyclopedia of Sufi Symbolism* and Luce López-Baralt's *San Juan de la Cruz y el Islam*. In addition to these, several other critical works from the fields of Spanish and Portuguese poetry, and Iberian Contemporary History, are applied.

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CHAPTER I: An Introduction to Clara Janés, Joaquim Pessoa, Postmodernism and Iberian Postmodern Poetry

In his *Crónicas saracenas*, Juan Goytisolo speaks of the “mudéjar imprints” (4) left on Hispanic letters by the 500-year presence of the Moors in the Iberian Peninsula. Despite the “mudéjar” not actually having been Moorish, the notion that there is a dose of the combined Moorish-Hispanic culture still found in Spanish (and, as we will see, Portuguese) culture is observable in the comment. Returning to those “imprints,” this presence and influence of Iberia’s Moorish past is evident in the poetic work of both Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa, as the mystical inclination of their poetries in the 1980s and 90s indicates. In this first chapter of the dissertation I will present an introduction to Janés’ and Pessoa’s lives and work. This introduction will also outline the larger idea of postmodernism and the core notions of postmodernism best associated with Janés’ and Pessoa’s poetries. The latter concepts will include the ideas of decentralization and deconstruction, intertextuality, the “chora” and the idea of social discontent within the context of Iberian (both Spanish and Portuguese) poetry. I will then review some of the basic critical notions behind the works of Ana Rossetti in Spain and Vasco Graça Moura in Portugal. By outlining postmodernism both theoretically and practically in the Iberian Peninsula through examples of these poets’ principle thematics I will complete two important tasks. The first is the social, political and artistic contextualization of both Janés’ and Pessoa’s poetries. The second will be a greater understanding of the concepts of the chora and of deconstruction as studied in Chapter II, and a discussion of the basic, postmodern critical notions present in both Janés’ and Pessoa’s poetries.

Clara Janés, daughter of publisher Josep Janés, was born in Barcelona in 1940.¹ She was raised in an academically and intellectually stimulating environment, where her exposure to poetry came early on and often during her childhood. She did not, however, take up poetry as both a guiding and therapeutic practice until her father's tragic death in a car accident in 1959. After graduating from the University of Barcelona she traveled extensively throughout the world, studying languages and writing poetry which helped her to express the "solitude, disorientation, despair and suffering" that had occupied her since her father's death (Pérez 207). The existentialist preoccupations of works such as *La Estrella vencida* (1964) and *Límite humano* (1973) gradually began to combine with what in Chapter II we will explore as "feminist" themes in works like *En busca de Cordelia y Poemas rumanos* (1975) and *Kampa* (1986). It is during this "feminist" period that Janés wrote and published both *Vivir* (1983) and *Creciente Fértil* (1989), two of the three works to be studied at length in Chapter IV of this dissertation. In the 1990s she published several other works, containing elements of both the existential and feminist themes shown above as well as a leaning toward the process of mystical illumination found in writers such as San Juan de la Cruz and Santa Teresa whose work she had studied in her youth. During this time she published *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* (1996) and *Arcángel de sombra* (1999), the final of her four works to be studied in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

Joaquim Pessoa, on the other hand, was born in Barreiros, a Lisbon neighborhood, in 1942. The story of his childhood is largely unknown, although his tendency for poetry

¹ The biographical information taken for this chapter comes almost exclusively from Pérez, Janet. "Clara Janés." *Twentieth-Century Spanish Poets*. Jerry Phillips Winfield, Ed.

with a strong social component, functioning as a form of social activism, is evident in his first poetic works written in the 1970s. It is also unknown where he studied, nor what activities he has taken part in, whether social or artistic. The critical work on him, as will be emphasized in the next chapter of this dissertation, is also scant at best, limited to a paragraph or two, a single interview (of questionable value) and a somewhat unimpressive introduction to *O Livro da Noite*. As I demonstrate in the Chapter II, Joaquim Pessoa's work rests on a basis of deconstructing government censorship and control empowered through a sharp sense of deception in the 1970s. His attack on the government is tempered by an ever-present desire for love, whose mystical manifestations in the 80s and 90s take center stage. In the works of this period, a mystical process is incorporated in order that the poetic subject may find illumination through love. Finally, by the end of the 1990s there seems to be reached a middle ground, one which encompasses a deconstruction of the un-illuminated mind and an attempt to re-create a notion of the limitlessness of poetic language from a pre-existing notion of that language's perceived limitedness. The works to be studied in Chapter II, *O Pássaro no Espelho*, *Os Olhos de Isa* and *Vou-me Embora de Mim* embody this evolution in Pessoa's poetry.

Despite these writer's obvious thematic differences, a striking similarity exists, that of the presence of a mystical process in their works whose presence aids in attaining a state of mental and emotional ecstasy, as well as some greater universal knowledge. As will become clearer in Chapter III, this mystical process is the seven-stages Sufi process of illumination which George Koovackal refines in his article "Sufi Spirituality."

Simultaneously, however, there exist the techniques of decentralization and ironic deconstruction of the phallogentric or hegemonic master-narrative, literary intertextuality, metatextuality (such as the discussion of the limitations of language in Janés' *Vivir* as well as Pessoa's *Vou-me Embora de Mim*), the kristevan "chora," and derridean "différance," all of which point to Janés and Pessoa as entirely postmodern poets. To understand fully both the terms listed above and the eventual integration of a mystical process into the postmodern, the following section of this introduction will serve as a brief definition of postmodernism, emphasizing those techniques listed above.

A widely accepted definition for the postmodern poetic is given in Linda Hutcheon's well-known synthesis of postmodern criticism, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*. Here, she defines it as "a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and then subverts, the very concept it challenges ..." (3). It serves at its advent to demystify the notion of the "master narrative" as proposed by Lyotard (whether that be an historical, literary or cultural one), through the process whereby "consensus becomes the illusion of consensus" (Hutcheon 6-7). Postmodernism, at its most basic level, desires to counter modernist discourse by removing the authority vested in the text and replace it with the revelation of that text's true status, as a human construct, both expressed and limited by the language used to create it (7-8). Thus, any discourse, whether artistic or political, may be understood as nothing more than the manifestation of a "contradictory interaction" based on any given ideology and its "relations of power" with the reader / listener (178-179). Techniques such as intertextuality may serve to reveal the true nature of the "master narrative" as a combination of the literary and the

historical. “It is a kind of seriously ironic parody that often enables this contradictory doubleness: the intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both the ‘world’ and literature” (124). This world of intertextuality supports the reworking of particular “master narratives,” such as phallogentric and political hegemonies, decentralizing them and, thus, leaving their relative, and even illusory, nature exposed (158-159).

The single most important artistic technique, both employed in the poetry of postmodernism and related to the topic of this dissertation, is alluded to multiple times in the previous paragraph, that is, deconstruction. In his work *On Deconstruction*, Culler names three principal aspects of deconstruction (Culler 85-89). First, the deconstructive text must work *within* the terms of the same system it means to deconstruct. In this way, the text will *undermine* the notion, idea, philosophy or base text which it at first would seem to assert. Second, and more specifically, the deconstructive text will *question* the notion of causality in the deconstructed object. This means that the text will make evident the relationship between *cause* and *effect* in which the main ideas of the deconstructed object create its logical base. Finally, the deconstructive text will *reverse* the hierarchical oppositions of the original causal scheme. Thus, by inverting the system in which the deconstructed object works, it may subvert the effectiveness of the causality which feeds the notion of hierarchy sustaining the object. As Hutcheon states, “postmodernism might be seen to operate as an internalized challenge to analytico-referential discourse by pointing to the way in which its model of infinite expression is, in

fact . . ., underpinned by a drive toward totalization and finite and closed knowledge” (75).

The application of this technique in any text causes the illusion of the text as a “master narrative” to be undone. Returning to the defining characteristic of deconstruction, through the process outlined above, the “modern” text, or “master narrative,” becomes just another example of a value-laden hierarchy with no real central core to sustain it. Thus, the text is not only deconstructed, it becomes decentralized.

Decentralization, in fact, appears in some of the first, and most influential, critical texts of the era of postmodernism. Roland Barthes, in his work *Mythologies*, describes language as nothing more than a small part of a greater, yet identical, structure of signifier, signified and sign. “In myth, we find again the tri-dimensional pattern which I have just described [in a summary of Saussurean linguistic theory]: the signifier, the signified and the sign. But myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it *is a second-order system*” (Barthes 114). Ultimately, the semiotic of myth is identical to that of language, meaning that both are finite constructions based on the same, limited model within and through which the illusion of form exist merely as a function of its own limitations. For this reason, what Barthes calls form (117) is not the object itself, but that into which the “impoverished,” empty shell that our linguistic / mythological / sociological tri-partite conception converts it. As Culler puts it, Barthes works toward the ideal of considering all human endeavor as just another linguistic system, “as a series of ‘languages’” that serve to uncover cultural secrets (Culler, *At the Boundaries*, 30-31). This notion will become central in the

discussion of Pessoa's *Vou-me Embora de Mim* and his attempts to reconcile language's perceived limitations with the limitless mystical existence that his poetic subject has attained.

Jacques Derrida explains the technique (or "project") of deconstruction as a way of both undoing textual phallogentrism (Harvey 196) and of revealing "différance," or "a system of difference and contradiction" (Derrida 44) which deconstruction exploits. As postmodernism suggests that no text may contain, nor exist as, a "master narrative," the only centralizing force in such a text becomes that of Derrida's "différance." This redefinition of the notion of a universal center as nothing more than a contrast between differing textual elements, implies that no real definitions may exist, which leads then to a questioning of the nature of literature versus non-literature (i.e., history, political discourse, etc.) Derrida's *Glas*, a simultaneous literary and philosophical discourse, effectively demonstrates this notion (Culler, *At the Boundaries*, 38).

In terms of Derrida's push for a deconstruction of phallogentric language, other critics have taken up the struggle to deconstruct and decentralize this notion. Julia Kristeva, for example, takes up the argument in terms of the marginalization of women in the now-derided notion of the "master narrative." In her *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva studies the grammar of poetic language and resolves that it functions to express "significance" not through normative discourse, which capitalist society has stratified and appropriated, but through a marginalized discourse. "Magic, shamanism, esoterism, the carnival, and 'incomprehensible' poetry all underscore the limits of socially useful discourse and attest to what it represses: the *process* that exceeds the subject and his

communicative structures” (Kristeva 30). The term “significance,” thus, represents the true nature of the world, a “structuring and de-structuring *practice*” rather than a set hierarchy (31). Rhythm (36) and the phonic quality of language (37), both of which reflect poetry’s underlying primitive structure, also represent both the womb and its “significance,” movement and origin. The term Kristeva designates to this phenomenon is that of the “chora,” a greek term for “womb” (35-36). It defines both the derridean “différance,” or the relationship between the real “and the symbolic,” and the element which links the body to its origin, “the mother” that gave birth to it (36-37). In Clara Janés’ poetry, the notion of the “chora” as part of an anti-phallogentric struggle appears as linked fundamentally to her application of the Sufi mystical process. I will discuss this in detail in Chapter II.

The anti-phallic struggle is not the only one present in postmodernism, however. The fight against capitalist government (and against the hierarchical nature of capitalism in general) and the false freedom it offers becomes a primary concern for some postmodern critics. For example, Terry Eagleton, in his work *An Introduction to Literary Theory*, explains that, just as the notion of a literary canon is a social construction (22-23) and an exercise of power in a hegemonic relationship between the reader and the critic (240), so is political discourse, especially that borne of capitalist regimes whose “master narrative” is nothing more than an expression of their own tyranny (246). In Eagleton’s view, the notions of literature and of literary criticism are really just social constructions (242), an opinion which, with the support of deconstruction’s result of decentralization, makes sense, since no universal center, whether historical or literary, really exists. This

unstoppable and undeniable deconstruction of political and literary “master narratives” will be of particular importance for Joaquim Pessoa’s poetry, as I will show in Chapters II and V.

Other techniques, such as the mixing of high and low cultural elements, also play a role in Janés’ and Pessoa’s poetries. As will be revealed in Chapter II, there exists both a literal and intertextual relationship between high and low cultures. That is, Janés’ somewhat prosaic, yet ludic and erotically provocative treatment of sex in *Creciente Fértil* is tempered through its combination with both a sublime mystical symbolism and the narration, on the surface, of an ancient Middle Eastern myth. Pessoa’s similar combination of an almost academic discourse on the contrast between God’s power and the seemingly limited nature of language is tempered in the opposite direction through the use of words such as “porreiro,” or the slang term approximating English “cool,” to describe the almighty.

Yet, the Iberian context in which these poets create their art is just as important as the art itself. For example, Janés’ erudite background in publishing and Pessoa’s apparent suffering among the lower classes of Lisbon society eventually shaped the general direction that each of their deconstructive tendencies took them. While Janés seems, on one level, to fight against the male-dominated hegemony of Spanish society, Pessoa struggles against a local enemy, that is, the government itself. So, the remainder of this introduction will be devoted to summarizing both socio-historical and artistic factors which influenced certain aspects of postmodernism in Iberian poetry, and in the works of Janés and Pessoa in particular. The two poets whom I use as examples, namely,

Ana Rossetti and Vasco Graça Moura, embody many of the characteristics of postmodernism which seem the most salient in Janés' and Pessoa's poetry, as well as in Iberian postmodern poetry, deconstruction and decentralization of Lyotard's "master narrative;" the struggle against a particular social hegemony or social discourse; and the subsequent questioning of the meta-narrative, presence of irony, relativism and intertextuality which follow as consequences of the former.

Historically, the Franco and Salazar dictatorships which ruled Spain and Portugal, respectively, for most of the 20th Century had, in the mid-1970s, been replaced. In Spain, the death of Francisco Franco on 21 November, 1975, marked the end of a period of economic growth known as the "años de desarrollo," in which Spain developed from a rural and relatively impoverished country to become the world's ninth greatest industrial power (Hooper 18). This unprecedented economic growth was due to a combination of high levels of importation and a constant flow of tourist dollars during the 1960s and early 70s, along with foreign investment in the country (19). Unlike what happened in Portugal, as we will soon see, the Spanish government welcomed all of these income-attracting economic and developmental decisions (19-20). Although corruption and social stratification abounded (21), the country saw a level of prosperity unheard of in the years prior to the Civil War. By the time of the approval of the first post-Franco democratic constitution in 1977, however, the 'economic miracle' had ended and prosperity had begun to decline (25-28). It had also become evident that, despite the increase in personal wealth that most Spaniards enjoyed, the division of wealth among the social classes had not changed at all from the previous decades (27). So, with the

death of Franco and the returned influence of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español, the Spanish Socialist Party, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, there appeared a chance for renewed economic growth as well as a more egalitarian distribution of wealth in Spain (52-53). However, as the 1980s moved to a close it became clear that the Socialist Party would not attempt to change the uneven distribution of wealth in the country (61), leading to voter disillusionment and one of many reasons for which the more conservative Partido Popular, or Popular Party, began taking more and more parliamentary seats during the 1980s and 90s (62-69). In fact, social critics have commented on an important aspect of the transition period that differentiates it from that of other countries, namely, the control maintained by the ruling class over the transition to democracy (López 36). The Spanish case is, thus, one of a transition “from above,” rather than the Portuguese case of a transition stemming from the army’s disenchantment with the colonial wars (Kaufman 13) and fueled by the disenfranchised working classes (Nataf 73), as we will see shortly.

Culturally, Spain has had to accept its linguistic and national plurality while simultaneously maintaining a unified, central government (Hooper 371). Religiously, the people’s adherence to the church, an essential element of Spanish culture in the past, began to wane during the post-Franco era (133). This was due in part to a secularization of the general populace, especially those born at or after the transition period (133-4). The generally conservative nature of the Spanish clergy came into sharp contrast with the more liberal political culture of the 1980s and 90s (143). In this possibly hostile (and by no means historically unique) situation, however, there is still a strong sentiment that

Catholicism serves as an element of national identity, even if the belief in God is not so solid (126). It is in this confusing moral, and somewhat disappointing political, situation that a poetics of postmodernism takes hold in Spain.

The most noted characteristics of this postmodern Spanish poetic art, beside those described above, are the contentions of “tradition versus cosmopolitanism” (Lafollette 161), shifting gender roles and the subversion of prescribed social norms. According to Holloway there exist two types of postmodernism, that of the 1960s and 70s “novísimo” writers (both in poetry and prose), and the other, seen as having created a “metaficción historiográfica, pero dentro de un modelo autorreferencial e irónico que subvierte la estabilidad de todo sistema de representación, bien la historia, bien del sujeto humano” (62). In terms of the “feminist” off-shoot of postmodernism, the battle of transgressing and deconstructing the male-dominated social hegemony, as well as the subservient female role in that hegemony, has taken center stage (Llorente Torres 14). The re-definition of gender roles is evident in the works of several postmodern-era male and female Spanish poets (20-21). There is also a co-existence of seemingly disparate literary perspectives. Such is that of the more hybrid poetic forms, such as prose poetry and narrative which are incorporated in the poetry itself. In this sense, cases such as the ironic montage technique employed by Ángel González in his *Procedimientos narrativos* serves as a good example (Fisher 281-283). This also includes the combination of a traditional narrative style with more experimental styles as seen in 1980s and 90s prose (Pereiro 13). Ultimately, the paradoxical nature of Spanish postmodernism remains a deconstructive, decentralizing and almost activist presence in what is still a heavily

traditional society. One of the best examples of a Spanish postmodern poetic that both works within the postmodern techniques described above, and at the same time attempts to negotiate the “tradition versus cosmopolitan” paradox, is found in the work of Ana Rossetti.

Ana Rossetti, born in 1950, grew up during a period of relatively relaxed censorship and came of age in an historical period marked, as explained above, by, as Debicki states, “a lack of historical perspective, uncertainty regarding the future” (179). Her ironic undermining of cultural “master narratives” concerning the phallogentric, through carefully utilized sexual imagery (211-212) allows for a deconstruction (through carnavalesque inversion) of a culture of male-dominated hegemony (213). Her work *Indicios vehementes* (1985) is one that many consider one of her most telling works, in which in poems such as “Chico Wrangler,” the inversion of the male-female, or dominant-submissive, relationship function in the context of a foreign advertisement (Debicki 213 and Ferradáns 25):

Dulce corazón mío de súbito asaltado.
Todo por adorar más de lo permisible.
Todo porque un cigarro se asienta en una boca
y en sus jugosas sedas se humedece.
Porque una camiseta incintante señala
de su pecho, el escudo durísimo,
y un vigoroso brazo de la mínima manga sobresale.
Todo porque unas piernas, unas perfectas piernas,

Dentro del más ceñido pantalón, frente a mí se separan.

Se separan.

(Rossetti 99)

In this single-stanza poem, the inversion of the male hegemony mentioned above is evident. The application of additional aesthetic meaning to a popular object whose purpose is entirely commercial (that is, to gain customers and make money) indicates another, very postmodern aspect of Rossetti's work, the marking of an absence of universal meaning (Moreiras Menor 108). Her work also demonstrates the emphasis on Spanish culture as having become one of the "spectacle," where one searches out appearances but not meaning (108). Decentralization occurs, thus, through the deconstruction of ultimately superficial and vacuous cultural icons, such as an advertisement for pants, as indicative of a superficial and vacuous culture. Ironically, it is this emptiness that points toward, according to Rossetti's work, a mark of Spanish cultural identity in the wake of the Franco's death (111). The combination also remits to the tendency for combining high culture (represented here by a very stylized reaching toward the sublime) with low culture (the almost vacuous eroticism and use of a commercial image present in the poem). The fact that it is a woman's gaze upon the image of a man, as stated above, emphasizes the shifting of gender roles in the poem, as Rossetti's female poetic subject becomes the active participant in the exchange. It has been recognized that "the seductiveness of the bodies in Rossetti's poetry derives from their conformity to cultural models of eroticism, even when their gender or sexual orientation departs from the norm of these models" (Kruger-Robbins 171). The male

image then serves as a cultural icon for her erotic deconstruction of his authority as both male and iconic.

Although “Chico Wrangler” does not reflect the reconciliation of the traditional with the deconstructive, Rossetti’s articulation of past imagery [from the work of Góngora, for example (Ferradáns 27)] serves this purpose. The absence of attempts at defining specifically the state of Spanish society also sets her apart from her contemporaries (Moreiras Menor 115). As with the case of Ángel González’s poetry from the 1970s on, there exists a certain timelessness in her poetry. As Rossetti states, “... cuando escribes, no existe una sucesión lógica del tiempo. Todo lo que tienes y todo lo que esperas está ahí” (Rossetti 14). The theme of death, although present in her prose (Moreira Menor 119), does not take a central role in her poetry. I believe that this is due to Rossetti’s adherence to the experiencing of a postmodern ideal which, in its ambiguous, indefinable and nihilistic view of the decentralized universe, sees the attempt to transcend the world as a waste of time. Death’s absence may also reflect the lack of ontological historicity which, in Rossetti’s postmodernism, signifies that the meaning of death becomes relative to others’ interpretation of it in the present. This reduces its absolute nature to a relativized, and thus less transcendent, poetic and ontological element.

Historically, the case of Portugal is similar to that of Spain, although the xenophobic nature of the Salazar regime and the paternalistic nature of its colonial management (Birmingham 159-160), which included the colonial wars of the 1960s and 70s (169), allowed only for minimal industrial development (160). In fact, it is said that

Salazar's Portugal seemed "closer to the standard of tropical Africa" than to a Western European country in terms of the general well-being of the people (160). Unlike the critical stance that the Spanish church took against Franco's treatment of the lower classes (Hooper 136), the government and the church in Portugal maintained a complex, although absolute, sharing of power, especially over those classes (160). Overall, while the Spanish dictatorship had to deal with unprecedented economic growth, ethnic plurality and internal criticism, the Portuguese dictatorship, put simply, did not.

The only area in which the Portuguese economy grew, albeit only slightly, was through trade with the colonies in Africa – industrial development and international trade there brought much-needed funds for the more insular homeland (Birmingham 176). The natives of these colonies, namely, Angola and Mozambique, were not so keen on being exploited, thus revolting against the Portuguese in the 1960s (176). Losses on the Portuguese side of the war were high and moral low, especially given the lack of support among much of the general population and the army for the continued wars (177). So, on 25 April, 1974, elements of the military, with the support of the working classes, revolted in a bloodless revolution against the dictatorship. The soldiers were greeted by civilians who gave them carnations [hence the terms, "a Revolução dos Cravos," or the Carnation Revolution (Kaufman 13 and Birmingham 177)].

This first revolution did not bring about a popularly supported democracy (Birmingham 182), as the new socialist government's attempts at agrarian reform ended only in failure and a return to the Salazar-era system of absentee landlords and exploited workers (183). Government officials began making secret deals with landowners as the

army, lead by the “capitães,” or the captains who lead the 1974 revolution, began to intervene more frequently in civil affairs (184-5). So, on 25 November, 1975, a second coup d’etat, lead by moderate factions of the army, toppled the leaders of the first revolution and the ailing government (185). Soon after, the first Prime Minister of the democratic Portugal, Mário Soares, was elected to power (185). In terms of the colonial war, on 11 November, 1975, the Portuguese Colonial Army withdrew from the African colonies for the last time, thus ending an almost two-decade war as well as a failed attempt to set up transitional governments in the region (187).

Both socially and artistically, the Portuguese, like the Spanish, live in a mix of traditional culture, promoted as a source of cultural unity during the dictatorship period in each country, and of the international culture of the European Union, a newly opened free-market economy and cultural postmodernity (Kaufman 17). Interestingly, Spanish exploitation of the lower wages in Portugal has created an economic quasi-colonialism rivaled only by that of the British during the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries (Birmingham 191). This phenomenon, along with the slow development of industry and disillusionment with the democratic government’s ability to lead the people out of their misery, turned the populace from highly optimistic in the 1970s (Kaufman 16) to somewhat doubtful, in the 1980s, that change was possible (18-19). The questioning of traditional artistic modes, such as Neo-Realism, and the rejection of traditionally popular modes of expression, such as Fado, by the populace (Birmingham 179), allow the entering into the country of a more effective means of expressing a more modern Portuguese culture (Kaufman 18). Thus, the realization of an uncertain future in the

1980s and 90s (Seixo 406), fueled by an ambiguous cultural, political and social status both within and without [summed up in Sousa Santos' declaration that Portugal is a "semi-peripheral" nation (Santos 58)], has become the background for the development of postmodern poetry in the country.

The process of Portugal's adoption of postmodernism fits cleanly within the social process described above. There is a seemingly sudden swing from the essentially Modernist, Surrealist and Neo-Realist tendencies of the 1920s, 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s, to the appearance of postmodernism in the 1970s. This could be an entirely artistic phenomenon, as, according to Marinho, the plurality of voices heard in Portuguese poetry in the 1960s reflects the failure of the poetic word as an efficient and useful tool for expressing meaning and universality. "...[the poets of] os anos 60, profundamente influenciados pela crise dos valores sociais, apostam na recusa do sentido, vivendo angustiadamente a inutilidade da palavra e a sua terrível ineficácia ..." (Marinho 41). No matter what the catalyst, this process, rather stunning relative to what seems a more measured development of postmodernism in Spain, began toward the end of the 1950s and continued on to the adoption of postmodernism as present and strongly felt in Portuguese poetry in the 1990s.

This postmodern Portuguese art, similarly to its Spanish counterpart, is characterized by the deconstruction, decentralization, irony, and relativism seen at the beginning of this chapter. Its uniqueness, however, come from its so-called "revivalism." "Daí as citações, o intencional regresso a formas historicamente definidas, o ecletismo, a convocação de estilos polifonicamente diversificados e entrosados que não-de permitir

que se fale de um novo-romantismo ... de novo-simbolismo, de novo-expressionismo, de novo-surrealismo abjeccionista, etc., para não falarmos antes de uma figura que poderá ser comum a todas estas formas de *revival* e que é precisamente a da paródia ou a da ironia” (Guimarães, *A Poesia Contemporânea*, 172). Just as in the case of Spain, however, postmodernism in Portugal is not simply a monolithic genre, but rather a polyfaceted series of intertextual games played, in some writers, with recently past poetic movements, such as in the case of João Manuel Magalhães’ poetic dialogue with the work of the mid-Twentieth-Century poet Carlos de Oliveira (Gusmão 171). In other writers, such as Vasco Graça Moura (as will be seen below), there is a constantly evolving intertextual relationship between traditional and popular styles, along with much older poets, such as Camões. Finally, there exist also the writings of Nuno Júdice, whose “discursive and visionary exuberance found likewise in Herberto Helder” (Gusmão 172) set him apart from the others in his intertextual dialogue with a 1960s experimentalist discourse. As will be seen in throughout this dissertation, the poetry of Joaquim Pessoa can lay claim to each of these typologies, including, of course, a mystical intertextual discourse, making his writing not only unique in Portuguese poetry but in postmodernism in a general sense.

In any case, the sometimes paradoxical situation described above, similar again to that of Spanish postmodernism, does hold an important difference to it. Spanish postmodern poetry (and literature) seems to have taken an anti-hegemonic direction with respect to a male-dominated society, as is clear even in the work of male writers. I stress this point as it is salient in the work of Clara Janés. The Portuguese, upon the disillusionment felt when the new, democratic government began to undermine the

principles of the 25 April revolution, turned their struggle against a government who time and again has betrayed them (Sabine 196). This will also be evident in both Joaquim Pessoa's first poetic works, from 1975 to the beginning of the 1980s, and in the anti-imperialist discourse of Moura's poem "conhecimento," in *Letras do Fado Vulgar* and studied below. Again, there are other differences which one could discuss concerning the historical and traditional literary environments of Spanish and Portuguese poetry of this era. I have limited my discussion to those pertaining specifically to the influences and postmodern characteristics of Janés' and Pessoa's works in order that the focus of this monography not be lost.

Vasco Graça Moura is an excellent example of a Portuguese postmodern poet who has become emblematic of postmodernism's paradoxical effect on contemporary Portuguese poetry. In a very general sense, in fact, both his artistic and political life has reflected a sense of movement from one genre to another, from poetry to theatre, novels and essay on the one hand, and on the other, from extreme leftist during the revolutionary period to a functionary in the government Propaganda Office (Oliveira, "Biobibliografia," 32). Even focusing on just his poetic work, the reader is bombarded with a never-ending series of symbols that, although seemingly pertaining to the same neo-Surrealist strain as Helder's, actually form part of an intertextualization of the Surreal with Renaissance themes and symbols (Lancastre 36). It allows the poetic subject in Moura's poetry to explore the theme of memory as an intertextual game played between past and present. This game both draws out the omni-presence of the former in the latter, and reveals the chaos lurking underneath a seemingly stable poetic tradition.

“O fantástico, o real, a «self-reflexivity» e a citação [of works from 16th Century Renaissance poetry], são as quatro constantes através das quais o poeta age para enredar e ao mesmo tempo destabilizar o seu leitor. Porque estas quatro constantes, assim combinadas, criam equívocidade e ironia, abrem, embora no respeito quase férreo da tradição métrica, para um novo universo: um caos que se esconde por entre as malhas apertadas da observância tradicional, e que é constituído pelo *assemblage*” (Lancastre 36). His utilization of music in many works, such as *Letras do Fado Vulgar* (2001), adds the element of a combined high/low culture to this enigmatic and ironic mix (Andrade 43). In fact, the postmodern game of anachronisms becomes plain in his recycling of Fado in intertextually rich poems such as “conhecimento:”

fiz no teu corpo à noite a travessia
de mares e céus e terras e vulcões
e em breve rodopio as estações
detinham-se esquecidas e foi dia

a memória das praias e florestas
perpassou-me na pele e entranhou-se
como um suave afago que assim fosse
espuma que ficou de iras honestas

e ao despertar de tanta sonolência
formou-se devagar esta canção

para entreter de novo o coração
tão paciente em sua impaciência

até que sendo noite eu atravesso
uma outra vez o mundo, o mar, o vento.
amar é sempre mais conhecimento
e conhecer é tudo o que eu te peço.

(Moura, *Letras do Fado Vulgar*, 42)

There are, of course, certain rhythmic and symbolic points in this poem which are both common to any Fado tune as well as the first poetries of the modern period in Portugal. In terms of the rhythm, the use of the hendecasyllabic, four-verse ABBA rhyme-scheme, known as octave (or “quadra”), was commonly utilized by the poets of the Renaissance Period both by itself (as reflected above) and in conjunction with the sextet for the reproduction of the Petrarchian Sonnet form. In fact, the dedication of the poem is the third verse from the following stanza by Camões in his *Lusíadas*:

Oh, que famintos beijos na floresta,
E que mimoso choro que soava!
Que afagos tão suaves! Que ira honesta,
Que em risinhos alegres se tornava!
O que mais passam na manhã e na sesta,
Que Vénus com prazeres inflamava,

Milhor é exprimentá-lo que julgá-lo;
Mas julgue-o quem não pode exprimentá-lo.

(Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, Canto IX, 313, Stanza 83)

Although this particular stanza does not follow the rhyme-scheme found in Moura's poem, the stanza has great relevance for the analysis of it. This scene occurs during the time in which Vasco da Gama's crew has found the Island of Love, or the "Ilha dos Amores," and is enjoying a respite with the sexually-oriented nymphs present. The stanza serves to outline the pleasures the island provides and to inform the reader that the promiscuity described should not be judged harshly, although the narrator knows that the jealous will judge. In any case, this stanza has also appeared as the lyrics of a fado tune by Cristina Branco. So, immediately the intertextual presence of both the "high culture" of Renaissance poetry and the "low culture" of Fado lyrics is felt in the poem.

Returning to Moura's poem, the greatest difference between the two is that while the original (i.e., Camões' *Os Lusíadas*) is part of a larger work which exalts the Portuguese colonizing subject, the more recent version of the story is a more intimate exploration of the sailor's true desires. It links his travels with the experience of the island in terms of the nostalgic remembrance of the places visited, rather than as a series of national victories. Also, and just as importantly, at the end of Moura's poem, the poetic subject states that "love is always more knowledge / and knowledge is all that I ask of you." The physical act of sex, then, takes a less important role: that of the type of memory found in "fado" music, that of a nostalgic looking-back to the past; that of the pleasure which "entranhou-se / como um suave afago que assim fosse / espuma que ficou

de iras honestas.” The ironic switching of physical love with nostalgia in the poem follows Moura’s deconstructive style. In other words, he has utilized the same language of the pro-imperialist, nationalist and high-culture *Lusíadas* to subvert its original message and “vulgarize” it, reducing it to the level of a common Fado tune.

Beyond the combining of Surrealism, 16th Century Lyric and Fado lurks yet another element, the quotidian, which Moura represents as the anecdotal “vulgaridade de situações” in his poetry (Moura 9-10). As becomes evident in collections such as *A Sequência da Baleia*, and *Concerto Campestre* (1993), the notion of the quotidian as anecdotal is not limited to simple, day-to-day happenings, but may include an ironic carnivalizing of the way the media transform the simple into the hyperbolic. For example, *A Sequência da Baleia* («o caso flácido da baleia moretal que deu à costa perto da póvoa do varzim») is a ludic and critical look at an “episódio de um passado muito recente que os jornais, as televisões e as rádios que temos elevaram ao estatuto de catástrofe planetária” (Blanco 41). This insertion of the real and “circunstancial” (Guimarães 117) into a critically deconstructive poetic discourse opens a space for cultural action (Matos 45), perhaps stemming from his political and social leanings as mentioned above, and thus for a “healthy” provocation of the reader (Blanco 42). The deconstructive, and thus postmodern, aspect of undermining the notions behind that which may be seen as quotidian is evident. Moura’s intertextual combination of the present (and, thus, “real”) with the past (as seen in his use of 17th Century poetic meters) also reinforces the all-important notions of irony (Guimarães 116-117) and ambiguity

(Navarro 43) which form the basis of Derrida's "différance" and, thus, the existence of postmodernism in Portugal.

In this chapter I have attempted to construct a very brief outline of aspects of postmodernism manifest over the course of the second half of the 20th Century, as well as examples of it in the works of poets from the Iberian Peninsula. I have used two poets who I believe exemplify the latter half of the evolution from occidental modernism, or the vanguard period of the first half of the Twentieth Century, to postmodernism in the Peninsula: Ana Rossetti in Spain and Vasco Graça Moura in Portugal. Each poet demonstrates, in his and her own right, the postmodern techniques of deconstruction, decentralization, "différance" and anti-hegemonic struggle in the Peninsula. They are also emblematic of the difference in focus of each struggle as seen in Janés' and Pessoa's works, the former against a sexist hegemony, the latter against a socio-political one. Although this analysis may seem simplified, the difference in focus outlined above is extremely important when producing a comparative analysis of the poetics of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa, one which occupies the greater part of this dissertation.

In the next chapter of this dissertation, I will discuss existing criticism on the poetry of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. Chapter III will be an explanation of Iberian Sufi mysticism. Then, in Chapters IV and V, I will focus on the presence and influence of the Iberian Sufi mystical processes in specific works by both Janés and Pessoa. Finally, I will conclude with the notion that these poetics could possibly represent a point of stabilization of the postmodern in Iberian poetry at the end of the 20th Century.

Chapter II: Basic Critical Ideas on the Poetry of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa.

Section I – Clara Janés

The trajectory of criticism on Clara Janés has, in the last ten years, taken us from the Erotic used to re-define feminism, to the universal, and finally into the realm of the mystical. Thus, in this chapter I would like to propose a review, and re-reading, of the basic critical ideas applied to Clara Janés over the last fourteen years. We will begin with a discussion of the notion of Clara Janés as an entirely erotic and feminist, anti-hegemonic poet, searching for the origin of essence in the “chora,” or pre-linguistic womb, of Kristevan critical thought, as some critics have suggested. We will then link Janés’ apparent deconstruction of the phallic patrimony with her intertextually mystical journey, finding in the cross-over a series of dichotomies, or “binary oppositions,” that engender an ambiguous space for the creation and nurturing of a new feminine self. This works because the dichotomous forces brought together in Janés’ poetry (the particular vs. the universal) create in their union an ambiguous (and thus, free) highly erotic space. Within this space, the exclusion of the (male) lover’s active participation in the more profound aspects of the erotic experience gives rise to a new, uniquely free and universal feminine identity.

Janés’ poetry from the beginning of her career reflects a deep interest in a search for that which is the most essential, while at the same time attempting to transcend national, physical psychological and literary limits (Wilcox, *Clara Janés*, 356). Her constant investigation of the internalized self differentiates her from what Wilcox characterizes as a more masculine, extroverted voice (357). In the poem “Rosa del

desierto” (*Vivir* 15), for example, the poetic voice describes the scent of the rose (a symbol of fecundity and the female genitalia) as it transforms into the witness (and thus carrier) of its own plenitude:

Las rosas rojas de indetenible aliento
cuya energía núbil de capullo
en esplendor y aroma se transforma,
testigo son de plenitud y de tránsito.
Esta pequeña piedra, sin embargo,
no entra en competencia con el tiempo,
no le teme al no ser, pues ser le basta,
y bellamente, en silencio total,
la perfección de lo imposible muestra.

The absence of any sort of symbol or metaphor referring to the opposite sex is important as it allows for the exploration of this feminine symbol for its own sake. It does not depend on any phallic referent to define itself. Also, by focusing on the invisible, floating scent of the rose rather than on its physical form, the poetic voice allows the rose to transcend its physical limitations and to become “la perfección de lo imposible.” Temporality becomes a moot point for the poetic voice, as the scent of the rose transcends the perceived limits of death.²

² It should be noted that the juxtaposition of love/sex and death is a traditional combination in Spanish poetry throughout its history. It is found in the works of twentieth-century poets such as Lorca, Alexandre, Alberti and many others.

Thus, a profound and perpetual questioning of Western, masculinized values comes into effect in Janés' poetry, which deconstructs, then rewrites, some of our conceptions of the notion of Women. The weakening of the masculine in Janés' poetic voice and the deconstruction of that masculinity need a space, however, in which to occur. To engender this free space, the poetic voice must first lose its inherently egocentric nature. This logically negates Wilcox's notion of introspection as a type of introversion. In her article *La Subjetividad desde "lo otro" en la poesía de María Sanz, María Victoria Atencia y Clara Janés* (1992), Sharon Keefe Ugalde posits that, starting with *Vivir*, the direct expression of the poetic voice's ego begins to diminish. In "Rosa del desierto," cited above, as well as throughout *Vivir*, the poetic ego simply does not appear. On the rare occasion that it does, such as in "Gato" or "Una Paloma," the poetic ego appears in reference only to an element of nature to be poeticized (in these cases, the animals who make up the title of each poem), and not for its own sake. Thus, a uniquely feminine identity emerges in the union of feminine sexuality and poetic creativity, expressed through the presence of erotic corporeal pleasures combined with music, a pre-linguistic state of reflection (Keefe Ugalde 312). This relationship extends itself, beginning with *Kampa*, into the realm of nature, as the unrestricted nature, or fluidity, of the poetic self (which Keefe Ugalde designates as feminine) come to form an integral part of the poetic ego (313). Thus, we see the emergence of a unbound feminine poetic self whose true meaning lies not within the confines of the male (and thus phallic) lover, but within her own singular, intimate and eroticized relationship with the exterior world.

We may explain this phenomenon as the process whereby the deconstruction of the masculine becomes fecund (able to create life) in the context of a non-masculine erotic (and here, poetic) experience. Along with, and as a direct consequence of, this erotic deconstruction of sexuality as a fixed, gender-based value, we find ourselves in a poetic world with neither physical nor hierarchical limits. “Talvez la manifestaciones más importantes de la identidad femenina en la poesía de Clara ... son la preponderancia de la unión y la fluidez y la ausencia de un orden jerárquico (Keefe Ugalde 312).” This lack of a male-dependent hierarchical structure for the realization of the sexual act then helps to make Janés’ re-definition of the sexual experience universal and thus free from conventional constraints. The untitled poem whose first verse is “A mis muslos ofrece tu cabeza” (*Creciente Fértil*, 48) demonstrates this idea:

A mis muslos ofrece tu cabeza
en tanto a horcajadas la recibo
y sobre ella me deshago
y baño tu cabello
y tus ojos de ágata
de ungüentos amorosos.
En extremo transida,
como ladrón te robo
lo que de aliento queda
en tu boca arrasada.
Y someto tu lengua

que mis valvas en éxtasis estrechan
cuando su húmeda punta
alcanza el ojo de oro.

The importance of the poem is not found necessarily in the explicitness of the sexual act, but of the poetic voice's power over her male partner during that act. The poetic voice maintains complete control over her lover – it is she who chokes him, robbing him of his breath and thus his life. The lover's participation is mortally passive here, allowing the poetic voice an unrestricted control over life and death. This type of control, not permitted in a traditional sexual relationship, may only occur in a world where phallogentric constraints on the feminine poetic voice do not exist.

We have spoken of a fluidity in Janés' poetry, but have not yet defined it in terms related to Janés's constant quest for the origin, or essence, of being (both poetically and autobiographically, as her interview will explain). I posit that the universal femininity of the chora gives rise to what we classify here as the feminine act of literary creation.

In Ugalde's article, *Huellas de la mujer en la poesía de Clara Janés*, we begin to see the first real in-depth analysis of Janés's search the kristevan "chora," or origin of life and creation, in her poetry (Keefe Ugalde, *Huellas*, 203). Similarly to Chapter I of this dissertation, Ugalde summarizes the "chora" as a term coined by the postmodern feminist theorist Julia Kristeva, who re-named the notion of the uterine space using the Greek term for the uterus, or "chora." According to Ugalde, Kristeva identifies this space with the semiotic in terms of its function as a "pre-oedipal" (and thus, non-masculine and non-erotic, in Freudian psychological theory), disorganized combination of sound, movement

and the basic impulses of our animal beginnings (202). The semiotic, it seems, subverts the notion of organized language as an ideal, revealing it as having stemmed from a phallogocentric concept of society (202). Thus, the notion of the “chora,” as it appears in Janés’ poetry, serves to deconstruct this (assumedly) masculine ideal by purposefully disorganizing it, breaking it down into its most basic (i.e., essential) and animal-like structures to demonstrate its hypocritical nature as both an ideal means of communication and a method for the suppression of the feminine.

This search for the chora, or uterine space, appears in such works as *Kampa II* and *Vivir*. According to Ugalde, Janés, in these works, articulates not only a break-down of the “normal” rhythms of language as an attack on the masculine symbolic, but recorded tapes to emphasize in her poetry that which is “un fluir prelingüístico desorganizado” of sound, and rhythm (202-3). The final section of *Vivir*, “Planto,” is composed entirely of verse put to musical notation, an approximation to the “pre-linguistic fluidity” noted above (*Vivir* 65-76). The fact that we find poetry in both Spanish and Catalan indicates the unimportance of a particular language, highlighting then the importance of sound and musicality over semantic meaning. The song “Ah!” (69), for example, is made up of a C-major progression and the syllable “a” triumphantly exclaimed. This short melody, thus, is based on the sound made with the mouth entirely open, as an animal or baby’s cry. It is also a sound made as death takes the body, as in the song before it whose final verses are “presente / el cuerpo / de muerte” (68). The musical score that accompanies is not at all intricate. Rather, it is a simple tune from which it is possible to create many other possible melodies. So, here we have a space for possible future creation based on that

which is most basic and essential – the musical “chora,” as it were, borne from the union of creation and death, another dichotomous relationship.

Despite our critical assertions of Janés as a feminist, anti-phallic and chora-seeking poet, as early as 1988, in an interview with Keefe Ugalde, she makes statements which should lead us to question our interpretation of her work as purely postmodern (a definition of which is offered in the introduction to this dissertation). In this interview, Janés clarifies that, although she does not align herself with the “novísimos,” she does see herself as taking part in a (highly mystical) poetic tradition beginning with San Juan de la Cruz (Keefe Ugalde, *Conversaciones*, 45). Janés also makes references in the interview to Sappho, Murasaki (“una japonesa que vivió entre el siglo X y el XI”), Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, among many other poets (45-47), as points of personal artistic inspiration. Later, she goes on to comment that she doesn’t feel she pertains to a decidedly feminist literature (46). If, after all of the argumentation presented on Janés as a feminist writer, she still does not see herself as such, what then does that say about the validity of our more feminist analysis? More importantly, what function does she see herself fulfilling through her poetry, if not the one designated here? At one point in the interview, Janés affirms that her poetry is a “constante búsqueda de la luz.” She also states that the experience of the exterior world is an “experiencia visionaria, una «visión», lo que ... podríamos decir, es la identificación con lo «otro» ... creo que está muy vinculado a la cuestión de la luz” (49). These clear affirmations of a mystical nature do not necessarily contradict the anti-phallic, anti-hegemonic development of the chora that we have been studying. They do, however, force us to revise our critical stance and take into account a

kind of mystical journey which Janés, upon contemplation of her own suicide, has undertaken. At the end of the interview, Keefe Ugalde asks Janés, “ha sido la poesía una salvación, incluso del suicidio?” Her answer is the following, “Sí, lo ha sido ... porque a mí me había salvado de la muerte, me había hecho seguir viviendo” (50). I will argue, thus, that despite her arguable adherence to a feminist ideology, the purpose of her poetry, due especially to its mystical nature, is not only one of female empowerment, but of personal enlightenment, salvation, and (in the final chapter of this dissertation) the re-invention of her historical Iberian identity.

We should now turn our attention, given the elucidation offered in the above-referenced interview, to the presence of mysticism as a singular influence and all-encompassing theme in Janés’ poetry. We should keep in mind that, while informative, the studies by Engelsen Marson, Keefe Ugalde and Francis do not clearly define this mysticism any more than Janés herself does in her interview. While pointing out that a Christian mysticism does exist in works such as *Creciente Fértil and Kampa*, they neglect to delve deeper into the roots of that mystical tradition, which, as we will see in Chapter III, come directly from a much-ignored Iberian Sufi tradition.

Ellen Engelsen Marson, in 1995, published her article *Clara Janés: Mysticism and the Search for the Female Poetic Voice*. In this work we see that, for the first time, the topic of mysticism is studied as an independently fluid (i.e., unrestricted and defining) concept in Janés’ poetry. Engelsen Marson divides this Janesian mystical process into three stages, “purgation,” “illumination” and “union with the Absolute,” coinciding with the stages of the mystical journey as described by Santa Teresa (245), San Juan de la

Cruz's mentor. The first stage is that of purification through pain, where the soul of the sufferer becomes empty, ready thus to be filled by "binary oppositions," such as "love" and "pain." The actual receiving of the binary oppositions constitutes the second stage. This then prepares the mystic's soul for the third stage, its union with God (245).

In *Vivir* we find the poem "Teoría" opening the collection (9):

Contra dolor amor se intensifica,
dota de tacto al pensamiento en el objeto,
toma cuerpo en las voces que el mármol no retiene,
en las epifanías de gélida materia;
arremete en turbiones contra sombra,
da vuelo al pie que discurre entre las yerbas,
y desata del tiempo aquí mutante
la pura transparencia.

In the next chapter we will focus on the dichotomy of love and pain in this poem, as well as the specifics of which mystical process, be it Christian or Sufi, is more present here. The important thing is that we have a mystical process whereby pain and love drive toward transcendence. Ontologically speaking, the poetic voice introduces a contrast of the material versus the sublime and in so doing intertwines the mystical with the ontological. Then, through the absence of a strong poetic ego in the poem, the theme of transcendence becomes a universal one.

Still, the definition of the term "mysticism" cannot be wholly drawn from Renaissance Christian sources. As seen above, the mystical process coincides

ontologically and semiotically with the quest for the chora, a postmodern deconstruction of the phallogentric *par excellence*. In fact, Natalia Francis' dissertation, completed in 1998, includes a chapter dedicated to Janés' expression of mysticism, either through the characters, places or themes portrayed in her work, combined with her postmodern tendencies. Thus, we see that Janés produces a very uniquely ambiguous mystical deconstruction based in, as we have noted, the simultaneity and union of opposing dualities. Francis is also the first to mention Sufism, although in a relatively limited scope, in any critical work written on Janés.

Francis first discusses the demystifying nature of certain works of literature (Martin Santos' *Tiempo de silencio*, for example), then applying the notion of demystification to Janés' work as completing its deconstructionist function (133-141). In particular, Keefe Ugalde's critical work on Janés seems to serve as a solid basis for this analysis (140-145). "Los artículos de Ugalde han sido y siguen siendo una aportación valiosa al conocimiento de la obra poética de Clara Janés..." (145). However, Francis does differentiate in her notion of Janés' work from Keefe Ugalde's definition by stating that Janés does not so much revise myth as she does recreate and, thus, renew myth within her own contemporary poetic context (153). Francis also states first that myth in Janés' work carries an ontological meaning (154), which, as we have seen in the poem "Teoría," makes logical sense. It stands to reason, then, that her preoccupation with the deconstruction of the masculine-dominated Western discourse finds itself deeply entrenched in the fight against those primordial elements of our phallogentric mythology.

However, the deconstruction of myth and mysticism isn't so important in and of itself. Rather, we should view this process as a reconstruction under a more pro-feminine discourse. This idea coincides with my own exploration of Janés' work as a re-centralization of the erotic as fluid, and thus feminine, within the space created by the deconstructed ontological and semiotic state. In the poem "Soy la abeja" from *Creciente Fértil* (24), we see the physical nature of the female poetic voice as one of a sexual body and as one of a bee come to pollinate the male (an obvious inversion):

Soy la abeja enviada en pos de ti, ¡oh Telipinu!

En ebrio vuelo emprenderé el acoso;

tomaré cera y lavaré tu cuerpo

melado como el ámbar;

te picaré en las manos y en los pies,

despertaré insolente tu capullo

y podré al fin libar.

Y de una gota desataré una fuente

con labios deslizantes,

cubriéndote a batidas

hasta enjutar tu orto,

para que te sometas

exangüe a mi dominio.

The pro-feminine discourse, as throughout *Creciente Fértil*, comes from the aftermath of the deconstructed state of the male discourse. The bee, once a symbol of

male fecundity and fluidity, now becomes appropriated by the female poetic voice. Telipinu, who Janés explains at the beginning of the collection is the mythical son of the Goddess Auriga (11), is reduced to the simple recipient of her advances. As for any mystical yearnings in the poem, the combination of love and pain (the poetic voice's stinging him) as the path to purification (as "exangüe" to her dominion) resonate from our definition of mysticism into three stages, as seen earlier.

However, probably the most detailed analysis of the mystical in Janés' poetry comes from Candelas Newton's 1994 article *Mitopoesis, revisión y delirio en 'Creciente Fértil', de Clara Janés*. Here we see an analysis of the manifestation of myth and mysticism as an attack on the patriarchal and phallogentric hegemony through the presence of non-Christian (and, thus, non-phallic) themes (110). Although not explained in the article, I will assume for the sake of clarity that the use of the term "non-Christian" stems from the idea of Christianity as belonging to the previously deconstructed semiotic of the masculine discourse of organized language. This would make any "non-Christian" discourse a move against that language (at least for the sake of Newton's argument). In any case, we may easily confirm this mythical intertextuality in our analysis of "Soy la abeja" above. Again, we emerge with yet another duality based on the utilization of the contemporary, namely, the search for the feminine self as a universal and as the negation of masculine power as represented in a more traditional mystical quest. The presence of the Goddess Inanna through whom the poetic voice in *Creciente Fértil* begins its quest for divine illumination, the notions of transubstantiation and the use of magic, combine to defy traditional Christian thought, according to Dr. Newton (111). There is

just one little problem. The mysticism analyzed so far has been seen as a Christian one, meaning essentially that *not all* Christian thought is simply negated in Janés' work. "Soy la abeja," with its mystical purification, is a perfect example of this. Besides that, the supposed dichotomy of elements of Christian Neo-Platonic *mysticism* and Pre-Judaic Middle-Eastern *mythology* do not actually exist in binary opposition to one another. This means that they are not able to support the type of contrast in opposition needed so that Janés' poetry may produce the effects discussed above. So Newton's comparison does not make much sense. As I intend to indicate in Chapters III and IV, with the help of Luce López-Baralt's work, the real connection is found in the tracing of neo-platonic dualism through the Sufi Scholars of Al-Andalus, then to the Spanish Mystics. From there, we may see that what appears to be a *Spanish Christian* mystical tradition is actually an *Iberian Sufi* tradition whose importance goes largely unnoticed or ignored. Once more, as our analysis of specific poems by Janés develops, so does the almost transparent nature of Janés' Sufi influence (including, but not limited to, actual citations, in Arabic, of Sufi concepts).

Section II – Joaquim Pessoa

The case of Joaquim Pessoa differs from that of Clara Janés, at first glance, both thematically and critically. Thematically, his focus seems more on social issues, such as censorship (as I will discuss in detail throughout this section), while Janés' does not. Critically, we find comments on his work in the critical writings of Saraiva, Guimarães and in several relatively unknown critical works, yet nothing more than that. At times we

even find critical interpretations made not from any poetic analysis, but from what Pessoa himself may say (without any substantiation through critical analysis) about his own poetry. Such is the case of his supposed realism inherited from Cesário Verde. The name appears at the end of the poem “As palavras do meu canto” as the invocation of another poet who loves his city (Lisbon) and his country (Pessoa, *Vol I*, 99). Saraiva seems to take this as something more than simply a coincidental similarity or minor formal influence (*História*, 1125), despite relatively little proof in Pessoa’s actual poetry to support this belief.³

³ The supposed presence and influence of the thematic and critical strategies of Cesário Verde, one of Portugal’s more well-known poets of the 19th Century, as mentioned in Saraiva’s work on Joaquim Pessoa (*História*, 1125) is important to explain. According to Margarida Vieira Mendes’ critical work on Verde, his poetry does possess an affinity toward the working class (Verde 21), a notion studied here in Pessoa’s poetry. Also, as has been noted, in many of Pessoa’s poems we find the same formal versification (i.e., Serventesian meter) as in Verde, such as the famous poem “Nós” (122-141) written in 1884. The similarities, however, seem to stop there. Politically speaking, Joaquim Pessoa was a member of the Partido Comunista Português until 1982 and a consummate revolutionary figure in the first decade of Portuguese democracy (Letria 6). Verde, on the other hand, was a member of the Portuguese bourgeoisie and of the country’s Republican party (which opposed the Communists politically) (Verde 20). Although severely critical of many of the bourgeoisie’s abuses, Verde’s contrasts are usually between the vilified city (of which the bourgeoisie were part) and the idyllic country-side (generally associated with the peasants, whether rural or urban) (Verde 20-21). His criticism is never directed against the social “Order” (as in *Português Suave*) or any political body. Poetically speaking, images and symbols from nature in Pessoa (such as the bird or the sand) are semantically mutable, eventually either deconstructed, deconstructive or both. In Verde, on the other hand, they represent the locus amoenus of life outside Lisbon (Verde 20-21). In Verde’s poetry these images and symbols function as comparative, and not deconstructive, poetic elements. As for the supposed inheritance of Realism from Verde to Pessoa, I find Pessoa’s work too metaphorical (even in the period between 1974 and 1980, before the introduction of metaphysical elements to Pessoa’s work) for such a comparison. Even though *Português Suave* does contain several poems which imitate specific discourses, this imitation, as we have seen, exists only on the surface. The poem analyzed above represents a pluralized cry against a political order, not a single voice reaching out against a specific social class. Thus, even though elements of commonality exist between Pessoa and Verde, I would hesitate in making such direct connections between them as does Saraiva (*História*, 1125).

In any case, I will dedicate the rest of the present chapter to an analysis of the major themes in Joaquim Pessoa's poetry (in concordance with critical work on his poetry to date). To facilitate this analysis I will divide Pessoa's work, both diachronically and thematically, into three stages. The first is the stage of deconstruction; the second is that of a metaphoric, mystical exploration into the tragic, ontological irony surrounding the themes borne from the first stage (which will be discussed in depth in Chapter V); the third, and most recent, is the stage which I refer to as that of the search for a representation of the self. Thematically speaking, I will begin with a study on Joaquim's adherence in the 1970s to the technique of deconstruction as a tool against the use of poetry as a function of state legitimacy, and poetry's subsequent reconstruction as a tool for the protection of poetic freedom in the context of a society betrayed by its own anti-totalitarian social revolution. I will then continue with an analysis of themes such as the freedom of the poetic word, and the silencing / self-censoring of that word. Afterwards, and as an introduction to the analysis in Chapter V, I will strongly suggest the presence of a mystical journey in Pessoa's more metaphysically-inclined poetry which, from the 1980s to the beginning of the 21st Century, takes center stage.

Before analyzing specific poetic texts, I would like to define further the term "deconstruction" using the description from *On Deconstruction*, by Jonathan Culler. In this work, Culler names three principal aspects of deconstruction (85-89). First, the deconstructive text must work *within* the terms of the same system it means to deconstruct. In this way, the text will *undermine* the notion, idea, philosophy or base text which it at first would seem to assert. Second, and more specifically, the deconstructive

text will *question* the notion of causality in the deconstructed object. This means that the text will make evident the relationship between *cause* and *effect* in which the main ideas of the deconstructed object create its logical base. Finally, the deconstructive text will *reverse* the hierarchical oppositions of the original causal scheme. Thus, by inverting the system in which the deconstructed object works, it may subvert the effectiveness of the causality which feeds the notion of hierarchy sustaining the object.

In order to find the deconstructive nature of a given text, Culler notes six types of conflict for which the critic / reader should be on the lookout for (213-215). The first of these conflicts is the “value-laden hierarchy,” or a system in which the value of one element is seen as greater than that of another. Once this type of conflict is established it becomes necessary to search for the others, as the critic / reader will have either a very single-minded text or a text in the process of deconstruction on their hands. The second type is described as being points of semantic and metaphorical condensation. Here, a single element of discourse may convey several meanings, or “sets of values” (213). Third, the critic / reader should watch for the text’s “difference from itself” (213-14), or the presence of anything which counters its own authority. This idea is directly related to the fourth type of conflict, or that which admits the same procedures that the text claims to criticize. These two attributes together then create a textual environment of semantic ambiguity and flexibility. The fifth conflict is provided by the possibility of contradictory readings of the same text. Although this may happen in any literary context, here the level of ambiguity is purposeful rather than accidental. Finally, one needs to see if the text pays attention to the “marginal” (215), or those elements of the

deconstructed object which few addressees take into account. In this way the critic / reader may establish a relationship with those elements of the deconstructed object's causal hierarchy that the object does not want to treat and those which the author appreciates, thus questioning, then reversing, the "logical" process of exclusion of marginal elements in the object's causal hierarchy.

The process of deconstruction is evident in one of Pessoa's first works, *Apenas Caminhar* (1972), which was incorporated later into *O Pássaro no Espelho* (1975). In the poem "Livre e Vertical," for example, we may observe deconstruction acting upon a symbolism present in Portuguese poetry of the 1960's and 70's:

O pé fincado na espuma branca
na leve areia poalha destes astros
que respiram o dia pelos troncos, árvores.
Pelas pedras já voam devagar
os exactos pássaros devorando
outros grãos de sol e trigo, areia.

Já sabemos de cor estas manhãs
Tão altas e apenas meio-dia
e já os passos ressoam cavos altos
pela sombra dos corpos e dos olhos.
Não há por entre as ruas outras ruas.

Escrevo os versos com sangue disponível
dos pássaros que arremesso contra o espelho.
Caminho livre e vertical dobrando
o finíssimo equilíbrio das manhãs.

(35)

The first stanza of the poem contains an enumeration of symbols from nature which will be explored in more detail both in this chapter, as well as in Chapter V. In the meantime, it should be noted that the poetic subject views this world by looking from his feet in the sand to the birds in the sky, drawing a vertical line in the world which reminds us of the poem's title. Also, the poetic subject's feet are planted firmly in the sand, connecting him with a world which the birds devour. This image should remind us of the image of the bird as the poetic word from Herberto Helder's "O Amor em Visita" (Helder 30), as well as the poetic subject's submission to the will and the force of nature in both "Amor em Visita" and Ruy Belo's "Homem Perto do Chão" (Belo 20). Thus, we have established the first point of the deconstructive text, that of a text which works within the boundaries set by the deconstructed object, in this case the symbolism established by the Helder and the poets of "Poesia 61" and of related poets such as Ruy Belo.

To elaborate on the notions of the creative poetic word (which Pessoa will deconstruct) and of the poetic subject subsumed by the force of nature, I would like to take a quick look at how this symbol appears in Helder's "O Amor em Visita." In the poem the poetic subject gives himself to Woman's power over life and death (Perkins 13-14):

Dai-me uma jovem mulher com sua harpa de sombra
e seu arbusto de sangue. Com ela
encantarei a noite...

(Helder 30)

The association of the woman with nature, although not new in Occidental poetry, takes on a surreal quality with its combination of visceral and natural images, such as that of the blood-bush (the “arbusto de sangue”) above. This has to do mostly with Helder’s adhesion to a Surrealist esthetic and symbolism (Marinho 5). Other natural objects, such as the sea-foam and the birds, also appear in “O Amor em Visita:”

Cantar? Longamente cantar.
Uma mulher com quem beber e morrer.
Quando fora se abrir o instinto da noite e uma ave
o atravessar traspassada por um grito marítimo
e o pão for invadido pelas ondas –
seu corpo arderá mansamente sob os meus olhos palpitantes.

(30)

In this stanza the representation of death, or the night, is shown as existing outside of the male poetic subject’s control. Yet it also appears as connected to the image of the woman with whom the poetic subject “drinks and dies.” The first verse of the stanza is, I feel, the most important in terms of this study, in that the poetic subject would like to “sing” the woman, creating her image through his own lyrical word. So, at this point we see the possibility of a creative poetic word, such as that found in the Surrealist

esthetic. This creative poetic word (deconstructed in “Livre e Vertical,” then re-defined over the next twenty years, as I will reveal shortly) will allow Helder to make for himself a woman whose purity and creative potential are expressed in the Surrealist symbolism in which his poetry converts her, as well as in her own creative language. This last idea, that of Woman’s creative word, appears near the end of the poem in verses such as, “Onde estará o mar? Aves bêbedas e puras que voam / sobre o teu sorriso imenso” (Helder 38). The birds (Port. “aves”), drunk from the ecstasy of love and pure from Woman’s perfection, fly over her “immense smile.” The bird, thus, functions as a symbol for the poetic word even before Pessoa’s work begins. This same symbol will be the focus of metapoetic deconstruction in “Livre e Vertical.”

Returning to “Livre e Vertical,” in the second stanza we see the first questioning of this hierarchical system, in which the poetic subject submits itself to nature. Here, the poetic subject states the repetitiveness of the symbols used in the first stanza, describing them as steps that “sound out high concave arches / through the shadow of bodies and eyes.” They neither contain, nor have the capacity to become, any more than the empty shell of what once had meaning. In terms of deconstruction, this statement renders moot the power of the signifiers from the first stanza, as, due to overuse / abuse in previous poetry and by previous poets, they no longer carry any semantic weight. The final statement of the poem, “There are no streets between the other streets” is an interestingly ambiguous phrase semantically, as the designation of the original streets as “other” inverts the hierarchical structure set up in both the beginning of the stanza as well as the beginning of the poem. Thus, Pessoa has not just questioned the semiotic of an

established symbolic hierarchy, he has also deconstructed and inverted, or reversed, the logic behind the causality through which the deconstructed object created its own notion of the power of its poetic word.

The last stanza is, as far as I am concerned, the most original and important of the poem. Here, rather than leaving the deconstructed object in its embarrassingly uncovered, fragmented state, Pessoa's poetic subject re-writes the poetic process so that the signifier may again reflect the existence of the signified. This move, although not necessarily contrary to the purpose of deconstruction, does allow for the future inclusion of various other methods of "reconstruction" of poetry and of the manner by which the signifier's meaning is returned to it. One of these methods, the Sufi Mystical process as re-written by Pessoa, will be studied in Chapter V.

In any case, in the final stanza the poetic subject writes "verses with the available blood / from the birds that [the poetic subject] splatter[s] against the mirror." The mirror is the tool by which one may see himself in his most superficial representation, without the depth of the spirit or personality expressed. The bird, or poetic word, must be deconstructed by exposing it to its own superficiality in order that it may be freed from the abuse suffered from previous poets' fallacious idealism (found in Helder's poem cited above, for example). The final verses of the poem, "walking freely and vertically doubling / the exquisite balance of mornings," is a statement of empowerment in which the poetic subject's deconstruction of the poetic word allows him to move freely both in the world of nature (the horizontal axis of the poem) and the sublime world of imagination in which the poetic word travels (the vertical axis of the poem, not accessible

to the poetic subject in the first stanza). The self-affirmation as a free poetic subject, thus, happens only through the process of deconstruction.

Many poems from Pessoa's first works, in fact, deconstruct social and artistic notions that Pessoa sees as part of the sensation of betrayal and disillusionment which itself stems from the perceived failure of the revolution of 1974 caused, the "repulsa ... de uma revolução traída" (Saraiva 1125). The poem "Soneto dos poetas de aqui e agora," from one of Pessoa's most famous works, *Amor Combate*, reflects this sensation:

Mordemos as palavras. E há venenos
a queimar-nos por dentro das entranhas.
Ai palavras tão grandes tão tamanhas!
Ai venenos tão falsos tão pequenos!

Venenos e palavras. Coisas nossas.
E não de quem nos quer amordaçados.
Cavalos da verdade mutilados
entre os varais de raiva das carroças.

Mordemos as palavras pois então!
E cuspimos o sangue coalhado
fazendo destas tripas coração.

E damos de beber ao nosso gado:

a manada de versos da canção
deste povo de novo atraído

(104)

The use of the Petrarchian sonnet form and rhyme is ironic, as here Pessoa means to criticize the use of poetry as simply another tool of betrayal against the Portuguese people. In the first stanza, the poetic subject states in fairly general terms that the poetic word has been poisoned. Although not expressed openly until the second stanza, the title has already told the reader that the ones who have bitten into, and thus poisoned, the poetic word are the poets themselves. Returning to the first stanza, we see the opposition (both semantically and graphically, through the splitting of each verse at its seventh syllable) of the great and large poetic word in the third verse with the small, false venom of the fourth verse. This tells us that the venom which poisons the poetic word need not be as meaningful nor true as the poetic word in order to ruin it.

The second stanza reveals expressly that the poets themselves have served to destroy the poetic word, not as a productive act of deconstruction but as a lascivious act of betrayal. Here the poetic subject states that venom and words are “things of ours,” or of poets. In the second verse he clarifies even further, saying that the venom comes “not from those who want us gagged.” This statement, I believe, refers to those who would not want to allow the poetic word its freedom, namely, a government whose tool of control would be literary censorship. In earlier work by Pessoa, many of his poems speak directly to that effect. His various *Poemas de Resistência* (Pessoa, Vol. I, 9-22), written between 1968-1971, which, along with *Apenas Caminhar*, were later incorporated into *O*

Pássaro no Espelho (1975), serve to outline his ideal of resistance against a government whose continuous war in the African Colonies and suppression of freedoms in Portugal itself undermines any hope of creating a free society. In any case, the second verse clarifies that this government is not the focus of the poetic subject's criticism. The third and fourth verses of the second stanza, just as those of the first stanza, give us an image by which to reinforce the idea of the first two verses, namely, that of "workhorses of truth mutilated between the maddened shafts of the carriages." This image seems rooted in a sort of Helderian pseudo-Surrealism, indicative of this poet's influence on early Pessoaan works. The shaft should serve to guide a particular object (in this case the horses) in a particular direction without wavering. However, here the action of the shafts (by their action the poetic subject refers indirectly to whoever is driving the carriages) seems controlled in such a way as to suggest a lack of sanity. The insane movement of the shafts wounds the "workhorses," or the physical manifestation of the truth in this poetic subject's imagery. Thus, by attempting to take control over the truth indirectly through the poets, represented in the poem as carriage shafts, the unskilled government only damages it. In other words, only through the act of taking artistic control does the government reveal its inability to control the truth, and thus, the illusion of its own power. The rage that the poetic subject feels is expressed in the violent description of the wounds inflicted upon the workhorses and generally throughout the poem.

The relationship of these two verses to the first two of the stanza, then, is one of the effectiveness of an easily deconstructed and essentially illusionary notion of power. However, as we have noted this power does not come from the government, but from the

poets themselves who serve as tools for the government. To see this idea represented symbolically I posit that we perceive the “carroça,” or carriage, as the government, or the machine of government, itself, and the “cavalos,” or workhorses, as either the workers / the Portuguese people (which makes sense given Pessoa’s Socialist leanings). Thus, the poets themselves are the “varais,” forming part of the machine of government but in an artificial and uncomfortable manner, and whose power is drawn from the government and thus not inherent to them. Thus, the criticism of poets, whose poisoned poetic words act in the service of a government that betrayed its own people, finds expression in poetic subject’s own act of deconstruction as played out thus far in the poem.

The third stanza, the first of the resolution phase of the Petrarchian sonnet, does not serve this purpose at all. Instead, it moves from the poisoning of the poetic word to the artificial re-shaping of it. Here, the poetic subject states that the poet, after biting into the poetic word, spits out the coagulated blood and guts, making the shape of a heart out of them. We are again confronted with a grotesque image of the poetic word deformed. However, here the deformation does not occur for the sake of re-writing poetry to serve a new reality, but for that of a criticism of the official, and artificial, notions of beauty and power in poetry that Pessoa’s poetic subject attacks. The verse also refers to the transformation of fear into courage, based on the more common figurative meaning of the phrase. Given my previous interpretation of the verse, as well as that of the poem, the fear of the government is turned to courage against it by means of the recognition of that government’s power as unreal.

The final stanza of the poem describes the final step in the process of the poetic word's destruction, namely, that of its distribution to the masses, "our cattle." The poetic subject's disgust and anger here are evident. The "herd of verses of the people's song" in the penultimate verse is fed to the cattle of the first verse. Thus, poetry itself is no better off than those forced to read it – it has become a dumbed-down, superficial tool of those poets who belong to a state which, through them, maintains its illusion of power over the masses. Both poets and the state have betrayed the people and the poetic subject. (It should also be noted that poetry itself, as a tool of the poets, allows itself to become the betrayer, as its passivity as a "herd" makes known.) As I have previously noted, Pessoa's criticism of the use of poetry as a tool for the state stems from the notion that the revolution of 1974 ("A Revolução dos Cravos," or the Carnation Revolution, named after the carnations placed in the barrels of the revolutionary soldiers' rifles as they marched down the streets of Lisbon) as well as the subsequent democratic government had each failed to bring about the social justice that Pessoa had expected. Just as he deconstructs the previous as well as the present generations of poets in his work, here Pessoa also sharply attacks the failure of the revolution and of the new Portuguese government.

The theme of social injustice becomes more apparent in another poem from *Amor Combate*, titled "Último Soneto:"

De tanta mágoa já se cansa o vento.

Em tanta teia já se enreda a fala.

O meu Abril é um país cinzento.

O cravo não é cravo. É uma bala.

Na minha rua a lua é dos soldados
e brilha como o aço dos punhais.
No meu abril que foi dos namorados
o vento sopra. E dói ainda mais.

Tão grande meu amor é a cidade
como é pequeno quem se morre nela
coberto com o linho da saudade.

Aqui abri de vez esta janela:
que me importa morrer pela verdade
se nunca morre quem morrer por ela.

(Vol. I, 115)

The general tone of this sonnet is one of betrayal – hope is turned to needless violence, and the frustration of the poetic subject becomes clear in the structure of the poem through the use of short sentences in the first two stanzas that reflect the quickness of violent action. The particular symbolism utilized here reinforces both the notion of betrayal and violence. In the first stanza, the wind, seen in later works as a symbol of longing and of hope, here becomes tired of the bitterness present in the air. Speech is also silenced, tied up as if in a spider’s web. So, the emotions present in the poem’s first two verses are both strong and simultaneously inexpressible. In the second half of the

stanza, the poetic subject's "April," referring to the April 25th revolution, has changed color, from that of the carnations placed in the rifle barrels of soldiers entering Lisbon to that of the bullets which they never had to fire. The association, of course, is that of a return to the use of force as a method of social control, rather than the maintaining of government rule through peace, an idea to which the pacific revolution attested.

The second stanza also converts the beauty of nature into an instrument of violent repression. The moon, whose beauty now belongs to the soldiers, turns to the "steel of daggers." Interestingly, this Surrealist association of nature and man-made weapons is present in both Lorca's *Poet in New York* and Rafael Alberti's *About the Angels*. The use of similar metaphors makes sense in Pessoa's work, as he states his admiration for the Spanish Surrealist poets in an interview with José Jorge Letria (Letria 6). In the third verse of the stanza, the month of April loses its capitalization, becoming "april." This could represent the imposition the disillusionment caused by a reality that contradicts the hope that the revolution promised. The lost dream of freedom is also expressed in the use of the preterite perfect tense ("o pretérito perfeito") of the verb "ser," emphasizing the ephemeral nature of that freedom. The lovers, and thus love, are hurt by this betrayal. The wind appears again in the fourth verse, this time in even more pain than before due to the government's violence and, more importantly, that government's censoring of love. Thus, the contrast between hope and love, and the hopelessness caused by censorship and betrayal, in the first two stanzas creates an inescapable tension. In terms of the poem's critical function, the poetic subject has exchanged the symbolism of the revolutionary government with that associated with the violent dictatorship from the inside, by using of

the revolutionaries' own symbolism (i.e., the carnations turned bullets). This has undermined the authority of the new government's symbolism, allowing for its deconstruction.

The third stanza places the grandness of the city in contrast with the smallness of a person, whose body, when dead, is covered by a linen of "saudade." I will explain in detail the notion of "saudade" in my analysis of "Primeira Canção de Lisboa" further on. For now, the principal idea to be deconstructed in "Primeira Canção" is the one which "saudade" represents here, that of both longing for greater nation and the simultaneous reality of the hopelessness of the poetic subject's, and all of Portugal's, situation. The stanza shows that, even in death, a person may not escape the tension in the binary opposition which defines the meaning of his or her existence.

The final stanza of the poem, on the other hand, reflects an affirmation of hope over hopelessness. The poetic subject opens the window, removing a barrier, as it were, to self-expression. I will explain this action and its semantic evolution further in my analysis of "Primeira Canção de Lisboa," as well as its return in Pessoa's third stage. However, the stanza's principle theme quickly turns from that of hope to that of martyrdom, in which the poetic subject does not care if he dies for truth, stating that he will not really die. Although one could find a Christological significance in the verse, that of dying for one's people, I find that neither the notion of resurrection nor that of dying for the people's sins is relevant nor even present in the poem (or in Pessoa's work for that matter). The notion that one may die as a martyr in the name of truth, nonetheless, carries an historical meaning. Those few who died in the April 25th

revolution were shot by the few remnants of the PIDE, or “Polícia Internacional da Defesa do Estado,” or the Portuguese Secret Police, just outside of their headquarters in Lisbon while protesting for the Police’s surrender to the revolutionaries. As the first three stanzas undermine the authority of the new government’s symbolic language, highlighting the constant tension between the reality lived and the fantasy of hope, this final stanza highlights the historically ironic solution. The poetic subject reconstructs reality as just another dictatorship whose people must pass to martyrdom to secure their future freedom. Yet even then the poetic subject may not escape, as the combination of hope and hopelessness surround him even in death, as seen in the third stanza. This may be because the method of dying, martyrdom, is usually carried out by violent means. So, the tension between the hope of freedom through the martyrdom of the poet and the hopelessness inherent in the manner of death, omnipresent in the poem, lives on even at the end.

The poem “Amor Combate” (116) marks the beginning of a new evolution in *Amor Combate*, as it will emphasize the poetic expression of love as a way of attaining freedom:

Meu amor que eu não sei. Amor que eu canto. Amor que eu digo.

Teus braços são a flor do aloendro.

Meu amor por quem parto. Por quem fico. Por quem vivo.

Teus olhos são da cor do sofrimento.

Amor-país.

Quero cantar-te. Como quem diz:

O nosso amor é sangue. É seiva. É sol. É primavera.

Amor intenso. Amor imenso. Amor instante.

O nosso amor é uma arma. É uma espera.

O nosso amor é um cavalo alucinante.

O nosso amor é pássaro voando. Mas à toa.

Rasgando o céu azul-coragem de Lisboa.

Amor partindo. Amor sorrindo. Amor doendo.

O nosso amor é como a flor do aloendro.

Deixa-me soltar estas palavras amarradas

para escrever com sangue o nome que inventei.

Romper. Ganhar a voz duma assentada.

Dizer de ti as coisas que eu não sei.

Amor. Amor. Amor de tudo ou nada.

Amor-verdade. Amor-cidade.

Amor-combate. Amor-abril.

Este amor de liberdade.

(116)

In the first two stanzas the reader sees that love for the lover and for the nation are united in the beauty of nature, an evolution of the betrayed lovers in “Último Soneto.” This union happens metaphorically in the following pattern: love is represented by the lover’s arms, which then are equated to the flower of the almond tree, and finally to the nation. The image of the flower, a representation of female fecundity and sexuality, appears also in Janés’ work with a similar meaning as I have shown in this chapter. The suffering felt in the final verse of the first stanza brings back the notion of freedom as expressed in poetry, but not experienced in reality. This tension, as found in the previous poem, seems to intensify the feeling of necessity that the poetic subject’s song takes on through both the desire, and realization, of an expression of love in the phrases “Love that I sing. Love that I say ... I want to sing you.”

In the third stanza the poetic subject creates a series of metaphors to explain and define love. These symbols, in order, are: blood, sap, sun, spring, a weapon, hope, and a crazed horse. The first three, blood, sap and sun, are all life-giving and life-sustaining elements from nature. So, the first interpretation of love, beyond the seemingly general specification of love as for the lover and the nation, is of a life-giving and nurturing element of nature. The representation of love as Spring, a traditional poetic metaphor for fecundity, reflects the growing eroticism in Pessoa’s poetry which will become much more explicit in *Os Olhos de Isa*. By equating both the image of a weapon with that of hope, the poetic subject remits to a similar association in “Último Soneto,” that of hope being perverted by the government and transformed into a weapon of violence against the people (or, as seen in the second stanza of the poem, against the lovers). Finally, the

crazed horse is an important symbol from “Soneto dos poetas de aqui e agora.” In the poem, this symbol represents the truth, enraged by the torture it has endured in the hands of the government. Here, it is associated with love, creating the equation of “truth = love.” The description of love as “intense...immense...instant” links the notion of love to that of the Surrealist movement in Portugal. In the poetry of this period, love becomes an instantaneous, rather than long-term, emotion. The poetic subject of a poet such as Mário Cesariny, for example, finds that through love he may access all parts of the psyche simultaneously (Simon 1). The existence of love within a universe ruled by its velocity of change and movement is found also in Herberto Helder’s work, as Maria Lúcia dal Farra states in her article, “Vôo de Teto-Teto: Sobre a Poesia de Herberto Helder” (19).

The fourth stanza applies another important symbol to the notion of love, and then re-equates it with that of the flower in the final verse. The new symbol, that of the bird, is also in a state of evolution from Pessoa’s first poetry. Although it begins as a metaphor for the poetic word, as I have shown, and will continue to demonstrate, its meaning changes over time to represent the poetic subject’s illuminated soul. At this point, however, I feel that the bird as poetic word is best applicable in the second verse of this poem, meaning thus that love and the poetic word are one in the same. Furthermore, this more sublime poetic word, which Pessoa’s poetic subject has deconstructed, then reconstructed as greater than what the “poets from here and now” had made of it, has capacity to “lift” the spirit, but doesn’t come down. It remains flying above the poetic subject, but “à toa,” or hopelessly without end. Again, in this way the poetic subject

emphasizes that hope exists, but without realization. The sublime bird, as is the poetic subject's song, may serve to affirm the "courage of Lisbon" in its reaching out to the limitlessness of the blue sky, but it cannot return to the people. The tension from "Último Soneto," then, continues unabated, despite the positive outlook that still exists in the poetic subject's tone.

In the final stanza of "Amor Combate," blood, the poetic subject's first symbol of love, is transformed into the poetic word. Another way to see this transformation is as an act of expression, i.e., the poetic word is created through the poetic subject's love for the lover and for the people. This poetic word, made of the essence of all life, or love, will serve to bring freedom. The poetic subject wants to "ganhar a voz дума assentada," or earn the voice in one sitting. The poetic subject seems to believe that through the poetic expression of love, he may break the tension which has been developed throughout *Amor Combate* and regain the freedom which he states that his government denies him. Interestingly, there is a connection between the image of the invented name in the final stanza, and that of the "things" that the poetic subject says of his lover but does not "know." The notion of a "name" whose power to express love aids the poetic subject in attaining freedom is central to the influence of Sufi metaphor and symbolism in Pessoa's poetry, as I will argue in Chapter V. As for the rest of the poem, the last four verses of the final stanza serve as a summary of the metaphorization of love as evolved in the poem and in the work as a whole. The poetic subject connects the notion of love with those of truth (i.e., the crazed horse), the city (Lisbon), combat (the weapon into which love was converted, and with which the poetic subject will rebuild the world in the name of

freedom) and April (which is still in lower-case, representing the dream of the revolution remaining unrealized). Finally, he states that love is liberty, the principle theme of *Amor Combate*. This last idea, as well as many others seen here, will re-appear in my analysis of *À Mesa do Amor* in Chapter V.

The collection *Canções de Ex-cravo e Malviver* (written from 1976-77, published in 1978) is dedicated to the social criticism that Pessoa has become known for, even though his actual poetry written on the topic is limited to that written up to 1983 and does not take into account his substantial production after that time. The poetry found in this collection seems to be an evolution of the themes of betrayal and the expression of hope present in the previously analyzed poems. One poem from this work in particular, “Primeira Canção de Lisboa” expresses both Pessoa’s social (as opposed to his previously artistic) criticism as well as the evolution of the symbolism which I will focus on at its apex in Chapter V of this dissertation.

The title of the poem “Primeira Canção de Lisboa” (Vol. II, 9) seems to imply that this is a foundational text for the story of the city. Beginning with a short analysis of the poem’s formal structure, the poetic subject deconstructs this foundation, which is made from a traditional vision of Portuguese society that feeds the disillusioning reality of a society in a state of cultural suffering. It is composed of three stanzas with four decasyllabic verses in a consonant, ABAB rhyme-scheme, just as did “Último Soneto” from *O Pássaro no Espelho*:

Em Lisboa é que nascem as gaivotas.

Que pena, meu amor, o mar não ser

um copo de água pura. De água para
a sede que em Lisboa eu vi nascer.

Em Lisboa. Capital do vento sul.
Coração do meu povo. A doer tanto
que a dor se tornou cor. E é azul
como a ganga dos homens do meu canto.

Em Lisboa a gente morre sem idade.
Devagar. Como se faz uma canção.
E há um pássaro que voa. É a saudade.
E uma janela aberta. O coração.

In other words, the poem uses a Serventesian meter. This meter originated in the Gallica-Portuguese poetry of the middle ages (Reyes xxvii). The use of Serventesian meter in this particular poem may indicate a connection with a past in which the Portuguese nation was still undergoing a process of formation. This is relevant here because the central topic of the poem has to do with the suffering of the Portuguese as exacerbated in the time shortly following the “Revolução dos Cravos.” Thus, along with the symbolism of the poem, the formal structure itself helps to emphasize the notion of a vicious cycle of cultural suffering in Portugal.

The first stanza states, literally, that the seagulls are born in Lisbon. As seen in “Último Soneto” and “Amor Combate,” this idea should not surprise the reader. The

poetic subject then laments to an unseen interlocutor that the sea is not made of pure water which Lisbon, a place where the subject as seen thirst borne, could drink. The seagull may be interpreted as the bird of *Apenas Caminhar* and *O Pássaro no Espelho*, symbolizing the poetic word. This poetic word in “Primeira Canção de Lisboa” is Portuguese, being born exclusively in Lisbon. The reference to the city’s thirst is a reference to the city’s, and thus the Portuguese nation’s, desire for the freedom that the poetic word, or seagull, may express. A certain cycle is established, however, in which the process of freeing the poetic word may not come to fruition due to the nature of Lisbon’s geographic situation. The seagull, or poetic word, may be expressed, but only if the desire for freedom, or thirst, is quenched. Because of the impure water surrounding the city (from the Tagus River to the East and South, and the Atlantic Ocean, mentioned explicitly in the poem, to the West) the people of Lisbon may drink from neither the river nor the sea, the obvious places from which the city should be able to take its water. Besides this, the sea has served as the life-line for Lisbon, both in terms of the food taken from it and its function as the route between Portugal and her former colonies. However, the sea can no longer provide what the city needs. Thus, an impasse is created in the relationship between the city and the sea that it has depended on for almost 700 years.

In the second stanza the poetic subject changes his focus from viewing Lisbon as a single entity to pointing out the “povo,” or people, as the inhabitants from whom the desire for freedom is born. The “vento sul,” or southern wind, could be a reference to the country’s glorious past, as is the famous poetic collection *Mensagem* by the world-renown Fernando Pessoa (unrelated to Joaquim Pessoa). In fact, the phrase seems a clear

reference to the winds off the Portuguese coast which lead sailors from the colonies in Africa and Brazil to Lisbon's ports. We see here the idea that Lisbon is the center of the Portuguese nation and of its history. The pain referred to in the final two verses of the stanza may be interpreted as the agonized longing caused by the people's thirst for freedom. In the final verse, the poetic subject speaks of this pain as "blue / like the jeans of the men of my song." The metonymic relationship between the clothes of the working class and the workers themselves (similar to the North-American phrase "blue collar," meaning lower-middle class workers) helps to specify that Pessoa's poetic subject is speaking about a particular social class, rather than about all Portuguese people. Given Pessoa's self description as a "poeta civil" (Letria 6), or civil poet, as well as his aforementioned feelings of betrayal against the government and his Socialist leanings, his poetic subject's inclination toward the working class should come as no surprise.

The third and final stanza of the poem shows the consequences of a lack of freedom in Lisbon. First, the people die "ageless. / Slowly. As a song is made." The reference here may seem slightly oblique, although it is not impossible to decipher. The song spoken of is a Portuguese song, that is, a song made from stereotypically melancholic verses built from a sad and slow instrumental foundation. The best example would be that of "Fado," what many believe is the national music of Portugal. In fact, the poetic form used here is not only that of a "Serventésio" but it is the principal meter in many Fado songs. So, in a sense Pessoa has written a Fado tune in order to reference later the characteristics of that tune. The reference to the people as "ageless" signifies also the slow evolution of not only a "Fado" song, but of cultural and historical processes

which could help the nation to progress. This sense of stagnation through a well-recognized nationalist symbol serves to heighten the tension created by the already vibrant feelings of pain and thirst from which the working class of Lisbon suffers. The final two verses of the poem return us to the image of the bird, representing the free poetic word. However, the word has now transformed from freedom to “saudade,” or the nostalgic longing for that freedom which, in previous poems, has represented both the hope for freedom and the hopelessness that the reality of Lisbon provides. Given the characteristics of Fado already noted in this analysis, the inclusion of “saudade,” a key element of Fado, makes sense. Finally, the poetic subject focuses on an open window, perhaps from where the bird escaped, that is the “heart” of Lisbon. If the “heart” allegorically represents “saudade,” then the poetic word is seen leaving the same place from which it was used to create a culture-specific poetry like the lyrics of “Fado.”

Looking at the process from the point of view of deconstruction, the poetic subject has, by working within the metaphorical system described, recognized that the nationalist use of the poetic word in the service of “Fado,” in order to express “saudade,” only aids in the forced stagnation of Portuguese culture. This notion undermines the usefulness of “saudade” both culturally and poetically. The capacity of the poetic word to be used in favor of the people is then established through the reversal / re-formulation of the poetic word’s “essential” meaning. Rather than an element of stagnation, it is placed in motion, leaving behind its assumed place as a tool for a more conservative mentality. So, for freedom to be plausible, the poetic word must escape, ironically, through poetry (not, of course, through the word as used in “Fado,” but of a different sort, the kind seen here, for

example.) The poetic word, born from the people of Lisbon, cannot attain its freedom to express the desires of the people as long as it functions as an element of *longing* for, rather than one creating or expressing, freedom.

Although the idea of “saudade,” or a nostalgic longing for the past, a lover, or in this case, freedom, is very well known in Luso-Brazilian and Portuguese cultures, it gained a unique notoriety in the first decades of the 20th Century with the advent of a literary style called “Saudosismo” whose principle spokesperson was the poet Teixeira de Pascoaes. In short, Pascoaes turned the idea of “saudade” into a type of “poetic meditation” where the comprehension of the past and the desire for the future converge as a single moment in which elements of nature take on a supernatural meaning, that of a longing for and understanding with God (Duarte 123-132). This sublimely nostalgic element became the basis of Pascoaes’ vision of the solitary “Portuguese being” (Quadros 97-98). Through the sensation of “saudade” as expressed in poetry, the Portuguese could realize their solidarity and experience love on a “super-rational” scale (100). As far as the poem above is concerned, the poetic subject’s use of the term “saudade” to describe the symbol of the free poetic word takes on a new meaning, that of an element of nature made both from longing for freedom and the understanding of the nature of that freedom. As it is borne from the heart of Lisbon, a symbol which I believe refers to the sentiments of the Portuguese workers, we may then infer that the sublime “saudade” has risen out of these workers in their solidarity and simultaneous solitude. (I will return to the symbol of the bird further along in this chapter as well as in Chapter V.) I posit that the final verses of the poem serve as a call for freedom by the people of Lisbon, and thus, of all Portugal,

and that that call comes in a uniquely Portuguese form, that is, as expressed in terms of a 20th Century interpretation of “saudade.” As seen in “Primeira Canção de Lisboa,” “saudade” possesses the possibility to act as an element of Portuguese solidarity. On the other hand, its nature as perpetual longing (without possibility of the realization of that which is longed for) creates a cycle by which the poetic word, born in the poetic subject and objects, could not express more than a longing for freedom. This duality is reflected in the dual significance of the image of the open window in the previously examined poem. It is the window through which the poetic word has abandoned the people, yet also that which remains open, and thus receptive, to help and to change from without. In other words, hope for change exists simultaneous to the sense that its mode of expression does not. Ironically, it is that same mode of expression (the poetic word) that the poetic subject utilizes to deconstruct the attempts by “saudade” to guide it. So, the poem could be read, in the end, as the embodiment of a triumph that has already occurred over “saudade” and the culture of stagnation.

The collection *Português Suave* (1978, published 1979) also contains several poems whose satire of the new regime is both formal and thematic. This unique critical strategy could be the reason that Fernando Guimarães calls Pessoa a master of “discursivity” (173). The poem “Contra a Manifestação” (Pessoa, Vol. II, 56) utilizes the discourse of the government to deconstruct its own authority:

Aconteceu de repente: o homem vinha já a gritar, de braços abertos, abraçando coisa nenhuma, quando se ouviu o estampido. Sei lá que horas eram disse a testemunha cruzando as pernas no tribunal. A polícia não sabe de nada, não

temos nada a declarar a não ser que o agente disparou para o ar, compreende, tem que se intimidar esta malta, mas o inquérito está quase concluído além de que, compreende não é, se não querem que as coisas aconteçam não se metam nisto, nós apenas estamos aqui para defender a ordem, a ordem pois, nada mais do que isso, e depois olhe aqui na esquadra só não houve feridos por milagre, até a mãe do rapaz se atirou a um dos nossos homens mas depois passou tudo, acalmou-se, compreende, sempre perdeu um filho e um filho é um filho, nós sabemos, etc.

Although the blurred distinction between prosaic and lyrical form is not incorporated in Pessoa's poetry subsequent to *Português Suave* (it seems, in fact, a formal element through the first half of the work only), the deconstructive application of this type of discursivity should be noted. The poem's structure, namely, that of a text in prose, emphasizes the text's narrative function. In contrast, a more lyrical structure, as with the poetry previously studied here, may have served to create a condensed, metaphoric reality in which to open a dialog between the reader and the subtleties of the notion being deconstructed, here this narrative structure lends itself to a particular case, as though Pessoa's poetic subject were creating a journalistic piece or telling a story. The reader is then brought into a particular case more intimately. Here, the poetic subject's narration of an incident regarding the death of a young man during a protest is created through a combination of discourses, namely, that of a witness to the crime which combines in the third through sixth lines with that of a police officer. The poetic subject becomes polyphonic, representing thus the plurality of voices over and through which the regime reins. As for the theme of the poem, we see on the one hand the defense of the

state, that is, that the police are there “to defend the Order,” and are thereby justified in their violent actions toward the young man. On the other hand, we find a certain empathy for his mother, as the policeman, the representative voice of the government, states, “she lost a son and a son is a son, we know, etc.” He also attempts to make excuses for the violent action taken against the victim in statements such as “the police fired into the air,” and “if you do not want things to happen do not stick your nose in this.” Through this voice’s attempts to remove the regime’s guilt and simultaneous empathy for the victim, the regime’s discourse contradicts its own rigidity, revealing that those who defend “Order” may not necessarily agree with the actions that that order may imply. This opposition present in the official discourse serves as manner by which the narrative poetic voice enters into the linguistic system in order to undermine it. The contradiction shown above, then, not only represents the problem of maintaining a unified discourse within a political regime, it demonstrates a lack of logic and coherence in the regime’s discourse and action. From here, the now undermined official discourse may be reversed, becoming an excuse for violence, as seen in the poem and cited above in this analysis. The voice of the government in the poem, thus, contains the essential elements of its own deconstruction. Again, the poem serves to demonstrate Pessoa’s political leanings against the regime through a process of both a discursive and an ideological deconstruction of a particular symbolism, namely, that of an official discourse of the regime.

In sum, Pessoa’s first stage begins with a deconstruction of poetic language and its misuse by a government which has abused the revolutionary discourse to maintain

control over the Portuguese people. In the work *Amor Combate*, however, the criticism of the regime begins to combine with the notion of love as the creator and nurturer of life, then as the element which the poetic subject will attempt to use to regain liberty for him and his people. This final notion takes a primary role in determining the evolution of Pessoa's second, more mystically inclined stage.

The shift in Pessoa's poetry from politically charged work toward a more metaphysical and mystical exploration of the ontological questions raised in previous poetry occurs in the work *Os Olhos de Isa* (1979, published in 1980). Of particular importance are the questions of love as capable of illuminating the poetic subject, that subject's identity and the usefulness of poetry in expressing that identity. (The final two questions will become just as salient in Pessoa's third stage.) In this shift from political poetry to love poetry we find that the discursivity so appreciable in *Português Suave* disappears, and that the poetic subject's experience of physical love links him to the sublime. The modified voice of the Pessoaan poetic subject appears from the beginning, in the untitled introduction of the collection. This poem in prose, different structurally from the poems in verse found in the rest of the collection, summarizes the process mentioned above:

De todas as palavras, uma ficou gravada em minha memória, uma só, pura,
insubmissa, mas ao alcance das tuas mãos.

De todos os minutos, também um se encheu de uma alegria íntima, e no entanto
sobrenatural, com que festejei os teus olhos e deixei que repousasse a minha

cabeça no teu ventre, quando o meu corpo cansado e ferido, abandonando-se nos teus braços, foi o princípio da noite, o chamamento do vento, a agonia dos pássaros.

Se eu pudesse dizer o teu nome essa palavra bastar-me-ia. Chamando-te, iria ao teu encontro, e não importa onde estivesses, porque não importa onde estás, e, num minuto, toda a ternura voltaria a acordar meu sangue e minhas mãos para acolher o teu corpo onde, hoje, o meu corpo treme e a minha boca vacila.

Que nada, ao menos, meu amor, me possa perturbar a tua ausência, presente na alegria magoada do meu coração inquieto.

(Vol. II, 129)

The poem describes the lovers' encounter in the first three stanzas, moving on to the memory of the lover in the final stanza. In the first stanza the poetic subject speaks of a single word recorded in his memory, "pure, unsubmitive, yet at the reach of your [the lover's] hands." The word he describes and that pertains to the sexual encounter in question, then, is the poetic word. However, up to this point the poetic word has had its capacity for expression questioned on multiple occasions. This means that the previously suspect poetic word has begun to evolve into something more useful. The poeticizing of a sexual encounter, thus, will allow the poetic word to take on a sublime quality, as it began to in *Amor Combate*, permitting its use in the re-definition of memory and

nostalgia as ontological ideals, rather than as tools for a previously deconstructed rhetoric.

The first line of the second stanza uses the same phrasing as the first line of the first stanza to create a link between the notions of time and the poetic word (“Of all the words ... Of all the minutes”). Interestingly, here Pessoa’s poetic subject does not necessarily mean to create an equality between these two concepts. Rather, I believe he means to show that the poetic word will exercise its control over time, allowing the poetic subject to stop time in an attempt to live within his nostalgic memory of the lover. I will explore this notion further in my analysis of the final stanza of the poem. In any case, the happiness with which the minutes are filled is described as “supernatural,” again indicating the sublime nature of the lovers’ encounter. This poetic word breathes life into the experience, making the memory of the sexual encounter as expressed in poetry even more real and significant than the physical experience itself.

Continuing with the description of the encounter, the poetic subject rests his head on his lover’s lap and states that the moment is the “beginning of the night, the call of the wind, the agony of the birds.” Each element seen here is significant for the particular type of mystical experience the poetic subject desires. In this case, the bird seems to represent the spirit of the poetic subject. It is because of the symbolic nature of the image of “night” as representing death that the bird finds itself in agony, threatened by an end that its own nature as a signifier of the erotic experience has brought about. The image of the wind could also represent nature itself as connected to the lovers. The more mystical

nature of these symbols will be explored in Chapter V, but for now it is enough to say that a relationship is created between death, nature and sex in this stanza.

The third stanza, nonetheless, serves to define the encounter further. Here, the lover's body would reawaken from its death if the poetic subject could pronounce his lover's "name." This name, a poetic word by nature of the poem's mention of it, is thus sublime and must then form part of the mystical erotic experience that the poetic subject seeks. The corporeal imagery in the poem ("my blood and my hands would reawaken") reminds us again of the influence of Helder's surrealist and corporeal images in Pessoa's poetry, as seen in *O Pássaro no Espelho*. The contrast made by the image of the night and the image of blood (that is, by the color contrast of black and red) also invoke the binary oppositions which could be interpreted using the notion of binary oppositions found in peninsular mystical poetry, as will be explained in Chapter III. However, I would like to point out that, while the calling out of the lover's "name" would allow for the night to feed life into the poetic subject's body, the absence of the lover (and thus, of her name) removes the possibility of the cycle completing itself. The poetic subject, thus, exists in an existential state of nostalgia, an idea already present in Pessoa's poetry, but that was deconstructed in the first stage of his work.

The final stanza emphasizes this fact when the poetic subject states that his lover is present in "the embittered joy of my unquiet heart." The image of the heart, recurrent in both this stage and the next of Pessoa's poetry, is extremely important in Sufi mystical poetry, as I will show in Chapter III. In particular, it is a good idea to remember that as long as the poetic subject feels his lover's absence she is still present in his heart. It also

behooves us to remember also that the driving force in the poem is the ever-evolving nature of the poetic word from a previously deconstructed illusion of universality in the beginning of the first stage of Pessoa's work to a more metaphysically charged element, that of the soul, in the end of the first and throughout the second stage. This is due, as we will see in Chapters III and V, to the divine nature of the feminine as defined by the Sufi poet and mystic Ibn 'Arabi and his unique manipulation of the Sufi mystical process to include the feminine. Unlike other mystical poetic processes, however, we will observe the peculiar nature of Pessoa's mystical process as one which, ironically, cannot be completed in the traditional sense.

The themes and images present in the previous poem appear also in Poem II:

Vem, amiga,

trazer-me as tuas mãos, as tuas brancas mãos.

vem percorrer o meu corpo lentamente

mergulhar nua nos seus lagos

saciar-te nas suas fontes.

5

Vem. Cobrir-te-ei de beijos.

Encherei as tuas horas, os teus minutos, com uma alegria inesperada.

Desvenderei antes da noite

o segredo que existe nos bosques molhados da mais estranha solidão

onde te esperam inquietos os meus braços,

10

a minha boca chama em silêncio a tua boca,
e o amor acontece
para lá da fronteira das palavras.

Oh, vem, quero alimentar-me de ti
como uma planta carnívora. 15

Como o lobo devora o corpo da gazela.
Quero que a minha língua percorra em delírio as tuas coxas
e os meus dentes mordam e cantem no teu peito.

Quero sentir o meu desejo correr nas tuas veias.
A minha fome perder-se nos teus músculos. 20
O teu ventre estremecer nas minhas mãos.
O teu gemido crescer na minha voz.

Vem amiga. Viajarei contigo
à procura de nós em cada beijo.

(Vol. II, 133)

The first noticeable aspect of this poem is the explicit nature of the erotic encounter. Descriptions of the lover's hands touching the poetic subject, the poetic subject kissing the lover, and sounds the lovers make during the encounter abound. The second major characteristic of the poem is that, beyond the image of sex, several

references to nature, death and violent acts are present. These link this poem with the previous poem studied in this chapter, as well as with the symbolism of Pessoa's first stage. Finally, the presence of several mystical symbols, especially those from nature, show the poetic subject's articulation of Sufi imagery to access a Sufi mystical process. This process, after the deconstruction of Pessoa's first stage, is united with the elements of the theme of love from previous poetry to serve as the seed of the recentralization of the Pessoaan poetic universe which began in *Os Olhos de Isa* and continues through Pessoa's third stage.

The first stanza of the poem opens the erotic encounter with the physical contact between the lovers. The poetic subject calls for the lover to come to him and to bring her white hands. This reference to the lover's purity touching the poetic subject's naked body, as I will show in more detail in this chapter and in Chapter V, signifies a purification of the poetic subject through the sexual love received from the lover. In the next two verses the poetic subject calls for the lover to "dive into his body's lakes / satiate [herself] in his fountains." Here he utilizes the symbol of water, already seen in the Pessoa's first stage as a necessary element for the creation of life. However, this element is impure, having come from the poetic subject's body. Again, the representation of the lover's purity entering into the water of life will be studied further in Chapter V. For now it should be sufficient to say that the poetic subject becomes purified in the first stanza by way of the lover's purifying touch.

The second stanza, composed of only two verses, the poetic subject calls again for the lover to come to him. The nature of the call is different from the first stanza,

however, in its reference to an action in the future, that he “will cover her in kisses.” The use of the future tense (“cobrir-te-ei”) makes more evident that, although the poetic subject knows of the lover’s purity, he has yet to experience it. (In Chapter V, I will show that the lover’s have already experienced sexual love before, making this call to a future encounter one of a repeated, rather than a first, experience.) He then declares that he will “fill [her] minutes, [her] hours, with an unexpected happiness.” This statement is not simply a promise to make the lover happy, but may signify a declaration of the poetic subject’s desire to remove the lover from the preoccupation of time, perhaps replacing it with the happiness of sexual union. The implied idea here is that, through love, both the poetic subject and the lover may pass from the world where time reigns over the body to one where love and happiness exists without the limiting effects of time on the body. This binary opposition of worlds is central to the binary division of the universe in Sufi mysticism, which I will explain further over the course of the following three chapters.

The final verse of the third stanza declares that “love happens / beyond the frontier of words.” The verses previous to this in the same stanza help to support the idea by stating first that the poetic subject will remove the blindfold from the lover’s eyes, helping her to see “the secret” that exists in “moistened forests.” The image of a secret existing in an area filled by nature is not new to poetry. Its function here as a safe place for the lovers’ encounter remits us to the medieval image of the “locus amoenus” (although it appears also as Renaissance trope). The poetic subject states that his mouth will call silently on the lover’s. This verse most directly supports the final verse, already cited and translated above, in that the union of the lovers’ mouths signals not only their

physical silencing but also that the use of words is unnecessary in experiencing the erotic encounter. Interestingly, Clara Janés' poetry utilizes a similar image in her mystical process, as I will show in Chapter IV. Despite the poetic subject's use of poetry and the poetic word to describe the wordlessness of the lovers' union, I believe that the poetic subject alludes here to the purity of the physical (and, as I intend to suggest, spiritual) encounter as contrasted to the impurity of his own attempts at describing it. Later on in this chapter I will show how the Pessoa's poetic subject develops (and then overcomes) the notion of the limits of language, in my analysis of *Vou-me Embora de Mim*. In the present case, the passing from the poetic subject's impure world of description to the erotic "locus amoenus" in which the lovers may unite is not only important for my analysis of Sufi mysticism's place in Pessoa's poetry in Chapter V. It also clearly demonstrates that, unlike in Pessoa's first stage, where the poetic word acted as the key to freedom of expression, in this second stage it begins turning into a counter-point to something "more pure." As I intend to argue both here and in more detail in Chapter V, this "purity" is the unification of the poetic subject's soul with that of the lover by way of a Sufi mystical process. This process, in particular, will be the one which the Iberian mystic Ibn 'Arabi had designed as an evolution of the Persian ideology. (I will study this evolution in Chapter III.)

In the fourth stanza the poetic subject incorporates a level of violence to the erotic experience by declaring to the lover that "I want to feed on you / as a carnivorous plant." The association of the self with nature's flora has formed a part of Pessoa's poetry since his first stage. The poetic subject's violent devouring of the lover also has its place, as an

unexpected development of the notion that the poetic subject desires to “take in” the female lover’s purity so that he may become more pure. As my analysis of Sufi mysticism in both Janés and Pessoa will reveal, one of the greatest differences between the two poets is that, while the former uses references to violence as a metaphor for death (a necessary step in her Sufi mystical process), the latter uses it as just another metaphor for the sex. The poetic subject then follows by describing the physical act of tasting, biting and “singing on [the lover’s] breast.” Again, the association of physical acts of love with the act of devouring flesh becomes confused in the stanza. On the surface this could indicate an attempt at deconstructing the language of sex, undermining its authority through the use of its own metaphors. However, I believe that, unlike Pessoa’s first stage, here deconstruction is no longer at the forefront. His preoccupation with the desire for union with the lover does not lend itself to a deconstructive process, nor does his symbolism, which is becoming more Sufi at every turn. The wolf devouring the gazelle in the third verse of the stanza, for example, is a reference to the devouring of the beloved and / or of “theophanic beauty” (Nurbakhsh, Vol IV, 154). In fact, the act of feeding itself, in Sufi mystical symbolism, represents the “nutriment [which] is the food of the lover received from the Beauty of the Eternal” (Vol XV, 98). The wolf is interesting in that it seems not to symbolize anything in a Sufi system. However, the symbol of the wolf as the devourer is prevalent in Pessoa’s work of the second stage, both in *Os Olhos de Isa* and the other works to be studied in this chapter, *O Amor Infinito* and *O Livro da Noite*.

The fifth stanza continues the description of the erotic encounter's physical side, ending with the verse "your moan [growing] in my voice." The images of the poetic subject's desire running through the lover's veins, of his "hunger" being lost in her muscles and of her belly trembling in his hands, all point to a physical union through which the poetic subject's emotional state blends with the lover's "pure" body. Again, the union between the lovers that began with the silent calling of one mouth to another has reached a point in which the sounds made by the one resonate from the other, the hunger and desire of one is absorbed in the other. This points toward the lovers' physical and spiritual union. It is a good idea to remember, on the other hand, that the first word of the stanza is "quero," or "I want," indicating that this encounter has not yet happened within the confines of the poem (although it already has, in another sense, as I will show in Chapter V, blending this desired encounter with the memory of a previous one).

In the final stanza the poetic subject calls again to the lover, stating that he "will travel with [her]." The journey he proposes is a mystical one, by which he may become united, through love, with the purity of the female lover (a notion which will be explained in my analysis of Ibn 'Arabi's work in Chapter III). The final verse of the poem, in which the poetic subject declares that he will search for "us in each kiss" again reflects the desired union with the lover.

In sum, the poetry of *Os Olhos de Isa* seen so far is an affirmation of love's power to help purify the poetic subject. This purification happens through the erotic physical and spiritual encounter with the female lover in what, through the presence of specific Sufi symbols, is a mystical process borne specifically in the Iberian Peninsula. I will

develop further my analysis of the Sufi mystic process as present in the work in Chapter V. Beyond the mystical process, two other notions are present in the work. The first, that of memory, is tied directly to the theme of nostalgia as found in all stages of Pessoa's work. The second, that of the limitations of language to express pure love and / or thought, began in the first stage as an imposed censorship from the outside, but will evolve into a censorship and self-imposed ignorance from within the interlocutor in Pessoa's third stage. It will be developed further in my analysis of *Vou-me Embora de Mim*.

O Livro da Noite (1981, published in 1982), the work by which Pessoa received the Prêmio de Poesia da Secretaria do Estado de Cultura in 1981, is probably his most non-erotic, metaphysical work. Here, his poetic subject expands on the ontological questions surrounding the potency of the poetic word which his previous works had explored. Also, in this work we find probably the densest concentration of poetic symbols of any of Pessoa's works so far. As I will explain, these poetic symbols do not reflect the deconstruction of the human (or Portuguese) condition, as it were. In fact, deconstruction as defined in this chapter does not take a primary role in the poetry of this second stage of Pessoa's work at all.

The introductory poem of *O Livro da Noite*, just as that of *Os Olhos de Isa*, summarizes the themes and imagery to appear and be developed throughout the work:

E o Verão levou o Fogo
por um caminho de pássaros acordados
até ao sítio onde ferozmente o ouro ainda grita nas montanhas.

No fim do tempo, para falar da morte, as folhas caíram sem ruído
numa arca de terra escura; nas frestas
por onde se podia vigiar a chama
abrigavam-se os duendes e os cães.

O pardal e a rosa,
o vento e o corvo,
o formidável falcão,
vieram. E todos
juraram sob um velho castanheiro, diante do Outono,
terem visto nas dunas o rasto do coração do Homem
e escutando o rumor do sangue
sobre a água.

(9)

The poem is in free verse, as opposed to the highly controlled meter of Pessoa's previous lyrical (i.e., non-prose) poems. This break away from the classical meter indicates that the poet's primary formal concern is no longer the deconstruction of those forms which he has used ironically. In fact, the lack of any standard meter frees both Pessoa and his reader to focus exclusively on the poem's content. Thus, in a very postmodern sense, the reader of the text, who must also function as the text's writer, may take more interpretive license with his or her reading of the text without trampling on a pre-conceived meaning conveyed by the text's formal constraints.

The first section of the poem (i.e., the first three verses, separated from the rest of the poem by a period) states literally that “And *Summer* carried *Fire* / down the path of the awakened *birds* / to the place where *gold* still ferociously cries from the *mountains*” (I have provided italics for emphasis). The most commonly recognizable image from this is that of the birds, “os pássaros,” a recurring symbol in Pessoa’s poetry. As I have noted on various occasions, and will continue to note throughout this dissertation, this symbol’s semantic evolution from an impure and corrupted poetic word in *O Pássaro no Espelho* to the poetic subject’s soul in *Os Olhos de Isa* forms part of the recentralizing tendencies in Pessoa’s overall poetic development. Based on the evolution of the bird as a pessoan symbol, the reader is able to follow Pessoa’s poetic evolution from deconstruction in his first stage to the reconstruction and apparent recentralization evident in his second and third stages. Returning to the poem, here we find the bird in a metaphoric landscape where it is not only free, but is no longer even present, having already left a “path” for others to follow. This looking back at the process of freeing the poetic word, and thus the poetic subject’s soul, explains the vanished need for a formal structure in the present poetry, as the use of these meters to represent a constricted poetic freedom is no longer necessary. As for the symbols themselves, they may be extrapolated from poetic tradition. “Summer,” the hottest season and the one which comes before Fall, symbolizes the period of life between that of growth and that of the decline toward death. In the poem, Summer, or life, has taken Fire, representing the heat of the season as well as human passion, down the path left by the birds, interpretable, after its evolution in *Os Olhos de Isa*, as both the free poetic word and the illuminated soul. Thus, in this poem

we have an expression of human passion through the evolved symbol of the bird. This poeticized and enlightened passion is taken to the hidden secret (gold) of eternity (often represented through images such as the eternal mountains). Here we also see a representation of the balance of nature, reflected in the presence of three of the four elements: earth (the mountain), fire, air (the path of the birds).

Interestingly, we do not see water, the fourth element, until the final verse of the poem. There it is expressed as both “water” and “blood,” two of the substances from which the human body is made, and which resonate throughout Pessoa’s poetry in conjunction with the image of the bird. Thus, the while Pessoa’s poetry becomes more metaphoric, certain basic symbols, although in constant transition, keep a continual presence throughout.

The second section of the poem (or sentence from which we find the next four verses) functions as a transitory stage between life and death in the poem. Here, light has begun fading away from the world. Nature then begins to die, represented by the trees caught under the shadow. The mythical “duendes,” or elves, and the dogs, have found refuge in the few places left where light, represented by the “chamas,” or flames, still exists simultaneously with the darkness. These particular creatures, bound to the earth, would be unable to participate in the flight of the bird. As the bird’s flight represents the movement of the soul beyond the limits of the body, and semantic fluidity of the free poetic word (among other meanings, proving that semantic fluidity even further), those creatures in Pessoa’s symbology that do not possess the ability to fly will not be able to share in this freedom. They are not simply bound to earth literally, but also symbolically,

to a state of perpetual desire for freedom. Also, I should emphasize that the free poetic word / free soul remains unseen in the poem. In fact, only the trail left behind remains, implying that the action of this free entity having expressed its creators' passion, love, or any other possible idea, belongs in the past.

The third section of the poem tells of five flying creatures that come to the dying tree. Three of these are birds, one is the wind and yet another is a rose. The image of the bird, so central to Pessoa's allegorical construction in the poem, has been divided into three parts. Although this tripartite division seems reminiscent of the Christian Holy Trinity, in reality, the three birds make sense in a non-religious symbolism. Each of these avian images, the sparrow, the crow and the "formidable" falcon, represents a different aspect of the human condition. The sparrow, a bird associated with the springtime, could symbolize the moment at which life becomes most present. Here that life would have been part of the past, thus giving the image of the sparrow a dual meaning. The crow, an ancient symbol and omen of death, in this way reflects the present moment of the poem. Finally, the falcon, a bird of prey often representing strength, may symbolize human potential, or the human ability to survive. As I will show in Chapters IV and V of this dissertation, the establishment of a relationship between the human and the natural (i.e., plants and / or animals) represents a re-incorporation of the poetic self into nature, an important aspect of both Pessoa's and Janés' poetries. In the case of Pessoa, this self-reflection in nature, as seen in this poem as well as those from *À Mesa do Amor* in Chapter V, may stem from the duality of meaning found in the symbol of the bird (i.e., both the free poetic word, after the process of deconstruction as outlined by Culler, and

the free soul, illuminated through love by way of the Sufi mystical process as studied in Chapter V).

In the final section of the poem it becomes clear that these birds, accompanied by the wind and the rose (each a symbol of nature and of beauty, respectively), have come to the tree in search of whatever may remain of the human heart. The poem states that they had unequivocally (by “swearing,” as though in a legal proceeding) seen signs of the human heart. The time of year expressed, the fall, is significant in that it comes just before Winter, the traditional time of death in poetic symbolism. As for the “remnant of Man’s heart / and ... the murmur of blood / upon the water,” there is a sense of hope in the notion that, although again unseen, the essence of life may still exist even beyond the moment of passion, as the time of death approaches. This essence is represented by the presence of blood, the liquid which give life to the body, upon the water, the liquid which nurtures life. The heart itself may hold a dual meaning, just as did the symbol of the bird. First, it not only represents love, but the physical mechanism with which the body passes blood through the body. The second, more mystical meaning, is that of the “qalb,” or sacred heart of the lovers in which their souls unite in the sixth stage of the Sufi mystical process, called “Haqiqat.” I will explain this notion further in the next chapter. In any case, similar image of the essential elements of life both nurturing and giving hope for the continuation of life through love will appear again in my analysis of *À Mesa do Amor* in Chapter V.

This process plays out not only in *O Livro da Noite* but in other more metaphoric works of Pessoa, such as *O Amor Infinito* (1983). In the introduction to this work,

Roxana Eminescu writes of two similarities between the works that will turn up even more significantly in Chapter V. First, each of the works speaks of death as an integrated, although unforeseen, part of nature which is made up of the four basic elements of earth, air, fire and water (*Amor*, 12). Second, the symbolic elements of light and darkness are simultaneous in each work, existing in the same space at the same time (12). The binary opposition created here becomes the basis of the process of life and death, also a simultaneous binary opposition in Pessoa's poetry of this period. *O Amor Infinito* is divided into seven "Cantos," or songs, numbered from zero to six. Eminescu states that this division in seven sections is not random, but a signal to the reader that there exist in the work, "seis dimensões do espaço mais a dimensão extra-cósmica" (*Amor*, 11). I propose a less general reading of the work's overlaying structure. As I will study in depth in Chapter V, there is a strong presence of Sufi mystical symbolism and imagery in Pessoa's work which influences the evolution of ideas such as the notions of love serving as the basis of life and freedom, and that of self-expression through love. In *O Amor Infinito*, nature exists as a consequence of the notion of love and death as both omni-present and in simultaneous binary opposition to one-another. In fact, even in "Canto Zero," the first of the work's seven parts, life and love flow concomitantly with violence and death, borne in poems such as "Último Soneto," but evolved here to function as an affirmation of both a physical and spiritual existence:

Serás tu a fera acoçada?

É teu o rouco murmúrio da floresta?

Vês o sangue pagão que arde na lenha

há tanto tempo junta, ao pé do fogo?

Não é do azul que te defendes. 5

Ó lâmina mortal que feres fundo.

Quase mil séculos viajou a sombra

até chegar à tua cabeleira

e fazer as ramagens do outono.

Por pedregosas ruas de silêncio 10

ela veio com manchas tão soturnas

que os ribeiros fugiram para os rios

e os rios para o ventre do oceano.

Foi um percurso nas ervas e no céu

e ainda as violetas eram verdes 15

quando a longa viagem começou.

Depois a noite fez-se e cobriu tudo

com a capa mais escura que encontrou.

O pequeno animal fechou os olhos

e o sonho abriu as asas ao terror. 20

O corvo ditou ordens à serpente

enroscada nos passos do bisonte

e veio a neve e trouxe a flor gelada

que deu os negros frutos do inverno.
Então a tempestade abriu os braços 25
rebetando os diques dos seus dedos
e foram grandes lagos os seus olhos
doirados pelo oiro que há no fundo.
O grito que se ouviu e ninguém soube
foi o do vento: era a sua paixão 30
derrubando o sono imenso dos carvalhos
para fazer o leito à primavera.
Chegou a luz, serena, sobre as asas
esquecidas, da pequena codorniz
que olhou o verde vivo, o coração 35
sombrio, que as cores transformava.
Um barco deslizou por sobre a pedra
carregado de silêncios e de frutos
e de todos o maior era o da mágoa
crescendo desde a água até ao cimo 40
da macieira grávida de luz.
O sol desceu da boca universal
com seus ramos de densa claridade
e toda a terra girou à sua volta
na louca bebedeira que perdura. 45

O verão nunca se soube de onde veio
mas diz-se que era os ombros de uma estrela
Mensageira do amor, que no percurso
Soltou os lentos raios da aurora.

(*Amor*, 25-26)

This poem opens *O Amor Infinito* with a recounting of the lover's life cycle as concomitant with nature's, as well as the function of love and the notion of the binary opposition as the basis for that cycle. In the first stanza, the object of the poem, or the "pursued / hunted animal," is asked if she sees the blood burning at the foot of the fire. The combination of blood with fire is a revealing combination, as it connects the image of blood, a life-giving liquid, with that of fire, a violent image associated with both cooking and passion. Thus, in the first stanza the link is established between life and death, while passion and violence are also connected. The object, whose pursuer may be the poetic subject (although that part is not yet clear), is part of the process of life and death. The image of the hunted animal invokes images of that animal's death. The blood that she sees, then, may be a foreshadowing of the spilling of her own, meaning that she observes and simultaneously takes part in the process of life and death which the image of blood mixes with fire has shown.

In the second stanza, composed of only two verses, the poetic subject states that the hunted animal is not defending itself against "blue." Rather, it is subject to the "mortal blade" invoked in the second verse. The color blue could be a reference to the openness of the daytime sky, representative of the realm of the bird, whose symbolic meaning I

have studied at several occasions in this chapter. Another possibility is that which appears in Sufi poetry, in which the color blue symbolizes the combination of “loving-kindness ... with whatever is other than loving-kindness” (Nurbakhsh, Vol IV, 54). Whether the first or second interpretation is applied, it is clear that the first verse refers to the notion of either infinity or equilibrium between opposed elements which would have caused the object’s death. The second verse, nonetheless, makes clear that this object will meet a violent end. It should be noted, however, that the notion of binary opposition, a Sufi notion to be studied in Chapter III, hold true here as it does in *Os Olhos de Isa*. That is, while the poetic subject speaks of death and violence, the notions of life (in the burning blood) and love (through the combination of blood and fire) remain just as present. Thus, the first two verses present an intricately woven natural world in which existence is based upon binary oppositions such as life / death, love / violence, carried over from Pessoa’s first stage and developed further in the second.

In the third and final stanza, composed of 43 verses, the four elements of nature (fire, earth, air and water), linked to the natural cycle of the four seasons (of which spring and autumn are particularly salient), are applied to the object’s life cycle to show that the basis of existence is the binary opposition of life and death. The first four verses talk about how the “shadow” traveled until finding itself in the hair of the “fera.” There, it made the “branches” of autumn. The shadow could be a reference to the “shadow of death,” or perhaps a symbol for the night, both of which are common representations of the end of life in Western religious symbolism. If so, then the branches of autumn are a metaphor for the “fera’s” aging process. Technically speaking, this image is more

complex than many described here in that it uses the implied metaphor of dying leaves to represent the whitening of the “fera’s” hair, a synecdoque for aging. It is also a personification of the image of the “fera,” whose animal characteristics have already been established in the first stanza. Thus, the first four lines manage to create a complex symbolic system by which the prey animal in the beginning of the poem may slowly become more human. Yet, the threat to that object’s life is still evident from both the first two stanzas as well as this one. So even if the prey animal becomes less of an animal, it is still subject to the law of nature, made clear in the previous stanzas as the binary oppositions of life with death and love with violence. The next four verses (verses 10-13) state that the shadow came so gloomily down the silent road that the arroyos ran for the rivers, which themselves went to the “womb of the ocean.” The image of the return to the origin of life, or to the kristevan chora, is not only evident here, it reflects an important consequence of Pessoa’s deconstructive first stage. Beginning in this second phase, and developing in the third, the tendency toward reconstruction, or returning to the essence of existence, becomes a paramount goal of the pessoan poetic subject. In my analysis of *Vou-me Embora de Mim* later on in this chapter, as well as my study of certain second-stage works in Chapter V, I will show that Pessoa’s poetic subject reaches mystical illumination, then attempts to use deconstruction to aid others in illumination (and not simply political freedom as found in the first stage). Verses 14-16 mark the moment when the shadow’s journey began, which is best interpreted as the springtime. The blue of the sky, as in the first two stanzas, represents the place where beauty and non-beauty meet (i.e., a meeting place for a particular binary opposition). The green of

the grass symbolizes the “purity of the spirit,” (Nurbakhsh, Vol IV, 37). In Chapter V, I will explain the influence of Sufi symbolism in Pessoa’s work, however, for now it is enough to say that these representations exist in the presence of the terrified and partially personified prey animal. The image, thus, symbolizes existence as a combination of spiritual purity and animal impurity, of beauty and non-beauty creating a sublime space above that which the object of the poem, the animal, occupies. The next verses (17-24) show the fall of night, the coming of winter, another traditional symbol of death, and the fear that winter causes in the animals that occupy the land. The animals themselves are interesting, as each represents a different aspect of existence. The crow, an avian symbol whose black plumage gives the feeling of death rather than spiritual freedom, dictates orders to the snake, another animal symbol for the body of the traveler on the path to illumination (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 152). It remains coiled up inside the footprint of the bison, waiting for snow who “gave the black fruits of winter.” The snake, or traveler’s body, thus, will wait for death in the form of winter to come and remove its physical body. As for the bison itself, although Eminescu refers to it as simply one more element of the poetic subject’s “bestiário completo,” or his connection to the suffering of nature (*O Amor Infinito*, 14-15), I take a different stand. I believe that the beast is another representation of the binary opposition of purity and impurity prevalent in the poem. The bison itself is never seen, only its imprint on the ground remains. Thus, the impure body no longer exists, but the memory of the animal lingers. Also, this imprint serves as the place for another animal to seek shelter and / or wait for the coming of winter. So, not only does the purity of the animal’s memory continue after the animal is gone, it also

provides for another's needs. This other, the poetic representation of the mystical traveler's body, thus finds rest in the memory of the former. Thus, here another element of the mystery of existence appears, that is, the affirmation of the memory of life as vital in the process of life and death. Yet another important aspect of the poem to mention is that at this point the reader sees not only the four elements of nature (fire, earth, air and water) but the passing of time as reflected in the natural life cycle. Death, the end of that cycle, will be developed in the rest of the poem as the beginning of a new cycle of life, represented by the sun's light rising over the horizon in the final eight verses of the poem. In these verses, the "Messenger of love," is said to have returned the summer to the world. [Although Eminescu sees this "messenger" as a Christological symbol (*O Amor Infinito*, 15), the abundance of Sufi symbolism in the work of Pessoa's second stage as well as the presence of a Sufi mystical process throughout suggest that this "messenger" is more akin to Janés' "arcángel," as seen in Chapter IV of this dissertation, than to a Christ-figure]. The mythical quality of the final verses is evident in the notion that the word has been passed on from someone else to the poetic subject. This also implies that that particular someone may have shown this cycle to the poetic subject, meaning that this cycle applies not only to nature but also to the telling of the story itself. The notion of an illuminated being aiding another in understanding the nature of the universe will be important in my analysis of Janés' *Arcángel de sombra* in Chapter IV. Also, the image of life and death united in the cycle of existence and nurtured by love will be developed more fully in my analysis of *A Mesa do Amor* in Chapter V. For now, it is enough to say that the omni-presence of binary oppositions as the elements of universal existence and

creation are seen in the poem as based on the notion of love as the nurturing force behind them.

In summarizing Pessoa's second stage, it seems clear that the emphasis on love as the essential force for the life cycle in nature has taken center stage. As my analysis of each poet's articulation of Sufi mystical symbolism develops through Chapters IV and V, we will begin to understand the presence of these oppositions as a stepping-stone for a process of ascension which will define both Janés and Pessoa as poets of rebellion against what would be considered, in the work of each, as destructive cultural norms.

Pessoa's third and final stage reflects a synthesis of both the deconstructionist attitude of his first stage and mystical exploration found in the second. In one of his most recent works, *Vou-me Embora de Mim* (2002), the search for meaning by way of the metaphysical seems, at first, to have reached a moment of de-evolution as Pessoa, now 62 years old, attempts to "dispense with formalities" (9) associated with his metaphysical symbolism and "discover the future in the universe of the past" (*Vou-me embora de Mim*, 14). In other words, the poet attempts to foment a more conversational tone in his poetry while simultaneously searching for the future through his own past. In its entirety this work is a single, untitled poem divided into sections. As such, I will refer to poems by their starting and ending page-numbers. In any case, from the first section (9-12) we see that Pessoa's poetic subject utilizes a symbolic, confessional language and changes from a mythical to a conversational tone:

Dispensemos as formalidades.

Tornei-me parte deste planeta

independentemente da minha vontade.
Surpreende-me a forma como acordamos e viajamos de novo.
Tal como acontece à chuva quando congela: tem
um dever para com a sua herança.
Não sei o que mais posso fazer. Talvez
A resposta me cerque por aí, talvez seja excelente
Não ter alternativas. Não existir passagem.
Ninguém nos ouve, ninguém quer saber
das nossas intenções, descobrir a ponte ou procurar a luz.
...

(9)

This fragment, as well as the work as a whole, seems as prose written in a poetic style, rather than the poetry-in-prose of *Português Suave*, for example. In this way Pessoa may create a more informal, conversational atmosphere in which to combine the communicative quality of a phrase such as “I don’t know what else to do” with the metaphoric nature of phrasings such as “Just as what happens to the rain when it freezes: it has / a duty to its inheritance.”

The themes which appear in the fragment are also significant in that they contain many of the ideas already present in Pessoa’s earlier poetry but without the abstruse metaphoric or symbolic language characteristic of his work up to this point. For example, the second and third verses in which the poetic subject states that “I became part of this world / independently of my will” refers to a feeling of betrayal against the

world present in his first poetic works. Also, the image of water freezing in the fifth and sixth verses contains not only the basic natural element of water, the one which is most closely related to the human body, and thus existence on Earth, as seen in the poem analyzed here from *O Livro da Noite*. It also refers to the act of freezing, an implication of the season of winter, a symbol of darkness, and thus death of the flesh, as implied in earlier poetry. The stopping of water from flowing could also be interpreted as a metaphor for silence, a theme associated with an existence of suffering and /or death. That this death, or silence of the water's fluidity, is its inheritance, makes the irony of existence as a form of bondage that much stronger. Thus, Pessoa's poetic subject is forced to utter the phrase "I don't know what more I can do," a sign of surrender to the process of death. However, in another fragment of this same section we see a possible path of escape for the poetic subject, that of memory and the faith that the intimacy of remembering the subject's lover will bring him closer to the "name," or unnamable sublime, referred to in *Os Olhos de Isa*:

Mostra-me um lar, deixa-me fechar os olhos e pela última vez
saber das coisas do teu corpo, sentir que ofereci o meu fogo ao frio da lareira
e ao calor dela conversarmos, dizermos tudo sem ter que afirmar alguma coisa.
Mas a corrupção pode prosperar aqui,
à volta do que precisamos. Queres dizer que não?
Pode haver muitas fomes entre um homem e uma mulher,
pode haver muitas formas de olhar para a fome do mundo

e na realidade só pode haver um nome para a forma e para o mundo e para o
homem e para a mulher,
pelo programa que há em nós,
pelo que queres e não queres, pelo que julgas e pelo que te ensinaram a julgar.

... A água

Está armazenada no nosso coração e as pessoas vivem na margem do deserto.

O projecto é tornar a vida verde e fértil.

(10-11)

The poem is, in essence, metapoetic. Here we find that the poetic subject fears desiring his lover because of his aversion to the “corruption” which could ruin the experience that such as intimate memory provides. This corruption is the tension that exists between what the lovers desire to express in words, but cannot, and the ultimate “name,” unspoken for an inability to find the means. Language, as is expressed in the poem, does not seem adequate to express the human condition, first of love, then in a general sense by the penultimate verse of the fragment cited above. The poetic subject declares that water, the essence of life, is in “our heart,” a reference to life, then, being found in the lovers’ heart. We will see the image of true life as found in the lovers’ shared heart in my analysis of the “qalb” of Clara Janés’ poetry in Chapter IV, and will continue our analysis in Chapter V. However, this water, or essence of life, is forced to live exiled from the love that words should express. Thus, death emerges in the poem as the desert on the border of which people live, lacking a method of pure and true self-expression. Finally, the project of turning the world at the edge of the desert green again

through the present poetic expression of the poetic subject's ontological impasse alludes to the recombination of the poetic subject and nature through the power of the poetic word, as Letria states in the appendices to the work (*Vou-me Embora de Mim*, 75). So, it would seem that the poetic subject's project at this point is to attempt to use poetic language to find the purest form of self-expression, turning the dead language into a living one, created through the essence of life rather and, thus, capable of expressing it.

In relation to Pessoa's previous work, the deconstruction of the poetic word in *O Pássaro no Espelho* and its subsequent reconstruction and re-definition as the associated directly with the soul illuminated through love in *O Livro da Noite* and *O Amor Infinito* is again apparent. The doubt about the poetic word's usefulness does not come, however, from its political corruption as seen in the first stage of Pessoa's work, but from its epistemological corruption, that is, from its inherent impurity as language. The notion of language as unable to express exact human experience is a widely-recognized basis for the notion of deconstruction, as the limitations of language inscribe themselves on the human subject, thus limiting him to its parameters (Critchley 25). In fact, it could be argued, as does Manfred Frank in "Identity and Subjectivity," that identity is both dominated and defined by its opposite (143). Thus, in the above fragment, the notion of self defined as the opposite of limiting language while simultaneously subject to it is implicitly questioned. It is, of course, questioned by means of the same language which, in theory, should limit the poetic subject. This questioning of language through language, and the subsequent project of re-definition and reconstruction in the poem, (and as I will now show, in the work as a whole) undermines the argument that language is incapable

of true expression. Ironically, the rebellion against centralization for the sake of a corrupt government in the first stage, thus, gives way to the rebellion for centralization and against the existential limitations provided by deconstruction. At the same time, this reconstruction is provided by the application of a deconstructive technique through a poetic language whose capacity for communication is greater than deconstruction's capacity for proving that language's expressive limitations. From this point, all that remains is the utilization of the previous theme of life nurtured by love (whose development and parameters will be further defined in my analysis of Pessoa's Sufi mystical process in Chapter V) in the deconstructive / recentralization effort.

The final section of *Vou-me Embora de Mim* (65-66) speaks of a battle where the reader's manner of "suffering" in the world is in conflict with his true nature. The poetic subject tries to explain this through deconstructing the reader's "suffering" and then providing the reader with a way out:

Um anjo diz que sim o outro diz que não.

O poeta diz talvez. E tu que dizes? Tu que vives

a vida de fora para dentro, comandado

por estímulos que entram maquilhados no teu sono e no teu sonho

e que acordam contigo sem alguma vez te terem despertado.

5

Sofres porque habitas um palácio imaginário.

Sofres porque sabes como te chamas mas ignoras quem és.

Sofres porque fechas as janelas da tua casa e as janelas do teu espírito

mas a vida não pára de preparar surpresas

para quando abrires a porta na manhã seguinte. 10

Sofres porque cada orgasmo é uma festa maravilhosa que te estremece apenas o corpo.

Sofres porque cada satisfação tua foi atingida com um imenso rol de profundas

Insatisfações

Sofres porque quase sempre o que tu desejas não é o que tu queres.

Sofres porque não vais além do coração e porque o coração

não vai além de ti. E porque ambos se atrapalham. 15

Sofres porque tens medo e porque tens medo de ter medo.

Sofres porque tens dificuldade em olhar para a frente, partir de ti para um outro tu, e porque olhar fixamente para trás te pode transformar numa estátua de sal.

Sofres porque a tua honestidade é desonesta e a tua consciência é um juiz

que tu mesmo te encarregas de corromper. Sofres 20

porque a tua infâmia pode preencher a primeira página

e porque a primeira página nunca fala de ti nem que seja para mostrar a tua infâmia.

Sofres porque é grande a sensação de ameaça

e porque enorme é o tédio e porque é fundo o desespero.

Sofres porque as razões porque és feliz são as mesmas razões da tua infelicidade. 25

Sofres porque sabes tudo isto e desconheces tudo isto

e porque o conhecimento das coisas e o desconhecimento das coisas

são sempre a primeira e a última das razões

para invocares o teu inútil sofrimento.

The fragment begins with the recognition of an internal conflict, that of the opposing voices which exist in every person. These voices form a binary opposition which serves the basis for our capacity for judgment and logical thought. The second verse refers to the notion of the poet as a third voice, remitting back to the notion that the truth is a three-edged sword, one being person A's perception, another person B's, and the last being the truth. The reference to the poet as "perhaps saying it," then, designates the poet as being the closest to the truth. The notion that only the poet can perceive the true nature of the universe, the true path of the seeker, etc, will become clearer in my analysis of two of Pessoa's mystically-inclined works in Chapter V. The notion also reminds the reader of the authoritative stand that poets took in the early Twentieth century as the greatest, and sometimes only, perceivers of the truth. This retrograde motion in Pessoa's work, from an extremely postmodern, deconstructionist standpoint to one whose characteristics seem more akin to Modernism's authoritative perspective is, in part, a consequence of the presence and influence of Sufi mystical imagery, symbols and notions in Pessoa's second stage. This mystical influence serves as a tool for the reconstruction of Pessoa's highly deconstructed poetic universe from his first stage. The basis of that reconstruction, of course, is the notion that love is the center, creator and nurturer of all things and beings, as seen in the end of his first stage, throughout the second stage and even in the present work. The confusion from within, thus, reinforces previous notions present in Pessoa's work and also sets the stage for the analysis of the interlocutor's existential dilemma.

From the end of the second verse to the end of the poem Pessoa's poetic subject, having already passed through the stages of deconstruction, mystical illumination and purification, and postmodern self-analysis (in the present collection), deconstructs the interlocutor's "suffering." He states first that the interlocutor lives his life "from outside to within," as opposed to the more illuminated method of living which may be inferred from Pessoa's work, that is, from within to understand that which exists outside of the mind. The poetic subject continues, saying that the stimulus which enters from the outside "enters made-up [with make-up] in your sleep and in your dreams." This reference to the truth made "prettier" through distortion and covering-up reminds us of the references to the truth as a tortured and crazed horse from Pessoa's first stage, as well as to artistic methods of distortion, such as Valle-Inclán's "esperpento." The "esperpento," of course, was a method of twisting the outside, as though through a concave mirror, to reveal the true ugliness of fin-de-siècle European civilization. This fact makes the reference to a truth distorted by the interlocutor's own mind, rather than by an outside force, even more significant. This carnivalesque reversal of the perceptual directionality of Valle-Inclán's esperpentic vision sets the stage for the poetic subject to enter into this distortion, twist it again through a technique of deconstruction, then hand it back to the interlocutor with all of the illogical and contradictory processes revealed, which the interlocutor uses to hide himself from the truth of a universe made of binary oppositions that he himself embodies.

The images brought into being throughout the poem are ironic and illogical contradictions that show the deconstructive and simultaneously reconstructive process

above. The difference in meaning between the verbs “acordar” and “despertar,” the latter being a spiritual awakening while the former an awakening from physical sleep, becomes important in the fifth verse given the deconstructive technique described above. In the seventh verse, the interlocutor’s recognition of his name and simultaneous ignorance of who he is represents a binary opposition between the name given to the physical manifestation of the self versus the person’s “true name.” The notion of the name will be explained in Chapter V in my analysis of *Os Olhos de Isa*. Verse eight revives the image of the open window, present in “Primeira Canção de Lisboa” as the opened heart of the poetic subject. Here, the link is made explicitly between the interlocutor’s closed window and his closed heart, both images of a self-censoring from within and a deliberate ignorance of what lies outside. Yet in the ninth and tenth verses, the interlocutor cannot escape the “surprises” of the outside world, as he must face it “the following morning.” This idea, in conjunction with the poetic subject’s hurling of binary oppositions at the interlocutor, demonstrates the ridiculousness of the latter’s attitude toward the true nature of the world around him.

The idea of sex takes a primary role in the remainder of the poem. Verses 11-12 speak of the unsatisfying sexual experience of having “only the body” feeling sexual pleasure (and that after having suffered so many “insatisfactions” that the satisfaction of sexual gratification has little positive effect). When taken in comparison with the satisfaction achieved in *Os Olhos de Isa*, where physical love as a manifestation of spiritual love helps to bring the poetic subject mystical illumination, the interlocutor’s spiritless sexual experience seems even more detrimental. The 13th verse is one of the

more telling in terms of the word-games played by the pessoan poetic subject who now has a distinctive understanding of, and control over, both language and deconstruction. This verse translates as “you suffer because almost always what you desire is not what you want.” The subtle difference in meaning of each verb marks the confusion present in the interlocutor, caused by an ignorance of the binary oppositions which exist within him and which attempt constantly to show him the true path (to illumination, as it were). The desire expressed, thus, is a reaction to the confusion, rather than an expression of the spirit’s need (or “want”) of something more profound. The sexual experience in the previous verses seems to represent the process – the interlocutor desires sex, neither because it gives any spiritual pleasure nor because the spirit wants it, but because it provides a temporary, limited satisfaction to the physical body. This limitedness can be seen as a sign of the body’s impure nature, a notion studied in my analysis of poetry from Pessoa’s second stage. This “purer,” spiritual and sublime “want” is seen in my previous analysis of *Os Olhos de Isa* as tied to the erotic experience with the female lover. The “desire,” then, is a false want, as without spiritual pleasure it retains no true value. The real desire, of course, is that which stems from the spirit’s “want” of something, a desire that could be seen as limitless, sublime and “pure,” in contrast to that which is “impure,” or the male physical body without that of the female to purify him. The interlocutor may perceive this “want” if he pays attention to the binary oppositions which make up the essence of the universe. Because he seems not to believe, however, that there exists any other mode of living other than the corporeal, and thus impure, existence of suffering and

the confusion caused by ignoring his spiritual side, he is doomed to a life of having the truth masked from him.

In this poem the poetic subject also makes evident the interlocutor's egotism as a partial cause for his existential confusion. As in Pessoa's second stage, through physical love the female's "purer" body and spirit may purify the male's "impure" body, aiding his spirit in a process of illumination which I will clarify in detail in Chapter V. In this final section of *Vou-me Embora de Mim*, the interlocutor does not achieve a "purer" form of pleasure because, as the reader may infer, the interlocutor is so wrapped up in himself that he does not open the "windows" of his spirit to what the other may offer. He is surprised by the issues that arise through his own ignorance of the world's binary oppositions, as well as his own, because he does not open himself up to the possibility of their existence. Rather, he sees only what the impure body sees: suffering, dissatisfaction, and a lack of understanding that feeds his suffering in a vicious cycle of ignorance. This cycle is reflected in the final four verses of the poem, where the poetic subject states that the interlocutor "knows" and "is unfamiliar with" the binary oppositions, one of which has just been mentioned and resides in the interlocutor's own self-created confused existence. The poetic subject then declares that the interlocutor's "familiarity" and "unfamiliarity" are his "first and last reasons / to invoke [his] useless suffering." Again, the cycle of knowing and ignoring for the sake of an insatisfaction which feeds his suffering may give the interlocutor's body the chance for periodic pleasures, but it does not aid him in opening himself to the sublime pleasure of the possibility of "purity."

The corporeality of the interlocutor's situation is also emphasized in verses 14-15, when the poetic subject indicates that the interlocutor never goes beyond his "heart," and that it never goes beyond him. As I have mentioned, and will continue to study in the proceeding three chapters of this dissertation, the symbol of the "heart" represents the Sufi notion of a meeting place of the soul with God, the lover, or whomever else the soul would like to bond with. The interlocutor and his heart seem to be intertwined in such a way as not to allow either to move beyond the other. The heart is trapped with the man, and thus both hinder and confuse themselves and each other (hence the ambiguity in the verb "se atrapalham.") Given the corporeal, egotistical nature of the interlocutor's existence and the confusion brought about through his ignorance of his more "pure" side, this hindrance of the heart's "want" for going beyond the man makes sense.

The remaining verses of the poem, verses 16-25, take on the role of giving more examples to support the notions described above. Verse 16 speaks of the interlocutor's fear of fearing, meaning a fear of any emotion related to the unknown, an idea that he has purposefully ignored. Verses 17-18 mention his difficulty in seeing his "other self," which I infer to be his spiritual side, the side that "wants," rather than the impure side which "desires." Again, his fear of change, or being transformed into a "statue of salt," drives his forced ignorance of the truth. His "honesty is dishonest," referring to the lies he tells himself so that the truth may remain covered, and he takes on the task of corrupting his own conscience, meaning he tries to remove the internal barriers to his own suffering so that he may continue to suffer. Verses 21-22 state that he suffers because his villainy (Port. "infâmia") could fill "the first" page, but does not, even if that

page is meant to show it. This image represents the interlocutor's "desire" for some sort of recognition, albeit negative, that becomes another insatisfaction due to its incompleteness. The image, thus, serves to feed the cycle of an egotism which feeds his self-imposed ignorance of the truth that causes an insatisfaction which, in turn, feeds him "useless suffering." Thus, as verses 23-25 declare, he feels a great sensation of threat due to the existential tedium and desperation that this cycle causes in him, making his happiness a simultaneous sadness. Again, the pessoan universe, as it has evolved from the 1970's up to this point, functions on two central ideas. First, that love is the basic nutrient of existence, and second, that existence is constructed from infinite and constantly present binary oppositions. By presenting the binary oppositions inherent in the interlocutor, the poetic subject has revealed that the interlocutor's ignorance of them is the root of his suffering. The implication of this, of course, is the importance of these binary oppositions, as they signify, as stated above, that within him the notion of love and the possibility of a life with greater meaning still exist. Thus, the "way out" that I have alluded to above is that by deconstructing the problem (i.e., the interlocutor's ignorance of his essential nature), the poetic subject has revealed the solution, that is, the simultaneous binary oppositions themselves, nurtured by love, from which the universe is created. In this way, the marginalized heart from the previously analyzed fragment may be freed and the "desert" of the interlocutor's existence may become "fertile."

To summarize, Pessoa's *Vou-me Embora de Mim* reflects a desire on the part of the pessoan poetic subject to argue that self-expression and self representation are possible through the re-empowerment of poetic language and the recognition of a self-imposed

ignorance of the universe's true nature. The poetic subject, now in the third stage of Pessoa's poetry, has already reached a mystical illumination through a Sufi mystical process (as I will analyze in much greater detail in Chapter V) and has returned to aid others in finding that path. (This notion is important also in Janés' *Arcángel de sombra*, studied in Chapter IV.) In the beginning of the collection, Pessoa's poetic subject returns to poetic language its authority through the technique of deconstruction against the notion of language as limited and inherently flawed. Then, at the end of the collection, the poetic subject utilizes poetic language to deconstruct the cycle of egotism and ignorance with which the interlocutor has caused his own suffering. Here, the poetic subject undermines this ignorance through a demonstration of the interlocutor's own embodiment of the binary oppositions of which the universe is made. Although not explicit, the notion of "pure" love, as found in Pessoa's second stage, is evident in the final section's criticism of all that is not "pure" love, such as the orgasm limited to the body only. The hope, both here and in throughout *Vou-me Embora de Mim*, is that by turning away from the cycle of suffering, the interlocutor will attain the connection with the universal truth of love. Thus, deconstruction has served not only to criticize, as in Pessoa's first stage, but to help rebuild the world in the image of the love and illumination explored in Pessoa's second stage.

In Joaquim Pessoa's work we have observed an evolution from his first phase, that of his poetry from 1974 to 1980, with a focus on deconstruction as a method of social and poetic criticism, to a more metaphoric approach to the tragic irony of the poetic subject's approximation to nature through the loss of his existence in his second phase, that of his

work from 1980 through the 1990s. We have then witnessed a turn, in the more recent poetry of Pessoa's third and final phase, toward a search for answers to the ontological question of existence as tragic irony which the previous phase of his poetry had brought about. This final search for self-representation in poetry through the self's reconstruction may signal and abandoning of the postmodern decentralizing ideal, a shift from search for "representation" in an essentially vacuous universe to a search for "meaning" in a more centered, intimate world. It is in this world that the technique of deconstruction acts as a *tool* for recentralization and for expression within the self, rather than as "the weapon" of self-expression against an outside threat (such as a government, censorship, etc). In Chapter V we will study this apparent centralization as rooted in the Sufi Way, focusing on two works, *Os Olhos de Isa* (1980) and *À Mesa do Amor* (1994). By doing so we will find an answer not only to the question posed above but also to the missing decade of the time-line presented here, namely, the development of Pessoa's poetry in the 1990s.

Before studying Pessoa's work further, however, I will define Sufi mysticism and its development in the Iberian Peninsula in Chapter III, then return to my analysis of Clara Janés' work in Chapter IV. Specifically, I will study the manifestation and subsequent manipulation of the Sufi mystical process in four of her poetic works, *Vivir* (1983), *Creciente Fértil* (1989), *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* (1996) and *Arcángel de sombra* (1999).

Chapter III: Mysticism in the Iberian Peninsula – The Influence of Ibn ‘Arabi and the Sufi Way

In this chapter, I propose a short review of the three mystical currents, Christian, Moslem and Jewish, in the Iberian Peninsula. I also propose a definition of Sufism in its Arab, Iberian and even Sanjuanian contexts (as studied in the work of Luce López-Baralt). In the two chapters that follow, we will explore Clara Janés’ and Joaquim Pessoa’s inclusion of this unique brand of Sufi mysticism in their poetry.

The peculiar nature of Spanish Mysticism finds its roots in the heterogeneous nature of Medieval Spanish society. Cilveti states in the introduction to his anthology, *La Literatura mística española*, that three Spanish Mysticisms, Christian, Jewish and Moslem, coexisted in the peninsula during the Reconquista Period (9). Thus we enter into a tripartite culture of differing mystical traditions influencing, then assimilating into, one-another. Despite such a mixture of traditions in the peninsula, the most basic ideals of all three types of Mysticism remain the same – “la experiencia de lo divino” (Cilveti 11) or the possibility of a more personal and intimate union with God.

The most influential of the three mystical currents was that of the Sufi, which scholars have associated more closely with Islam than with any other major religion, as stated in Cilveti. The word “Sufi” means “wool,” referring to the material out of which they made their clothing and highlighting their distinctive position in their society as people more familiar with God” (Abhayananda 228). Sufism, as Dr. S. H. Nadeem states, was a kind of philosophical rebellion against the wealthy and favored classes in Muslim society, appealing to the common people due to its offer of a more direct

communication with God. Thus, many Sufi followers originally came from poorer social classes (Nadeem xxiv). As Islam spread across the Middle East, North Africa and into the Iberian Peninsula, the Sufi followed and eventually divided into four major regions. These are: the “Western” branch, made up of Modern Spain, Portugal and Morocco, the “Egypto-Arabic,” encompassing the remainder of North Africa, the “Persian” branch of modern-day Iran, and the Sindhi, or Western Indian School (Marquette 161). Although each region had its different attitudes and interpretations of Sufi practices, they all shared the notion that the path to God is through *love*, rather than pain and suffering (as we will see in San Juan and Santa Teresa). The Sufi originally believed that by the soul’s dissolution, or the surrendering of the ego (Mujica Pinilla 86), and silencing into God, one finds illumination and, as Abhayananda states, the “supreme clarity” the divine offers (Abhayananda 228-229).

Traditionally, the Sufi mystic must pass through *seven* stages before reaching divine illumination. These stages are described in Koovackal (81) and summarized in the following paragraph.

The first stage, called “Ubudiyat,” is the stage of service. The mystic must obey the law and serve God. The second stage, “Ishq,” is the stage of love. The divine influence (who we will see represented in the poetic subject and / or his or her lover in Clara Janés and in Joaquim Pessoa) drives the soul towards the love of God. The third stage, “Zuhd,” is known as “renunciation.” Under the influence of divine love all worldly desires leave the heart. The fourth stage, “Ma’rifat,” is the moment of divine knowledge. The mystic contemplates the nature, attributes and works of God. The fifth

stage, “Wajd,” is the stage of divine ecstasy. As Koovackal explains, mental excitement is produced through contemplation of the only true Reality. This division between “reality” and the mundane will be studied further in our summary of Ibn ‘Arabi’s work and the changes he made to the Sufi process of ascendance. The sixth stage, “Haqiqat” (or “Haqiqat” in Arabic), is that of illumination. The heart is now illuminated with God’s Reality. At the seventh and final stage, “Wasl,” the Sufi mystic achieves his union with God. He now sees God, as it were, face to face. This stage, in Sufi mystical thought, should be permanent.

With respect to Iberian Sufi mysticism, as students of Peninsular literature and thought we have the good fortune to have pertaining to us one of the great Peninsular sufi voices, that of the poet and philosopher Muhammed Ali Muhammed Ibn al ‘Arabi al-Ta’I al Hatimi, better known as Ibn ‘Arabi (1165-1240).

Ibn ‘Arabi was born in Murcia on August 7th, 1165. He studied the Koran in the schools of Lisbon, Seville and Córdoba. In the latter city he met Averroes and became familiar with Sufi doctrine (Cilveti 103). He then traveled the Islamic world and worked as a scholar and political functionary during the remainder of his life, dying in 1240 in Damascus (Austin 45).

Interestingly, a direct line of influence may be made between the Persian school, namely, that of the mystical philosopher Suhrawardi, and the evolution of the “school of Almería,” to which Ibn ‘Arabi pertained, in the Iberian Peninsula (Mujica Pinilla 124). The origin of Sufi mystical thought in Persia is said to come from the work of another Persian philosopher, Avicena, who posited, among many other ideas, that mystical

illumination is possible only through the intervention of an “Active Intelligence.” This intelligence exists in, and proceeds from, the mind of an unspecified angel whose “holy intellect” emancipates the human mind from its earthly limitations (Martínez Lorca 162-3). Although it is debated whether or not he was a mystical philosopher or simply a religious one (Baldick 61-2), I have mentioned him here as a precursor to what would then become the mystical poetry of the Spanish poet and philosopher Ibn ‘Arabi. One of Avicena’s disciples, the philosopher known as Al-Hallaj, expanded on the idea by stating that through love (in a very general, non-sexual sense) this angelic intelligence may be accessed (184-5). Later on in this chapter I will show how this idea develops into that of the divine feminine in the Ibn ‘Arabi’s work. In any case, the philosopher Suhrawardi, a contemporary of, and apparent influence on, Ibn ‘Arabi, added two important aspects to Sufi mystical thought. First, he defined the mundane world as that of the shadows, differentiating it from the world of the light, or the divine (Mujica Pinilla 125). Second, he stated that the Sufi mystic must recognize the important combination of Platonic and Zoroastrian philosophy in the notions inherent to Sufi teachings (Martínez Lorca 190) (and, thus, the presence of the angelic combined with the dual existence of the world of the shadows with that of the light). The dualities present in this new evolution of Sufi thought will take precedence in Ibn ‘Arabi’s poetic and philosophical notions of simultaneous binary opposition and Active Imagination, or the Alam-al-Mithal.

In his best known work, the *Taryuman al-Aswaq* (in English, *The Interpreter of Ardent Desires*), Ibn ‘Arabi posited a binary division of the universe into *Haqq* (Arabic, “truth”), “the unmanifest Absolute,” or divine world; and *Khalq* (Arabic, “public, of the

people”), “the manifested world of phenomena,” or the world of the physical (Abhayanaanda 254). This division clearly shows the influence of Suhrawardi’s dual division of the universe between the world of the light and that of the shadow. However, we must be careful not to assume a complete scission between these two concepts. In the process of Sufi enlightenment, the mystic must remember that these two halves of the universe make up the essence of God, as real as God’s own being (Marquette 165). According to Ibn ‘Arabi, despite all things being some manifestation of God, we must distinguish between *Haqq* [the truth, “the real, one of God’s names (Baldick 83)”] and *Khalq* [that which is not as much the truth, “created things (83)”]. God, thus, becomes manifest to the mystic through the revelation of its true name, or *Haqq* (84), which happens once the mystic has passed into “Haqiqat,” the sixth stage of enlightenment. Austin explains that Ibn ‘Arabi also includes a host of Hellenistic allusions in his writing, relating thus his Islamic centralizing faith in God with a Neo-Platonic binary opposition between the darkened cave and the light of the outside (48). Thus, Ibn ‘Arabi’s inclusion of Neo-Platonism, along with his application of Islamic theology in his understanding of God’s different manifestations, helped to distinguish Ibn ‘Arabi as a vital force of change in the development of Medieval Sufi mysticism.

Ibn ‘Arabi also developed another new aspect of Sufi Mysticism which links his work to that of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. He believed that by contemplating the beauty of the feminine, which is by nature fecund (and thus creative), the mystic may comprehend “the highest manifestation of God, namely creative divinity” (Falconar 60). According to Ibn ‘Arabi, Rumi and other mystical Sufi poets (60), femininity links

directly to the divine ontological form, namely, that which connects the mystical soul to God. The process of Ibn ‘Arabi’s way of enlightenment happens only with the union with God expressed as the union with the feminine through love.

In order to understand the above-mentioned process, it is necessary to explain further how the divine feminine serves to this end. In Ibn ‘Arabi’s work, the angel not only works to apply the angelic intellect on the mystic’s perception, as stated in Avicena, but also represents an “essential correlation” between the human physical form and divine spiritual form (Corbin 62). Thus, the angel acts as intermediary between *Khalq* and *Haqq*. The angelic intellect, thus, exists as a space in which the angel may guide the mystic to his union with God. This space, where the objects of the world are perceived as a dialog between their mundane and divine forms (152), is known as Active Imagination, or the “Intermediary World” of “Alam-al-Mithal” (Falcanar 61). As for the notion of the divine feminine, it stems from Ibn ‘Arabi’s idea that Adam was, as male, able only to comprehend himself as either active or passive, but not both at the same time. Eve was created, thus, as a balance between the active and passive, as a divine creator of life and as divinely created by God. In order that Adam may contemplate the universal balance he must unite with Eve through the contemplation of her divine beauty (Corbin 162-4). In more general terms, this contemplation activates the mystic’s Active Imagination, placing him in Alam-al-Mithal and, thus, a step closer to illumination.

In the *Taryuman*, for example, the loved woman is an image of the physical being which has been transfigured and placed in the “Intermediate world” (Falcanar 61) through Active Imagination. Once there, the mystic may learn the secret knowledge of

the divine (*Taryuman*, 45). In several instances in the poem, the focus on the physical characteristics of the female face signifies, in reality, an attempt on the mystic's part to view the face of God (56-7):

Como también (decimos) que vestidos tienen las ramas
virtudes los jardines, y que de los labios sonrientes surge el rayo.

(XII, 7)

El rubor de la vergüenza en sus mejillas se asemeja a la claridad del día,
que hacia el crepúsculo se encamina.

(XV, 3)

I cite here two separate occurrences, although many others exist in the work. Interestingly, in Janés' *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* the garden (Sp. "jardín"), is a Sufi symbol of the space in which the lovers unite. The focus on the lover's lips, from which the ray of light emerges, is a clear expression of the Sufi symbol of the lips as the divine word (i.e., the divine knowledge) (Nurbakhsh, I, 114) from which love, and thus divine illumination, surges forth (IV, 14-15).

Thus, we find the divinity of the feminine utilized poetically as a stepping stone in the mystic's journey between *Khalq* and *Haqq* by way of *Alam-al-Mithal* in the search for illumination through divine knowledge. In the following chapters I will introduce the notion of "qalb," or the divine heart, and its presence in the mystical manifestations observed in both Clara Janés' and Joaquim Pessoa's works.

The Jewish mystical tendencies in the peninsula took a slightly different route. Their mystical process happens through an analysis of the Kabbala, or oral law passed down from God and Moses. This oral law lacks reference to the feminine, and is more deductive and logical than it is intimate in nature (Cilveti 39). We may see Kabbala, thus, as “more interested in the esoteric nature of creation” (Cooper 4). Perhaps because of the lack of feminine representation in Jewish mysticism, or maybe due to the almost non-intimate nature of it, kabbalist thought does not seem to enter into either Janés’ or Pessoa’s poetry. Thus, although its presence represented an important part of Medieval Peninsular life, for the purpose of this study it will remain relatively untreated.

Although Christian Mysticism really begins near the end of the Western Empire with the writings of St. Augustine on Dionysius (Marquette 147), it reflects many aspects of Sufi mystical ascendance and Ibn ‘Arabi’s Neo-Platonic binary opposition of *Haqq* and *Khalq*.

The basic idea behind Christian Mysticism is that by detaching oneself from the physical world through prayer, one may become pure enough to ascend to God. The mystic in his purest form is thus devoid of any ability to perceive anything but the divinity of God’s true self (Marquette 146-147). This works only because, according to St. Augustine, the mind is not capable of conceiving, much less understanding, the divinity of God, so it must be subjugated to the power of faith and prayer (146). This system was Christianity’s primary mystical process until the 16th Century C.E.

The most significant revision of Christian mystical thought happens in Spain of 16th Century with the writings of San Juan de la Cruz. He was born in Fontiveros, near

Ávila, in 1542, and as a child and adolescent “suffered much privation (Abhayananda 312),” He later joined the Carmelites Order of Santa Ana, where he met Mother Teresa de Jesús, also known as Santa Teresa (313).

San Juan’s importance to us, in essence, comes from the idea that the meticulous nature of his re-writing of ascetic doctrine may serve as mystical preparation in and of itself (Cilveti 50). In his mystical writings, San Juan posited that a union with God implies a separation of the independent, individual self. Thus, the knowledge, pleasure, and enjoyment of God are obtained in the interior world of the mystic, not from the exterior. “The knowledge, pleasure and enjoyment of the phenomenal world is not included in it” (Abhayananda 319).

At the heart of San Juan’s Mysticism, also, is the same binary opposition found three-hundred years earlier in Ibn ‘Arabi’s union of *Haqq* and *Khalq*. In San Juan’s mysticism, the ego cannot exist – God is the only true being. Only through his own negation can the mystic conceive of God’s greatness (Fernández Leborans 156). This idea seems very Augustinian at first. However, the negated self is actually a by-product of the process of division between the world we perceive and God, a series of binary oppositions which make up the essence of the universe (and, thus, God’s own essence). By simply ignoring one, we achieve acknowledgment and mystical unity with the other (147). Thus, the semiotic dichotomies, or binary oppositions, by which the universe exists, rest on the fact that you can only be looking at one at a time. In his famous work, “Cántico,” for example, we see the opposition of light and dark work not in conjunction, but in absolute opposition to one-another. As the poetic voice reaches closer to its state

of ecstasy, it is unable to conceive of anything but the darkness in which physical perception becomes impossible and enlightenment through God is reached. The light of the physical world, thus, is excluded from God's essence, eventually being lost altogether.

Both Janés' and Pessoa's poetries, as we will see in their treatment of life and death in Janés' *Vivir* and Pessoa's *Os Olhos de Isa*, clearly show a trend toward the simultaneous presence of both elements of each stated pair, rather than dealing with them separately. Particularly in Janés' *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* and *Arcángel de sombra*, this tendency will become even plainer, placing her squarely within the mystical practices of the Sufi, rather than within those of San Juan.

Fernández Leborans also mentions that, along with this almost neo-Platonic vision of mystical enlightenment, the element of sacrifice remains omnipresent in San Juan's work. In this conception of mystical ascendance the mystic not only removes himself from his ego and worldly nature, he must also suffer as Christ suffered, painfully sacrificing the flesh for the greatness of the soul (158).

I am not, however, the first to see the connections between the Sufi mystics and San Juan de la Cruz's unique mysticism. Luce López-Baralt, a professor of literature at the Universidad de Puerto Rico, has spent over 20 years publishing on the subject of Sufi influences on Christian Mystical writings, the contemporary novel and poetry. Although her work has become an extensive compendium of data on the topic, for the purpose of this study I will limit my presentation of López-Baralt's work to a short introductory explanation and to those few works most associated with the matter at hand.

The work which began López-Baralt's critical trajectory was her book titled *San Juan de la Cruz y el Islam: Estudio sobre las filiaciones semíticas de su literatura mística*, published in 1985 by the Universidad de Puerto Rico and the Colegio de México. In this impressively intensive and detailed study of San Juan's mystical poetry, López-Baralt explains that, in essence, San Juan and mystics such as Ibn 'Arabi coincide in their concept of language as ambiguously symbolic in nature. Each word contains the binary oppositions (representing both *Haqq* and *Khalq*) from which the world is made (11). Thus, the dualistic vision of the world in San Juan is really no more than the rewriting in Spanish of Ibn 'Arabi's work in Arabic (11). The more elusive aspects of San Juan's poetry can, through the thorough study of his symbolism and the qualifying nature of his mystical linguistic explorations, be narrowed to a general "arabization" (11) of his poetic language by way of his adoption of Sufi poets' ontological preoccupations.

López-Baralt's study also painstakingly explains every possible symbol and metaphor which we may trace back to the Sufi poets of Muslim Spain (including, and especially, Ibn 'Arabi, studied above). We may note, for example, that San Juan's "Cántico" displays some aspects also present in Ibn 'Arabi's *Taryuman*. In both San Juan's and Ibn 'Arabi's work, the metaphor of darkness as the pain of death coupled with the ecstasy of enlightenment, along with several other metaphors present in both works, points to a use of the metaphor as the gateway to a "heterogeneous multiplicity" of meanings. When these metaphors appear in San Juan's writing, based on an experience of an erotic nature, however, the idea of purification through the separation from the mundane becomes muddled and difficult to perceive. Furthermore, there is no clear

explanation of this apparent eroticism in Sanjuanian writing. When we compare the text to the *Taryuman*, however, we see a clear parallel between the two, in terms of the manifestation of the metaphor's semantic multiplicity, as well as the erotic symbolizing a link with the divine feminine (an idea present in San Juan's mystical experience, although without the simultaneous opposition found both in the *Taryuman* and in Janés' work). As Carlos Varona Narión makes clear in his introduction to Ibn 'Arabi's *Taryuman*, the presence of a symbol like the eyes of the feminine lover in both San Juan's and Ibn 'Arabi's poetries may help to illustrate the above-mentioned connection:

¡O cristalina fuente,
Si en estos tus semblantes plateados
Formases de repente
Los ojos deseados
Que tengo en mis entrañas dibujados!

(San Juan de la Cruz, *Cántico*, stanza XI)

Y cuando digo: ¡dirigidme una mirada!, me contestan: ¡se te negó por piedad!

(Ibn 'Arabi, *Taryuman*, poem XV)

Although the symbol of divine sight exists, as Narión states, in all religions, the similarity found in each poet's use of the "torment of love" is uncanny (78). There exists, however, the difference between remaining in the state of torment (a well-known aspect of San Juan's poetry) and evolving beyond it into the realm of Active Imagination (as López-Baralt has stated is found easily in Ibn 'Arabi's work). My previous citation from

poem XII of the *Taryuman* states that from the lips (or divine word) of the feminine comes illumination (the ray of light). Thus, by utilizing Active Imagination the mystic has already found illumination in the divine feminine, making the citation from poem XV a repetition of a cycle already resolved in a previous section of the work. In a general sense, this scission defines the philosophical distinction between the Christian mystical process (as studied by Englesen Marson and mentioned in the previous chapter) and the Sufi mystical process. This absence of the need for suffering in the mystical process also forms the basis of both Janés' and Pessoa's mystical work, as will be seen in the following chapters.

Utilizing this type of comparison we see that some of San Juan's greatest poetic achievements actually find their beginnings in the Sufi poetry of Islamic Spain, rather than in the work of other Christian Mystics. In López-Baralt's chapter entitled "Simbología mística 'secreta' musulmana en San Juan de la Cruz" we find an enumeration of mystical symbols and their explanations / counterparts in Sufi poetry. These include, but are not limited to: "la noche oscura del alma," representing death into the divine (229, 236); the "Llama del amor vivo y las lámparas de fuego," (229, 249) representing the spark of life; "El vino y la embriaguez mística" (231) an ancient Sufi symbol representing the sensory confusion of the mystic's enlightened ecstasy; "el pájaro solitario," (269) or the solitary spirit of the enlightened mystic, which in Pessoa's poetry will take on a particularly important significance; the list goes on. In my analysis of Clara Janés' and Joaquim Pessoa's work I will refer to these comparisons between San Juan and the Sufi Mystics, whom Janés utilizes as a source of mystical poetic inspiration,

and from whom Pessoa will take his mystical sources directly and indirectly to create an intertextual collage of Sufi symbolism and poetic illumination.

Chapter IV: The Presence and Influence of the Sufi Way in the Poetry of Clara Janés

As we have seen in the Chapter II, the heterogeneous nature of criticism on Clara Janés' work has led to the stereotyping of Janés as a mostly postmodern feminist poet, despite Janés' own refusal to take part in a feminist discourse (Keefe Ugalde, *Conversaciones*, 46). Apart from the introduction of such thought in the work of Natalie Francis, Janés' expression of a mystical Sufi discourse has, until the last decade, gone largely unnoticed. Thus, in this chapter I propose a study of Sufi Mysticism's presence in, and influence on, the poetry of Clara Janés.

As we delve into the mystical union of Clara Janés' poetic voice(s) with his/her lover, we see that God is not present in her work. This happens because, as we have seen, the traditional idea of God may be tied into a masculine, hegemonic conception of the mystical process. I propose that, in place of God, Janés utilizes the idea of sexual union as a universal experience tied directly to both the idea of mystical ascendance and penetration into the Kristevan chora. Mystical ascension will then occur through the union of the lovers, not through the union of the mystical with God, making sexual union a divine, not just universal, process. Although present in the work of San Juan de la Cruz (*Cántico* serves as a good example), the idea of sexual union as divine can really be traced to the Sufi poem *Taryuman al-Aswaq*, by the Iberian mystic Ibn 'Arabi, in which the ideas of the divine feminine and of the Intermediate Space, or "Alam-al-Mithal," are first expressed. Thus, as the explicit manifestation of the Sufi Way in Clara Janés' later works becomes clear, we see the type of mystical experience described by Koovackal,

combined with the Keefe Ugalde's and Engelsen Marson's universal sexual union, allowing a mystical and centralizing, yet still deconstructive and anti-hegemonic, poetic experience.

Based on the discussion in Chapter II of some sexual aspects of Clara's poetry and the description of Iberian mystical currents and López-Baralt's work in Chapter III, we also see that the theme of christological sacrifice fits neither with the thematics, characterizations of the poetic subject, nor geographical placement of such a subject. We should also note that the notion of the feminine as divine, which Engelsen Marson and Newton use to justify the argument that Janés' work draws from Christian mysticism, finds its roots not in Christian but in Iberian Sufi mystical practices as described in Ibn 'Arabi's work. It seems logical, then, that a poet such as Clara Janés, whose poetic subject holds authority over the phallic and does not suffer physically from the experience, would steer away from the Christian mystical practices to find a deeper connection with a more ancient Iberian tradition. We may now begin to understand that it is the Sufi Way, and not the previously cited Christian mystical process, which Janés' poetic subject chooses as its preferred method of attaining spiritual illumination. Beginning with *Vivir*, prancing through the estuaries of *Creciente Fértil*, culminating in *Diván* and continuing in *Arcángel de sombra*, we will observe that, despite her education and obvious interest in San Juan's Christian Mysticism, the greatest influence on Janés' more recent poetry is truly a Sufi one.

Before beginning our exploration of the Sufi Way in Janés' poetry it will be helpful to recall the basic tenets of Sufi mysticism, as stated in Chapter III. There are

seven stages through which the Sufi mystic must pass in order to attain enlightenment, illumination and ascension. The first stage, called “Ubudiyat,” is the stage of service. The mystic must obey the law and serve God. The second stage, “Ishq,” is the stage of love. The divine influence (who we will see represented in the poetic voice’s lover in Clara Janés, and in Joaquim Pessoa later on) drives the soul towards the love of God. The third stage, “Zuhd,” is known as “renunciation.” Under the influence of divine love all worldly desires leave the heart. The fourth stage, “Ma’rifat,” is the moment of divine knowledge. The mystic contemplates the nature, attributes and works of God. The fifth stage, “Wajd,” is the stage of divine ecstasy. The sixth stage, “Haqigat” (or “Haqiqat” in Arabic), is that of illumination. The heart is now illuminated with God’s Reality. At the seventh and final stage, “Wasl,” the Sufi mystic achieves his union with God.

We will now begin our exploration and analysis of the method by which Clara Janés utilizes some of the thematic and symbolic aspects of Sufi mysticism to elucidate and enrich her own personal and spiritual. We begin, thus, with the first work in which the Sufi influence is felt, that is, *Vivir*.

Published in 1983, *Vivir* seems a prime example of the application of the choric and anti-hegemonic themes that Keefe Ugalde describes, as seen in Chapter II. The collection is divided into eight sections (whose significance we will discuss shortly) with the poetic prologue titled “Teoría,” discussed briefly in Chapter II:

Contra dolor amor se intensifica,
dota de tacto al pensamiento en el objeto,
toma cuerpo en las voces que el mármol no retiene,

en las epifanías de gélida materia;
arremete en turbiones contra sombra,
y desata del tiempo aquí mutante
la pura transparencia.

(Janés, *Vivir*, 9)

The poem is composed of eight verses, each of differing meter, from which we may conclude that the poem is free-verse. This contrasts with the poetry from the final section, “Planto,” with its variations on two, three and four-syllable assonant rhyme-schemes. However, the lack of a notable rhyme-scheme does not seem to indicate any semantic difference from the poems in subsequent sections. In fact, this freedom from rhyme may symbolize a freedom from the limited expression which rhyme-schemes impose. This could imply that “Teoría” does not describe a process which is to happen but one that already has and that the poetic subject will now reflect upon in its freed state. So, although the title of the poem gives us the idea that *Vivir* describes the mystical experience upon which the poetic subject is about to embark, it may really be introducing us to the process through which it has already passed, serving then as a guide to the reader.

The poem then begins by contrasting the notions of “dolor” and “amor,” which are interlocked in binary opposition, which may then be interpreted dually. We may see it as a mystical union of love and pain leading toward spiritual enlightenment (as Engelsen Marson suggests from her study on San Juan and Santa Teresa’s ideas of love and pain as harmonious in their constant state of conflict). Or, we may interpret the

image of “pain” as symbolizing the death of the mystic’s body in *Khalq*, in contrast with the presence of, and ascension into, the pure *Haqq* later in the poem. This second interpretation would seem to corroborate with Ibn ‘Arabi’s recognition of a fusion of the duality between life and death as a deciding factor in the mystical subject’s ascension. To explain this second interpretation we may also invoke Janés’ later poetry, such as in *Arcángel de sombra*, where death is marked by the explosion of sensation, similar to the experience of intense pain, from all parts of the body. This links the image of pain, thus, with the act of death seen in the mystical process of the poetic subject. Thus, I will opt for the term “pain” to refer to death, meaning that the poem’s focus will fall mostly into the expression of a Sufi mystical experience (using Ibn ‘Arabi’s interpretation) rather than a Christian mystical experience.

We see that the idea of love functions as a tool for internalizing the exterior world (*Khalq*), as it “dota de tacto al pensamiento en el objeto...” (*Vivir*, 9). This internalization becomes manifest through the process whereby the *external world* becomes *poetic word* and thus free from the decaying effects of time [“da vuelo al pie que discurre entre las yerbas, / y desata del tiempo aquí mutante / la pura transparencia (9)”]. Here we may observe the passing from *Khalq* to *Haqq*, in which the mystic sees the unity of the mundane and the divine as the essence of God. This is the stage known as “Ma’rifat,” or contemplation of *Haqq*. Throughout the process of illumination and ascension the Sufi mystic never loses sight of *Khalq*, requiring its continued presence so that *Haqq* may be just that – the truth relative to that which is not so true. We thus discover that this introductory poem is both an expression of the poetic subject’s desire

for mystical transcendence as well as an indicator of its conception of the mystical process as a process of the simultaneous existence, then fusion, of binary oppositions. As we have seen, this distinguishes Janés' poetic subject from that of San Juan in his gradual loss of the physical world, and thus lack of fusion of juxtaposed dualisms, during ascension.

Our subsequent analysis of key poems in each section of the collection will aid in elucidating further the development of mystical themes. For reasons of clarity, I will attempt to avoid discussion of other themes (such as the discovery of the chora and development of any anti-phallic sentiments) unless absolutely necessary for comprehension of the poetic subject's mystical experience.

The poetry of the first section of *Vivir*, "Iris," focuses on the topic of love, but from the standpoint of a *human* spirit in love rather than that of a man or woman in particular. For example, in the poem "Iris" we observe that the duality of the love act becomes gender-less:

Configura tu gesto el entregado lirio
y en la sabiduría de su ser,
—Salomón de los campos, garganta de poeta—
resume el ave, el fuego y el rocío;
y aunque cerrados párpados custodia,
emite en su desnudo ese clamor intacto
que la raíz eleva,
la esencia restituye en hermosura.

(15)

We may note the presence of several important Sufi metaphors in the fourth verse. “El ave” represents the human mystic’s spirit (Nurbakhsh, IV, 146). “El fuego,” taken in direct relationship to the closed eyes that see in the fifth verse, may have several meanings, all alluding to the seer’s ability to reveal to herself the divine *Haqq* not visible in *Khalq* (14-18). “El rocío,” although not clearly alluded to in Sufi poetry, could exist as in metonymy with the idea of morning, or the moment where the “Metaphysical time” of *Haqq* begins (71). Thus, the poem’s symbolism points toward an awakening of the poetic subject’s sensitivity to the binary oppositions which make up the poetic universe.

In the next section, “Chillida,” we see yet another step in the mystical union with the lover, that is, the internalization of the love received by the poetic subject.⁴ The first poem of the section, “Observación,” for example, does not follow any anti-hegemonic scheme, nor does it elucidate any further development of the anti-phallic notions seen in Janés’s previous work:

En mutación inmóvil
para tornarse aliento
cobra vida lo inerte
y desvela el enigma.

(*Vivir*, 19)

⁴ The term “Chillida” may also refer to the Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida, who characterizes his work as the meeting place of a both universally open and the “luz negra” of the Basque soul (Chillida, www.Eduardo-Chillida.com.)

Here, inert matter mutates into breath, that is, the external object becomes not a living object, but life itself. In the fourth and fifth steps of the Sufi Way, “Ma’rifat” and “Wajd,” the mystic contemplates nature and God’s works, only then being able to perceive God’s reality. The transformation of the inert does not have to be a literal one. Rather, the poetic subject of this poem contemplates the true nature of any object, in this case an inert one in *Khalq*, as a part of the fluidity of all existence in its true form, or *Haqq*. Thus, we must interpret the poem as an expression of a part of the poetic subject’s mystical process or it simply does not make sense.

As we see from Engelsen Marson’s work (cited in Chapter II), in *Vivir*, the experience of the de-naturalization of the physical lover in “Iris,” combined with the transcendental nature of the notions expressed in “Teoría,” then in “Chillida,” form the moment of the poetic subject’s mystical experience. From the poem “Observación” we observe the contemplation of the material as a part of the sublime. In the poem following “Observación,” titled “Lurra IV,” we see the sublime spirit ascends out of its human seat toward *Haqq*, the stage known as “Haqiqat”:

De tierra finalmente
materia primigenia
por la que el hombre encarna
en torno a su columna
su ser pronto escindido
por la medida grieta
disgregación de origen

ruptura-acoplamiento
entre el alma y su asiento.

(19)

In this poem we read a description of death, or the “breaking ... between the soul and its seat.” The term “acoplamiento” joined with “breaking,” however, defies the nihilist notion of death as a simple loss of the body, or disappearance of the self. Here, the rupture with the body coincides with a joining, or fitting together, of the soul and body. Iberian Christian Mysticism does not allow for such a simultaneous experiencing of such a binary opposition. By applying the Sufi terms *Khalq* (for the body) and *Haqq* (for the spirit, a supposedly truer form of life than the flesh) we find our answer to the problem of this sort of simultaneity which previous criticism has, up to now, not resolved.

After “Chillida,” we find that the section titled “Convite” serves just that purpose: it is the invitation to share in the poetic subject’s mystical experience (we will see this same invitation in our analysis of the third section of *Arcángel de sombra*):

I

El pan contra la muerte se entregaba,
alimento suave junto al labio
que en humor ya se torna;
y al pasar a las venas
el hielo desaloja tenazmente,

cediendo a la pupila
fulgor desde lo hondo.

II

Cálido mece el vino el dolor,
arranca de los párpados tersura
y a la voz presta suavidad de beso;
en el pecho reúne
las cosechas sangrantes del perfume,
y el llanto en un arroyo de tibieza;
apretura del éxtasis
que la esencia dispersa por el humo.

III

La carne siempre virgen del cordero en ofrenda ...
Por la yerba en sopor cede la inteligencia
instante a la frescura.
Cordero entre las manos con sus huesos y aliños,
hasta acercarse al banquete de amor
donde se entrega el ser

en sacrificio humano.

He sido don

y ahora son mis huesos

como enjambres de moscas,

ineptos excepto para el fuego.

IV

Blanco queso de cabra

miel y piñones

y los sabores puros cautivos

recuperados néctar y ambrosía,

y con las manos limpias,

signos de paraíso.

La voz del ángel en melado color

la garganta somete.

V

La menta y el espliego y el romero,

el hinojo, la salvia, la ajedrea,

el tomillo, la malva, el estragón,

la angélica estrellada y el poleo,
la ortiga y el llantén, la celidonia,
la maría luisa y la verbena,
la tila, el azahar y la artemisa,
la manzanilla, el brezo, la borraja,
la amapola, el helenio, el malvavisco
y también la cicuta.

VI

La manzana mordida
emite la promesa
y se pierde en el verde,
descolgada del árbol
y la mano y la boca que la amara;
ya no desea el cuerpo la caricia,
es negación de vida su abandono al espacio:
ávido continente de inútil desafío.

VII

Y aquel que bebe agua

a la lluvia se remite,
al rocío evaporado sobre el pétalo,
a la nieve de perfecta contextura,
al deseo de la nube en mar ardiente,
a la palabra siempre oculta de la fuente.

VIII

El banquete que os propongo es para el día de mi muerte
y responde al amor que yo siento y deseo:
pido que se me coma,
que mi ser en no ser no se mude
sino en puro alimento;
comunión caníbal suplico,
génesis en el otro.

(29-32)

The principal poem of the “Convite,” using the same title, introduces us to the ideas of love and “pain,” or death, as a unified, ecstatic state (existing as a simultaneous binary opposition, as necessary according to Ibn ‘Arabi). In the first two poems of “Convite” we see no impediment to death. Rather, we read an expression of the ecstasy of physical love transform, first into the death of the physical, then into divine union.

In Poem I the poetic subject states that life, or “bread,” is ingested and then incorporated into the body. In fact, it would seem that the poetic subject actually surrenders itself to a warmth that awakens the body to that which, in Poem II, becomes the heat of passion between the poetic subject and an unspecified lover. In any case, this renunciation to the process of love and to the lover is known in Sufi mysticism as “Zuhd.”

With Poem II the poetic subject passes from the absorption of life to the acceptance of a voice whose “softness of a kiss” allows us to perceive it as that of the poetic subject’s lover. The voice, present throughout this poem, will appear in both *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* and *Arcángel de sombra* as that of a lover / guide speaking from within the realm of the Angelic Intelligence, or Active Imagination, and through which the creation of “qalb” in the poetic subject (or, as in the case of *Diván*, in Majnun) is possible.

In Poem III the poetic subject’s body becomes a sacrificial lamb for love, signifying the death of the flesh which then serves to free the poetic subject’s soul to enter into “qalb” (in the stage known as “Haqiqat”), unite with the lover, then ascend to permanent, divine union in the stage of “Wasl.”

Poem IV emphasizes the presence of an angelic voice in the final verses, “La voz de ángel en melado color / la garganta somete” (30) which signify the voice of the lover who guides the subject along the mystical path, an element which Ibn ‘Arabi added to the Sufi Way when he described the feminine as divine (in *Taryuman*, for example). The poem itself supports the notion of a new understanding of nature by the poetic subject,

representative of the stage of “Ma’rifat,” or the contemplation of divine knowledge. The poetic subject ties in physical sensations and spiritual enlightenment (through the guidance of the angelic voice) with the purity of the color white and the sweet taste of ambrosia and nectar. Thus, the physical act of ingesting food and the spiritual act of purification through love are connected in simultaneous binary opposition.

In Poem V the poetic subject lists various herbs and plants, both flavorful, such as mint and thyme, and deadly, such as hemlock. Thus, the binary opposition of life and death is maintained while simultaneously reinforcing that which the poetic subject establishes in Poem IV.

Poem VI the poetic subject declares, as in Poem I, absolute renunciation, first to the contemplation of the world’s true nature, symbolized by the bitten apple. Of course, this apple reminds us of the Biblical story of Adam and Eve’s fall from the Garden of Eden. However, it is necessary to see that the apple, who had accepted the lover’s caress, may actually represent the sacrificed body of the poetic subject. The poetic subject has negated physical being in order to open itself up to the infinity of space, or ascension into the divine union that love provides.

Poem VII shows that the poetic subject has not only “drank the water” of the divine knowledge, but has also become part of it. The poetic subject then may become liquid, as the rain, gaseous, as the evaporated dew, or take an intermediary form, such as the droplets of the raincloud. The final verse is the most revealing of the poem, however, where the poetic subject states that, along with becoming free of the body, it also becomes the secret knowledge which in human form it sought to possess. This “word,”

the transcendent, divine knowledge, allows the spirit to unite permanently with the lover in “Wasl.” It is a good idea to remember this detail of the Sufi process as applied to a postmodern context in Joaquim Pessoa’s *Os Olhos de Isa* from the following chapter. In any case, this transformation, from a solid body that ingests knowledge to a part of the fluid (and thus free) world of *Haqq*, or the truth, happens as the spirit unites with the lover in “qalb” during the stage of revelation, or “Haqiqat.”

Once this revelation of the divine, or the “Haqiqat” occurs (as in “Chillida”), the poetic subject may die into the love / lover to which s/he has become dedicated, such as in Poem VIII of “convite,” repeated here:

VIII

El banquete que os propongo es para el día de mi muerte
y responde al amor que yo siento y deseo:
pido que se me coma,
que mi ser en no ser no se mude
sino en puro alimento;
comunión caníbal suplico,
génesis en el otro.

(32)

The idea that the devouring, or taking in, of the body signifies a rebirth in the lover will return in our analysis of *Diván y el ópalo de fuego*. We see clearly now that

the death into the lover and re-birth which follows finds its roots not the Christian mysticism of San Juan de la Cruz and Santa Teresa, but in the mystical path of the Sufi.

As *Vivir* continues into its fourth section, “Presencia,” we see the poetic subject observing elements of the world from the perspective of the mystic who has achieved “Ma’rifat,” or contemplation of the divine. The section includes poems such as “Gato”:

No igualo yo en certeza
a la presencia que siempre me acompaña;
es el salto impecable, la medida;
es desnuda y continua elegancia,
es el signo preciso, no la duda,
es grácil coacción, gesto imperioso.

(36)

The cat, a living element of *Khalq*, reflects the dichotomous, yet simultaneously complete, nature of the universe. Its “imperious manner” and “elegance” give the poetic subject a view into the grace and elegance of *Haqq*, which she is on her way to understanding.

The poem “Casillas” (37) defines the experience of love as the *solidarity* of the two lovers while death approaches:

El manso regresar de los rebaños
en el azul atardecer ...
Una a una las cabras
van llenando de motas movedizas las laderas,

dando vida al camino
que avanza hacia la noche.
Es sabio en su gesto el animal
y conocedor de identidad de acción y tiempo.
Jamás se empeña en ir contra su ser
ni exige de sí mismo el acto heroico.
Con precisión cumple su arco
sumiso a las potencias,
y cuando ya las tinieblas se anudan,
cruza sin vacilar las puertas del corral.
Nosotros, sin embargo, a la hora del sueño,
salimos casi a tientas
y nos perdemos bajo los castaños bañados por la luna.

(37)

In several poems analyzed here we have seen instances of an erotic encounter turned sublime through the mutation of physical ecstasy into spiritual and, thus, mystical ecstasy. In fact, in this poem in particular the moonlight encounter between lovers holds an interesting Sufi symbol. The shadow which extends over the lovers in the final five verses actually comes from Ibn ‘Arabi’s poetry. According to Sufi poetic practice, the shadow which reaches beyond a human figure points toward that person as “the Perfect Man” (Narbakhsh, IV, 24), or he who is closest to God. Thus, the approximation of the darkness, or death, to the lovers is a desired one, as it allows them their sought-after

union with the divine. It would seem, then, that in the Sufi stage of love, or “Ishq,” Janés’ poetic voice has replaced the love of God with that of a lover present in *Khalq*.

Also, in “Casillas” the love encounter happens when the lovers are surrounded by animals as well as other elements of nature. As we have seen from “Gato,” the presence of animals signals the closeness of the poetic subject to living representations of the dual existence of *Khalq* and *Haqq* in the world, seen only by those who have passed to the stage of “Ma’rifat.” Thus, the divine sexual union that has become necessary for enlightenment becomes intensified in “Casillas” through the mystical significance of natural elements as seen in “Gato.” However, one other interesting aspect of the poem, that of directionality, seems to contradict this idea. As the “manso animal” returns to the corral, its human counterparts move in the opposite direction, away from the safety and pre-established order that the corral represents. Due to this distancing from an ordered society, the poetic subject may now indulge in a more mystical undertaking. The notion of isolation as a tool for mystical illumination, nascent in Janés’ poetry at the time of *Vivir*, becomes vital for Majnun’s mystical process in *Diván y el ópalo de fuego*. It is necessary, nonetheless, to make sense of this seemingly self-contradictory interpretation, that of the simultaneous presence and absence of the animals in the mystical process. To explain this phenomenon, I see it particularly important to emphasize that, while the animals go back to the corral, the chestnut trees remain as a point of contemplation for the poetic subject and the lover. The trees seem to cast the very shadow that points out the lovers’ proximity to the divine. Also, the symbol of the tree in Sufi tradition represents the perfect human being (Nurbakhsh, IV, 42) whose shadow symbolizes his

existence in *Khalq* (21). Thus, the lovers' contemplation of the trees and their shadows contains not only clues to lovers' own divine state, it also serves to highlight that the lovers are able to contemplate the notion of *Haqq* and *Khalq* as expressed through a particularly Sufi symbolism, or the stage of "Ma'rifat." Also, the image of the tree also appears in the final verses of *Arcángel de sombra* with particular importance to the notion of ascendance, as will be made clear at the end of this chapter. That the animals hide in the corral takes on its own meaning, in that the animals do not question their reality, but accept that safety in the order that the corral provides is more important than the knowledge of the truth of their dual existence in both *Haqq* and *Khalq*, as well as their natural tendency toward the former (which the poem "Gato" makes clear).

The following section of *Vivir*, "Lindarajas," contains some interesting natural as well as mystical references. In the poem "Castilla," for example, we see the poetic subject's tears appear as a needed gift to heal the parched land's thirst and wounds:

Castilla parcheada de abrojos,
¡cuánta sed te atormenta!
En mis ojos se forman dos lagos incesantes
para calmar tus resacas heridas,
mi amante mano te siembra de esmeraldas.

(45)

The healing ability of the poetic subject in this poem could serve as a reference to the divinity of one who has reached illumination and desires to aid others in reaching that goal, just as the voice of the "angel," or lover, helped the poetic subject on its journey.

Although not as explicit in *Vivir*, the angelic voice which guides Janés' poetic subject to illumination, then ascension, will be easier to observe in my analysis of *Arcángel de sombra*.

In the poem "Corto Circuito" from the section titled "Burning Bright" the poetic subject describes its ontological state as a living expression of *Haqq*'s enlightenment:

¿Qué es ser poeta?

Tal vez emitir como el viento la voz
o como la rosa el perfume indetenible.

Tal vez detectar infinitas palabras
en el rumor marino

o vivir en el pulso del silencio.

Tal vez conocer íntimamente el fulgor
y así quedarse a oscuras, inmutable,
recibiendo en tinieblas a desconcertados visitantes
cuando se va la luz,

ya que los ojos ven de todos modos
y el buen aeda no necesita para el verbo
ni un cabo de vela.

Dícese de Homero ...

(53)

The poetic subject here questions what is to be a poet. In this poem, to be a poet means seeing the poetic word borne out of all things in the universe, an idea expressed in

previous poems studied here. Also, the fact that the poetic word comes from sea, or the water which gives life to the world, alludes to Janés' intimate connection with the origin, or essence, of the universe. Being a poet also means "seeing in the dark," or seeing what normal eyes (those fixed on *Khalq*) cannot see (and what we call *Haqq*). The connection with the essence of the universe through the discovery of the poetic word coupled by the ability to see the true reality, or *Haqq* parallels the Sufi stage known as "Haqiqat," or the illumination of this true reality. As we will see, this illumination will be represented repeatedly as the realization of the sexual encounter with the lover, an innovation that Janés' poetic subjects will continue to develop throughout her poetry.

To summarize the above analysis, *Vivir* may be interpreted not only as a postmodern work (as seen in Chapter II) but as an expression of Clara Janés' mystical journey of enlightenment. This journey has not followed the course suggested by previous criticism, however, by way of the process outlined by the Iberian Christian mystics of "purgation," "purification" and "illumination." Rather, it follows the seven-staged process as described in Sufi mystical writings and as modified through the notion of the "divine feminine" in the philosophy of the Iberian Sufi mystic Ibn 'Arabi.

The process, however, is not complete in *Vivir*, as certain elements of Janés' poetry contradict the first stage, or "Ubudiyat," the obedience to God. Nowhere in *Vivir* do you feel a devotion to God, despite the elements of ascension previously discussed. The element of erotic ecstasy is another factor to consider. As we have seen, Ibn 'Arabi discusses the divine feminine insofar as it pertains to an expression of the divine power of God. In *Vivir*, the erotic seems to fulfill the stage of "Ishq," or divine love, without the

need for a deity to get involved. These two discrepancies, useful for the sake of the postmodern analysis of the deconstructed phallic hegemony, must also be accounted for in terms of Janés' mystical process. We turn, thus, to *Creciente Fértil*, where we find the ontological link between the physically erotic and the mystically sublime.

Creciente Fértil is a collection of poetry based loosely on a Pre-Islamic love story involving Inanna, a Hittite and Sumerian goddess. This goddess becomes the poetic subject whose physically erotic descriptions of her encounters with her lover seem almost merely a description of a superficial sex act, thus not allowing any sort of mystical or metaphoric symbolism. As Engelsen Marson has pointed out, however, this is not the case. She concludes that, through the lover's influence, rather than the simple deconstruction of the phallogentric, Janés unites with the divine, creating a greater constructive and literary space (255).

In the poem beginning with the verse "Soy la cúpula azul de la mezquita de Ahmet," (*Creciente Fértil*, 18) the well-established female poetic subject describes the anticipated sexual act with her lover:

Soy la cúpula azul de la mezquita de Ahmet,

doscientas ventanas sostienen mi luz.

Para que alcances a cubrirme

haré arder tu cuerpo de cedro

hasta que como incienso te esparzas

y te eleves, y colmes mi desmayo.

Ebrios del don sagrado,

mis labios susurrarán antiguos versos:

El vaho se apodera de la casa,

el humo oculta las ventanas;

y siguiendo el ritual dirán:

Lo que entra no vuelve a salir.

Y tu resina aromática y tu brasa

se quedarán en mí

para perpetuo trance de mis muros.

(18)

The theme of empowerment over the supposedly dominant male is obvious in the description of their union as that of a worshipper (he who is devoted to the lover, the stage known as “Ubudiyat”) who enters the temple from which he may never leave. Having set the parameters of control for the encounter, the poetic voice then uses the coming of winter as the symbolic back-drop for the next step in this erotic, mystical experience. An example of the next step is found in the following poem:

Las nieves arrastran ya el silencio monte abajo

y los pájaros huyen. Los reyes en plegaria

depositan vellones en los árboles verdes,

en tanto que enrojecen las hojas de la parra

y desnudo el castaño dibuja ya el quebranto.

Eres tú que, dormido, paralizas la vida.

Emerge ya del sueño, el vellocino hirsuto

de mi tronco te reclama.

(25)

We see an interesting color contrast in the second sentence of the poem. Here, the green of the living leaves finds itself overcome by the “vellones,” symbolizing snow by their silvery coloring, and begin to die. The reddening of the leaves signifies the death of the plants’ physical selves. The poetic subject then identifies the lover as the cause of this process. Finally, we see the renewal of life at the end as the “velloncino,” a seemingly linguistic evolution of the “vellones,” as that which warms the poetic subject while simultaneously ending the life of the physical self.

As noted above, although Engelsen Marson speaks of the woman’s blood as an element in her dominance over the masculine hegemonic discourse, I believe that here we see a different application of the symbol. Here, the reddening of the leaves symbolizes the death which must occur in order that the mystical experience may happen. We see the same requirement in *Vivir*, where the lovers in “Casillas” hopefully wait for death to take them during their own sexual encounter. We also know that, in the sixth verse of the poem, it is the poetic subject’s lover, in a sleep which represents a type of post-coitus physical stopping of the body, (i.e., death) who paralyzes life. The lover then re-emerges in the form of fleece, protecting the poetic subject as the process of mystical enlightenment removes the body from it. At the same time, we see in the final verse that the poetic subject “reclaims” the lover, making the act of union a mutual one where the lover protects the poetic subject while the poetic subject “takes in” the lover. Thus, they become a single, unique entity. This makes the physical act of love both a literally sexual

encounter, and chance for metaphysical pondering, mystical transformation and transfiguration.

Janés' use of the image of the lover in *Creciente Fértil* would lend to the idea of the female image as transfiguring, through erotic love, into a divine image, and thus, into divinity itself. I have also commented on Janés' manipulation, in both *Vivir* and *Creciente Fértil*, of the aspects of the Sufi process most associated with, if not defined by, the presence of a God toward whom all mystical seekers hope to travel. I posit, thus, a transformation in Janés' poetry of those parts of the seven-staged Sufi mystical process, as described by Koovackal at the beginning of this chapter, having to do with the search for God. These newly-defined stages, numbered by the original stage being replaced, are: 1) "Ubudiyat" – Devotion (although not obedience) to the lover; 2) "Ishq" – love for the lover; 3) "Zuhd" – renunciation; 4) "Ma'rifat" – the moment of divine knowledge; 5) "Wajd" – ecstasy (both physical and spiritual) through the lover; 6) "Haqiqat" – illumination of the truth through the experience of physical love; 7) "Wasl" – union with the lover. In this new mystical system, the lover, and not God, becomes the entity through and with which a mystical union is possible. Thus, Janés, utilizing changes made by Ibn 'Arabi, rewrites the Sufi mystical process again so that the physically erotic serves not as a metaphor for approximation to God (such as in Ibn 'Arabi's *Taryuman*) but as the single, divine act necessary for mystical illumination. In *Diván y el ópalo de fuego*, with the help of López-Baralt's analysis, the parameters of this erotic and spiritual union between the lovers will be further defined.

As we have stated, López-Baralt has worked for over 20 years on Sufi influences in San Juan de la Cruz and others. In 1996, López-Baralt wrote the introduction to Janés' collections of poems, *Diván y el ópalo de fuego*, or the poetic re-writing of the Berber myth of Leyla and Majnun [“la contrapartida islámica de la pareja occidental Romeo y Julieta” (López-Baralt, *Introducción*, 8)]. Here, López-Baralt addresses some of the same issues we have seen in *Vivir* and *Creciente Fértil*. First, we see the fundamental question of Iberian identity confronted in the introduction. López-Baralt mentions that other Spanish writers, namely García Lorca and Juan Goytisolo, have already made “literary incursions” into the common Moorish past of all Spaniards (8). She then asks, as did María Ángeles Durán, if we are talking about the Iberian Moors, and particularly Moorish women, as “them” or “us” (8). The question is important because Janés' poetry, insofar as it relates to Sufi Mysticism, hinges greatly on her ability to associate her empowered, erotic poetic subject with the peninsula's Sufi past. Culturally, this issue questions the perceived Christian origins of Iberian identity. In any case, we will study the idea here, then carry our analysis to a reasonable conclusion in our joint study of Pessoa and Janés' incorporation of Sufi mysticism as a method of better defining Iberian cultural identity in the conclusion of this dissertation.

Poetically, the choice of characters for her poetic reconstruction of the myth was not, according to López-Baralt, an empty or arbitrary one. Janés chose her characters, Leyla and Majnun, purposefully, to connect her poetic personages with those of Ibn 'Arabi and other Peninsular Sufi poets (8-9). Then, as we have observed in *Vivir* and *Creciente Fértil*, Janés does not simply copy or translate, rather, she re-creates. She

rewrites the myth, using her previously revised Sufi mystical process, to question the nature of her identity, as a woman and a poet, in the Peninsula (9). Her explorations of the mystical stages known as “Ma’rifat” (the moment of divine knowledge), “Wajd” (sublime ecstasy through the lover), “Haqiqat” (illumination of the truth through the experience of physical love) and “Wasl” (union with the lover) are realized through the recreation of this ancient story of lost love of which Ibn-‘Arabi’s *Taryuman al-Aswaq* sings and laments (Falconar 61-62).

The original story of *Diván* is one of two young lovers, Leyla and Kays. In summary, Leyla’s father does not allow Kays to court his daughter. Kays then becomes love-stricken, transforming into Majnun [Spanish, “Machnún”], or the “crazy one,” and wanders the desert writing poetry and holding his love for Leyla in his heart. Leyla, betrothed to another, escapes to the desert to find Majnun. When she does, however, she finds that Majnun no longer needs love from her in her physical form, as he already has her love contained within his heart. Leyla’s body then dies. Subsequently, Majnun also dies and joins with Leyla in “Wasl,” or divine union (*Diván*, 15-16).

López-Baralt, in fact, directly links Clara’s symbolism in *Diván* with that of Sufi symbolism as well as the thematic development of ‘Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman al-Aswaq*. [We should again note that the connection between the story of Leyla and Majnun had already been found in Ibn-‘Arabi’s writing by A.E.I. Falconar in his study, *Sufi Literature and the Journey to Immortality* (1991), as cited above]. According to López-Baralt’s analysis, the uniqueness of *Diván* is Janés’ incorporation of the notion of “qalb,” a symbol taken from Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman*, into the poetic text (13). The symbol of

“qalb,” or heart, is actually the Sufi symbol of “the rational soul,” or that which stands between the perfect, sublime world and the world of the physical, that of the body (Nurbakhsh, Vol. 9, 85). As we have previously discussed, Ibn ‘Arabi’s “body of the divine feminine” serves as “qalb” for the mystic seeking ascendance. From this standpoint we can understand why Majnun, in Janés’ *Diván*, chooses the heart, or “ópalo de fuego”, as his very solid base from which to express his amorous longing for Layla. This interior space (so integral to Janés’ poetry since *Vivir*), from which Majnun’s love for Leyla is borne, becomes the “proteic, iridescent space” from which love will mystically transform the lovers (López-Baralt 13).

The word “qalb” appears in ‘Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman al Aswaq*, signifying the part of the imperfect, physical body which transforms into a divine love “cuya belleza sin limites refleja sin cesar” (López-Baralt 15). Thus, “qalb” fulfills its mission as the mutable “middle-ground,” known as “Alam-al-Mithal,” or the Intermediate World, in Sufi mystical practice as defined by Ibn ‘Arabi (Falconar 61-2). This third space allows for the ascension and return of the illuminated, united mystics’ souls between the sublime perfection of the divine world, *Haqq*, and the imperfection of the corporeal world, or *Khalq*.

López-Baralt states that the names Layla and Majnun come from the words “leyl” meaning “night,” and “majnun” meaning “crazy one,” which the Persian poet Rumi uses widely in his poetry (18). It should not surprise us, then, to see Layla, whose name refers symbolically to death, “transmuted into an immaterial idea” (16) and then united in “qalb.” Thus, in *Diván* we see the symbolic process of Sufi ascension defined even

further, as not just an encounter with the lover that suddenly becomes mystical, but as requiring that “qalb” function as an intermediary space for the lovers’ souls to merge before ascension. So, we must re-define the stage of “Haqiqat” as not only the heart’s illumination, but as a union of the lovers, happening in “qalb” just before the permanent, divine union, or “Wasl.” “Haqiqat,” thus, takes on an even more profound meaning. It now signifies the preparation of the heart as “qalb,” or the intermediary space in which the final union of the lovers must occur in order that “Wasl,” or divine, permanent union may be achieved.

Although López-Baralt has already analyzed the plot of *Diván* in detail in her introduction (16-22), I believe that an analysis of key poems of the work may help elucidate those ideas explained above. The first poem, “Nota” (*Diván* 27), resembles the poem “Teoría” from *Vivir* in that it summarizes the process through which the poetic subjects of the work will ascend by way of their erotic experience together:

Columbré el ópalo de fuego
en el crepúsculo.
Tal nube luminosa, rebasando
la discreta veladura,
de irisaciones llenaba el lugar;
destellos eran de una historia
que el nombre de la noche cortejaba
y en leyenda mudó
la boca del poema.

As we have seen in López-Baralt's analysis, the "ópalo de fuego" is a Sufi metaphor for "qalb." It also provides a color contrast between the light of the fire and the darkness of the night, important for the simultaneity of binary oppositions needed for the Sufi mystical process to work (unlike San Juan, who maintained a separation between stages symbolized by darkness and light, as previously noted). It is also worth noting that in verses six and seven the poem focus on the story of "the name of the night," or Arabic "Leyla," also the name of one of the story's protagonists. Lastly, in its final two verses the poem states that the mouth of the poem turns into legend. I believe that these verses refer to what we will see in the actual poetry as the result of Majnun's decision, upon his encounter with Leyla and the birth of his love for her in the iridescent space of "qalb," to become a poet (from whose mouth the poem, represented as the "pájaro," is freed). Once this happens, he begins to perceive the true beauty of the universe ("Haqiqat"), ascending upon his death through the union of his spirit with that of Leyla ("Wasl").

The connection between the process of mystical enlightenment and poetry has already been established in my analysis of *Vivir*, so it should be no surprise that Janés continues the idea here. As for the focus of this introductory poem on only the lovers' encounter and then the end of the process, I feel that the novelty of this work is the modification of only the final stages of the process, where the space known as "qalb" takes a primary role. Thus, although Majnun will pass through all seven stages, those most emphasizes will have to do with his inclusion in "qalb" as defined in Janés' *Diván* and in Ibn 'Arabi's *Taryuman*.

Of course, before the Sufi mystical process may begin, the poetic subject's must first fall in love (or, at the very least, experience their erotic encounter). This love is established early on in *Diván* with the poem "De Como Machnún proclama su amor," where we already see the transformation of Kays into Majnun through his love for Leyla:

¡Amo a Layla,
la niña más hermosa
de esta tribu!
Cada vez que habla
sus palabras son alegres
como las coloridas telas del Yemen;
cada vez que sonrío
me ciegan perlas del Adén;
sus cejas son el arco de mi anhelo;
sus ojos están llenos de monedas:
el tesoro escondido
de mis sueños.

(33)

Although the poem itself seems nothing more than a run-of-the-mill declaration of love, I find interesting the manifestation of the image of coins as the hidden treasure of Majnun's dreams. As seen in *Creciente Fértil*, the "vellones," or silver coins, may signify the death of nature and / or of the poetic subject. Here, however, we see the coins behind the eyes of the other poetic subject (who will later not only take part in the

narration but also unite with Majnun in the stage of “Wasl”), lending to the idea of the elements of life and death existing in simultaneous binary opposition to one-another. This opposition attracts Majnun to Leyla, perhaps signifying the first steps in his perception of the true nature of the universe as a series of binary oppositions (in the stage known as “Ma’rifat”). Thus, by falling in love with Leyla, Majnun has already taken the first steps in ascension through the divinity of the feminine as outlined by Ibn ‘Arabi.

The next two poems in the collection, “Donde se relata un episodio sucedido en la escuela” and “Poema al modo de los que Machnún escribía fingiendo errors para que Leyla se los corrigiera,” (35) outline even further the plot of the work, namely, the development of amorous feelings between Leyla and Majnun. The first also contains a few Sufi symbols worth noting. In this poem, Majnun brushes against Leyla’s arm and thinks to himself the following:

Su mano apoyada en las ramas
es un pájaro blanco
al que nada asusta.

(34)

This poem serves as the Sufi stage of “Ishq,” or the declaration of love for the lover. In his declaration, Majnun describes Leyla’s hand as a “white bird” which nothing may frighten. The color white, in Sufi poetry, acts in relation to the object’s “severance from that which is other than God” and/or the spirit’s ability to attain mystical unity (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 54). The symbol of the bird, in Sufi poetry, usually refers to the eternal spirit (146) when the bird is described as a *divine* object, which I believe happens

here. Thus, by using Sufi symbolism Majnun again links Leyla to the “light” of the divine by showing her as forming part of that divinity. Through his sexual union with Leyla (the night who is also the divine feminine), the embodiment of the opposition of light and dark, as stated in the poetry of the Persian Sufi poet Rumi as well as by his contemporary Ibn ‘Arabi, he may find mystical unity with God. Due, however, to the changes Janés has made in the Sufi mystical process, this unity will be with no God, but with the lover, this being the only and most divine ascension possible.

The next section of *Diván*, “La rosaleda,” outlines the romantic encounter between Leyla and Majnun in the locus-amoenus of a rose garden. According to López-Baralt, the rose garden is the Sufi symbol of the lover’s heart in the process of transformation (*Diván*, 15). However, she also states that this garden, or heart, is “qalb,” the intermediary space in which the lovers’ souls combine in order that they may ascend as one, united spirit. She also states that the sexual encounter does not actually happen in Janés’ version of the story, meaning that any sexual references happen only in Majnun’s, or the crazy man’s, imagination. Although I agree that the garden serves as a symbol for “qalb,” I believe that textual citations may indicate that the encounter really does happen and that “qalb” is the space created through the sexual union of the two protagonists. I also believe that López-Baralt may have taken too seriously the meaning of “Majnun,” forgetting momentarily that the “crazy” lover is the one who loves God, or in this case the Janesian lover, with the greatest devotion, found in the first stage (“Ubudiyat”) of the Sufi mystical process.

The first poem of the section “Retrato del héroe” introduces the protagonists in “qalb,” symbolized by the rose garden:

Desnudo entra Machnún
en el jardín de rosas
y en su alma se adentra,
de brasa alimentada,
donde sólo de Layla
el rostro es paraíso.
Su cuerpo es la palabra amor
y amor es su nudez y cobertura
de loco, encadenado, y libre y cuerdo.

(39)

We see here the meeting of Leyla and the naked Majnun in the rose garden. The fact of Majnun’s nudity should be noted as I believe it contains both a sexual and mystical meaning. The sexual meaning should be obvious – the lovers are preparing to make love and, thus, have to be naked first. The mystical meaning, however, takes us closer to the stage of “Wasl,” or spiritual union between the lovers, in the sense that a type of spiritual purity must be attained before the mystic may pass beyond the limitations of the realm of *Khalq*. This purity develops first from the renunciation of objects associated with *Khalq*, the stage known as “Zuhd.” The shedding of clothes, a trapping of the body while in public, fits nicely with the renunciation of all that which falls outside of the simultaneously erotic and spiritual experience of this sexual

encounter. It then continues to evolve based on the recognition of the universe as made up of simultaneous binary oppositions, which we see in the final two verses of the poem where the body of the lover is described as “nakedness and covering / of the crazy one, chained, and free and sane.” This recognition corresponds to the Sufi stage of “Ma’rifat,” or the moment of divine knowledge, where one may perceive *Khalq* and *Haqq* through oppositions such as those shown above. The idea of being chained may also refer to Majnun’s simultaneous devotion to Leyla and capacity to see the universe in its entirety. The fifth stage of the Sufi mystical process, “Wajd,” or ecstasy through the lover, happens in the next poem, which will then lead to “Haqiqat,” or illumination of the truth, and finally “Wasl,” or spiritual union with the lover, by the end of *Diván*.

The “Poema del encuentro” details the sexual experience and also serves to counter the idea that the erotic experience happens only within Majnun’s mind:

Se cruzaron sus ojos
y ambos cayeron desplomados.
Enmudeció la voz del ruiseñor
que unía sus alientos
y se estremeció el bosque.
La selva insaciable se llevó a Machnún
y en el rostro de Layla
vanos fueron el agua
y el perfume:
un árido horizonte borró

el diurno esplendor de las rosas
y ocupó su memoria.

(40)

The idea that the lovers fall “deplumed” refers back to the idea of Leyla as the divine bird. Now, however, both lovers are referred to implicitly as birds, signifying their purity of spirit (a necessary requirement to reach “Wajd,” or ecstasy, as discussed above). Also, the image of the quieting of the voice of the nightingale that united the lovers’ breath may be taken directly from Sufi poetic tradition, symbolizing the “Universal Body” (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 145) or *Khalq* in its most original form. Its silence, thus, signifies the melting away of the impure world as the lovers become closer to the pure world, or *Haqq*. Also, the image of both water and perfume “being in vain” in the eighth and ninth verses carry their own mystical significance. Water, according to Sufi tradition, represents existence in a general sense (24). Here, I believe its leaving from the garden refers to the aforementioned process which, in terms of the Sufi mystical process, is called “Wajd.” The need for perfume, or a scent applied onto the body but not forming an intrinsic part of it, would also logically disappear, as did that of Majnun’s clothing in the previously cited poem, since neither perfumes nor colognes are necessary in the context of Leyla’s absolute beauty. However, at the end of the poem we see an “arid horizon,” or the desert, erasing the garden from Majnun’s vision and memory. Thus, despite the encounter with Leyla, Majnun has attained neither the illumination nor union necessary to complete the eroticized mystical process that Janés has created. Yet, the empty purity of the scene, in contrast with the lushness of the garden, represents also

Majnun's passing from a world of colorful distractions (*Khalq*) to that of a space in which his struggle toward illumination becomes his single preoccupation. Here, he may concentrate wholly on his love for Leyla, utilizing it to give rise to "qalb" within himself.

In the third section of *Diván*, "El loco," Majnun then begins wandering the desert, insane with love for Leyla, writing poetry in her name. One poem of special interest, "De cuando Machnún partió al desierto," describes Majnun's entrance into his desert exile:

Arde de amor Machnún
y el desierto se quiebra en manantiales.

Las aves hacen nido en sus cabellos
y las bestias le siguen y custodian
su templo, carne viva,
su corazón, que es ópalo de fuego.

(49)

As Majnun becomes closer to nature, a consequence of his erotic mystical process as seen in *Vivir* and repeated here, we see the description of his heart as the "Opal of Fire," or "qalb." This citation would seem confusing at first, given that Ibn 'Arabi had stated that "qalb" was borne of the divine feminine's heart transforming into "Alam-al-Mithal," or the intermediary space in which the lovers' spirits may achieve "Wasl," or union. We must remember, however, that the process whereby Majnun's heart transforms is due entirely to his love for Leyla. He could not have become "the crazy one" without her, nor would have been able to take part in the Sufi mystical process

without Leyla serving as catalyst. Thus, “qalb” is borne from the combined love of Leyla and Majnun. That it becomes realized within Majnun is, for now, unimportant.

The fourth section of *Diván*, “La separación,” recounts exactly that – the period of separation of the lovers. In the poem “Voz del enamorado en la oscuridad” (54), Majnun proclaims that “I will achieve the fame / of a mystic and of an indigent, / yet in my heart / her eyes will make a nest.” This statement has some interesting consequences. Here, he makes clear that the mystic is also an unaccepted member of his society. This adds to the meaning of his name, “Majnun,” the one whose insanity is defined by his renunciation of the world, his devotion to his lover and, now, by his following a mystical path, one in which he has attained the knowledge of the true nature of the universe and the divine ecstasy of the erotic experience. Because no one else understands this process of illumination, he is labeled a pariah and rejected by his society.

The fifth section of *Diván*, “Vida en el desierto,” continues with the idea of Majnun’s wanderings on the geographic fringes of his world, both physically (in the desert) and mystically (as a Janesian illuminated lover). One poem, “Layla confía su sentir a una vela, una mariposa nocturna y una nube,” Leyla’s emotional state takes center-stage, not in isolation, but as reflected in the growing “qalb” contained within Majnun:

A la vela que cabecea
pregunto por el calor
que los lutos del humo desvanecen.
Consumiéndose en lágrimas de cera

se aviva todavía y emula
el corazón de Machnún

A la falena que se le acerca
pregunto por su impulso invencible.
Desplegando las alas a ella se entrega
y dibuja en el espacio
mi propio corazón.

A la nube que absorbe nuestros suspiros
suplico que se aparte de la lluvia
y en fuego transmutada reúna nuestras llamas
en una hoguera única,
un astro inagotable,
cifra de nuestro amor.

Yo soy, Machnún, la voz de Layla,
del clamor envoltura,
de quien es transparencia,
figura de figura
que se ve con tus ojos.

(60)

Leyla's emotions are transferred in the first three stanzas from her, through the object perceived (a candle, then a night butterfly, and finally a cloud) and into Majnun's growing "qalb." Again, "qalb" exists only due to Layla's contact with Majnun, thus it is her emotional state, or "... rain / transmuted into fire collecting our flames / in a singular hearth" which builds the impassioned "qalb" in Majnun. Finally, Majnun's self-declaration as Leyla's voice makes sense as he is, in essence, declaring his voice as transformed into hers and vice-versa. Thus, despite their physical separation, their single sexual encounter has created the possibility of sublime unity through the intermediate space which, by way of Leyla's feminine divinity and Majnun's devotion to her, continues to grow.

In the next three sections of *Diván*, "Machnún se entrega a la poesía," "Las Bodas de Layla" and "El encadenado," there are two major plot developments. First, Majnun dedicates himself to poetry as an expression of "qalb" within him. This happens, however, in a manner reminiscent of *Vivir*'s poetic subject when it speaks of becoming the poetic word. We see this realized in "De Nuevo errante por el desierto, Machnún se entrega a sus poemas":

Dicen que el cielo
en mar se ha convertido
en las tierras del Yemen
y que aquel valle verde
es cascada de aguas;
que hombres y rebaños

huyen a sus guaridas,
aunque brilló Canopus
anunciando cosechas de promesa.
Aquí, en mi corazón,
brilla un astro
que anuncia metamorfosis;
tras el monzón del alma
me tornaré poema.

(70)

The “astro,” or star, which Majnun speaks of is evidently “qalb,” or the divine heart which serves as “Alam-al-Mithal,” the Intermediate Space for the unification of the two lovers’ souls. The metamorphosis he speaks of is the transformation undergone by the mystic from one whose soul is bound physically in *Khalq* to one whose freed soul is bound for *Haqq*. In the final verse Majnun declares that he “will turn into poetry.” I believe that this statement is a step in the evolution of the notion that adhesion of the poet to the poetic word brings the poet closer to his or her own illumination, the sixth stage of the Sufi mystical process, called “Haqiqat.” Here, however, Majnun takes a step further by not only adhering to the poetic word for illumination, but *becoming* the poetic word itself, thereby uniting with the pure world of *Haqq*. Thus, Majnun foresees his own ascension into *Haqq*, a notion not seen explicitly in Janés’ poetry until now.

However, Majnun has not yet ascended, despite the foreseeing of his own ascension cited above. This is because he has not yet reached “Wasl,” the union of his

soul with Leyla's in "qalb." That event will be possible only through the death of the physical body, an impure manifestation of *Haqq* borne in the flawed world of *Khalq* which traps the soul within it.

The second major plot development is the betrothal of Leyla to a man who her father approved for her which takes place in the seventh section of *Diván*, "La Bodas de Layla." She opposes this arranged marriage, desiring only a spiritual union with Majnun, as seen in "Lo que tiene siempre Layla delante de sus ojos":

Inagotable espejismo
donde veo el desierto
en llamas,
en las llamas del amor
que se confunden
con el crepúsculo,
puerta del horizonte
de los sueños.
Y luego arde la arena
y es un lecho de fuego
que el anhelo codicia
para en él diluirse,
mas ni el oscurecido firmamento,
ni la gélida luz de las estrellas
puede con el alma encendida,

ni la súbita lluvia
que raudales arranca
de la roca candente
con el alma
puede.

(82)

The “mirroring” in the first verse alludes to the ability of the lovers to sense each other’s spirit, despite the physical distance between them. This is due to the growing “qalb” which their physical encounter had borne. Thus, the physical experience of sex and the spiritual experience of mystical illumination and ascension become themselves united in a simultaneous and complementary binary opposition. The other oppositions here are also of interest. For example, the desert which burns brightly in darkness, the cold night verses the desert where Majnun resides (the “bed of fire”), the cold light of the stars verses the brightly lit soul of Majnun, all remind us of the basic simultaneous binary oppositions (hot/cold, light/dark) from which the mystic may first perceive *Haqq*. This capacity of perception normally happens in the third stage of the Sufi mystical process, or “Ma’rifat.” Yet, here we hear the voice of Leyla, whose divinity is granted to her by virtue of being female, as affirmed in Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman*. Thus, the oppositions described in the poem cannot come from a mystic who has just entered this stage of the mystical process. Rather, the poetic subject speaking, already part of *Haqq*, looks upon the impure world and views only those elements which draw her closer to Majnun, with whom she will soon unite spiritually in “qalb.”

In the eighth section of *Diván*, “El encadenado,” Majnun returns to Leyla’s home to wait for her. In the poem “Layla mira a aquel mendigo que Machnún es,” Leyla sees Majnun for the first time after his self-exile in the desert. She recognizes him, of course, in the moment in which she looks into his eyes and sees “two eyes offer to me / and reclaim a life,” an indication of Majnun’s devotion to Leyla and his desire for spiritual union with her. This transaction continues with Leyla’s receiving of a letter Majnun writes to her and her answer to that letter in the ninth section of *Diván*, “la noche”:

Layla duerme
reclinada la cabeza
en las palabras de Machnún
que la envuelven como
incienso:
“oscura es mi tez
pero resplandece
porque tú me ocupas”.
Todo se dispone al equilibrio.
Dos aves quietas en el alfeizar
Aguardan a que ella
escriba la repuesta.

*

(las palabras)

Los rubíes que arrancó

de mi corazón su carta
son el lacre
que sellará la mía.

(89)

The words of Majnun, “dark is my face / yet it shines / because you occupy me” refer to “qalb” which exists in Majnun due to Leyla’s divinity. Once implanted in Majnun by way of their sexual encounter, the divine, feminine seed which Leyla places in him creates, thus, the necessary space for union and ascension with him. From this point of view, this impregnation of Majnun is a clear indication that the notion of the “chora” referred to in Chapters I and II is present even in *Diván*. Here, however, the choric space becomes manifest in the *male* body, signaling an inversion of the choric and the phallic in the male-dominated social hegemony, and also re-defining the space which is defined by the term *Haqq*. As I have stated in my analysis of *Vivir*, the poetic word takes the poet to an understanding of *Haqq*, the purer world and the origin of the human spirit which occupies a physical body in the impure world of *Khalq*. By viewing “qalb” as a physical manifestation of the pure chora we may then see *Haqq* as the chora itself. Thus, the substitution of God, from the original Sufi mystical process as outlined by Koovackal, for the lover, in Janés’ rewriting of the process, makes even more sense given our new understanding of *Haqq* as the choric space, having substituted it for Heaven, the space where God resides. Yet again, the link between the physically erotic and the spiritually mystical is conserved in the multivalent semiotic in which the poetry of Clara Janés exists.

The tenth section of *Diván*, “El ascenso,” contains three poems, all of which describe the death of Leyla’s fiancé, her subsequent leaving the city in search of Majnun and the presence of an angelic voice which seems to guide her to Majnun’s location. This voice, present in the last of the three poems, “De Layla a una voz luminosa que en sueños oyó,” interests us in the color ascribed to it as well as its effect on Leyla:

¿Quién es el ángel
que al alba me saluda,
la voz azul
que se derrama por mis venas,
abre las puertas de la vida
y del paraíso
que no es más que la vida,
que no es más
que el jardín invisible
de la vida?
¿Quién es aquel
cuyo canto,
el universo
en vuelo
condensa
y con levedad de ala
anuncia

la perfecta desnudez de los sentidos,

el puro fluir

del hontanar de amor?

(107)

The poetic subject of the poem describes the voice she hears as “blue,” a color which, according to Sufi tradition, indicates the blending of “loving-kindness” with all that is not loving-kindness (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 54). The angelic voice, thus, is the manifestation of the simultaneous binary opposition of love and hate which, in Leyla’s words, “spills through my veins / [and] opens the doors to life / and paradise.” This reference to the opposition of body (blood) and the soul’s existence beyond *Khalq* (life) follows the logic of existence, harmony through duality, as expressed in the works studied in this chapter. Thus, the voice Leyla hears is most likely another manifestation of these oppositions which she, as part of the divine feminine (and linked therefore to *Haqq*), can inherently perceive. Again, the abilities associated with Leyla in *Diván* not only reinforce her place in the mystical process but also empower the image of the female within a previously (i.e., previous to Ibn ‘Arabi’s contribution to Sufi mysticism and spirituality and to Clara Janés’ anti-hegemonic eroticism) male-dominated semiotic.

In the eleventh and penultimate section of *Diván*, “La unión,” we see Leyla and Majnun’s reunion in the moments before the death of their physical bodies (which happens in the final section of the work). Here, Leyla declares in the poem titled “Poema del Kashf o desvelamiento” that, as the plot of the story states, her body is no longer necessary:

Si en ti moro
vano es mi cuerpo ya.
Pase a tus labios
la rosa viva
que en los míos crece
y a ellos incorpore su fuego
y que se confundan
mis cenizas con la nada.

(114)

In Sufi tradition the symbol of the lips signifies the “Divine Word” (Nurbakhsh, Vol. 1, 114) and the flower exists as a manifestation of the knowledge accumulating in the heart (Vol. IV, 39), originally perceived in “Ma’rifat” (the moment of divine knowledge) and later internalized in “Haqiqat” (the moment of illumination). This particular flower, a rose, encompasses two complementary meanings. First, it symbolizes fecundity and the female genitalia, as stated in Chapter II of this dissertation. Second, its color mirrors that of the fire of Majnun’s passion which incorporates her into it (and thus allowing her to be the catalyst for the creation of “qalb” in Majnun and also their eventual union in “qalb” and ascension to the origin of life, defined as *Haqq* and / or the chora). Thus, we have again the impregnation of Majnun by Leyla’s divine fecundity (i.e., the rose) by which her soul unites with his, making her body then unnecessary. This is the beginning of “Wasl,” the final stage of the Sufi mystical process.

The twelfth and final section of *Diván*, “El Final de la palabra,” both defines the final stage of the Sufi process as analyzed here (namely, “Wasl,” or union), and helps us bridge to the next collection of poetry to study, *Arcángel de sombra*. As an example we observe the final two poems of the section, “El Poeta pone fin a lo escrito” and “Coda” (cited respectively):

Yo, peregrina del amor,
quiero besar la piedra de su tumba
y con el beso llenarme
de la ciencia que el tiempo
hurta a mis días.
Quiero besar su losa
en comunión de aire,
yo, que rodeada
de esas bestias salvajes
que son las palabras,
en soledad vivo y en desierto de hielo,
aguardando un único viático:
el agua pura
de la voz del arcángel,
que es mi alimento.

(122)

Y ahora beso el libro
que aquí concluye
ya que también la página
amor encierra
y en la página
a mí misma me encierro,
y, con ella, tal sudario,
me visto,
para luego
avanzar
hacia el silencio.

(123)

The two poems referenced above form the final resting place of the voice of Majnun, as he kisses the tomb of Leyla, then dies, thus finding spiritual union with her in the divinity of eternal love “united in the invisible world” (23). Due to their union in “qalb,” Majnun and Leyla’s united soul now takes on both masculine and feminine characteristics. Thus, “el poeta,” or the masculine poet from the title, states that he is a “peregrina del amor,” or feminine subject on a pilgrimage of love. Beyond the possibility of applying an anti-phallogocentric meaning to this bi-gendered poetic subject, the mystical interpretation of the lovers united in “qalb” and prepared thus for a permanent, divine union, or “Wasl,” is clear. Also, of particular interest are the verses “the pure water / of the archangel’s voice, / that is my sustenance (122),” “I dress, / to then / advance / toward

the silence” (123). In the first excerpt, taken from “El poeta pone punto final a lo escrito,” we see that Majnun refers to the purity of the archangel’s voice. As the protagonists of the poem will live on as the divine word produced by them through their union in “qalb,” we may interpret this voice as the representation of the lovers’ purity, and then, as the purity of the poetic word. Thus, as the united entity of Majnun and Leyla prepares him/herself to advance into the silence described in “Coda,” s/he ascends to the perfect world of the divine which “qalb,” growing within Majnun through his and Leyla’s love, has allowed.

We have seen in *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* that the voice of the angel and archangel are both manifestations of *Haqq* which both Leyla and the united entity of Leyla and Majnun perceive. While the previous work outlines the Sufi mystical process of ascension, in *Arcángel de sombra*, on the other hand, we will see this voice manifested as that of the lover returned to the world of *Khalq* to guide the poetic subject to her illumination and ascension through the divine sexual encounter. Thus, here we have the enlightened returning to guide the poetic subject, who by the end will return to offer her own aid to those still trapped in the impure world of *Khalq*. We will also find the notion of sexual ambiguity and the appropriation of the male in the female alive and well in the work.

Before continuing our analysis of *Arcángel de sombra* it will be helpful to review our re-written Sufi mystical process to include the information obtained in our analysis of *Diván*. These newly-defined stages, numbered by the original stage being replaced, are:

- 1) “Ubudiyat” – Devotion, (although not obedience) to, and an apparently crazed

obsession for, the lover; 2) “Ishq” – love for the lover; 3) “Zuhd” – renunciation of all that does not pertain to the lover; 4) “Ma’rifat” – the moment of divine knowledge, the ability to perceive the simultaneous binary oppositions which constitute the true, pure world, or *Haqq*; 5) “Wajd” – ecstasy (both physical and spiritual) through the lover, where the senses come alive; 6) “Haqiqat” – illumination of the truth, rather than simply the perception of it, as caused by the experience of physical love; 7) “Wasl” – union with the lover. These final two stages, “Haqiqat” and “Wasl,” occur in “qalb” (Arabic for “heart”), or the lover’s heart transformed into the Intermediate Space (in Arabic, “Alam-al-Mithal”) which the lovers’ souls may become one. In this new mystical system, the lover, and not God, becomes the entity through and with which a mystical union is possible. Thus, Janés, utilizing changes made by Ibn ‘Arabi centuries before, rewrites the Sufi mystical process again so that the physically erotic serves not as a metaphor for approximation to God (such as in Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman*) but as the single, “divine” act necessary for mystical illumination. In *Arcángel de sombra* we will also see the circular nature of the universe as symbolized through the image of the illuminated spirit guiding the mystic. We will also observe the metaphorization of nature as an inherent part of this process and how Janés appropriates this notion from Ibn ‘Arabi.

The divisions of *Arcángel de sombra* are titled “Arcángel de voz,” “Arcángel de sombra” and “Arcángel de silencio,” a reference to the voice of the poetic subject’s lover guiding her through the eroticized Sufi mystical process. In Ibn ‘Arabi’s interpretation of the mystical process, “Alam-al-Mithal . . . is bound up in Active Imagination; hence when anything manifested to the senses calls for interpretation because it transcends the datum

and becomes a symbol, the symbolic truth implies perception on the plane of the active imagination” (Falconar 65). As seen in Chapter III, although the notion of Active Imagination stems originally from the work of the Persian philosopher Avicena, its application in the Sufi mystical process through the presence of the divine feminine results directly from Ibn ‘Arabi’s modification of the Sufi mystical process. Thus, the abstraction of the physically erotic experience into the spiritually aesthetic metaphor, or the application of the angelic intelligence in the Sufi mystic’s mind through sexual union with the lover, makes evident that the poetic subject’s process of illumination as described in *Arcángel de sombra* is one of a specifically *Iberian* Sufi mystical ascendance.

Let us start from the beginning of the process, represented in the title of the first section, “Arcángel de voz.” The first poem of the collection, “Empozado el silencio surge la nieve en la sima” (*Arcángel*, 9), uses an interesting combination of color imagery to enhance the beginning of the first step, that of devotion to the lover, in Janés’ mystical process:

Empozado el silencio surge la
nieve en la sima. Una suave oleada
de claridad la adornece. Luego,
desde otro plano, un gesto
puntual y anguloso ara el aire y
propicia el latido del corazón
hasta que prende el junco

arrancado del juncal. No me
separa del silencio la lengua de
fuego. Tampoco el acento que me
rapta.

(9)

Here, the difference between the white of snow and red of blood and fire are shown as contrasting on the surface only, making up two parts of the same mystical process. The poetic subject's silence, while showing a certain passivity toward the coming of the fire [a Sufi symbol of the spirit manifested in flesh, (Nurbakhsh, Vol. I, 24)] also demonstrates an acceptance of it. The poetic word then appears at the end of the poem in an attempt to take the poetic voice away from its silent condition. We see here a repetition of the color contrasts found in poetry from Janés' work *Vivir*, only now the power of the word appears as a fecund figure (one which parallels the fire whose punctual and angled gesture toward the poetic subject "ara el aire" with light), one whose job it is to guide the spirit into the erotic mystical process. This word must then be that of the "arcángel de voz," the poetic subject's guide and lover throughout the process. It should be noted, however, that the "junco," or cattail (which suggests a phallic shape), taken by the voice does not achieve the separation of the poetic subject from silence. The separation really is not necessary anyway since fire and silence, or the binary opposition of light and darkness, exist here simultaneously. Thus, Janés' modified Iberian Sufi mystical process remains clearly present and intact beginning with the first poem of *Arcángel de sombra*.

One significant point to make is that the poetic voice in this first poem, unlike that of *Creciente Fértil* or even the more actively involved Majnun from *Diván*, remains passive throughout the first section of *Arcángel de sombra*. We can make good sense of this passivity by reviewing the first stage of mystical illumination, that of “Ubudiyat,” or devotion. This devotion is followed by “Ishq,” or love (here, for the lover), then “Zuhd,” or renunciation of the self to the mystical process (and, in Janés’ rewritten mystical process, to the lover). This may occur as even passivity connotes a decision on the part of the subject to participate in the process (which explains the lack of any resistance to the fire or mystical poetic word).

Another notion inherited from previous works by Janés is that of the voice / tongue combined symbol seen in verses three through ten of the poem. A similar combination is seen in the series of poems titled “Convite,” as well as the poem “Casillas,” from *Vivir*. In both cases the substantive form in *Khalq* is combined in what I like to believe is a simultaneous binary opposition to the object’s transubstantiated form in *Haqq* to show the poetic subject’s capacity both to see and understand what is seen. This stage of in the Sufi process is called “Ma’rifat.” At the same time, the tongue is a physical representation of the angelic voice, which itself exists as the purer version of the guiding voice. Even the tongue itself contains a similar duality, utilizing the fire, a symbol of the spirit manifest flesh, on the one hand, and the physical object with which speech is possible on the other.

In the poem “Pierdo la noción de límite, soy el alcance de su voz,” the poetic subject begins to walk the path leading to “Wasl,” or union, with the voice that guides her:

Pierdo la noción de límite, soy el
alcance de su voz. Sus ondas son
mi aliento. La cúpula de mi boca
amante con la geometría celeste de
su canto alcanza el arco sin fin de
la vastedad.

Dije: el azul que ha insuflado
en mi boca decía las palabras En’l
Haaq.

(15)

The poetic voice states then that this divine lover says the words “En’l Haqq,” or “I am (of) the truth.” Thus, the already firmly established link between this collection’s poems and the Sufi mystical process finds a moment of explicit expression. The statement also expresses the divine nature of the poetic subject herself, a realization made in “Ma’rifat,” or the perception of divine knowledge, according to Ibn ‘Arabi’s view on the divine feminine in conjunction with Janés’ re-writing of the Sufi mystical process studied here. This femininity, seen throughout *Arcángel de sombra*, creates an interestingly complicated mystical system in the work. Supposedly the female is already divine by nature, meaning she may not need the guidance of this “angel” at all. However,

we may quickly dismiss this concern because the divine feminine, although able to achieve illumination, is not necessarily illuminated. As seen in the personage of Leyla in *Diván*, she must also work through the process to reach illumination and ascension into *Haqq*.

As we have seen in *Vivir*, the enlightened voice later returns to *Khalq* to offer aid to others on the path of illumination. Here, the process occurs, but it is the voice of the “angel,” the illuminated lover, that guides Janés’ poetic subject. This implies a cycle of illumination, ascension and returning, that brings to mind the neo-platonic dimension of Ibn ‘Arabi’s Iberian Sufi thought. In any case, this cyclical nature, as we have mentioned, will appear at the end of *Arcángel* with Janés’ illuminated, united poetic subject calling forth to those still existing in *Khalq* to begin the process toward *Haqq*. It will be important to remember this cycle in Joaquim Pessoa’s mystical process as studied in the next chapter.

The second section of the work, “Arcángel de sombra,” outlines the next stages of ascension, namely, those of “Wajd,” or mental ecstasy, and “Haqiqat,” or death (symbolized in the title as “shadow”) into “qalb” and divine illumination in the lover. The poem “Le dije: nunca” exemplifies the transition to “Wajd” and later “Haqiqat”:

Le dije: nunca

he visto nada como tus ojos,

nunca he visto

nada como tus ojos.

Y sólo veía el fuego

y no lo negro

en el fondo de su negrura.

(38)

The repetition of the phrase “I have never seen anything like your eyes” shows the poetic subject’s fixation on the lover’s eyes, a search for the divine elements lurking within. Here, the contrast in color has shifted from white vs. red to red (of fire) vs. black (of death). Behind the lover’s eyes (presumably doubling as the creator of the mystical poetic word) the poetic subject knows death is waiting just beyond the erotic fire. Although the poetic subject says “sólo veía el fuego / y no lo negro,” the mention of the darkness implies its very existence. Thus, even if the poetic subject is not entirely aware of the coming separation from the flesh, the presence of color and Sufi imagery in the poem aid in anticipating it as well as the mental ecstasy which the poem “Abre la boca – dijo – ” represents.

This build-up to ecstasy, and subsequent anticipation of annihilation becomes clear, as stated above, in the poem “Abre la boca – dijo – ”:

Abre la boca – dijo –,
bebe la redondez de la esfera,
bebe los siete colores del espectro,
bebe la plenitud de la música,
bebe la ascensión de los pájaros del alba,
bebe la pureza de esta hora
antes de que la nieve se funda

en el silencio negro de mi beso
que robará el color de tus ojos
para siempre.

(41)

In this poem we find the moment where life and death fuse as the lover urges the poetic subject to breath in, and thus be absorbed into the subject, one last time as the process of ascension “steals the color from her eyes / forever.” The physical union of the lovers is represented here in their kiss, one of the few instances in *Arcángel de sombra* where the physical relationship between them is made explicit. By virtue of the angelic guide’s divine nature this kiss will be reflected in both *Khalq*, as a sexual gesture, and *Haqq*, as the mental ecstasy of “Wajd” and passing from the flesh in “Haqiqat,” the stage where the lovers join in “qalb.” In defining the mental ecstasy described here, the repetition of the word “bebe” is the absorption of symbolic representations of the physical world. These symbols, representations of the true, divine forms of physical objects in *Khalq*, remind us of Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of the mystical soul’s transformation, in “qalb,” of the physical world into symbols which the imagination may better interpret as the process of ascension reaches a critical phase. These particular symbols, the roundness of the sphere, the seven colors of the spectrum, the plenitude of music, the ascension of the “pájaros del alba,” the purity of the moment, each have significance in Sufi symbolism. The bird, for example, represents the soul (Nurbakhsh, Vol. 4, 146), which clearly will find ascension from the limited body in which it is trapped. This

symbol in particular will become even more important in our study of Sufi influence on Joaquim Pessoa's poetry, as studied in Chapter V.

The third and final section of this collection, "Arcángel de silencio," details the final stage of ascension, that of "Wasl," or union with the lover after the death of the flesh and ascension into the divine. This final stage actually parallels the final moments of *Diván*, when the lovers, now united in "qalb," begin their ascension to the heaven, guided by a divine voice. While in the previous section the poetic subject allows union with the lover via the physical bridge between them (i.e., the kiss that brings death to the body in "Abre la boca – dijo –"), here the female poetic subject's dead body, her form in *Khalq*, brings life back to the impure world. As seen in *Creciente Fértil*, the fiery passion of the poetic subject, having united with the lover both physically (as shown in the previous section) and spiritually (in "qalb") has melted the snow which brought winter, thus providing water, and returning life, to the world of *Khalq*. This life flourishes, and thus the cycle of life (which the snow from the first section had covered and destroyed) is restored. Love, as we will see, serves not only to illuminate the poetic subject but also to create life from the death of that poetic subject's impure body.

In the poem "Yo misma, os digo," we see not only the first explicit identification of the poetic subject as female, but also as creator of a new world through her spiritual / erotic experience with the illuminated lover:

Yo misma, os digo,
soy el tercer arcángel
y os tenderé la mano

para cruzar el puente
porque el jardín que penetró
en mi corazón
en los prados florece
cada primavera.
Mi sangre ha encendido la aurora,
mi anhelo es bálsamo en las simas.
Y aliento soy
para la elevación del tallo,
alimento del aire que os sostiene,
voz de la hoja,
por la luz tensada,
por la insuflada vibración del rocío.

(73)

Here, “qalb,” now apparently contained within the poetic subject, has given rise to a new cycle of life. The verses “...the garden that penetrated / (into) my heart / in the fields flowers / each spring” contain symbols seen before in *Diván*. For example, the garden alludes to the Sufi symbol of “qalb” as the space in which the lovers may become united in their sexual encounter, a simultaneously spiritual and erotic locus amoenus. We also observe the re-birth of the world in the metonymy of springtime flourishing through the power of mystical union in “qalb.” As the poetic subject is now not only divine naturally but illuminated spiritually through its nature as a union of two spirits, in the

final verses of the poem s/he speaks of itself as united also with nature, with the process of life and death. S/he states that its blood, or nutrition liquid, creates life in death (i.e., lighting up the aurora). The united poetic subject's desire is that which bridges the rift (between *Khalq*, the place of life of the body, and *Haqq*, the place of life of the spirit and death of the flesh), and its breath is the air that sustains the readers' life (the use of the second-person plural direct complement pronoun "os" before "sostiene" indicates this). These symbols have appeared before in Janés' poetry. The poetic subject's statement here that s/he is the "voice of the leaf," an integral part of both *Haqq* and *Khalq* (or the simultaneous binary opposition between the pure and impure from which the universe is formed), deserves some clarification. As discussed previously, this opposition is not a clear case of logically defined opposites in *Khalq*, such as the difference between sunlight and shadow, but based on the poetic subject's self-identification with the physical manifestation of nature and, simultaneously, the ephemeral forms of that nature in *Haqq*. The same technique of creating a simultaneous binary opposition from the pure and impure forms of an object, while at the same time identifying a personage from a given poem with that object, also appears in the poetic manifestation of the angelic, guiding voice of the lover. While his ephemeral voice appears throughout *Arcángel de sombra*, he is also represented by the tongue of fire in the first poem of the work.

Although we could see the final verses of the poem by the united poetic subject as an indication of an anti-hegemonic, pro-feminine discourse still alive through the fluidity of gender definitions in Janés' poetic subject, I believe that the significance of the poem lays simultaneously in the Neo-Platonic ideal of the enlightened guiding the cave-

dwellers to enlightenment. Here, the united poetic subject says “I am the third angel / and I will tender my hand to you / for you to cross the bridge,” a declaration not only of her own ascension and newly-found enlightenment, but also of her willingness to help others attain the same illumination (“Haqiqat”) and union (“Wasl”) through the erotic mystical experience (which the poetic subject achieves in the second section of the work).

The final poem of the collection, “Grita una urraca,” tells of the now ascendant and illuminated poetic voice’s “Wasl,” or union with the lover, as the world of the *Khalq* symbolically melts away:

Grita una urraca
el punto de la disolución,
el rojo impone su ley crepuscular,
los metales fecundan las rocas
con herrumbre,
desgranar vida las entrañas del fruto.
Undosos se estremecen los alientos
desde el alma.
Mi amado en mí respira.
El árbol blanco
nace en nuestra boca
y eleva con su luz
la eternidad.

(81)

In this poem, the last of the collection, we see the red fire melting metal, making it penetrate (in what is describes as impregnation in the poem) into the rock just as her illuminated spirit, united with that of her lover, will penetrate into *Haqq*. Thus, the poetic subject's ascension prevails through the lovers' union in "qalb." At the end of a dying world, "the white tree / borne in our mouth / and raises with its light / eternity." As in *Diván*, the united poetic subject transcends *Khalq* and enters into *Haqq*. The white (or pure) tree, a Sufi symbol representing the *man* who has taken the "universal bodily form," or that which does not require the physical body of *Khalq* (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 43), penetrates *Haqq*. Also, that the tree is rooted in the mouth of the united, genderless poetic subject refers back to the idea that the poetic word is itself divine and will bring the poet / poetic subject closer to *Haqq*. This act allows *Khalq* to be reborn through the divine, poetic word spoken by the illuminated, united poetic subject. The tree also acts as a phallic symbol, appropriated by the female poetic subject in her union with the lover. It is, thus, both an act of anti-hegemonic empowerment as an expression of the fluidity of gender definitions, as stated earlier, and an act of mystical ascension into *Haqq*, or the truth of the universe. Thus, Janés conserves her feminist critics' interpretations while simultaneously utilizing, then rewriting, the Sufi mystical process for her own erotic exploration of mystical illumination and ascension. Nonetheless, the point to emphasize in this final poem of *Arcángel de sombra* is that the united poetic subject's mouth serves as a powerful poetic symbol, in both sexual and sublime terms. When the lovers kiss in "Abre la boca – dijo –," the two distinct lovers begin to unite with one-another sexually by way of the joining of their mouths. From here, the two become one, first physically,

then spiritually with the death of the body. In the final section of the work, the now united mouth, for lack of a better term, produces the tree, or the divine poetic word, which allows the poetic subject its desired illumination.

In Clara Janés' poetry, we see that mystical love, which transcends the bounds of the physical to signify the enlightenment of the divine in all of us, hinges not on our devotion to God but on our devotion to erotic pleasures, whether physical or spiritual. In other words, Janés' exploration of sexual ecstasy does not promote eroticism only for "feminist" reasons, as we see clearly in the poetry of Ana Rossetti (see Chapter I), among others. Rather, here we find a poetry in which the imperfect humanity of the sexual act retains aspects of something greater than a physical encounter. I believe that in order to understand this liberation of the soul through sex, rather than God, we must return to the first critical notions expounded concerning Janés, as studied in Chapter II.

Clara Janés began writing poetry which proclaimed a revolution against a phallogocentric hegemony based on the perception of male control during the sex act. Janés reclaimed that act through the constant deconstruction of the male sexual discourse. Thus, she established the essentially erotic nature of her poetry early in her career. Keeping with this tradition, she then entered into the world of the mystical, starting in *Vivir*.

The ramifications of this reborn mysticism, however, go beyond a personal quest for enlightenment, illumination and ascension through sexual, bodily pleasure. The Sufi were the "original" mystics of the peninsula, stretching back to peninsula's culturally formative Medieval Period. As such, they played a foundational role in the cultures

which developed later on in the Peninsula. Through the uncovering of this “other” Spanish identity, that which some have seen as Christian is actually Arab (or, in this case, Moorish), challenging a supposedly unshakeable Christian hegemony in Spanish literature, history and culture. This is evident in Janés’ repeated formulations of the philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabi and in the spatial and temporal denaturalization of her poetic subject in *Creciente Fértil*. In fact, the poetic space in *Creciente Fértil* allowed Janés’ poetic subject a free space in which to begin exploring the notion of her personal and national identity (that of a Spanish, or Iberian, woman, exploring the non-Christian traditions of the mysticism which has attracted her to poetry, according to Janés herself, since the beginning of her career). Looking from a diachronic critical perspective, this rediscovered pro-feminine aspect of Spanish culture also reinforces the struggle in Janés’ poetry against the male-dominated hegemony, and to which it has shown constant opposition, since the publication of *Vivir* in 1983. In other words, this space acts as a place in which Janés may channel the erotic energies of her poetry while simultaneously battling a male-controlled discourse which would never have allowed her the freedom to express those energies openly. Thus, through the manifestation of a both non-Christian and anti-hegemonic mystical process, beginning in *Vivir* and continuing in *Creciente Fértil*, *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* and *Arcángel de sombra*, Janés journeys on a path of redefining, through her poetry, the essential nature of what it means to be Spanish. We will explore this notion in more detail at the conclusion of this dissertation.

In the next Chapter we will see how the ideals of the postmodern discourse and Sufi transcendence find an open space for union, nostalgia and an inter-cultural poetic dialog in the work of the Portuguese poet, Joaquim Pessoa.

Chapter V: The Presence and Influence of the Sufi Way in the Poetry of Joaquim Pessoa

In Chapter II, Section II of this dissertation I explained the process by which Joaquim Pessoa's poetry ventures from a deconstructive criticism of social and artistic themes toward a metaphysical exploration of the self, continuing then to a commentary on the idea of the limitations of poetic discourse. In this chapter I return to elucidating the terms of Pessoa's mystical and metaphorical exploration through the constant presence and influence of the Sufi Way in *Os Olhos de Isa* and *À Mesa do Amor*.

Before beginning my poetic analysis, it will be helpful to review the original seven stages through which the Sufi mystic must pass before reaching divine illumination. These stages are described in my previous analysis of the work of Koovackal and the Sufi mystic Ibn 'Arabi, as well as Chapter III of this dissertation. The first stage, called "Ubudiyat," is the stage of service. The mystic must obey the law and serve God. The second stage, "Ishq," is the stage of love. The divine influence, or the divine feminine according to Ibn 'Arabi, drives the soul towards the love of God. The third stage, "Zuhd," is known as "renunciation." Under the influence of divine love all worldly desires leave the heart. The fourth stage, "Ma'rifat," is the moment of divine knowledge. The mystic contemplates the nature, attributes and works of God. The fifth stage, "Wajd," is the stage of divine ecstasy. As Koovackal explains, mental excitement is produced through contemplation of the only true Reality, as seen in the work of Ibn 'Arabi. The sixth stage, "Haqiqat," is that of illumination. The heart is now illuminated with God's Reality. At this point the mystic must unite with the divine feminine in

“qalb,” the sacred heart created through her. At the seventh and final stage, “Wasl,” the Sufi mystic achieves his union with God through the divine feminine. He now sees God, as it were, face to face. This stage, in Sufi mystical thought, should be permanent.

Unlike Clara Janés’ work which does not invoke the presence of God in order that the physically sexual may be sacred, Joaquim Pessoa uses the title *Os Olhos de Isa* both to emphasize and deconstruct that presence. This work, translated into English as *The Eyes of Isa*, refers to the eyes of Jesus, the son and physical manifestation of God on Earth. The word “Isa” is the Arabic word for “Jesus,” used by Moslems to refer to this religious figure. According to Christian mythology, Jesus and God are one in the same, making the eyes of Jesus the eyes of God. Pessoa chose this translation of the name (and thus its meaning), I believe, to emphasize both a connection to God and a distancing from European, Christian tradition. As in Islam, God is considered the ultimate truth (as is widely believed in all Judeo-Christian faiths) I posit that, rather than loading the work with a Christian semiotic, the title *Os Olhos de Isa* refers to the search for a truth which is both Iberian and Arabic-speaking, thus non-Christian. This allows for a mystical journey by way of the sexual act whose principle reference point, its semiotic base, may be one taken from the Iberian Sufi, rather than Iberian Christian, tradition. As for the deconstruction of the Christian semiotic in the title, the presence of Jesus as a Moslem figure rather than a Christian one serves to denaturalize the figure in an ironic way. Pessoa’s poetic subject may then recontextualize the figure, in this case, applying the eyes of Isa to a woman with whom he has a sexual encounter. As Isa represents the divine truth, or “Haqiqat,” the image of a woman’s eyes as the gateway to that truth,

central to Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of the divine feminine, becomes significant as suddenly the application of a Sufi semiotic becomes evident.

The first poem of the collection (after the introduction, which I have already analyzed, albeit with relatively few Sufi references, in Chapter II) is titled as “I.” Although Pessoa’s poetic subject utilizes Sufi mystical symbols to reflect the presence of the seven-stage Sufi mystical process in this poem, the organization of the process is almost unseen:

Festejo o teu corpo com uma chuva de lâmpadas
e rosas clandestinas.

E amo-te.

Incendiando nas praias do meu sangue
esses pássaros que nascem no teu peito
e fazem ninho nas minhas mãos abertas.

Assim me desespero e fascinas.

E tudo em mim estremece. Tudo se desenraíza
como as grandes árvores que a tempestade sacode
e arranca no inverno, investindo sobre elas
com os seus cabelos de água, os seus cornos vermelhos.

Ó meu amor, meu amor, meu amor,

morro nos teus braços e renasço em ti
para de novo procurar-te em todos os minutos
percorrendo todos os rios, todas as aldeias do teu corpo
até chegar a tua boca, cheio de sede, ávido de ti,
depois de me perder no deserto branco da tua pele.

Amanheço sem rosto e sem braços, completamente nu,
deixando que doas em mim como um mistério
como se o teu ventre pudesse ser a minha boca
como se eu nascesse de ti para te amar e me esquecer.

E levanto-me
e bato a todas as tuas portas (afinal as minhas)
e tu não me respondes. Percorremos todos os corredores
do teu silêncio e não te encontro em nenhuma parte.
Grito por ti até sentir o sabor do sangue nos meus lábios.
Atiro-me contra as barreiras que me separam de ti
e aí adormeço, cansado, como um naufrago
e então és tu, são os teus braços a minha praia
a minha longínqua, doce e estranha praia
onde me esqueço e deito
onde enlouqueço à tua espera.

Ó meu amor, meu amor, meu amor,
foste sempre o meu poema, a minha canção de gesta,
a minha certeza e a minha dúvida,
o meu vinho e o meu cálice.

Tu és no meu país deserto a última rosa.

Inventei-te em delírio. E trago-te em mim
por entre os mortos exilados que caminham comigo pelas ruas.
Trago-te levantada nas minhas mãos como a única espada
para vencer o mundo.
A minha pedra absoluta.
A minha eterna sede.
A minha ilha.

Ó meu amor, meu amor, meu amor.

(Vol. 2, 131)

The first stanza begins with the poetic subject's declaration that he will "celebrate [the lover's] body." This is a clear indication, given the topic of the collection, of a sexual relationship between the subject and lover, or object of the poem. The color-scheme employed through the images of a rain of light and clandestine roses indicates a

dichotomy, or perhaps opposition, between white and red, colors seen in Chapter IV as used metaphorically to describe binary oppositions such as “death” versus “passion” whose elements occur simultaneously. The Sufi mystic would see these oppositions in the stage of “Ma’rifat,” or the contemplation of the true reality.

The stanza continues with the poetic subject’s declaration of love for the lover. Here, the birds are borne in the lover’s chest, making their nest in the poetic subject’s hands and burning “the beaches of [his] blood.” That this bird is borne in the lover’s chest could indicate the presence of “qalb,” or the sacred heart made from the lovers’ passionate union. It is also evident that the symbolic meaning of the “pássaro,” or bird, as the poetic word in Pessoa’s first stage, needs revision. Clearly this symbol now represents the soul, a seemingly Christian symbol. Given both the Sufi symbols surrounding it, the process whose particulars I will reveal over the course of this chapter, and the already mentioned appropriation of the name “Isa” from a Christian symbolism to a Sufi one, the supposed Christian symbolism to which the “pássaro” belongs must be questioned. In fact, the symbol of the bird in Sufi poetry has represented the human spirit (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 146). In a more balanced symbolism, this could suggest that the Christian and Sufi symbols of the bird both coincide and unite. However, as I argue both here and later on, the Christian symbol of the bird actually forms part of a hierarchy in which Christian symbols become appropriated by the Sufi process. This move on Pessoa’s part stems from the constant presence of an individual struggle against the present (Christian) cultural hegemony in Portugal whose government he attacks persistently in the first stage of his work.

In terms of the actual Sufi mystical process, this union of the lovers usually comes near the end of the Sufi mystical process, I believe that *Os Olhos de Isa* begins in medias res, at the stage of “Ma’rifat,” the poetic subject having already passed through the previous three stages of his erotic experience with the lover.

The next stanza is a single verse, in which the poetic subject states that the lover “In this way makes [him] desperate and fascinates [him].” The second idea, that of fascination, is linked directly with the first stage of the Sufi mystical process, those of “Ubudiyat,” “Ishq” and “Zuhd,” or service, dedication and renunciation to God as represented by the lover, herself a manifestation of the divine feminine. Here, the mystery of the divine has not yet opened itself to the mystic, making him desire a continuation of the experience toward the next stage, or “Ma’rifat,” at which the poetic subject finds himself in the previous stanza. Thus, this verse does not reflect a steady time-line, but a simultaneity between past and present in the poem. Thus, it questions the notion of linear causality in the poem, a consequence of the importance given to memory as a type of ontological realization for the poetic subject’s erotic experience. This experience, then, will become part of a cycle in which Pessoa’s poetic subject will attain illumination.

The first of the notions in this single-versed stanza, however, indicates another important aspect of this mystical, erotic experience. The desperation that the poetic subject experiences stems from an erotic desire for the absent lover. This notion is exactly what gives the poetic subject his “solidão” (Vol. II, 130), translated as both solidarity and solitude, from the introductory poem of the work. It allows him to live the

simultaneous binary opposition of cultural solidarity, i.e., belonging to a larger society, and individual, intimate solitude, or isolation from both that society and the lover. In this way the Sufi mystical process, as early as the first poem of the work, is presented as incomplete, with the poetic subject longing for a fuller realization of his mystical journey.

The third stanza of the poem incorporates Sufi symbolism to describe the moment of death into the lover (with whom he unites and enters into “qalb” here and in the fourth stanza). Here the poetic subject states that he is unrooted “like the great trees that the storm shakes / with its hair of water, its red horns.” First, the symbol of the tree has two meanings in the philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabi, those of the “Perfect Man” and of “existence,” as well as symbolizing the three major realms of existence, *Khalq*, *Haqq* and the the angelic realm (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 43-44), also known as intermediate realm of “qalb” (Vol. IV, 108). The storm represents the everlasting nature of the divine which swallows up the poetic subject once he is united with the lover in “qalb” (Vol. IV, 6). This stanza, thus, expresses symbolically the attainment of the sixth stage of the Sufi mystical process, or “Haqiqat,” in which the lovers unite in “qalb” and the poetic subject is able to perceive, and is illuminated by, *Haqq*. Also, the coming of the water happens in winter, the traditional symbol of death but also an image which invokes the color white. This is due both to the white of snow that falls in winter and to the white hairs that come at the end of life. The transformation of the waves into hairs, implicitly white, then red horns, brings again to the forefront the simultaneous binary opposition of death and passion, white and red, an opposition on which I have commented on numerous occasions in this study.

The fourth stanza continues describing the final two stages of the Sufi mystical process, or “Haqiqat,” illumination and union with the lover, and “Wajd,” or ascendance into God. In this stanza the poetic subject “dies into” his lover, a clear reference to the stage of union in “qalb.” However, he continues speaking of a search for the lover through an exploration of “the towns” of her body, kissing her lips after having lost himself in the “white desert” of her skin. The reference to her white skin comes from the traditional presence of the color white as a symbol of purity common in Renaissance poetry. The contrast of white skin and red blood, or passion, reflects this 16th Century European symbolism.

At first, thus, the notion of a Sufi process seems to combine with a Christian one, but it must be noted that this supposedly transparent articulation of Christian symbolism happens exactly at the moment when the Sufi mystical process is about to be completed. Instead of allowing this process’ final resolution, the poetic subject is reborn into a physical state in which he continues longing for the lover, rather than ascending, united with the lover, into the divine realm. He then attempts to recur to a semiotic more commonly found in Portuguese (and other European), non-Sufi poetry. However, the symbol of the desert as the book of God (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 34), when applied to the divine feminine’s physical body, again places the poetic subject back into the Sufi mystical process. The issue must be resolved, thus, as to why the poetic subject would attempt such a break with the process in the exact moment of spiritual salvation. In this seemingly Sisyphean process, the poetic subject, ennobled through his erotic, mystical experience, must perpetually re-live his failure (which explains the exclusive use of the

present tense throughout most of the poem). It also reveals that the notion of memory serves to maintain the poetic subject in *Khalq*.

On the other hand, this stanza may also be interpreted as a celebration and affirmation of love as capable of driving the mystical process forward in its cycle of renewal. In this sense, it is possible to see that the poetic subject remains in “Ma’rifat,” with momentary glimpses of “Wajd” (ecstasy) and “Haqiqat” (illumination). These flashes, rather than reflecting just the memory of a past encounter, act also to remind the poetic subject of the possibility of future encounters in this timeless, cyclical Sufi process of illumination. Hence, memory functions not only as the footprint of the past (as in “Canto Zero” from *O Amor Infinito*, studied in Chapter II) but as that of the future, now that the limits of time on the lovers has been removed. Another ramification of this unifying contrast between affirmation and negation, future and past, is that it reveals an inherent binary opposition in the universe of which the lovers’ mystical experience is composed.

The fifth stanza speaks of the “re-birth” of the poetic subject, possible now that the negation of the mystical process has been paired with its binary opposite, affirmation of the process, in a cycle in which the poetic subject is re-created through the power of love. The love act, thus, does not function only for the poetic subject to become more aware of *Haqq*’s manifestations in *Khalq*, but also for the poetic subject to “forget himself” in the lover’s physical embrace, being reborn through the lover’s purity (as studied in Chapter II) which Ibn ‘Arabi’s Sufi mystical process outlines.

The sixth stanza of the poem seems to repeat the sensation of desperation that the poetic subject will eternally suffer. At the end of the stanza, the poetic subject states that he waits for the lover in his “far-away beach,” indicating the distance between him and his ascension through the lover. This distance has made him forget, as stated in the previous stanza, and to become crazed with longing for her. This insanity is reminiscent of Majnun’s insanity due to his distance from Leyla in Janés’ *Diván*. In fact, the poetic subject’s “re-birth” in the previous stanza functions in a similar manner as well. Both the erotic experience shared between Leyla and Majnun and the memory of that experience engender a timelessness in which, in comparing Janés’ and Pessoa’s works, both Janés’ Majnun and Pessoa’s poetic subject are “re-born.” Interestingly, while Janés’ Majnun moves through the cycle once, attaining full illumination at the end and ascending with Leyla, the poetic subject in *Os Olhos de Isa* moves through the cycle repeatedly, both in this and other poems in the collection. This cyclical Sufi process, or Sufi mystical cycle, reflects a process present in Pessoa’s third stage, from *Vou-me Embora de Mim* particularly, as well as Janés’ *Arcángel de sombra*, in which the poetic subject returns in the third section of the collection to offer his/her aid to others on the path of illumination. As I will argue in more detail in the conclusion of this dissertation, and despite differences in thematic focus, the similarities in the Sufi mystical processes of these two poets reveal a recentralizing force at work alongside their postmodern techniques.

The seventh stanza displays two unique aspects not encountered in any other point in the poem. First of all, the stanza uses the single, completed action past tense (“pretérito perfeito”) rather than the present tense. This shows that the poetic subject has

shifted in the timing of his narration from actions happening at the moment to actions which should have led to the tragic mystical process seen in previous stanzas. However, the statements “you were always my poem, my love song” does nothing more than emphasize an eternal presence of the lover. This makes historical a mystical process which until now has seemed to be based on only recent happenings. Secondly, the Christological symbols of wine and chalice at the end of the stanza help to re-emphasize the divine nature of the feminine in the poem. The fact that these symbols are remnants of Christian mythology does not negate the Sufi process, as the name of Christ here is Isa, the Islamic name for the representation of God on Earth. In fact, in Sufi symbolic tradition the chalice, or grail in this case, represents the heart of the mystic (Nurbakhsh, Vol. I, 130) and the wine it contains is the “pure, unadulterated pleasure which distances the Sufi from his egoistic identity” (155). Thus, here exists not only a re-placement of traditional Christian symbols into a Sufi semiotic but a re-emphasis of the divine feminine’s function as “qalb,” allowing the poetic subject the unity of the self with the lover and the pleasure (both spiritual and erotic) that this union generates. Again, these symbols, traditionally from Christian, Portuguese (and Occidental) poetry, are appropriated by the even more ancient Sufi tradition. This constant redefinition of poetic symbols thus creates a tension in the poem, as the notion of tradition is undermined through the use of those symbols for a mystical process not considered culturally licit in Portuguese Christian tradition. Deconstruction, then, remains present throughout the poem by way of the process of re-writing and, ultimately, re-appropriation of a much older Sufi symbolism. This postmodern process, nonetheless, does not take the critical

tone obvious in works from Pessoa's first stage, such as in *Amor Combate*, for example. In *Os Olhos de Isa*, the re-definition of Christian mystical symbolism as Sufi is meant only to show an alternate means by which love may engender illumination, salvation, or (as will be seen in my analysis of *A Mesa do Amor*) a greater understanding of the relationship between *Haqq* and *Khalq*.

The eighth stanza is a single phrase, stating that the lover is the poetic subject's final rose in the desert. This phrase enhances the poetic subject's feeling of solace and the presence of "qalb."

The ninth and final stanza refers again to the past, to the memory of the lover which the poetic subject "invented" in the delirium of the erotic, mystical cycle. When he refers to the "exiled dead" with whom he walks, the poetic subject places himself squarely in *Khalq*, having surrendered to the suffering which others on the street have as well. Thus, individual spiritual suffering is widened to include a society of people tortured spiritually. (The final section of *Vou-me Embora de Mim*, as seen in Chapter II, addresses an interlocutor who may be described as spiritually tortured.) These people have not yet begun a mystical journey, and are thus trapped in *Khalq*, unable to see the binary oppositions whose revelation would open the door (or window, as Pessoaan symbolism has chosen in the past to express it) to the greater universe. The final three verses of the stanza state that the lover is the poetic subject's "absolute rock," "eternal thirst" and "island." Each symbol represents truth, desire and isolation, respectively, all of which have been touched on in the poem and are listed here as a manner of conclusion. The binary opposition here, that of the thirst for "Wasl" (union) versus the affirmation of

the poetic subject's knowledge of it, and thus his power (the "sword-rock"), serves to emphasize the gap between the illuminated poetic subject and those around him who must be shown the mystical path. Thus, yet another opposition exists, that between the poetic subject and the people trapped in *Khalq*, reminiscent of the cave-dwellers from Plato's *Republic* as well as of Janés' interlocutor in the third section of *Arcángel de sombra*. Again, the notion that the illuminated must show the path to the non-illuminated is essential in the Sufi mystical cycle as explained above.

After the final stanza, the poetic subject says three times the phrase "my love." This repetition becomes common throughout the work, where after many poems the poetic subject reiterates his love for the lover. I believe that this repetition may reflect the repetitive nature of the cycle of mystical illumination that the poetic subject will experience, perhaps without being fully conscious of it. It could also serve as a sort of affirmative mantra for the recognition of the erotic mystical cycle and the possibility of mystical illumination based on that cyclical process.

In sum, the poem analyzed here utilizes the notion of memory, or the remembrance of the mystical erotic act, exists outside of linear time, allowing the poetic subject to re-live the experience *ad infinitum*. The physical pleasure of the act is also easily felt through the descriptions of the lovers' bodies as they touch and kiss one-another. The poetic subject also re-lives both the erotic, mystical experience and its attempts to aid him in his quest for the divine truth (contained, as I have already shown, in the "eyes of Isa," or the eyes of God, represented by the female lover, the divine feminine) through the negation of completion and the attainment of "Wasl," the final Sufi

stage. On the one hand, it seems that the poetic subject has modified the Sufi mystical process so as to remain in *Khalq* and in the timeless cycle of past and future memory borne from the erotic, Sufi mystical cycle, which the poetic subject's individual and cultural identity (based on a traditional, Portuguese Christian identity) would have denied him. On the other, he seems content upon returning as a "pure," illuminated entity in *Khalq* who will serve to aid others in their own mystical processes through love.

In the above analysis I have attempted to outline the major themes of *Os Olhos de Isa* as well as their development in the work as a whole. Thus, I will limit the remaining analysis to those themes which do not appear repeatedly in the work. These are the themes of "the name," or the true, divine word and that of the timelessness of the Sufi mystical experience as realized through the sexual act (which appears in poem XXIV).

Poem XXIV repeats many of the notions studied in Poem I, such as the attempted union of the lovers in "qalb" and of the mystical cycle, one of whose principal tools in the process of illumination is the timeless existence of memory:

Tu ensinaste-me a fazer uma casa:

com as mãos e os beijos.

Eu morei em ti e em ti meus versos procuram

voz e abrigo.

E em ti guardei meu fogo e meu desejo. Construí

a minha casa.

Porém não sei já das tuas mãos. Os teu lábios perderam-se

entre palavras duras e precisas

que tornaram a tua boca fria
e a minha boca triste como um cemitério de beijos.

Mas recordo a sede unindo as nossas bocas
mordendo o fruto das manhãs proibidas
quando as nossas mãos surgiam por detrás de tudo
para saudar o vento.

E vejo ainda o teu corpo perfumado a erva
e os teus cabelos soltando revoadas de pássaros
que agora se recolhem, quando a noite se move,
nesta casa de versos onde guardo o teu nome.

(159)

The first stanza, or first ten verses, express the loss of the lover (and, thus, her existence in the poetic subject's memory) as well as the notion of "qalb," represented here as the "house" which the poetic subject constructs from the lover's kiss. However, the lover was lost among "hard and necessary words." Although this could indicate that the poetic subject's lover left because of a lover's quarrel, I posit that the imagery here is meant as a metaphoric representation of the poetic word as the constructor of memory. This indicates, then, that the lover that exists in *Khalq* became lost among the words which had, ironically, created the poetic subject's own memory of her. "Death," in this stanza, does not express the literal death of the flesh, but the loss of the lover as an entity

existing within the poetic subject's exteriorly perceived realm. The house, or "qalb," thus, remains empty due to the lover's absence, and thus, due to the poetic subject's longing for the lover. The image of "a cemetery of kisses" is used to transform the idea of the poetic subject's mouth as a point of creation for "qalb" (by way of the erotic experience) to a point of entry for the divine feminine. The union of the poetic subject with the memory of the divine feminine, although not necessarily part of the Sufi mystical process, is important to note because it allows "qalb" to serve a function in what remains of the cyclical mystical process.

In the second stanza the utilization and remembrance of the sex act is evident in the verb "recordo" ("I remember") and in the description of the lovers' mouths united, "biting the fruit of the prohibited mornings." In Sufi symbolism the image of the fruit, in a general sense, symbolizes both the good and evil which humanity produces (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 44-45). Thus, the image of the lover's biting into the eroticized morning, represented here in the metaphor of fruit, expresses not only the Judeo-Christian semiotic of the erotic as prohibited by God but also the Sufi ideal of balance in the sex act. As in the previously commented poem, there is, on the one hand, the Sufi symbolism inherent to the image of the fruit which attracts the lovers toward the erotic as a means by which illumination may be found. On the other hand, there exists the Judeo-Christian symbolism, also inherent to this image, which attempts to dissuade the lovers by making the divine knowledge they seek a prohibited, and thus impossible, goal. Interestingly, there is an apparent binary opposition between the Sufi and Judeo-Christian symbolisms in this poem that exists simultaneous to these symbolisms' previously analyzed

complementary function (as seen through the re-appropriation of a supposed Christian symbolism by a Sufi one). This means that the tension perceived through the relationship between the two is actually nothing more than another simultaneous binary opposition. Its revelation here may indicate a conscious effort on the part of the poetic subject to become more aware of these oppositions, thereby developing more fully the ability to perceive the world in terms of *Haqq* and *Khalq* as outlined in the stage of “Ma’rifat.”

As for the final two verses of the stanza, the use of the Preterite Imperfect tense in the verb “surgiam” (Eng., “would surge forth”) is significant in that it implies the same repetition that “recordo” would, except that now the poetic subject is firmly planted in the past. As for the image of the lovers greeting the wind in the final verse, the Sufi symbol of the wind indicates a specific direction that the mystic should take in order that s/he may follow the correct path to illumination (Vol. IV, 30). Again, the notion of memory becomes important to the pessoan Sufi cycle, as does the image of an unseen path to illumination that the poetic subject perhaps has only begun to perceive. This greeting of the wind, however, also implies that the poetic subject sees that which cannot be seen in the physical world of *Khalq*, that is, an element of *Haqq*. Thus, the stanza shows that the poetic subject’s journey to the “pure” world by way of the pessoan Sufi mystical cycle, referred to in the previous stage, is moving toward illumination.

The poem’s third and final stanza again brings to the forefront the theme of memory in that the poetic voice “sees” the lover’s body, “scented of herbs” and her hair “freeing flocks of birds.” The two images connected with the lover’s body, first off, link her body with nature as is common in most love poetry (including, but certainly not

limited to, Helder's and Ruy Belo's poetry of the 1960s). However, another connection exists, that of the lover's body with the bird. In fact, the bird, or soul, becomes visible in the lover's hair, a reference to the union of the lovers as a movement toward the freedom that mystical illumination (and possibly even some sort of ascension) would signify.

The most significant point of the poem, and the reason for its inclusion in this dissertation, is the image created in the final two verses of the stanza, an affirmation of both the Sufi mystical cycle and of the growing power of poetry in that cycle. Here, these birds, or souls, are gathered in "this house of verses where I keep your name." I have already posited that the "house" constructed by the poetic subject through his sexual experience with the object, or his lover, represents "qalb," or the heart created through the physical union and mental contemplation with the divine feminine. Now, as "the night," or the "realm of the unseen" (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 74), moves away from the poetic subject in the penultimate verse, the soul chooses to shelter itself in "qalb," despite the apparent absence of the lover (apart from her "presence" in memory, which I have already discussed). However, "qalb" is now transformed into a "house of verses." Although it seems that this process may not necessarily be completed, the poetic subject is able to utilize "qalb," which here also represents a simultaneous binary opposition between the presence of the lover's memory and her absence, in order that he may save a piece of the divinity which the process provides. This divinity is the lover's name, the divine name, as having been borne of the divine feminine, also carries an important significance in Sufi symbolism. According to Ibn 'Arabi, the divine name is the name which God inscribes upon objects, making them divine. The mystic may then recognize

an object's divinity by the knowledge of its name, making that name a piece of divine knowledge (Vol. XV, 23-24). By knowing the divine feminine's divine name, and by keeping it in "qalb" which he built through his poetry, he may complete the mystical process and attain illumination. He may not partake in "Wasl's" offer of directly contemplating God in its entirety, but he will take advantage of the opportunity to contemplate the divine through a small piece of the divine, that which is found in the lover's name. Thus, by absorbing the lover's name, even if he may not see any other part of God, the poetic subject may look into the eyes of God to attain some level of illumination. As for the symbol of the bird, one whose meaning seems to have entered into a process of transformation, it would seem that in this poem the soul, illumination and poetry itself are all combined in the avian metaphor of ascension.

The final poem of the collection, "XXVII," summarizes Pessoa's successful mystical process:

Nenhuma morte apagará os beijos

e por dentro das casas onde nos amámos ou pelas ruas clandestinas da
grande

cidade livre

estarão os densos sinais do amor e da morte

com que se vive a vida.

Aí estarão de novo as nossas mãos.

E nenhuma dor será possível onde nos beijámos.

Eternamente apaixonados, meu amor. Eternamente livres.
Prolongaremos em todos os dedos os nossos gestos e,
profundamente, no peito dos amantes, a nossa alma líquida e atormentada
desvendará em cada minuto o seu segredo
para que este amor se prolongue e noutras bocas
ardam violentos de paixão os nossos beijos
e os corpos se abracem mais e se confundam
mutuamente violando-se, violentando a noite
para que outro dia, afinal, seja possível.

(Pessoa, Vol. II, 162)

The first stanza begins with the use of the future tense in the first verse, followed by the past tense in the second. Rather than emphasizing the timelessness of the mystical cycle, I believe that by combining the past with the future these verses point out that the cycle confines the poetic subject in a time which exists in “qalb.” This space for the lovers’ attempted union, or the houses referred to in the second verse, is pluralized in order that the repetitive nature of the cycle be made explicit. The second verse also contains an image which aids in making the experience a positive one. The “free city,” made from the houses, or the repeatedly recreated “qalb,” becomes the environment in which the lovers must realize their encounters in secret. This makes both ironic and tragic the metaphor of the “free” city. It is ironic because the notion of locus amoenus is violated in the poem, and tragic because it is from the physically and spiritually erotic experience from which “qalb” is born that the “city” is created in the first place. Really,

the poem's first stanza reinforces the freedom attained through the pessoan mystical cycle. This freedom from the limitations of *Khalq* is not limited to a single individual, but to the "city's" population, that of souls waiting for illumination in "qalb." It is the revelation of the "name" in the previous poem which has allowed this collective freedom, a notion not to be forgotten in Pessoa's next work to be analyzed, *À Mesa do Amor*. As for the "signs of love and death" in the third verse, love represents metonymically the erotic experience, but death does not necessarily represent the act of dying. As I have shown in this chapter, death in *Os Olhos de Isa* tends to symbolize the lover's absence. Without the physical or spiritual presence of the poetic object, the lover which the poetic subject requires for the completion of his mystical process, that process cannot be completed.

The second stanza begins by exclaiming the freedom which the lovers experience (or, at least that the poetic subject experiences) by means of the sexual act. Here, the term "pain" from the second verse alludes to that caused by the lover's "death." The poetic subject then states that the lovers will find themselves "eternally in love ... eternally free," differentiating the experience here from the limitations imposed on freedom by *Khalq* which we find prevalent in *Os Olhos de Isa*. Thus, even in the seemingly hopeless scenario described in the first stanza the poetic subject finds freedom in the space reserved for the lover's union, or "qalb."

Nonetheless, this situation, in which there seems to exist a simultaneity of union and non-union with the lover, yields an unexpected twist in the final verses of the stanza. The poetic subject states in the fifth and sixth verses that in "qalb," located in "the lovers'

(mutually shared) chest,” the united soul of the lovers “unveils in each moment its secret.” The verses “para que este amor se prolongue e noutras bocas / ardam violentos de paixão os nossos beijos / e os corpos se abracem mais e se confundam” emphasize that the lovers are now united in “qalb.” It would seem that, as a continuation of the limited contemplation of the divine observed in poem XXIV, the poetic subject is able to reveal that he and his lover really have achieved mystical union. This makes sense, as direct contemplation of the divine is not possible unless union with the divine feminine is attained.

In returning again to poem XXIV, it becomes clear in the final verse that the poetic subject has kept the lover’s “name” hidden in “qalb” as a piece of the divine through which he may attain some level of illumination. I posit that the lover’s name, an element of the divine knowledge, is linked directly to her essence, the most basic and important part of the divine feminine. In Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Taryuman*, the basis of Sufi mysticism as presented in this dissertation, the key to the mystic’s understanding of his direct contemplation of God is the knowledge of the divine name (Cilveti, Vol. I, 125). This name may be found in the contemplation of the divine feminine, called here the “mirror,” or eyes, of God (128). Thus, with the divine name stored in “qalb,” the poetic subject may achieve union with the essence of the divine feminine, now capable of contemplating God directly.

In sum, the poetic collection *Os Olhos de Isa*, one of the first from Pessoa’s second stage, utilizes an eroticized, Iberian Sufi mystical process in order to attain illumination, not just for the poetic subject’s sake, but for that of all who desire to take a

mystical journey (as seen in the final poem of the collection). As with Janés' mystical process, Pessoa's also changes to fit the poetic subject's particular nature, that of one entrenched in the notion of memory and the timelessness of love. Thus, the seven-stage Sufi mystical "process" becomes a "cycle," allowing for both past and future memory to flourish while permitting the poetic subject both his illumination and his helping others toward that same illumination.

The collection *À Mesa do Amor* (1994) is both a continuation and an evolution of Pessoa's path toward illumination which began in *Os Olhos de Isa*. Now that the poetic subject has progressed further along the Sufi path towards illumination, the theme of *À Mesa do Amor* will be centered around the creative power and fluidity which the poetic word draws from the notion of love.

The first of two introductory poems to the work is a translation of Parmenides' Fragment #6 (Parmenides, 60-61) into Portuguese:

O ser é para dizer e para pensar.

Tem de ser, pois é para ser, enquanto o nada

não é; isto te ordeno que medites.

Desta primeira via de investigação eu te afasto.

E também daquela em que os mortais que nada sabem

erram com duas cabeças, pois a incapacidade

lhes dirige, no peito, a mente errante.

E são levados surdos e cegos, a multidão sem

discernimento que acredita que o ser e o não ser são o

mesmo e o não mesmo.

Para quem regressivo é o caminho de todas as coisas.

(*À Mesa*, 5)

According to philosophical critical work, Parmenides' theory of "non-being" states that anything which may be named must exist, and thus, that which does not exist cannot have a name (Pelletier 12-13). Then, the essential meaning of all true statements must be the same due to the mere fact of their existence (15-18). Of course, a slight twist to the argument could make Parmenides sound as though he were saying that real dialogue cannot exist because no two people will say the same thing (19-20). In any case, there exists an idea in this poetic fragment central to the evolution of Pessoa's thematics, culminating in the definition of self as a function of language, symbolism and memory in his third-stage work, *Vou-me Embora de Mim*. The first is that existence is predicated by expression, that is, *being* is in order *to speak* and *to think* (or, in the case of the presently studied poetry, *to write*). The metaphysical aspect of this process is stated expressly in the fragment, when the poetic subject tells the reader to "meditate on [the idea]," in other words, to think about how thinking, and ultimately speaking, reflect being. Thus, in this first introduction to the work, the poetic subject has already doted the poetic word with an ability which it does not have until the end of *Os Olhos de Isa*. Only in the final two poems is the poetic word able both to express the divine name and represent it, thus reconstructing a supposedly lost divinity within the poetic subject's "qalb." In continuation of this new, expressive poetic word, as will be evident in *À Mesa do Amor*, the poetic subject is able to reveal a metaphoric world of his creation, taking

into account the poetic word's capacity for expressing "being," a process reminiscent of the transformation of *Khalq* in Active Imagination as seen in Janés' *Arcángel de sombra*. As an aside, Parmenides was the second greatest influence in Plato after Socrates (Palmer 3). Given the relationship between the notions of the "un-real" versus "real" worlds in Platonic thought, and those of *Khalq* versus *Haqq* in Sufi thought, the inclusion of Parmenides as the introduction to *À Mesa do Amor* is intriguing. Whether Pessoa is truly conscious of the link between his poetic subject's, and Ibn 'Arabi's, mystical paths is unknown. However, the poetic realization of that link is undeniable. As for the criticism of the nameless, faceless, un-seeing group of "lovers of sights and sounds," in both Sufi and Platonic terms their presence reminds us of the un-illuminated masses living only in *Khalq*, not perceiving of the pure world of *Haqq* which exists in simultaneous opposition to the former. The fragment describes these people as having two heads, the brain and the heart, neither of which fulfills their function in the mystical process of illumination (the head, which may possibly conceive of, and perceive, *Haqq*; the heart, which in the Sufi mystic represents "qalb"). The opposition is also bi-directional, as the simultaneous existence of the illuminated versus the non-illuminated persons runs concomitant with the expressly stated movement backward of the latter and implied movement forward of the former.

The second introductory poem, an excerpt from *1001 Arabian Nights*, serves both to remind the reader of the connection which Pessoa's poetic subjects maintain with Middle Eastern culture (which, of course, includes Sufi mysticism) and to emphasize the notion of love happening both before and after, and thus superseding, existence:

Quando ainda não existia nada, já existia o amor.

Quando já nada mais existir, há-de existir o amor.

As Mil e Uma Noites

(*À Mesa*, 15)

The notion here is ontologically interesting in that, while the existentialist would view, as did Sartre, that existence comes before essence, here the fragment states that essence, represented by love and representative of *Haqq*, comes before physical existence, or *Khalq*. This makes sense considering the thematic development of *Os Olhos de Isa*, in which physical existence is lost in the process of mystical illumination and the subsequent transcendence of the poetic subject's spirit from the physical body in *Khalq* to the divine purity of *Haqq*. The physical presence of the lover, thus, would take the role of initializing the mystical process and of housing "qalb" in the sixth stage of the Sufi mystical process, "Haqiqat."

Thus, both this fragment and Parmenides' fragment above serve to introduce the principal theme of *À Mesa do Amor*. This theme is that love is transcendent, above and beyond the limits of existence (or, *Haqq* as transcendent above *Khalq*), although both are present simultaneously in the pessoan Sufi mystical cycle. The poetic subject, through love, is rooted in this cycle, which in turn is expressed through Pessoa's recurrent natural and erotic symbolism.

Once established, the themes detailed in the introductory poetic fragments above serve as basis for the thematic development of the notion of the poetic subject's empowerment over memory. This step sets the stage for a process of self-representation,

founded in the Sufi mystical process as seen in *Os Olhos de Isa*. The process begins with the first original poem of the collection, titled “I,” in which the poetic subject begins his exploration of the complex nature of memory. This important theme is rooted in the opposition of pain and happiness which form the simultaneous binary opposition that, in *Khalq*, represents the origin of all things, love, possibly the basic element of *Haqq*:

Soberba antologia de lágrimas

obra duradoura que li em tantas noites

quando na realidade não havia mais nada,

nada mais que um vento inconsolável, um galo rude

que sempre acorda a inquietação, o coração em reza.

5

O momento em que ficámos foi de regozijo

como uma pequenina hasta que sobrevivei ao temporal.

Outros foram, confusos, com Deus e outro Deus

como se fosse duas vezes vezes quinta-feira. Não

é hoje o dia em que a vida se acerca

10

das coisas mais ausentes. Nesta data exige

apenas o cio das perguntas, saber de portas que ainda não existem.

É um rasgo nos braços esta vontade de abraçar a luz

pelos ombros, oferecer-lhe as feridas como castiçais florindo.

O que avança é uma árvore, a pura solidão.

15

Imenso branco, este deslumbramento,

dádiva que é, do êxtase, o coração insustentável.

São duas as chaves do remorso, uma lembra o arco-íris,
a outra um tocador de música.

As horas são trémulas, límpidas, sem margens. 20

O que fica, horizonte essencial.

Não são enigmas as perguntas que ardem, são asas,
pétalas animais, alegrias e esplendor.

No fim das árvores, um labirinto se diz
com uma boca límpida. É lá o sol. Todo o fragor da noite. 25

Amanhã ou agora, com pequenos nadas, pequenos pulsos
para o pensamento, haverá de colher-se a paz dos frutos.

Cantará o fogo na erva, masculino, imenso, aceso
pelo sopro dos lagos. Voltará à memória o simples peixe
que nada na alegria provisória. Inteiro, 30

denso, exacto, mover-se-á dançando.

E porque todos partem acontece a fábula,
os animais estão já perto do pólen, da cor inicial.

Mãe da terra, mãe das andorinhas e dos goivos,
esta alegria corre como lava fresca, treme nas amêndoas 35

nomeia-se entre a morte e a infância.

Amadurece na luz.

É um missal de sombras o corpo que amiúde exhibe
este saber de nós, de nós os que fomos mais felizes,

os que tornaram duro o fogo e adoçaram o ferro, 40

aqueles que com palavras quentes

disseram a frescura da música.

Todas as noites da noite os braços se entregaram

ao trabalho que foi só do olhar, da pele do olhar.

Hoje, impenitente, o mar secou as lágrimas. 45

E as coisas têm todas morada no amor.

(17-19)

This extensive poem indicates the beginning of another cycle of mystical union, through the images of simultaneousness light and obscurity, of death and life / love, as is the case in many poems from *Os Olhos de Isa*. The symbolism of the simultaneous binary opposition between *Khalq* vs. *Haqq* is made evident through the contrast between the image of the wind (a Sufi symbol of the mystical path) and the “bothersome rooster” whose irritating noise “always awakes unquietness.” The wind itself, however, also seems to irritate the poetic subject, perhaps as a representation of a mental state in *Khalq*, in which the guiding wind is not perceived as such, making the message blurred and the sensation unpleasant. This makes it seem as though the poetic subject were trapped in *Khalq* yet able to perceive *Haqq*, as the (imperfect, annoying animal) rooster and the (sublime) wind (in its state of binary opposition, as both irritating and sublime) are described as metaphorically representing the same element. This element, or memory, is the only one that really exists, as stated in the first four verses. It also serves to awaken “the heart,” or “qalb,” in which the sacred name of the lover should reside, despite that

lover's apparent absence. This absence is clear in the sixth through tenth verses by way of the poetic voice's use of the single-action past tense ("o pretérito perfeito") as well as the emphasis on several important moments shared between the lovers which now reside in the poetic subject's memory. There exists in the first ten verses a level of intimate frustration due to the lover's absence, as well as a focus on the remembrance of her. The poetic subject maintains control over his condition as a subject living a duality of present and past, the former serving as the position from which he may observe and explore the nature of the latter, as well as the nature of love and the lovers as residing in, and expressing themselves through, the memory of the past. Really, the attempt here is to sustain the memory of a past joy by way of the memory of love. Of the two, the latter better carries the former as it serves as the nurturing force in the universe (as I will show in this chapter, expanding on my analysis from Chapter II).

Several more elements of Sufi symbolism appear in the verses following these. For example, the poetic subject offers his wounds, meaning his pain, to the lover, thus opening himself to her. The light present in these verses represents illumination; the lover represents the path to illumination (by way of the erotic act with her, as she is the "purer" of the two according to Ibn 'Arabi and as studied in Chapter III). Thus, offering himself to the wounds caused by the lover's absence, and also offering the self to her memory, represents a renunciation for the lover. This entire renunciation of the self for the lover, and thus the process of love, is known in the traditional, Iberian Sufi mystical process (although in Pessoa it is a Sufi mystical "cycle," as shown in this chapter) as "Zuhd." Also, at another point the poetic subject speaks of a tree which symbolizes

“pure solitude.” This, along with the “immense whiteness” which represents the unsustainable heart, is a reference reminiscent of the tree which grows out of the “qalb” of the united lovers in the final stages of Janés’ modified Sufi process. In other words, here we find that the same mystical elements appear in Pessoa’s *À Mesa do Amor* as in Janés’ *Arcángel de sombra*, and with a similar usage, that of the poetic subjects’ ascension into *Haqq* at the stage known as “Wasl,” or union. However, while Janés’ poetic subject allows the flesh to die in order that the spirit may ascend, Pessoa’s poetic subject cannot. That subject is able to unite with the lover and become illuminated, yet he is not willing to ascend beyond the physical body in *Khalq*. Despite the ability of the poetic subject to ascend, he chooses not to, opting instead to explore the memory of the erotic experience as transcendent in and of itself. Unlike Janés’ erotic mystical process, Pessoa’s mystical cycle does not emphasize death as a requirement for union in “qalb,” only the remembrance of the lover and their simultaneous physical and spiritual union. Thus, the poem is one of overcoming and affirmation, in terms of both a physical union and a spiritual one, with the surrendering of neither.

The return of “horizon” from *O Pássaro no Espelho* in the 21st verse reminds us of the evolution of Pessoa’s symbolism from the deconstructive message of his first poetry to the metaphysical exploration here (as well as the metapoetic exploration in the next poem to be analyzed in this chapter). In “Livro e Vertical,” analyzed in Chapter II, the horizon functions as a contrast to the vertical line that the poetic subject draws in the poetic space. This verticality works metonymically to express the freedom of the bird, or the poetic word, the divine word that carries with it the poetic subject’s spirit, then

forming the basis of symbolism and thematics in the works that follow (including *Vou-me Embora de Mim*). Here, however, the image of the horizon combined with the sublime images of the rainbow, the sound of music and the passage of time in the previous verses works, in essence, as a point of encounter between the Earth, or the terrestrial and impure (where the poetic subject chooses to reside), and the sky, or the sublime and pure.

Although the bird does not appear in this composite image, its ability to fly places it in between the two worlds as well, making it a bridge between the pure and the impure.

Thus, in the present poem the image of the horizon maintains the horizontal/vertical contrast, but due to the evolution of Pessoa's poetry it has likewise evolved to signify the meeting place of the simultaneous binary oppositions (including that of light versus darkness in the 25th verse) which serve to represent the differentiation between *Khalq* and *Haqq*.

Along with the oppositions already commented on here, there appears another whose importance in *À Mesa do Amor* is paramount. In the 29th and 30th verses the poetic subject states that the fish swims in happiness. As it is obvious that fish swim in water, I posit that the poetic subject thus creates an analogy whose structure is "fish:water :: man:happiness." Returning to the image of the rainbow as metonymically representative of *Haqq*, this happiness takes on an essential quality, as the poetic subject states that the animals are closer to the "initial color," or the essence of the universe. In terms of the constant, simultaneous binary oppositions ever-present in any Sufi mystical process, the memory of the lover and her subsequent absence bring about a sense of loss which the poetic subject deems "pain." This pain serves to contrast directly with the happiness that

the poetic subject describes. Thus, there exists a rudimentary binary opposition in the poem, that of pain and happiness, which function as the defining opposition of the essential element of existence, that of love. Also, it is good to remember that the fish is an ancient Christian symbol representing the soul and concomitant with that of the bird in Sufi imagery. Thus, the tension between Christian and Sufi symbolisms in Pessoa's poetry, although seemingly resolved at this point in this second stage of his poetic career, remains present in a secondary role. I will return shortly to this idea.

In the 38th verse the poetic subject states that the body is a prayer book ("o missal") of shadows. Rather than recurring to a Sufi definition of the symbols here, I propose that the image of the prayer book, a conglomeration of sacred words, is linked with that of the "cio das perguntas," or heat (referring to the animal stage of mating, referred to also as "zeal") of questions (also made from words). This feminine and still animal quality itself contains the opposition of the divine feminine (connected to *Haqq*) and the physical (connected to *Khalq*). The dual nature of the symbol, then, reflects the dual nature of the united lovers in "qalb," both masculine and feminine, terrestrial and sublime, ephemeral and eternal, impure and pure. The prayer book as body takes on the same meaning, only now those sacred words are shadows, or representations in *Khalq*, of a more ontologically and semantically rich word. That representation, however, does not lose its expressive power, as it still functions in the poetic subject's memory as a piece of the erotically mystical encounter with the lover, as does her divine name in "qalb." Then, the poetic subject says in the 39th verse that "[we] were happier" ("nós ... fomos mais

felizes”), using the preterite perfect, or finished past tense. This intensifies the ephemeral nature of the lovers’ union and emphasizes its existence in the poetic subject’s memory.

In the 44th verse the poetic subject declares that the lover’s erotic union was the work of “sight, of the skin of sight.” The union of the physical and ephemeral skin with the mystical ability to perceive *Haqq* through the erotic encounter serves to join the physical with the spiritual in the memory of the mystical process. This brings the pain of the lover’s absence and the happiness of the erotic encounter together in simultaneous opposition. In the 45th verse the poetic subject states that the sea has dried the tears. I posit that the tears symbolize pain, and that the sea refers back to the origin of all life. As the final verse of the poem states that everything has its home in love. Taking into account the fragment from *1001 Arabian Nights* seen above, I believe that the sea, the origin of life, must certainly symbolize love. Both tears and the sea are essentially salt water, meaning that pain is a part of life, and thus a part of love. Here, pain is also combined with happiness in simultaneous binary opposition, meaning that happiness makes up the other side of love. Only when pain (and implicitly, happiness), symbolized by tears, succumbs to the overwhelming power of love, symbolized by the sea, is life able to flourish. Love and life, thus, may be expressed through the poetic word, as life is based on love, and the simultaneous binary opposition of pain and happiness make up the essence of both. This poem may also be seen as an allegorical “fall from grace,” an image of the exile from Eden that is overcome by the transcendence of love. If so, then leaving Eden is really a positive, rather than detrimental, step in the process of illumination. This is because by leaving the garden, the poetic subject may journey back

even further, from the origin of *his own* life to the origin of *all* life. I will return to this strongly centralizing mystical journey in my summary of the Iberian Sufi mystical process' possible presence in Iberian postmodernism at the conclusion of this dissertation.

I find it necessary to return for a moment to the binary representation of love in the symbols of the fish and the bird. Each is equal to the other, yet they both hail from two different mystical traditions, one Christian, the other Sufi (respectively). Pessoa's poetic subject articulates these two symbols, not in juxtaposition, but as part of a greater system, one that is ruled by love. On the other hand, the supremacy of Sufi symbolism in *Os Olhos de Isa* and *A Mesa do Amor* over a Christian one would seem to reflect an incorporation of the symbol of the fish into Sufi symbolism, just as the image of Jesus was re-created as Isa, an Islamic and Sufi mythological personage, in *Os Olhos de Isa*. As found in Pessoa's work and mentioned several times in this chapter, the inclusion of a Christian symbol within a non-Christian symbolism serves to denaturalize the symbol from its hegemonic position (as Christian in Portugal), deconstruct it (by forcing it to recognize as equality with the Sufi symbol of the bird) and reconstruct it as essentially Sufi (and, in contemporary terms, Islamic). Thus, Pessoa succeeds in questioning the notion of Christian symbolism as superior in the hegemony of peninsular mystical systems through an ironic, almost carnivalesque, inversion of one of Christian mysticism's principle spiritual symbols. I return to this and other symbols in the next poem to analyze, poem 21.

The first aspect to note about poem 21 is the poetic space in which the poetic subject must exist, and which the poetic subject must survive in order that he continue existing. Love, seen in previous poems as the nurturing basis of all existence, serves here as a guiding force for the poetic subject:

Aprendi a atravessar o deserto neste livro,
os bolsos cheios de peixes, a mão em exercício azul
de escrita. Dunas, dunas e só dunas.
Sorvo pequenas águas. Mitigo a raiz
das páginas. Deserto este, sem oásis, 5
um sol de febre, a boca implorando
sombra fresca. Movem-se palavras,
movem-se como lagartos obsessivos,
os pequenos dedos de sede, o olhar reflectindo o fruto seco,
árido, que irrompe da pedra. 10
Ferve um odor de pássaros parados,
o vento demora-se, lá longe, numa rosa.
Nem o vinho nem o sono derrubam esta luz
de quem caminha assim pelo deserto.
Embriago-me, durmo, acordo 15
entre os poetas que morreram de sede. Os seus livros
crepitam agora num incêndio de amor extremo,
de fascínio, de luxo, de água débil.

Páro, nesta página, para observar o horizonte,
talvez ouvir o canto ardente e puro de algum
pássaro.

20

Refeito, seguirei na direcção do sol.

Hei-de cruzar-me, eu sei, com o chacal e a andorinha.

(*À Mesa*, 41)

The traversing of the desert as symbolic of the plodding around in *Khalq* reminds us of Majnun in *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* in which the male protagonist was forced to wander the desert while his mystical process took hold. The “fish” in the second verse, from poem I of *À Mesa do Amor*, represents the poetic word. Given my analysis of the fish as a Christian symbol redefined as Sufi, this manifestation is acceptable. Yet, in the pocket of a desert wanderer, it seems to be relatively out of its element. Thus, one would suppose that the poetic subject begins in a state of discomfort with the creative process, possessing the tools to create but not the context. However, due to my previous analysis I find it logical to view the symbol of the fish as that of love which will aid the poetic subject in his mystical journey. It will allow him to continue perceiving the simultaneous binary oppositions from which the universe is composed. Love, in conjunction with the idea of a natural state of plenitude, as developed in the previous poem and throughout the work, may then serve as both nurturer and guide for the person's mystical cycle. The poetic subject's sipping of “small waters” is a metaphor for small pleasures reaped from some success in the creative process. Yet, the poetic word, when used, remains terrestrial

(the lizard, “o lagarto”), an impure and uncreative element of *Khalq*, or a representation of the universally expressive poetic word. The scent of “stopped birds” is still another indication of the poetic words present stagnation, perhaps even referring to the limitations of poetry, implicitly contrasting with poetry’s expressive power. If so, then this verse represents another simultaneous binary opposition that the poetic subject, in his Majnun-like desert wanderings, is now able to perceive. Then, the poetic subject begins to sense that there is a “rose” beyond the putrid scent of the birds which makes the wandering that much more difficult to bear. The rose, of course, is a positive symbol representing the ideal that the inadequate poetic word attempts to convey. Thus, he is able to remind himself of the risk inherent in becoming trapped by an incapable poetic language, as seen in his reference to the fallen comrades whose poetic inspiration never comes to fruition. This inadequacy will be observed again in *À Mesa do Amor* and resolved in *Vou-me Embora de Mim* as has been seen in my analysis of Pessoa’s third stage in Chapter II of this dissertation.

In the second stanza the poetic subject stops wandering and looks out onto the horizon. Remembering the oppositions discussed in my analysis of the previous poem, I believe that by focusing on the horizontal, or the point of encounter between *Khalq* and *Haqq*, the poetic subject allows the simultaneous binary oppositions within the vertical to be perceived as well. This reopening of *Haqq* to the poetic subject through the observation of its meeting point with *Khalq* reinvigorates the poet’s ability to perceive his existence through love. The hope of “perhaps [hearing] the birdsong” is a semantically rich verse, as it represents the poet’s longing for the soul’s creative power as manifest

through the free poetic word. It also indicates that the poetic subject has learned, and is able, to utilize the Sufi mystical cycle and its symbolism in order that he may continue the development of the self (i.e., the poetic subject as representative of the universally human.) Also, appearance of the sparrow and the jackal at the end of the poem, both symbols of the animal world and the poetic subject's connection to it, probably signify his connection with, or (at the very least) his perceiving of, *Khalq* and *Haqq* simultaneously. In any case, the symbol of the bird again aids in connecting this poem with the next to be discussed, poem 28. This poem, linked with a Middle Eastern tradition by way of its quoted speaker, demonstrates the notion of existence as a function of the simultaneous binary oppositions, nurtured by love and studied throughout this dissertation.

Poem 28 connects explicitly with the Sufi tradition by the application of the name "Kabir," meaning "great one" in Arabic, to the speaker whom poetic subject supposedly quotes, as well as the recycling of several Sufi symbols:

Disse Kabir: Sobre esta árvore está um pássaro.

Dança com a alegria da vida. Ninguém sabe onde está.

E quem poderá saber qual o tema do seu canto?

Tem o ninho onde os ramos fazem a sombra

mais profunda; chega ao anoitecer e parte, voando,

5

pela manhã, sem ter dito uma palavra

do que queria contar.

Ninguém me fala deste pássaro que canta dentro de mim.

*Não tem cor nem, sequer, é incolor. Não tem forma
nem silhueta.*

10

Descansa à sombra do amor.

*Mora no inalcançável, no infinito e no eterno
e ninguém repara quando chega ou parte.*

*Profundo é o mistério. Que os sábios procurem descobrir
onde descansa este pássaro.*

15

(48)

In this poem the symbolism in Pessoa's poetry joins in a beautifully allegorical description of the poetic word's empowerment through the omnipresence of love within the essential nature of existence. The first line states that there's a bird (the soul) on "this tree" (the Sufi symbol of the perfect man, "his divine essence and attributes" (Nurbakhsh, Vol. IV, 43-44)). In the second verse, the bird dances with life's happiness, yet the bird goes unseen. This unseen soul reminds the reader of the first introductory fragment of *Mesa do Amor*, in which those not illuminated are described as blind to the binary reality of the universe, much less its significance to those who have achieved the ability to see it. The poetic word's happiness is derived symbolically from the notion of love's dual nature in both *Khalq* and *Haqq*, as both happiness and pain. The third verse asks if anyone may know what is the theme of the bird's song. Again, the idea from the previously analyzed poem that music, and thus sound, belong to the sublime *Haqq* is emphasized, as is the inability to recognize the special nature of that sound. The fourth,

fifth, sixth and seventh verses describe the bird's nest as residing in the shadow of the tree branches. According to Sufi symbolism, these branches are a pure manifestation of the terrestrial roots of the tree in *Haqq* (Vol. IV, 44). The roots exist as an imperfect mirror image of the branches, in and from which the bird, or soul, may create new life. The bird spends the evening (i.e., the darkness) in the nest, then leaves the next morning (i.e., the time of light) "without having spoken beforehand about what it wanted to sing." In terms of the proposed allegory, then, I posit the following interpretation. In darkness, or silence, the soul may not speak, but only remain hidden in the place where it is creating life. In light, or the absence of silence, the same soul is free to express itself, albeit perceived only by those capable of understanding that light and darkness themselves form a simultaneous binary opposition due to the placement of the nest in a shadow, a dark place. This opposition, fundamental to the Sufi theory of existence and its subsequent mystical process, is visible to the mystic who has passed into "Ma'rifat," or the Sufi stage of divine knowledge, and beyond. So, the Sufi symbolism here not only reinforces the idea of the poetic word's expressive power, and thus the soul's vital, creative power, it also emphasizes the need for the mystical knowledge of *Haqq* and *Khalq* in order that the poet may utilize that same poetic word for his own poetic, and thus vital, process of expressing the world that the poetic subject has created.

The revolutionary nature of the verses is also not lost, as the free poetic word, and thus the soul, must grow where silence is, remitting back to the notion of freedom being born from the silence of censorship in the poem "Primeira Canção de Lisboa," as analyzed in Chapter II. It also reminds the reader that the mystical nature of the present

imagery is not without its basis in the same notions of freedom from dictatorship and government abuse of power which form the basis of Pessoa's poetry in the 1970s.

The final verses of the first stanza show a change in focus, from the soul as manifest outside of the poetic subject to a more interiorized soul within the poetic subject. He states, thus, that nobody talks to him about the bird singing within him. This means that the poetic subject, who has already discovered the illuminating nature of love, has not found external recognition of his discovery. In any case, this fact does not seem to bother him, as the poetic word has become spiritually manifest in him (and, thus, without shape or color, but as malleable and no longer needing representation in *Khalq*). It also exists in "the infinite and eternal," yet still within the poetic subject. Thus, I posit that the poetic subject has stored the free poetic word, and thus the illuminated soul, in "qalb," and that, based on my analysis of poems from *Os Olhos de Isa*, that free poetic word is the pure (and thus bodiless) manifestation of the female lover's divine name. This means that, through the erotic experience and subsequent memory of that experience, as well as through the poetic subject's expression of memory as a place from which the poetic word may become metonymically representative, and thus, vitally creative, the divine name has expressed the freedom created in the perfection of the mystic's illuminated spirit. It also means that the poetic subject's spirit has itself become a part of *Haqq*, and is thus both infinite and eternal, able to carry within it the free poetic word whose dual nature of exterior and interior, manifest in both *Khalq* and *Haqq*, makes clear that the two birds spoken of in the stanza are really manifestation of the same soul. Again, it must be remembered that the poetic subject, having evolved spiritually beyond

the need for a physical representation in *Khalq*, chooses to exist in both worlds. The symbol of the tree, thus, is actually a symbol of the poetic subject's capacity to exist in both *Khalq* and *Haqq*, as well as his ability to allow the soul, which carries the free poetic word, a space in which it may reproduce and flourish. It should be noted that the symbol of the tree in Janés' *Arcángel de sombra* serves not for the poetic subject to exist in a state of simultaneous binary opposition, but to ascend beyond *Khalq*. This would help to explain the importance of the death of the flesh in Janés' work. Here, on the other hand, the point is not to overcome the physical, but to incorporate it into the spiritual and exist in a state of simultaneous binary opposition. The cyclical nature of Pessoa's mystical process, rather than being a linear one that becomes cyclical through the descent of the illuminated soul as in Janés' work, then begins to find its reason for being.

Returning to my analysis of the present poem, in verse 11 the bird is also said to rest under "the shade of love," meaning that this soul is nurtured by love, the essential element of existence. Love, thus, exists as the both the principal and final component (after the Sufi mystical cycle's completion and the allowance of a space in which to be born and to live) to the process of illuminating the soul, that of creating a free poetic word which, by expressing the soul, will also carry it to freedom in the pessoan mystical cycle.

The notion that the poetic word, carried by the soul, will then carry that soul to freedom works for two reasons. First, language may express only that which exists, as stated in Parmenides' fragment above. This means that the poeticizing of the illuminated soul denotes that soul's existence. Second, the erotic, mystical cycle has allowed the

poetic subject access to the divine name used to express that which is, for lack of a better term, divine. So, the truth of the divine's existence is perceived, and thus illumination attained, through the revelation of the divine name in the sixth stage of the eroticized, pessoan Sufi mystical cycle, "Ma'rifat." The state of the poetic word as both the carrier and the carried, one of perpetual, simultaneous binary opposition, thus makes sense.

The final stanza is also telling of the poetic subject's personal evolution in *À Mesa do Amor* in that he states that the mystery (presumably, of life and love) is profound, and that the wise should discover where the bird rests. The poetic subject, however, already knows where the free poetic word / the soul rests (that is, in him, freed through the Sufi mystical cycle and nurtured by love). The idea that the illuminated poetic subject may be wiser than the wise seems egotistical, but after the processes through which the poetic subject has passed in *Os Olhos de Isa* and *À Mesa do Amor* it makes sense that he would feel himself transcended beyond the limits of knowledge found only in *Khalq*.

As for his self-representation through the poetic word, it is clear that the poetic subject has discovered how to create and use the free poetic word. He has not yet completed the project of total self-representation, however, as is evident in that the poem serves as a quotation of a character supposedly external to the poetic subject, rather than the thoughts of the poetic subject himself. Although I believe that the personage of Kabir is a manifestation of the poetic subject's uncertainty as to his ability to use the free poetic word in the manner in which it should be used (a notion evident in the previously analyzed poem), I also believe that, at the very least, the poetic subject recognizes that he is on the right track. The poetic subject sees, then, the manner by which he may utilize

the creative power of the poetic word for self-representation. This use of the poetic word becomes much clearer in the affirmation of the poetic subject's poetic, individual identity found in my analysis of *Vou-me Embora de Mim* in Chapter II.

In conclusion, the works of Pessoa's second stage serve to express his application of the Iberian Sufi mystical process, as outlined by Ibn 'Arabi, to the pre-existing notion of love as central in the creation and nurturing of the universe. His poetic subjects find mystical illumination through the manifestation of spiritual union in the act of physical love. It is evident that Pessoa modifies the Sufi mystical process so to help resolve the ontological issues of self-representation and hegemonic inequality, in part through the re-appropriation of symbols (such as the bird and the fish) from Christian mystical symbolism by Pessoa's Sufi symbolism. The utilization of a Sufi mystical process to combat contemporary concerns appears in Janés' work (as I have shown in Chapter IV of this dissertation). Unlike Janés, however, he does not incorporate the death of the flesh as a key component to the process. Rather, he transforms the "process" into a never-ending "cycle" whose principal differentiation from the original Iberian Sufi mystical process are that: a) "Wasl," or union and ascendance, is no longer the absolute goal of the process, and b) upon attaining "Haqiqat," or divine illumination, the stage in which "qalb" is created and filled with the lovers' spirits, the poetic subject turns back and begins again, this time using the memory of the previous cycle as a starting point. In this way the Sufi mystical cycle allows for the existence of the poetic subject in a state of simultaneous binary opposition, as both an entity in *Khalq* and *Haqq*. He then possesses the capability of fulfilling the destiny which Pessoa assigned to him in the first stage of

his work and in which he continues in the third and most recent stage of his work. That destiny is his role in aiding those who cannot or do not see the true face of the world and guiding them to their freedom.

The question that arises, after so much centralization and simultaneous re-definition, re-appropriation and deconstruction, is if the poetry of Janés and Pessoa still pertains to the all-encompassing label of “postmodernism.” I will address this question, as well as that of Janés’ and Pessoa’s place in Contemporary Iberian poetry, in the conclusion of this dissertation.

Conclusion: The Recontextualization of Janés and Pessoa into Iberian

Postmodern Poetry

In the previous five chapters, I have summarized both the basic tenets of postmodernism and the Iberian manifestation of the Sufi way which exert a noticeable influence on the works of both Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. In this concluding section of the dissertation I will address the consequences of these two poets' mystical poetics with respect to aspects of postmodernism in the Peninsula as seen in the previous chapters. In so doing, I hope to answer the question posed at the end of the previous chapter, that is, in what way do Janés' and Pessoa's works fit within the parameters of the postmodern as studied in this dissertation. I will begin this chapter with a short summary of the differences and similarities between Janés' and Pessoa's articulations / modifications of Ibn 'Arabi's Iberian Sufi mystical process. Then, I will attempt to explain the phenomenon of recentralization in both poetics in the context of deconstruction in order to answer the question posed above.

As the previous four chapters of this dissertation have argued, the deconstruction of hegemonic social ideals while maintaining ties to internal notions of order through the metaphor of Sufi ascension is not only plausible, it has happened. First, there is the case of the four works by Clara Janés studied here, *Vivir*, *Creciente Fértil*, *Diván y el ópalo de fuego* and *Arcángel de sombra*. In these works there exist simultaneously an anti-hegemonic, anti-phallogentric rebellion reminiscent of the critical interpretations of her work shown in Chapter II and a unique manifestation of the Sufi mystical process as

modified by the Iberian Sufi mystic, Ibn ‘Arabi, and as defined by Koovackal in his article, “Sufi Spirituality.” Then, there is the case of Joaquim Pessoa’s second-stage works, *Os Olhos de Isa* and *À Mesa do Amor*. In these works the reader observes a similar simultaneous presence of anti-hegemonic notions, (although in this instance the notion is not anti-phallic, but more a general sense of disillusionment with a government whose violent repression of the civilian populace translates, in Pessoa’s work, into a censorship of the truth and of love) combined with a Sufi mystical *process* transformed into a *cycle*. It is in this cycle that Pessoa’s poetic subject may remain in the “impure” world, or *Khalq*, and attempt to aid others in seeing the truth of their condition. In both cases, the Sufi mystical process is brought about by a romantic encounter whose position as catalyst for the process derives, as I have suggested in this dissertation, from Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of the divine feminine as seen in his *Taryuman al-Aswaq*. Also, each poet’s unique process is carried by an imagery whose combination of both traditional Christian and Sufi symbols serves to deconstruct the Christian-lead hegemony in peninsular culture.

The duality described above signifies neither a break from the aspects of postmodernism studied here nor a break from the universality which each unique combination with Sufi mystical illumination has provided. Rather, while recentralization is not necessarily postmodern, the notion of a simultaneous *restructuring* and *deconstruction*, as seen in Chapter I, creates a space defined entirely through contradiction and binary opposition, similar to that of Derrida’s “différance.” It is important to note that Derrida’s “différance,” although similar to the simultaneous binary

oppositions inherent in the Sufi mystical process, stems from an underlying need to undo the past “master narrative,” while the Sufi oppositions mean to reveal a more whole universe. In any case, the anti-hegemonic nature of the Sufi way, as mentioned in Chapter III, serves to support the deconstructive, anti-hegemonic discourses of both Janés’s anti-phallic and Pessoa’s anti-censorship work. This, as well as the anachronism of Sufi mystical symbolism in a postmodern context, creates an all-encompassing simultaneous binary opposition of destruction and construction within the postmodern. This ironic, but evident, conclusion reveals that postmodernism itself, as manifest in Janés’ and Pessoa’s works, may serve as an element of the universality of love, the erotic, and mystical path to illumination. In fact, there seems to be reflected in the Janés’ and Pessoa’s works a stabilization of postmodernism as a system whose defining characteristics are its own fluidity and general semantic non-determinacy, despite the presence of a centralizing force such as a Sufi mystical process. Interestingly, its own acceptance of this, or any, mystical process acts as a sign of extreme adaptability, to be deconstructive in one instance and then recentralizing in the next. Of course, in this case the recentralizing and the “universality” of Janés’ and Pessoa’s works are limited to “local” cultures, those of the Iberian Peninsula. This creates the very paradoxical and contradictory situation of a universality which exists only universal in a specific, non-universal context. This ultimate irony, nonetheless, demonstrates the capacity for absorption of multiple cultural and social criticisms, rebellions and even Sufi mystical symbolism, in what may possibly indicate postmodernism’s stability as one of the fundamental artistic movements in Iberian poetry in the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

As has become apparent in Chapter V, however, the poetic subject's desire to remain in the world of *Khalq* in Pessoa's work contrasts with the desire of Janés' poetic subject to leave the flesh behind and ascend into a world where the illuminated soul may then *decide later* to return and help others. I believe that the presence in Janés' work of the death of the flesh is indicative of a very Spanish notion of death as a powerful part of life, much more so than in Pessoa's work. Although not studied in this dissertation, it is possible that the difference in a poetic subject's death or life represents a crucial differentiation between Spanish and Portuguese poetry as a whole. This could mean that the manifestations of the Sufi mystical process in both Janés and Pessoa, while creating an environment of simultaneous deconstruction and recentralization, also take on the particular characteristics of the metaphysical thematics indicative of their separate national poetics. However, this notion of separation through the topic of death cannot at this time be at all proven. It is simply one of many avenues of future study which this dissertation hopes to open for the reader.

In speaking of further avenues of research, I believe that there exist at least four different perspectives that one may take, beside the possibility seen in the previous paragraph. First, there exist ample possibilities for expansion of this work into the broader areas of both the study of post-colonial discourse and of the tenets of "orientalism" as described by Said. Second, one may consider a broadly-based exploration of the more literary nature of Sufi or other mystical processes existent in either Spanish or Portuguese literatures. Thirdly, one may delve deeper into Janés or Pessoa's uniquely mystical postmodern traits, either jointly or separately, to answer the

important question of whether these aspects of the postmodern embrace the Sufi way or if the process actually occurs vice-versa. Finally, there is a notion in the sciences known as the “paradigm shift” which may have applications in the study of postmodernism’s development and subsequent dominant stature among alternative literary genres and movements (its absorption of Sufi mysticism is a clear sign of this). The idea that perhaps postmodernism reflects either a crisis of the over-encompassing cultural, social and artistic paradigm of Modernity, or the transition into another paradigm, could have unforeseen implications in postmodern art and artistic criticism.

In this dissertation, I have discussed the presence of postmodernism in the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the criticism existing on the poetic works of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa. I have followed with an explanation of the Iberian Sufi mystical process and its presence and influence in specific works by both Janés and Pessoa. Finally, I have concluded that the simultaneously postmodern and mystical poetics of Clara Janés and Joaquim Pessoa reflect a stabilization of postmodernism as one of the principal poetic movements of the Iberian Peninsular poetry at the end of the 20th Century.

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