

RAMON LLULL AND THE SECRET OF LIFE

Ramon Llull and the Secret of Life

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TRANSLATED BY

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Contents

Preface	VII
1. The Secret of Life	1
Conversion: 1232–1263	2
Formation: 1263–1274	7
Contemplation: 1274–1283	12
Preaching: 1283–1316	21
2. Wisdom and Compassion	31
A Cosmic Christology	34
The Body of Contemplation	46
The Enlightened Descent	56
3. The Alchemy of Language	68
Conversion and Conversation	70
Contemplative Prayer	79
Language and Destruction	82
The Animals, Metals, and Plants Speak	96
Epilogue: The Hermeneutic of the Secret	101
Notes	105
Selections from the Writings of Ramon Llull	135
<i>The Book of Contemplation on God</i>	137
<i>The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men</i>	159
<i>Blanquerna</i>	174
<i>The Book of the Lover and the Beloved</i>	180
<i>Felix, or the Book of Wonders</i>	191
<i>The Tree of Knowledge</i>	195

<i>Disconsolation</i>	208
<i>The Song of Ramon</i>	226
<i>Ars brevis</i>	229
<i>Contemporary Life</i>	236
Chronology of the Life of Ramon Llull	259
Bibliography	262
Index	271

Preface

IT IS NOW TEN years since I wrote my first study of Ramon Llull, the fruit of three years I spent in research at the Raimundus Lullus Institut in the University of Freiburg. Although surrounded by a first-rate group of professors and students, with access to a splendid library of primary sources in medieval philosophy, I did not at the time appreciate the scope of the immense scientific and spiritual project buried in the nearly 300 works composed by Llull in Catalan, Latin, and Arabic.

Already in the eighteenth century Ibo Salzinger had published an edition of Llull's Latin works in Germany (*Editio Moguntina*) under the auspices of the elector Johann Wilhelm von de Pfalz. For centuries it served as the standard reference, but in recent years the need to take into account a fuller corpus of established texts has set in motion the preparation of critical editions of the complete works in Latin and Catalan, no manuscripts in Arabic having been uncovered as yet. After several failed attempts by scholars in Mallorca, Professor Friedrich Stegmüller of the University of Freiburg proposed a full edition of all of Llull's Latin works, beginning with the painstaking compilation of a catalogue of texts. The project has continued on and off for more than forty years without reaching completion. More recently the work of preparing a critical edition of the works in Catalan was begun.

Studies about Llull have ranged widely across the expanse of his highly original thought, from an initial period of fascination with the symbolic language of his *ars combinatoria*, which held a strong appeal for philosophers like Nicolas of Cusa, Giordano Bruno, and Pico della Mirandola, to interest in his *lingua universalis*, which attracted the attention of G. W. Leibniz, among others—all of which has led recent scholars to recognize Llull as a predecessor of modern computer languages.

The impact of Lull's thinking in Europe, like that of his contemporary in the Germanic world Meister Eckhart, or of Dante in Italy, is due mainly to the fact that it presented philosophic discourse in the vernacular. The incipient creativity of a language born of experience, which had been germinating in the spiritual movements of Europe already from the twelfth century, had to contend with opposition from the dominant modes of thought and expression. Add to the value of visionary experience the desire to communicate it and we have a spiritual hermeneutics that seeks to project itself universally. It is just such a project that I have set out to uncover in the philosophical and religious thinking of Lull.

My interpretation will unfold through the reading of a text, considered to be autobiographical, in which the most decisive moments of Lull's spiritual and existential journey are recorded in a symbolic key. Accordingly, Part 1 will attempt to link the emergence of this splendid piece of writing to the need to understand an extraordinary individual experience. Part 2 develops his theory of mystical contemplation, and Part 3 considers the varieties of language used by Lull. In the hopes of demonstrating something of the richness of his literary expression, a selection of texts representative of the topics treated in the body of the book has been appended at the end.

I wish to thank professor Peter Walter, director of the Lullus Institut, for his kindness in receiving me during June 2000, so that I might work on my manuscript. I am also indebted to Raquel Bouso, a graduate student at my university, for her assistance with computer input of the final text; to professors Lluís Duch, Blanca Garí (Barcelona), and Antonio Rigo (Venice) for sharing research resources with me. Special thanks are due to Joan Esquerra i Tuñí, who made me a gift of his old edition of the works of Lull, and to Miguel Dalmau, with whom I visited the northern coast of Mallorca.

Nor can I neglect to acknowledge the many people who have helped me from the time I began my studies in medieval mysticism and philosophy, beginning with my professors in the University of Freiburg Klaus Jacobi (philosophy), Charles Lohr (theology), and Bernhard Uhde (history of religions), from whom I acquired the tools to encounter so complex a world. Two others I would single out for my best conversations on Ramon Lull and for their selfless direction: Jordi Gayà (Rome) and Fernando Domínguez Reboiras, a fellow at the Raimundus Lullus Institut and coordinator for the Latin edition of his works. Particular thanks also go to my friend Wulf Oesterreicher, current head of the Department of Romance Languages at the University of Munich and formerly professor in Freiburg, from whom I have learned a great deal both through long hours of discussion and through the enjoyable time we spent together in the Black Forest. Without his generosity, support, and confidence in me, I would not have

been able to complete the projects I was working on. But I would not have written the present book had the idea not been put in my head two years ago by Victoria Cirlot and Jacobo Stuart. It is thanks to their initiative that I was able to find my way back again to the beauty of the work of Ramon Llull.

NOTE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As the English translation of this book nears completion, I would like to thank my friend James Heisig of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture in Nagoya, Japan, for his labors on its behalf. He has followed the work with interest from its early stages, and that close contact is reflected in these pages. I also wish to acknowledge the generosity of Princeton University Press, and especially of Anthony Bonner and Eve Bonner, for allowing us to include portions of their translations of Llull's work. Finally, it is a special privilege for me to acknowledge the enthusiasm and efficiency with which the Crossroad Publishing Company and its director, Gwendolin Herder, have taken up the English translation. To all of them, my deepest appreciation.

Barcelona, 2002

I

The Secret of Life

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN the visible and the invisible—or in the terms that Lull prefers, between the sensible and the intelligible (or spiritual¹)—represents an interpretative frame for understanding the world, both the things that make it up and ourselves in relation to them. The dialogue itself stands in a kind of middle ground between the upper and lower limits of possible knowledge.² This middle ground is at one and the same time the foundation of individual experience and the place at which the self, in pursuit of its native vocation to understand itself, makes its way through the labyrinth of life, from the starting point of its quest to its encounter with its own elusive and continually displaced being. It is only when individual experience comes to insight against the historical horizon of the universal that we can speak of it properly as *life*.

The vocation to self-understanding is further reinforced by extending the search for the meaning of life into literary expression, where for the first time the world of symbolic expression comes into play. Even as experience elevated to the frame of the universal closes off the normal way of seeing things as events of subjective history, it opens itself to expression at the level of the theoretical life. From that point on, life discloses itself as a secret to be understood in the light of the transhistorical dimension of mystery, access to whose final unveiling is gained by converting one's life into a model of wisdom or, in the context of medieval Christianity, of sanctity.³ It is from such a perspective that we shall carry out our reading of the life of Ramon Lull and, mindful of the close relationship certain medieval authors

see between life and reading,⁴ try to see the course of his life as alternating between these two mutually illuminating dimensions of experience and understanding.

CONVERSION: 1232–1263

Having passed the age of eighty, Ramon Llull (Majorca, 1232–1316) sets about recounting the principal events of his life to the Carthusian monks of the Abbey of Vauvert in Paris, providing the basis for the *Vita coetanea* or *Vita Beati Raimundi Lulli*.⁵ The circumstances of the work, now recognized as autobiographical, bring to mind St. Augustine and the composition of his *Retractationes*. At the end of his account, in what amounts to a clear last will and testament, Llull lists 124 of his writings, indicating where he wishes copies of his manuscripts to be preserved (Paris, Genoa, and Majorca).⁶ Aware of the many years that have passed since his conversion at age thirty, and driven by a certain need to relate his life to his written work, he offers the list of writings as milestones in the story he wants to unfold.

Unlike that of Augustine of Hippo, however, Llull's general aim does not seem to be the correction of earlier opinions or the softening of certain polemical positions he had taken on questions of Christian dogma in the debates and discussions, both written and oral, he had engaged in during the course of his political and apologetic missions across Europe, north Africa, and the eastern Mediterranean. We see rather someone driven to understand his personal journey, to recapitulate his lifetime by tracing out its distinctive pattern. This he does in conversation with the Carthusian monks of Paris listening to him and copying down his words. But also and more importantly, he is in conversation with himself a few years before his death. Among the various forms of religious and ecclesiastical discourse available to him, he opts for a "discourse of confession"⁷ made before God and before others in an effort to achieve subjective awareness.⁸ Historians have drawn attention to the political and propagandist value of this document, but this is only half the picture.⁹ By the end of his life Llull had in fact gained a hearing among the leading political and religious personalities of the age. Taking advantage of a visit to the Council of Vienne (1311–1312), he reiterated forcefully the principal obsessions that had marked his religious life, especially the need to preach in infidel lands.

The text of the *Vita* regularly mixes questions of doctrinal and philosophical principle with accounts of personal turning points in life. As such, it shows the value of understanding one's own existence against a wider cul-

tural and historical horizon. As a result, the symbolic model of sanctity he offers takes on a more universal value, and the account of his personal path to conversion presents a model of wisdom that is not bound to one cultural setting.¹⁰

The account,¹¹ recorded in the third person, begins by authorizing the transcription of the principal facts:

To the honor, praise, and love of our only Lord God Jesus Christ, Ramon, at the instance of certain monks who were friends of his, recounted and allowed to be put down in writing what follows concerning his conversion to penitence and other deeds of his. (*Vita* 1)

What the monks in Paris are writing down here, with Lull's permission, is the story of his return to God many years previously when Ramon was a sinner addicted to the pleasures of the world. The *Vita* opens with the narration of the "conversion to penitence" that marked his birth as a new man. It also shows us how his awareness of sin emerges from conversation with himself and with God (and perhaps also with the Carthusian monks), and how this awareness in turn led him to redirect his past life towards a future in which to entrust his faith and project his life beyond the present.

The first significant period of the *Vita* covers the years between Ramon Lull's birth in Majorca in 1232 and the occurrence of his first vision in 1263. The text has almost nothing to say of Ramon's principal occupation prior to his conversion. The only fact in the opening of the story he wishes to establish clearly is his familiarity with the minstrel's art of composing love songs¹²:

Ramon, while still a young man and senechal to the king of Majorca, was very given to composing worthless songs and poems and to doing other licentious things. One night he was sitting beside his bed, about to compose and write in his vulgar tongue a song to a lady whom he loved with a foolish love; and as he began to write this song, he looked to his right and saw our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, as if suspended in midair. This sight filled him with fear; and, leaving what he was doing, he retired to bed and went to sleep. (*Vita* 2)

Drawings in the Karlsruhe manuscript¹³ depict Ramon seated next to his bed and engrossed in poetic composition, his gaze elevated to the place in the room where a vision of Christ on the cross appears to him—as it would five times more during the following days, until at last he "understands with certainty" the about-face he must make in life. For "God wanted him, Ramon, to leave the world and dedicate himself totally to the service of Christ."¹⁴

Henceforth the light and reason of his existence center on three things: a willingness to die for Christ in converting the infidels to his service, the composition of the best book in the world to counter their errors, and the establishment of monasteries in which the various languages of the Saracens and others might be learned. The order in which he intended to carry out his plan, although probably not very well defined at the time of his conversion, reflects the rhythm that was to play itself out in the rest of his life: martyrdom (religious consciousness), writing (formation), and monastic foundation (the need to preach). The *Vita* suggests that already from the time of his conversion he had somehow envisioned the whole of his life to come in light of that threefold plan.

Of the three aims, the writing of the book would turn out to be his fundamental life's project. He saw writing as a way to interlace the profane life with the religious life. It gives continuity to the "shifting of the emotional center"¹⁵ that has taken place, so that his life's work can continue in some sense unchanged after his conversion, whether it take the form of praise for love's folly or the invocation of divine love. In Llull it is profane love that will give meaning to divine love, and it is in the continued exercise of writing, as if in a single, protracted prayer, that all of this is to be revealed. From here on, his only objective is God, and what is written in the pages of the narrative fulfills this desire for reconciliation with the divine. As we see better in *The Book of Contemplation on God*—the second work he will write after these events and the main work of his corpus—Llull's desire is to return to the creator all that he is, however much or little he may make of himself, and to involve God in the process through that distinctive habit of the mystic of speaking to and conversing with the Other. Writing is his way of giving back the human part of the divine plan that took flesh and became real in his person. The search for the poetic expression is what leads Llull to his vision of the crucified. It is an example of how the characteristic trait of the troubadour's poetry as an "inner pilgrimage" moved by the face of the beloved links the genre to mystical literature.¹⁶

The first call to repentance is situated in the context of a quest. Whether it is a quest for the beloved or a quest for God, the important thing is that a way has opened to a reality beyond one's self. The search for the other commits one to make use of every means life puts at one's disposal, even when that means conflict with established norms or transgression of laws and social norms. To some extent this is the radical demand of the religious life itself¹⁷: to let go of oneself after the model of Abraham and forsake the familiar. But there is also the fact that a basic readiness to open the mind favors conversion and the transfiguration of the face of the beloved into the face of God.

The time of conversion and the time of writing come together here. The vision of the crucified, far from promoting a world of fantasy and unreality,¹⁸ transforms the disorder of life and the state of sin into a state of awareness and, in line with a long tradition, a life of prayer. The vulgar measure of time is broken, transformed into a new and creative beginning, whose first fruit is the felt need for new writing. Writing offers a kind of temporary interruption so that old time and new time can begin to flow together. The repetition of the visions that impede Llull's futile efforts to return to his previous life take place in ordinary, continuous time; but the call to repentance heard in this world resounds as an unmistakable echo from the other. Conversion requires transformation, not so much in the sense of the emergence of something new as in the sense of a new insight into what already exists. What we see here is a change of dimension or perspective that opens up a religious path to a godless life without altering one's essential character: the foundation remains love, of the same passion and intensity as before.

That Llull opens his story with the conversion and visions, not giving any detail about his previous life, is more than a mere rhetorical device. It is based on a genuine experience, immutable, ever the same, and symbolically charged. The account of his experience is at the same time offered as an instance of a Christological¹⁹ pattern of redemption, thus providing him with a universal language to encompass the personal histories of all people who turned away from their past to set their heart on repentance and conversion to God. Insofar as all conversion also entails a basic confrontation with death or suffering,²⁰ we may see Llull's awakening to the ground of reality²¹ as closely bound up with the death of a selfish love and the opening up to a true self. Or again, in the same way that without awareness of the fall there is no disposition to be saved, and that without sinful, lecherous love, there is no suffering, so, too, without the painful experience of a love in which there is no loving "without a reason why"²² there is no consciousness of finitude or death or conversion.²³ Conversion represents an absolutely new state only to the extent that the spiritual death is followed immediately by new insight in one's sinful condition and its cure. For Llull the suffering occasioned by impure love is the key to the *imitatio Christi*.

The "conversion to penitence" does not draw attention to the carnal life that Llull apparently lived to the full in his youth.²⁴ The core of his sin is located rather in the forgetfulness of God that comes from the *concupiscentia carnis* of which Augustine speaks, condemning the self to prefer its own will to God's will,²⁵ as we see in the following fragment from *The Book of Contemplation on God*:

I had been mad from the beginning of my days until I had passed my thirtieth year, at which point I began to recall your wisdom and had the desire to give you praise to recall your passion. For just as the sun has greater strength at midday, so was I mad and of little wisdom until the middle of my years.²⁶

For the author to reconstruct certain facts of his life in terms that are comprehensible to others, he needs to construct his individual story so that it can be read against the horizon of a mythical human history. In the beginning, then, the sin of forgetting God leads to the fall. In addition to establishing the fact of a new beginning, the mythical frame offers a model of understanding: *In illo tempore* humans had direct knowledge of God. Their forgetfulness did not proceed from sensual passion but from exclusive attention to the self. In the context of Christian spirituality, this means that conversion may be explained as the transition from a “forgetfulness of self” to a recovery of the memory of God.²⁷

Once the certitude of a new life in God has penetrated all Llull’s senses, the *Vita* recounts how the initial decision to offer up his life in martyrdom²⁸ soon left him disheartened as he began to reflect on how unsuited he was to carry out a mission among the Saracens:

Coming back to himself, however, he realized that he had none of the knowledge necessary for such an undertaking, since he had scarcely learned more than a bare minimum of grammar. This thought worried him, and he began to feel very sad. (*Vita* 5)

Still, the new self-awareness sustained by the conversion experience needed some concrete framework to give meaning to the following years, to reconfirm the new historical horizon of his understanding. The certitude of his radical experience has to be expressed the only way he knew how: writing “the best book in the world.” But his ignorance, which extended to matters of theology, makes the idea of seeing such a project to term seem impossible. He also lacks the means to communicate.

The *Vita* is full of passages that point to the resolution of the author—or the anonymous authors—to stay **in the realm of paradox**. Accordingly, the initial impossibility is resolved by yielding to a new one: preaching in written and oral form in the Arabic language. The solution will have to wait until the feast of St. Francis, when, listening to a sermon in the convent of the Friars Minor and inspired by the example of the saint, Llull makes up his mind once and for all. At that point his life opens up into an eleven-year period during which he will undertake the formation needed for self-understanding.²⁹

FORMATION: 1263–1274

The first step Lull takes toward the horizon he has drawn for himself is a pilgrimage to the holy places of Sainte Marie de Rocamadour in France and Santiago de Compostela (1263–1264), thus fulfilling the demand of poverty: to give up what is one's own and familiar. This signals a new self-abandonment that creates an empty space and serves as a preparatory ascesis for the great intellectual adventure that lies ahead. The departure puts him back at the beginning, at point zero as it were. It is not as if he were fleeing the world so much as immersing himself in its incomprehensibility and mystery. Lull casts himself into a life adventure, at the dictates of heaven, and with it is there comes to birth a secret life that will continue until the time of the "enlightenment of Randa," when the "form and manner" of writing his book will be revealed to him.

The *Vita* tells us that he returns from his pilgrimage intending to go to Paris in order to get the academic training he lacks. But passing through Barcelona he meets Ramon de Penyafort, Superior General of the Order of Preachers, who vigorously dissuades him of the idea, recommending instead that he return to Majorca to seek a formation more suited to his plans. Lull sets out in search of an alternate route to overcome his academic deficiencies.³⁰

When he arrived there he left the grand style of life which he had previously led and put on a lowly habit of the coarsest cloth he could find. And in that same city he then studied a bit of grammar, and having bought himself a Saracen, he learned the Arabic language from him. (*Vita* 11)

The nine years between 1265 and 1274 pass in a highly significant silence in which all teaching is reduced to instruction in language, that is, to acquiring the vehicle that would serve him later in his writing and preaching. During the long conversations with his slave, possibly of educated stock, in addition to learning the Arabic language he was able to gain a basic knowledge of Islamic theology.³¹ As if out of a need to erase from the picture every trace of his formation, the *Vita* relates the tragic episode of the Saracen's attempt to kill Lull and of his subsequent suicide in prison. Thus discharged of all responsibility towards the one who had taught him so much, Ramon makes his debut as an author.

Lull composed his first two works³² during those years of formation and study (1265–1274), between the ages of 33 and 42: *The Logic of Algazel* (1271–1272) and *The Book of Contemplation on God* (1274), this latter being his greatest literary creation. At the time he was still someone in search of insight into his visionary experience. Eleven years had passed since that fit

of love that drove him to his pilgrimage and then into retreat, but he continued to share a home in Majorca City with his wife, Blanca, and their two children, Domingo and Magdalena. In the meantime he had become a *contemplativus*, as his wife referred to him spitefully.³³ These first two works were written in Arabic, though the only extant copies are in Latin and Catalan, probably translated by Llull himself. Both writings, but especially the second, are a demonstration of what we might call the language of “inner” revelation that was to serve as a model for “outer” preaching. In fact, the theoretical content of his inner experience is quite simple, though Llull is at pains to frame it in a more prestigious context and idiom, both Christian and Islamic. Both works manifest the influence of his study and interest in Islam during those years, but the manner of expression and the control over the text, despite the four years that transpire between the one and the other, is completely distinct in the two.³⁴

The Logic of Algazel announces the language of what will be one of his major discoveries, the *ars combinatoria*, or combinatory art, while *The Book of Contemplation on God*, likewise a work of confession with numerous autobiographical passages, lays out amply the range of his mystical thought in the language of philosophy and theology, with which he was able to familiarize himself during his studies. If there is one thing that strikes one in these two works that precede the enlightenment of Randa, it is their dark and at times erratic side. The language struggles to open a path through a multiplicity of themes whose ordering is hard to capture. After Randa the themes will not change, only the form of language. In a certain sense these two works lay the ground for the reception of something new, something that will bring with it the power of the enlightened word which, in the religious context familiar to Llull, is to be understood as a spiritual birth empowering preaching to the outside.³⁵

His religious disputations, beginning with *The Book of the Gentile*, are thus preceded by works resulting from the years of study and prayer and aimed at giving content to his revelations. There is no cause to underestimate this content merely on the grounds of its linguistic expression. In its own theological context, the word is everything and does not allow for differentiating between what it is and what it transmits. Historically speaking, however, the order of the writing hardly seems to be a matter of chance or whim. Even though the *Logic* presents the reader with a synthesis of questions of logic and their application to theological polemics (to which Llull certainly intended to apply himself), nothing prevents us from seeing in the brief treatise a preparatory study to his method of contemplation, as well as the principles of a topology of mysticism that will be variously developed in his extensive later work.

The *Logic* contains various parts of the philosophy of Algazel (d. 1111) that helped Llull to familiarize himself with the modes of rational discussion peculiar to Islamic theology (*kâlam*). The Latin translation includes the obscure *Additiones de philosophia et theologia* ("Additions on Philosophy and Theology."³⁶ In the thick of the forest of symbolic language Llull employs there, a first group of figures appear in the form of trees³⁷ and geometrical shapes (circles and triangles), later to undergo more complex development. In the first short treatise of the *Additiones*, written in verse, Llull introduces the use of algebraic language, based on certain letters stating propositions that can be converted from one to the other and that will form the foundation of his combinatorial logic. The exercise of syllogistic logic helped Llull to master the art of discussion and conversation, but beyond that and above all, it prepared the ground for his art of converting.

In the second treatise of these obscure *Additiones* we find a particularly difficult passage, abstract and at one point highly symbolic, that will be illumined only as Llull's life and preaching unfold. It is a text of considerable interpretative obscurity,³⁸ expounding a rudimentary epistemology based on four modes of signification that may be understood as philosophical modes of abstraction. Similar to the four divisions of nature in John Scotus Eri-gena,³⁹ they are supposed to contain all the secrets of nature. The verses speak of four roads to the discovery of the secrets (*De investigatione secreti*):

*Si tu vols null secret trobar,
ab .iiii. mous lo vay cercar.*

*Primerament ab sensual
ençerca altre en sensual,
e cor .i. en sensualitat
dona d altre significat,
cor la forma artificial
de son maestre es senyal.
Segons mou es con sensual
demonstra l'entellectual,
com per est mou, qui's sensual,
entens l altre entellectual.*

*Ecte lo terç mou, on greument
impren ostal l'enteniment:
est es con l'entellectual
d altre es mostra e senyal,
axí com ver y fals qui són
los majors contraris del mon,
e demostren que Deus es;*

If you wish to find something secret
seek it in four modes.

First, with the sensual
seek another [mode] in the sensual,
for [just as one] in sensuality
gives the meaning of the other [mode],
so is the artificial form
a sign of its master.

The second mode is when the sensual
shows the intellectual,
as through this world, which is sensual,
you understand the other intellectual
[world].

Behold the third mode,
in which understanding is firmly lodged;
it is when the intellectual
of the other [mode] is a display and signal,
just like true and false, which are
the greatest contraries of the world,
and shows that God is;

*cor si posam que Deus no es,
 so qui ver e fals n es menor,
 e si Deus es, es en major
 contrarietat e ambdos;
 e cor major es ahondós;
 d'esser, e menor en defall,
 d onchs pots saber que per null
 tayll
 menor ab esser no.s cové,
 pus c'ab lo menor no fos re.
 Ab tres mous t'ay demostrat
 Deus esser ell significat;
 del quart mou te vull remem-
 brar
 ab l'intellectual, so.m par,
 d aysó qui's secret sensual;
 car theorica t'es senyal
 de los secrets de praticha.*

for if we propose that God is not,
 then true and false would have less [con-
 trariness],
 and if God is, there is
 greater contrariness between the two;
 and given that the greater [contrariness] is
 abundant
 in being, and the lesser lacks [it],
 thus can you know that in no way
 does the lesser belong to being,
 for with the lesser there would be nothing.
 Through three modes I have shown you
 that God is signified;
 of the fourth mode I wish to remind you
 with the intellectual, or as it seems to me,
 of that which is the sensual secret,
 for the theoretical is a sign
 of the secrets of practice.⁴⁰

Life is conceived as a mystery to be unveiled, a labyrinth of the sensible and the intelligible where one orients oneself according to four degrees of signification (sensible–sensible, sensible–intelligible, intelligible–intelligible, and intelligible–sensible).⁴¹ In the context of Aristotelian logic, these grades of signification describe a framework of ascent and descent from the particular to the universal, and vice versa). But in a mystical-contemplative scheme like Llull's, they can indicate the diverse movements of the spirit between the active and the contemplative life or, in the Aristotelian language that he himself employs, between the theoretical and the practical life. In the development of later works this scheme, which we may call “transcendental,” will be converted into a ladder of subjects⁴² that recapitulates the fullness of creation, from the most perfect being, the angel, to the lowest, the rock. It depicts both the limits of the possible and the perfection of the hierarchy among creatures, and it does so by making use of a widely shared model known in the Latin tradition as the *scala creaturarum*.⁴³

In the scheme discovered by Llull, however, the differentiation of the sensible and the intelligible is not simply used for epistemological (grades of signification) and cosmological (*scala creaturarum*) symbolism. It holds the secret of one's own lifetime and the secrets of the spirit whose objectives will unfold in the course of new events. There would be nothing mysterious about this passage if the final grade or *modus significandi* proposed were to conclude with a higher knowledge of intelligible-spiritual reality, thus

confirming the mystical intentions of the author to situate ultimate reality at the summit of the soul's ascent. But the fourth mode obliges us to turn our attention back to the lower level where everything began. The passage shows Lull's intention to locate himself in a philosophical-religious tradition with obvious Neoplatonic elements, which Jews, Christians, and Muslims could share as a philosophical foundation of their respective beliefs. At the same time, his model stresses the aspect of descent to the light of divine revelation, a movement of theophany that corresponds to the scientific-mystical path of the ascent. In no sense, however, does this mark the end of the road. After ecstasy, the reality of the eschatological dimension of time as well as the individual and collective history of the factual world oblige the seeker of secrets to return to the sensible world, not only imitating the model of creation that has been revealed but also applying, in the descent, the new model acquired in contemplative ecstasy, whose religious reference is the "kenotic" experience of the self-humiliation of God (Phil. 2:8).

It should not be forgotten that we are dealing here with a method for "discovering secrets" (*secretum investigari*), for unveiling to a limited understanding a reality that is veiled, whether merely to the senses or to the intellect as well. Thinking needs to proceed dialectically through the four levels of knowing that contain all of reality and where both the divine and the human have their meaning. From the standpoint of mystical-contemplative thought, it may come as a surprise to see the narrow limits that this interpretation has Lull imposing on thought aimed at the highest summit in its attempt to include even divine truths in a rationally comprehensible whole. But this was his challenge right from the start: to locate talk about God and the mysteries of religion in a scheme of the possibility of meaning that aims to cover the whole of rational argumentation.

The principal objective of the text is to come to a conception of God and reality through the very kinds of argument needed to confront the conversion of the gentiles. But it also has a more distant objective: to transform reality and the spirit. Such a scheme does more than offer a scientific method or epistemological model; it also has implications of a moral sort, given that the circle it traces between the two poles of the sensible and the intelligible shows a clear intent to establish a unity between the intellectual life and ordinary life, as indeed the text itself bears out.

Lull's is an art of seeking and finding the secrets of revelation, of finding and uncovering truth where it resides, however occult, in order to make it manifest to others. It has less in common with the sort of theological or apologetic method in style at the time than with a religious philosophy whose goal is first to orientate itself towards knowing truth and only later to convert what it has found into an object of preaching. This art of seeking

and finding the truth in the meanings of the world is an art of encountering God. For this reason, one who practices it is able to ascend and descend through the grades of signification, demonstrating the places in which the world finds sense and meaning.

If logic and theology offered a field on which to practice preaching, Llull's mystical inspiration aimed directly at constructing the world and the new reality that his astonishing language was attempting to describe. In this sense the preparation of *The Book of Contemplation on God* lays open at one stroke a framework in which all the topics to be developed subsequently are already present *in nuce*, even if they do not yet enjoy the privileged language and method of other works to come after the enlightenment of Randa. At the same time, it lays the foundations for an intellectual understanding of the religious life, of a preparation and ascesis of the spirit that will unfold into a prolonged appeal to the creator of the universe, an attempt to attract the divine to our own mundane reality.

CONTEMPLATION: 1274–1283

After nine years of intellectual and spiritual formation in Majorca, in which the two former works put to the test Llull's capacity for understanding inner preaching, he still lacked the language of communication necessary to inaugurate the second part of his life—preaching to others. In 1274 Ramon Llull is 42 years of age. Images in the Karlsruhe manuscript show him in the mountain heights of Randa on his island of Majorca, where he had retreated to contemplate, his books completed:

After this, Ramon went up a certain mountain not far from his home, in order to contemplate God in greater tranquility. When he had been there scarcely a full week, it happened that one day while he was gazing intently heavenward the Lord suddenly illuminated his mind, giving him the form and method for writing the aforementioned book against the errors of the unbelievers. Giving thanks to the Almighty, he came down from the mountain and returned at once to the above-mentioned abbey, where he began to plan and write the book in question, calling it at first the *Arx major*, and later on the *Arx generalis*.... When he had finished the book written in the aforementioned abbey, he again went up the same mountain. And on the very spot where he had stood when God had shown him the method of the Art he had a hermitage built, where he stayed for over four months without interruption, praying to God night and day that by his mercy he might bring prosperity to him and to the Art he had given him for the sake of his honor and the benefit of his church. (*Vita* 14)

To the intellectual formation there is added now a new language that arrives by way of a revealed book. To the earlier visions of the crucified in perceptible form, which brought together at a single moment in time the history of the passion and the proclamation of the history of Lull's salvation, there is added now the grace of the inspired form in the archetype considered most prestigious among religious communities—the Book. This will empower him to write and to preach, perhaps without academic sophistication, but with the authority of divine revelation. What has transpired here needs to be seen as closely connected to the first visions that came to him in a state of watching and waiting.⁴⁴ The revelation occurred only at the end of his coming to insight. Had it occurred earlier, he could not have materialized in a form visible to the senses. The first visions had been clearly Christian in content, but nine years later the event at Randa responded to the need for a broader, interreligious project that was to mark the end of his period of formation.

Revelation in the form of a book easily fits a pattern traditionally held in high esteem among monotheistic religions. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of the koranic model of what has been called “inlibration”⁴⁵ to underscore the theoretical kinship with the idea of incarnation: the Word become Book. In Lull's case, it provided him with a vehicle of communication and a model for preaching. The complete title of the book that represented the first tangible formulation of the revelation at Randa was *Arx compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (“The Abbreviated Art of Discovering the Truth”). Lull was full aware of the environment of “spiritual hermeneutics” in which believers in the “communities of the Book” (Ahl al-Kitâb)⁴⁶ live. For them, all of creation is seen as symbol of the activity of the Word of God through the divine attributes (what Lull had initially referred to as “dignities” in *The Book of Contemplation*). In this new book, however, he inquires after the possibilities of conversion contained in the language of syllogistic propositions, hoping to find some hint for understanding the personal conversion to which his glimpse of the divine had moved him. The genius of this step lay in the fact that his way of understanding (*modus intelligendi*) is conditioned by his way of being (*modus essendi*), which in turn will enable a new way of meaning (*modus significandi*). For all its novelty, the approach remains moored in the tradition, offering new insight without betraying the historical-transhistorical model of revealed truth.⁴⁷ Lull has seen that there is in fact no a priori understanding of revelation for the historical community. Revelation needs to be understood again and again, as if for the first time, and only in this way can it acquire a sense of salvific history to which religious individuals can contribute their own insights.

Though not without precedent in his previous writing, the main novelty

of Llull's language after the revelation of Randa is the use of geometric images as prayer-forms.⁴⁸ The entire message of preaching is now concentrated in "sensible figures" that represent a common symbolic context: first the circle, later the ladder and the tree. The *Ars compendiosa*, the work that descended from heaven, provides him with a language and a grammar to give order to and otherwise facilitate principles for preaching, but the principles themselves grew out of and were shaped by the extended period of meditation that ended with the enlightenment and resulted in the book. Already in the concluding pages of *The Book of Contemplation* we see Llull's intention to make dialogue with God the foundation for a theory of contemplative prayer, albeit in an exclusively Christian idiom.⁴⁹ The figure of the crucified remains the principal symbol of Llull's preaching, and as a result conversion is always conversion to Christ (*imitatio Christi*). Convinced of the crucial importance of this fact, and yet aware of the difficulty of introducing the figure of the incarnate Son of God into the dialogue with Jews and Muslims, he requires a universal language to integrate in rational discourse the elements needed for insight into religious experience leading to conversion. This will be the rationale for his attempts to introduce the cross into the center of the circle, somewhat in the manner of an Asian mandala. It has been suggested that the circles were the result of Llull's contemplation of the celestial sphere in the star-studded skies of the nights at Randa.⁵⁰ In any case, the circle is a universal symbol which Llull would use to include believers of traditions other than the Christian. In this connection it is worth recalling here that in the Neoplatonic worldview from which the three monotheisms have drawn, God is conceived of as an intelligible sphere.⁵¹

It seems factually accurate to consider the *Ars compendiosa* an introduction to the art of meditation, composed in the language of the Names of God, whose aim is to recapitulate all previous knowledge not only as a manual or guide for preachers but as a book of wider appeal, as would in fact become apparent in its later reception in Europe. In this sense it is a book for all—Jews, Christians, and Muslims—and in a certain sense, given its universal intent, is not aimed at promoting conversion to a specific religion (even though its language is specifically Christian), but in advancing the one true religion that integrates in itself all principles of explanation. Given its further intent to resolve the problem of predestination,⁵² it entails an art of salvation set in an eschatological context. What is remarkable here is that revelation is not treated as a prophetic-eschatological proclamation but as something philosophical, that is, precisely as something *not* learned in the theological schools. It is revelation without form or content, a mere method (scientific, apologetic, artistic, and so forth), a universal grammar. Divine

transmission is seen not as something concrete but as a way of understanding and a language, and consequently revelation is permanently bound to interpretation. During his eleven years of silence Llull was seeking a grammar for contemplation, a foundation from which other religious individuals might be able to convert to the true religion. In fact they already belonged to it as part of the historical community; what they lacked was a new way of being that would usher in a new way of understanding. In short, he saw conversion as the immediate objective of preaching and a theory of truth as its intellectual horizon.

The symbols adopted by Llull—the tree, the ladder, and the geometric figures—belong to a universal tradition, and as such are found throughout the three Abrahamic religions. Leaving aside the question of what influences may have been at work in the book, it is not so much the symbolic language itself on which the attention of the reader should focus, after getting over the initial shock, as the use to which Llull puts that language. In effect, the *Vita* tells us that before and after the revelation of Randa—that is to say, during the period that begins with the experience of conversion and ends at its comprehension in concrete and tangible language, and discounting time spent in travel during those years of formation—Llull devoted himself time and again to contemplative prayer.

Once the composition of the book was complete, we find Llull going up the mountain again to give thanks to God. He remained there in recollection for four months. During that time he learned to contemplate on the Names of God and on the recently discovered circles, which he used as prayer wheels.⁵³ After contemplation, the value of the Art would have to be confirmed in practice. This would follow in the fourth phase of his life: preaching. The *Vita* informs us that during his time in the hermitage, which, as we noted, he had built on the very site of the revelation, Llull was visited by a handsome young shepherd who praised his work for the great benefits it would bring the Church, thus according it a special prophetic significance. The providential timing of this visit, it is interesting to note, belongs to a wider tradition of angelic companions encouraging those about to embark on a religious way of life. Similar figures can also be found in ancient hermetic traditions and in Islam.⁵⁴ In the case of Llull, one senses an additional message of the call to ecclesiastical reform, not unlike the famous text of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, reminding the eschatologically oriented Christian community not to neglect its essential character as an *ecclesia sanctorum* in this world. The angelological imagery,⁵⁵ so typical of apocalyptic literature, suggests that Llull's shepherd symbolizes a theophany of the divine Word, a second apparition of the Word incarnate announcing

impending events. In this way one avoids the pitfall of exclusively ecstatic interpretations of his mystical experience.

From start to finish, the text of the *Vita* makes demands on the reader's attention, suggesting different levels of reading that in turn open up a variety of ways to understand the events recorded there. First is the ascent to the mountain and the revelation of the Art, which closes the historical period of conversion that began with the first vision of the cross. This is followed by the descent to carry out the writing, which closes the period of intellectual formation. At that point we find ourselves in a new historical present that marks a separation from the past time of conversion and the formation: contemplative activity and the second descent from the mountain that symbolizes passage to the active life and preaching.

The revelation of Randa completed the first visionary experience. But the language of that theophany implied the need for a new expression of the message of salvation. From a historical standpoint, the bases for this new mode of expressing revelation was already in gestation in previous works. From a transhistorical or metahistorical standpoint—which is the standpoint of the *Vita Beati Raimundi Lulli*—interior conversion was followed by the linguistic empowerment to preach. If we keep in mind the audience at which the work was addressed, the terms in which it was cast, whose meaning was presupposed as part of a common context of religious revelation, would represent the foundation of a common “theological grammar.” Fuller understanding of the text, however, requires familiarity with a secret ordering that only the initiated would have been able to decipher. The *ars luliana* stands before us, therefore, as a linguistic labyrinth, and in much the same way as among adepts of the Cabal only the pure of heart—as the Spanish cabbalist Abraham Abulafia (b. 1241) advises—are able to master the art of combining the Names of God, so in Llull's book the art of converting propositions whose terms are the *Dignitates Dei* is only for those with the requisite preparation. And all of this, as the text makes plain, is set against the backdrop of the conversion of the infidels.

The decisive discovery made between Llull's experience of conversion and his insight into its meaning radically affected his understanding of things. His sense experience (the visions) and his intelligible experience (the enlightenment) of God changed his way of assessing reality and led him to view the world anew. The borderlines between the sensible and the intelligible shaped everything, from the perception of the most lowly stone to the sensible-spiritual conception that enables a leap to the angelic and the divine. From such a standpoint Llull was able to offer a rational scheme in which the tension between these two extremes of the sensible and the intelligible gives access to all the rungs on the ladder of creation. Given his con-

ceptualization of human and divine reality, it is hardly surprising that he would rely on his immense confidence in the intelligible level of knowing to solve the problem of the relationship between faith and reason. And at the same time as those two poles constitute a system of ways to know reality, they also provide a way of disputation and conversation. His obsession for constantly reducing the expression of reality to a single language represents one of the most complex motifs of Lull's work. They also give us the key to unlock his mystical thought.

An important event that once again brings to the surface his overriding objective to convert others to the true religion took place in the years between 1274 and 1276,⁵⁶ namely, the composition of *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, the first work in which he applies the language discovered after the enlightenment of Randa. The immediate need he felt to try out his contemplative ideal in the context of distinct religious creeds would enable him to demonstrate the originality of his argument in comparison with other methods of preaching and apologetics. But more than this, he wished to formulate a new religious philosophy. The ideal of salvation that surged up powerfully in him after his personal conversion experience is one we find in all great religious reformers, from Buddha and Jesus to Mani and Mohammed. Once the certitude of liberation through knowledge has become experientially real, compassion leads to its communication and transmission to the human community. The sacrifice involved in renouncing control over one's own salvation ends in an ideal of martyrdom that impregnates the whole of spiritual literature. In Lull's case, it has to be understood in the Abrahamic context.

At the time that Lull felt driven by the irrepressible desire to throw himself into preaching and the salvation of infidel souls, polemical and apologetic literature had already long been the object of study in lands of the Aragon crown by privileged minds with a considerable knowledge of the Hebrew and Arabic tongues, among them Raimon Martí, author of the *Pugio fidei contra Iudaeos* ("A Dagger of Faith against the Jews," 1278).⁵⁷ The principal difference of Lull's preaching does not lie in its rational model of discussion. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa contra gentiles* (1258) and Martí, inspired by the work of St. Raimon de Penyafort,⁵⁸ had already worked our rational apologetics for Christianity. Lull's method is not aimed at disregarding the revealed truths of the faith in order to find some sort of common ground of understanding, but at working out a contemplative ideal for all his work. The search for a universal ground is only one factor. Along with it goes an almost obsessive preoccupation with a simple pedagogy for its transmission. This is evident from the many revisions and resumés to which he submitted his work time and again. The public and readership at

whom he directed his religious philosophy have to be seen as an essential ingredient of his contemplative ideal. In this sense, all of his works allow for a double reading, or perhaps better, they contain some sections that seem to be aimed at a public informed of the matters he is treating, Christian or otherwise, and others that seem to have been worked out with greater didactic deliberation for a wider public. The foundation of Llull's preaching is the transmission of a wisdom. Its principles are meant to earn consensus among an elite, but the basic model he employs has the benefit of being universal in scope.⁵⁹

Although *The Book of the Gentile* faithfully presents the creed of the three religions, Llull makes no attempt to explain to his public the dogmas and beliefs of each of them, which would make it little more than one more example of apologetic literature.⁶⁰ To the extent that the three religions are seen as historical experiences of one and the same revelation, the work is designed to present a single comprehensive model of understanding which is better achieved through simple description than through a dogmatic and fragmented presentation. The motivation for the book was not merely speculative; it was conceived as a manual for students in the eastern school of Miramar on the Tramontana coast of Majorca who were being prepared to preach to the infidels in distant lands.⁶¹ The strategy elaborated in its pages is one of argumentation through the practical exercise of reason, leaving aside questions of faith. The Names of God provide a common context of meanings, language being seen as the starting point for religious dialogue. The mutual understanding among the three sages in conversation with a gentile enables the mystical use of the Names as fundamental elements of a common idiom whose unity at the same time represents and guarantees the unity of the three religions.

The period beginning with the years 1274 to 1276, roughly the time of the redaction of *The Book of the Gentile*, and ending in 1287, when Llull made his first visit to Rome, find him working very much in darkness. For the *Vita* this time of voluntary silence is as significant as the eleven years of formation that precede it. He begins by devoting himself to securing his own intellectual preparation, animated by the desire to comprehend his visionary experience. Once he had the requisite knowledge, it is natural to assume that he felt the need to continue with the rest of his original project: the *amànca*, or science of the love of God. The *Vita* continues with his first recorded trip to Montpellier⁶² (1274–1275), where, in view of the rising notoriety of his activity on the island, he is summoned by James II. While there, a Franciscan monk examines his writings, “and in particular certain devotional meditations he had prepared for the days of the year, thirty paragraphs for each day. Not without admiration, the monk finds these medita-

tions full of prophecy and Catholic devotion.” This last comment is of interest in view of the relationship that *The Book of Contemplation* sets up among meditation, prophecy, and devotion. The contemplative prayer Lull practiced sounds a strong eschatological note even as it forms the mystical-contemplative basis of his apologetics, similar to what we see in Jewish and Islamic mystics.⁶³

The life of Ramon Lull swings back and forth between the active and the contemplative. After the frenetic activity of completing the *Ars compendiosa*, the *Vita* announces his desire for prayer. We know that during this period he wrote a mystical treatise of greater importance—and subsequently also better received—called *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*. *The Book of the Gentile* had been composed during his stay in Miramar, and there is every reason to suppose that in the solitude and beauty afforded by that place and having learned how to address himself to God through the divine Names, he threw himself intensely into meditation.

The proximity of the two works leads us further to suppose that contemplative prayer and the activity of preaching somehow each developed its own distinctive language. Prayer is now the result of having understood the word of God, and this suggests a new rhythm to the events of his life: visionary experience, intellectual understanding of this experience, contemplative prayer, and preaching. The revealed word is permanently manifest in the vision and from there is given intelligible form in the Art; next the sensible and the intelligible come together in prayer, which unites them into a single whole. Finally, preaching is the communication of the revealed word to those who can be converted, and at the same time, as mission, extends conversation with God to conversation with others. The *Book of the Lover and the Beloved* was written, as the latest edition confirms, around 1283 and in the history of his corpus appears as a chapter or appendix to the novel *Blanquerna*,⁶⁴ to whose development it was to be a necessary step and which in turn concludes with a brief treatise on the *Art of Contemplation*. Nevertheless, it is helpful to read *Blanquerna* as a type of biography in the same vein as the *Vita Raimundi*, its aim throughout being to validate the tension in the contemplative dimension of the active life or the intelligible dimension of the sensible life.⁶⁵

A preference for the ascetic and contemplative ideal over other forms of religious life shows itself from the first pages of the book, where the protagonist Blanquerna decides to “flee the world,” abandoning the riches and possessions he was to inherit from his parents, in order to give his soul over completely to the love of God.⁶⁶ The idea of flight from the world, for all the usual ambiguity that hangs over the phrase in the New Testament and the Gnostic tradition, takes on a distinctive flavor in Lull. Flight *from* the

world has to be converted into a flight *to* the world in which one lives committed to creation, culminating always in a love of nature and the world of matter. The many images Llull employs clearly deliver him from the charge of cosmological dualism. The flight is represented by the figure of the hermit, who, at first cut off from the world but then engaged in a religious life of intense public activity, contemplates the ultimate secrets that disclose themselves to his mystical insight. In other words, it is not a question of simply rejecting the world, but of reclaiming and saving it, and hence of reintegrating what once seemed only to distance one from mystery. This is the paradoxical situation in which the figure of the hermit, who appears so often in the books of Llull, seems to live.

Rejecting the love of the beautiful Natana, who seeks his hand in matrimony, Blanquerna tells her:

It is not right for you or anyone else to be my companion, as the only companionship I seek is that of God and trees, grass, birds, wild beasts, waters, fountains, meadows and river banks, of the sun, the moon, and the stars. For none of these things impede the soul from contemplating God.⁶⁷

The separation between the human, cultural world, full ignorant of divine wisdom, and the world of cosmic nature wrapped in primordial innocence, faces the protagonist on the road to saintliness as an absolutely either/or decision. As in the life of Śākyamuni the Buddha,⁶⁸ Blanquerna's mother, Aloma, exacts from her son the promise to visit her briefly before she dies. Her pain as a mother is no less great for having accepted the higher calling her son has chosen to follow. In purely human terms, the pursuit of saintliness can only look like a waste of life, but to the saint it is precisely the adventure and loss that the soul seeks out as the only possible means to spiritual realization. The same cosmic elements (plants, animals, etc.) that accompany Blanquerna in his solitude almost as if they were spiritual conferees, are seen by his mother as the cause of his disgrace. She prays to God the Father, reminding him that his own beloved Son had also renounced the life of the world:

In danger of evil people and wild beasts [the Son of God] is making him go; he would have him remain alone all the days of his life; he would have him eat wild grass; the hair on his limbs and on his head are to be his clothing.... Think of how the sun and the wind will darken his nakedness and destroy the beauty of his features.⁶⁹

In spite of everything, Blanquerna succeeds in beginning a monastic life. So, too, does his friend Natana, who from that moment takes on the contemplative methods of Llull himself based on the virtues and always in light

of the paradigmatic distinction between the corporal and spiritual senses⁷⁰ that give access to the world of nature, both human and divine.⁷¹ The seven virtues of the Art serve here as pathways to the religious world and to the ascesis whose principal purpose is to overcome the fear of death.⁷²

The two great silences of the *Vita*, corresponding to the time of formation and contemplative withdrawal (1265–1274 and 1274–1287), highlight the limits of ordinary language, both the polemic-apologetic language of the first period and the logical language of the Art. Any ability they have to communicate and preach flows from the mystical experience of union with the inexpressibility of the divine. The reader of the *Vita* is presented with a life alternating between darkness and silence on the one hand and the brilliant light of systematic discourse on the other. All of this takes on added depth when read against the background of the “Dionysian” tradition of the *via negativa* and the *via affirmativa*, which to some degree needs to be understood in a mystagogic context but at the same time as an immediate application of experience to the discourse of theology.

PREACHING: 1283–1316

After the period of contemplation and recollection, the *Vita Beati Raimundi* turns to the final stage of the mission to the gentiles. Llull is fully aware of that fact that no religious plan can be rooted in itself, that it must be grounded rather in an act of self-estrangement and indeed renunciation of the desire to be understood by one’s peers; he knows that prophets are not accepted in their own lands. The starting point for his plan, which seeks nothing less than realizing a complete reform of the *homo religiosus*, is to be personal witness. Unlike the models adopted by others like Raimon Martí and Thomas Aquinas, Llull’s project follows a formula that appears to have presented itself to religious sensitivities from ancient times: self-sacrifice or martyrdom. To be sure, there were other models of mission available for the preaching clerics of the day, such as those that stressed witness and communal life.⁷³ In the case of mission and martyrdom, however, approval by ecclesiastical authority was required.

In 1287, having failed to discuss his missionary plans with Pope Honorius IV before the latter’s death in April of that year, Llull lacked official permission to inaugurate his mission. Realizing the impossibility of putting his method of preaching into practice, Llull opts for an intellectual mission to academics, and so sets out for Paris where he proposes to convert the masters of the Sorbonne to his Art. Here, too, the *Vita* presents his goal as the conversion of a religious ideal into an intellectual task. Except for his visits

to north Africa, it seems as if he has set aside the quest for martyrdom in favor of a preaching directed primarily at the intellect—or, if you will, the heart—of those who have already begun to seek but lack a method and language for expression. As a result, his missionary passion is by and large identified with an intellectual project (*vita contemplativa*) that finds its most important praxis in prayer and later in mission. The paradox here is that only the practice of prayer can inspire such a life project in the first place, that it can only be communicated to one who is also familiar with meditation. In any case, Llull's intention is to convert the teachers of Paris to contemplative science, for no science or knowledge is complete without *amàn-cia*, the science of the love of God.

Between 1287 and 1289, in addition to his intellectual objectives Llull had a political agenda. He contacted Philip the Handsome in search of a new protector⁷⁴ and support for the creation of monasteries of Oriental languages in Paris, his present protector and nephew of Philip, James II, having lost Baleares. At the time of his first visit to Paris, Llull was not yet thinking of a crusade. In general his movements were governed by a realistic appreciation of the historical and social situation of the time, with which he never fell very far out of touch. This accounts for his preference for support from the powers of maritime republics to carry out his plans rather than from the authorities in Rome. In any event, political activities aside, Llull did a public reading at the University of a version of his Art prepared in Paris and entitled *Compendium seu commentum Artis demonstrativae* (1288–1289). The reaction was practically nil.

Faced with the poor results of his academic presentations during these three years, Llull wrote *Felix, or the Book of Wonders*. This new work opens with a dialogue full of examples and similes, principally chosen from the world of nature, aimed at situating the grand themes of his model of contemplation in a framework of the hierarchy of created beings. The book is organized into ten chapters meant to cover all of reality: God, angels, the heavens, the elements, plants, metals, animals, humans, paradise, and hell. In conversations with a hermit or a philosopher, Felix, a character who has set forth on a worldly adventure for the glory of God, extracts teachings through exemplary vignettes and moral tales. In the style of near eastern stories, one is thus immersed in a stream and complex labyrinth of meanings that put the reader's mental faculties to the test. Metals and animals are made to speak in the book, reflecting the overall cosmic harmony in terms of which Llull was accustomed to think. Even the natural elements enter into the dialogue, further illustrating the scope of a vision of God resulting from attention to nature and its meanings. Though we do not know how much of the composition of this novel was done before and how much after

his disastrous academic debut in Paris, one may surmise that only something like the disillusion he suffered in attempting to discourse on his Art could account for the change in his use of language.

Returning to Montpellier, Llull submitted his complex system to a considerable simplification, the most important version of which is found in the *Ars inventiva veritatis* ("The Art of Discovering the Truth," 1289).⁷⁵ Given that he took the Art to be a work of divine inspiration, the freedom with which Llull subjected it to numerous changes and adaptations is surprising, even if we taken into account that it was done "because of the weakness of human intellect," as the account in the *Vita* reminds us. The "weakness" may well be intended to refer to the Parisian academics and their inability to grasp a use of a language uncommon among professional scholars, not to mention his "Arabic way of speaking."⁷⁶ But it is also possible to read the passage as Llull's extrapolating from his own mental deficiency to the inability of the human mind as such to transmit a divine language, which led him continually to shift genres among the novel, the scientific work, and the religious polemic.

Disappointed at his reception in Paris, Llull decides to apply his method directly in the land of the infidels and translates the *Ars inventiva veritatis* into Arabic. His eye set on the mission, he moves to Genoa with the intention of taking a boat to Tunis. He is detained, however, by a stopover in Rome in 1291 and 1292. There, just one year after the fall of St. John of Acre, the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land, he encourages the creation of a school of Oriental languages. Llull is now seventy years old, and the feelings of discouragement and urgency have begun to drain the passion from his spirit.

Here the *Vita* enters into a delicate stage. All the events of life that the narrator had described up to that point (the contemplative phase) as a gradual ascent, converge in a deadlock that brings their rational ordering of events to a halt. At the very moment that his life is headed for a decisive existential crisis, suddenly, and almost as if in the form of an ascetical reminder, the image of his conversion reappears. In line with the motif of saintliness that runs throughout the text, any success Llull might have had in political contacts with kings and popes up to that time, or of the success he might have had in convincing the professors of Paris of the genius of his Art, are reckoned of little importance. These are questions that will come to the fore later, towards the end of his life, at the time of the composition of the *Vita* when the vain pursuit of personal success no longer seemed to have any affect on the events of the present. What was needed at the time was renunciation, self-negation, and finally passion and martyrdom. Perhaps only in this struggle to reconcile intellectual labors with worldly affairs

could the polarity between the sensible and the intelligible, so distinctive in his thought, have achieved its full significance. The intimation is that personal triumph in Paris and Rome would have brought about an early attachment to the world.

Quite unexpectedly, then, the reader of the *Vita* is reminded of the “other”—namely, Jesus Christ and his passion, as well as the Muslim infidel in danger of damnation—and of Llull’s promise of personal martyrdom. All of this is announced in what is known as the “crisis of Genoa,” which will be resolved with his first mission to Africa:

For when the ship and everything else were ready for sailing, as we mentioned before, with his books and other belongings already on board, there came to him on several occasions a kind of fixed idea that if he traveled to the land of the Saracens they would slaughter him the moment he arrived, or at the very least they would throw him into prison forever. Therefore Ramon, fearing for his skin, like the apostle Saint Peter during the Passion of the Lord, and forgetting his previously mentioned intention to die for Christ in converting the unbelievers to His worship, remained in Genoa, held back by a kind of paralyzing fear, abandoned to himself, by permission or dispensation of God, perhaps to prevent him from becoming too vain or presumptuous. But after the ship had set sail from Genoa, Ramon, on account of the huge scandal against the faith created in the eyes of the people by his not leaving, suffered such remorse of conscience that he fell into a profound despair, firmly believing that he would be damned by God. This thought brought him such inward pain of heart that outwardly his body became wracked with fever and he became gravely ill. And languishing thus in Genoa for a long time, without revealing to anybody the cause of his grief, he was brought almost to nothing. (*Vita* 20)

The *Vita* goes on to recount how he remains for a time in the convent of the Dominican friars of the city, where he has a vision informing him that he can save himself by entering their religious order. Quick to recall that his works had always been better received among the Franciscans, Ramon is thrown into a grave inner conflict as the voice continues to insist that his only salvation lay with the Dominicans. Finally he decides to ignore the voices and the visions and to renounce any religious order that would have obliged him to abandon his plan to preach the Art. Instead of the salvation of his soul, he opts simply for the salvation of his books, which he knew to be of divine origin.

Studies of the mystics are replete with stories of such periods of crisis in which the soul is overwhelmed by suffering and moral anguish. In Llull’s

case a number of elements come together in the crisis. In addition to the pain over the recent failure to teach his Art to the professors of Paris, there is his recollection of his forgotten pledge to martyrdom and his resistance to accept the passion of Christ as the model of what he had long desired for himself. Then there is the onset of a paralysis that all but incapacitates him physically. Phenomenologically speaking, this may be understood as a kind of spiritual hiatus that directly affects the body and manifests itself in the form of an illness. The illness, as it will turn out, is no more than a symptom warning of the painful way that lay ahead. Finally, there are his doubts about entering one religious order or the other. While this may well reflect the tense atmosphere among mendicant orders at the time (Llull's own political and religious position had always been closest to that of "spirituals" like Arnold of Vilanova, Bernard Délicieux, and Raimon Gaufredi), the *Vita* uses it as a rhetorical device to justify his change in preaching tactics.

In his first experience of Africa, Llull will have occasion to test on location his method of conversion through disputation. His model of polemics is based on the pursuit of wisdom without which there can be no agreement. The idea is that it is not possible to dispute if each religion is brandishing its own dogmas and authority. Fruitful discussion can only take place among a community of wise persons who make use of reason and whose principles share a common tradition: "It is proper for every wise man to hold to that faith which attributes to the eternal God, in whom all wise men of the world believe, the greatest goodness, wisdom, virtue, truth, glory, perfection, etc...." (*Vita* 26). Llull relies on a comprehensible language and a great faith in the symbolic potentials of the Names of God. The problem is how these Names are understood, that is, how they are related to the created world where they show their dynamism in the form of external activity. He therefore introduces the possibility of multiplicity in unity, which allows him to demonstrate the reality of the Trinity of Persons. As the *Vita* says, Llull proposes to those gathered around him in the plaza, among "the most versed in the law of Mohammed," that he will convert to their religion if he can be given reasons stronger than his own.

In this way, the principle of reason, sustained by the model of the universal insight into the language of the Names of God, finds a context that guarantees its functioning. As we have seen, the success of Llull's disputation consisted in his refusal to bring different dogmas into direct confrontation on the grounds that these are objects of faith and not of understanding. At the same time, he does not lose sight of his intended partners, persons of wisdom who had already undergone inner conversion through the power of prayer and contemplation. This is why he can insist that his demonstrations are supported by an Art "divinely revealed to a certain Christian hermit not

long ago." His newfound authority stems from the fact of being experienced in the contemplative life, which was probably the only model recognized by the three "communities of the Book." There is no doubt that he intended to take advantage of this context to make more accessible the dogmas of the Trinity and Incarnation, which Muslims were in no way able to accept. The apparent theological impossibility did not seem to scare him off. On the contrary, he was certain that the Christological model manifest in the passion could become a vehicle of rapprochement, the same model that underlay his obsession with martyrdom as a pedagogic model.⁷⁷

Llull's method subverts the religious order of the day. Disregarding the language of disputation currently accepted among theologians, it appeals directly to the heart of the contemplative in search of a way of compassion, suffering, and passion, beyond a blind faith in Scripture. It also appeals to the mind of the believer in the hopes of broadening the idea of God to one that, to use Llull's own mystical idiom, aims at being both prior to and subsequent to the three religions. What he preaches is wisdom, which in a certain sense has to belong to the few,⁷⁸ though even these must be converted first.⁷⁹ The reference to his "Arabic way of speaking" does not imply that he used Muslim techniques, but only that in some sense he held his own ground while at the same time seeking a common ground, thus demonstrating a perfect hermeneutic consciousness.⁸⁰

His stay in the kingdom of Tunis nearly cost him his life. Not only did it seem unlikely he would ever encounter sages open to his plan for disputation, but he was cast into prison. Close to death and after much tribulation, he managed to get expelled from the country aboard a Genoese vessel. We are now in 1294 and Ramon is en route to Naples, where he will endeavor to spread his Art until the time of the election of the new pope, Celestine V, who would abdicate shortly thereafter. But the preaching of his method fared no better among the Christians at the time, a further indication of its clash with conventional religious thinking. From there he went to Barcelona and perhaps briefly also to Majorca. In 1295 and 1296 we find him once more in Rome and Agnani, making his way as far as the court of the new pope, Boniface VIII. In 1296 he wrote *Disconsolation*, a work of rare beauty that takes the form of a conversation between Ramon and a hermit. In it he laments the course his life has taken and bares the exhaustion and disenchantment that have overtaken him. Recognizing that his plans were not going to be completed with the present pontifical Curia, the *Vita* tells us, he continues his voyage to Genoa, where he will write other books.

Together with the *Vita* and other brief works in verse, *Disconsolation* may be considered the poetic work most expressive of Llull's spiritual orientation. More than this, it gives us a solid but nuanced look at its personality.

This is not the first time Lull has put his poetic skills at the service of God. But this extended poem of 69 stanzas fulfills a distinctive function in the context of the events unfolding at the time. As a piece of poetic autobiography, it describes the great doubt into which Lull is cast at a particularly fragile time of his life. Since the first call to conversion, had he chosen the right path? Had he properly interpreted the order of the divine? *Disconsolation* shows the element of incertitude in conversion and the lack of perfection in a life that has been blessed, even for one who has known the raptures and advances of eternity. This only sets experience in its corresponding eschatological dimension. The absence of absolute certitude, however profoundly it affects the experience, does not shake the moral value of the truth that grounds it. The doubt that assaults Ramon is due to the ever-present possibility of unredeemed guilt. It is like a shadow that follows him wherever he goes, but without diminishing the obsession of his determination. His doubt is the result of his failure to transmit the Art. In any event, Ramon is well aware of the state of soul in which he finds himself, full of guilt, above all for being “angry” and “disconsolate,” as the hermit discussing with him observes:

Ramon, why do you weep rather than put on a happy face and seek consolation for your bad temper? It makes me fear you are in a state of moral sin and unworthy of doing good. God does not wish to be served by anyone who is sinning. And if that which you so desire is not realized, it is not the fault of those against whom you complain, [but] because God does not wish your undertaking to prosper while you are in a state of sin. No sinner can be the source of any good, for good and evil have nothing in common.⁸¹

Ramon has no reason to be sad if God has foreseen that his system of thought would not prevail. To feel sadness, the hermit argues, is to reject God’s plan for us. The situation is truly complicated and paradoxical. God’s plan, in particular for the Art, simply might not work out, even if it has all the necessary elements to succeed. Then again, perhaps, it was not given to Ramon to see the success of his work which, since it was revealed, was not his in the first place. Might the “temptation of Genoa” be understood as a confusion over the importance of salvation? Or was it a sin of vainglory born of an excessive attachment to control over the project? Perhaps the sin lay more in an unhealthy preoccupation with his own salvation, even if only the worldly salvation of earning fame through his Art, rather than with giving honor to God. What *Disconsolation* shows us is a man over sixty years of age setting out, thirty years after having begun his work as a writer, to record the immense sense of loneliness at having yet to be truly understood.

Between 1297 and 1299 Llull makes his second visit to Paris, where once again he lectures publicly on the Art and completes some of the main works of his corpus: *The Tree of Knowledge* (1295–1296); *The Tree of the Philosophy of Love* (October 1298), dedicated to Philip IV and Queen Joanna;⁸² the *Contemplatio Raimundi* (August 1297), a mystical work; the *Tractatus novus de astronomia* (October 1298); and several other polemical works that register the tension resulting from condemnations issued in 1277 by Étienne Témplier, bishop of Paris, of Averroist philosophical theses,⁸³ a matter that Llull will address in an important group of writings composed during his fourth visit to the city.⁸⁴

Llull has reached the age of sixty-five. The *Vita* tells us that the indifference with which his new works were being greeted—the one exception being Thomas Le Myésier, who appears on the scene as the first of his Parisian disciples and promoter of his works in France⁸⁵—prompts Llull to leave Paris, and in October of 1299 we find him in Barcelona, where James II of Aragon has granted him permission to preach in the synagogues and mosques of his realm.⁸⁶ After many years of absence, Llull returns for an extended stay to Majorca in 1300 and 1301. There he labors, we are told, “to bring the innumerable Saracens living there to the path of salvation” (*Vita* 32).

In no time, however, his restless spirit drives him across the seas yet again, this time to the eastern Mediterranean where he had heard that the king of the Tartars had attacked Syria with the idea of bringing its lands under his domain. Llull believed, through a number of messages to the Christians, that the Tartars were open to the idea of converting to the Christian faith. He saw this as an ideal opportunity to carry out his plan for Islam. But no sooner had he arrived at the island of Cyprus than he realized the reports were false. Attempts to reorganize his journey on short notice ending in frustration, he attempts to convince the king of the island to organize an encounter for him with the schismatic Christians as well as with the Saracens dwelling there. The plan was opposed as too grandiose and the enormous responsibility of seeing it through with all its details brings Llull to the brink of a new crisis. The *Vita* says that, in the feverish labor of preparations “he fell sick with a serious bodily illness” (34), which was further complicated by an attempt on his life by two servants, one of them a cleric, who were supposed to be taking care of him.

After these events Llull recuperates at Famagusta in the house of the Grand Master of the Knights Templar, a man who would later be condemned by the Council of Vienne, the same Council in which Llull vigorously attacked the military orders. Although the *Vita* makes no reference to the fact, it seems that he also traveled around this time to Armenia Minor

and Jerusalem before returning to Genoa by way of Majorca. Between 1303 and 1305 he alternates between Genoa and Montpellier. 1305 is also the year in which he wrote one of his most important works, *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (“The Book of the Intellect’s Ascent and Descent”). In Lyon Llull assists at the coronation of Clement v, whom he presses to found monasteries for missionaries to learn Oriental languages. His efforts are in vain.

This failure drives him back to the missions, this time to Bougie in the north of Africa, with a clear intent to seek martyrdom and finish his commitment once and for all. He changes strategies from dialogue to direct confrontation, the aim being to break through to the other at one stroke. From now on the supreme form of witness is death. Ramon meets the local Muslim qadi, a man renowned for his philosophical learning, but his arguments fail to convince. He is then cast into prison for six months, until a group of Genoese intercede to have him expelled from the country. En route to Genoa their vessel shipwrecks around Pisa. The *Vita* recounts how Ramon was able to save himself, along with a mysterious companion, but loses all his books in the sea. In Pisa he writes the *Ars generalis ultima* (1300), the definitive statement of his system. Beset by obstacles on every side, Llull attempts to promote a crusade to recover the holy places from Islam (*Liber de acquisitione Terrae Sanctae*, “Book on the Acquisition of the Holy Land,” 1309).

When none of the things he had wanted from the start of his life seemed to make sense any more, the text of the *Vita* suddenly takes a new twist and everything appears to be in place for the final triumph of his preaching among the academics of Paris. Somehow, following on the dramatic events just recorded, Llull succeeds admirably in presenting the core of his system before the teachers of the prestigious University of Paris. At this point the *Vita* seems to endorse his plan for reforming understanding as superior to the impossible plan of preaching to the unbelievers. The *Vita* makes every effort to proclaim the triumph of “a doctrine reinforced by philosophical arguments, but also professed a wisdom wonderfully confirmed by the high principles of the Christian faith” (*Vita* 42). The outcome is that in 1310 forty teachers and graduates of arts and medicine approve the *Ars brevis* (1308), which Llull had composed shortly after the *Ars generalis*. His model of wisdom was supposed to integrate faith and reason, but it has already become clear that the vehicle for communicating this wisdom is to be the intellect. The *Ars brevis* is an apt preamble to the collection of texts he wrote during his final stay in Paris against the Averroists of the Sorbonne, before whom he demonstrated the need to make true religion an intelligible object of understanding. In 1310 and 1311 the Council of Vienne was held. In it Llull,

then eighty years of age, was given the opportunity to propose again his life-long plan. Works from the period include *On the Council* (1311), *Phantasticus*, and *Petitio Raimundo in Concilio generali* (“Ramon’s Petition to the General Council”),⁸⁷ where he portrays the clergy in very negative terms and blindly defends his life and aims. One year later, in 1311, in the Carthusian monastery of Vauvert, he completes the composition of the *Vita coaetanea* (“Contemporary Life,” September 1311), which contains the first list of his writings.

This is as far as the text of the *Vita* takes us. There is data confirming various other journeys Llull made, among them a second trip to Tunis that almost certainly took place between September 1314 and December of the following year. He may have been accompanied at the time by a Franciscan friar who was translating some of his works into Latin, certain of which are dedicated to the king of the region. Although legend has tried to attribute the death of Llull to a shipwreck or, later, to execution at the hands of the infidels, it seems likely that he died peacefully on the island of Majorca at the age of eighty-four.

In the final section of the *Vita* we find one of those rare occasions on which Llull quotes the Bible to clear up any question concerning the authority of the events that transpired and what has been said of them: “For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (*Vita* 45; Matt. 10:20)—perhaps intending to refer to those who were writing down his works as he was speaking. At long last Llull has found the question to an answer he had been given many years previously in the form of the visions of Christ. The question was how to reach God, how to find him on one’s own. It first arose in response to the disquiet and dissatisfactions of love, but at the time his life had not yet opened itself to the world and creation where, in line with the thinking of the age, God would be seen as present in every element of nature, and so the question remained unclear.

The autobiographical account closes at a point between the *Vita Raimundi*, which marks the conclusion of a process of personal understanding, and the real end—that is to say, between the historical end of existence narrated in the acts of the *Vita* and the transhistorical end, that symbolic dimension whose value extends beyond the actual death of the author. The objective of his life is resolved and true inner preaching has found its meaning. Like other religious geniuses before him, Llull might have simply surrendered himself to preaching and working for the salvation of others once he had received this communication from heaven. But his conception of the Christian life obliged him to live out historically the transhistorical event of his revelations. Without the sensible dimension of the revelation its spiritual understanding would have been incomplete.

2

Wisdom and Compassion

IN ADDITION TO culling essential clues regarding the secret intentions of its author in omitting certain details of his life on earth and stressing others, our reading of the *Vita Beati Raimundi Lulli* has also uncovered a useful structure for approaching his life and work. Llull's successive ascents and descents of the mountain at Randa are not only responses to his actual historical situation, as the *Vita* recounts. They also symbolize an inner movement of the spirit. From the start the narration shows a clear preference for an interpretative framework based on the polarity between contemplation and action. The text moves back and forth between the two poles in covering the four phases of his life as we have identified them. Although the years dedicated to the preaching of his art and to the mission to the unbelievers cover a decidedly longer period than his years of pilgrimage, study, and seclusion, it is obvious that his active life would be meaningless without the ideal of the contemplative life behind it. In this way the *Vita* demonstrates the high spiritual value that infused a public life in which the fruits of contemplation were transmitted through preaching.¹ Thus the highest point is situated in the lowest in a kind of symbolic inversion that will radically affect his form of expression and prompt the paradoxical linguistic transgressions so peculiar to mystical literature.

The fact that the principles of the art of contemplation were acquired on the summit of the mountain does homage to a prestigious tradition that monotheistic systems have looked for in Plato's idea of *theôria*. The concrete realization of that intuition of the contemplative method that first inspired

Llull, however, came about in the monastery to which he descended to write “the best book in the world.” Here again, it is the act of writing that redraws the horizon. The act of descent harbors in it a motive crucial for our understanding of the *Vita* and the vicissitudes of Llull’s contemplation. Like other religious figures before him, Llull is overwhelmed by the need to communicate his Art, that is to say, his message of salvation. The wisdom received through the grace of God finds its complement in love through an act of universal compassion. By not remaining on the summit, the soul, to whose ascent the superior faculties had contributed, enters a new movement of renunciation, a new spiritual death,² whose steep slope signals the profound eschatological meaning of Llull’s mystical experience. The rest of his life, following the contemplation of the divine virtues, has therefore to be transformed into an act of disinterested love. This is the framework in which we must try to grasp the complex processes and explanations that Llull himself offers in the pages of his first great work, *The Book of Contemplation on God*, and in the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (“The Abbreviated Art of Discovering the Truth”), both written in 1274 but separated by the enlightenment of Randa.

Getting a clear idea of what Llull means by contemplation³ is difficult in the extreme, even though it is one of the terms most common to his peculiar idiom and appears in so many of his works.⁴ That said, in nearly every case the term seems to be reduced essentially to what has been called his doctrine of “first intention”⁵: to know and love God.⁶ In affect, these are the two principal terms of Llull’s grammar from which his entire scientific-contemplative system unfolds. In *The Art of Loving the Good* (1290), a work of mystical content, we see a common path marked out for both: “*Amància* is defective without science, and science defective without *amància*.”⁷ This is somewhat surprising, given that science or knowledge will represent the discursive ascent of the faculties of soul to the highest point allowed them, while the *amància*, or science of love, will be reserved for the torturous descent whose model is Jesus, a symbol pervasive throughout the Christian near East.⁸

The theological context of the descent is to be found in the “kenotic” experience of God (Phil. 2:7), and its symbolic language in the humiliating descent of passion on the cross. The complex formed by the *Vita* and other texts of Llull’s offers a very clear reading of a mystical way of life, one rooted in extraordinary experiences such as the vision of the crucified and the enlightenment of Randa, and yet also possessed of a kind of ecstatic intentionality. In the movement of descent Llull dignifies the way to earth and the world, as if in a gesture of cosmic love that restores the Christian mystical experience to its rightful place.

This new medieval spirituality of the “compassionate,” closely bound to the ideal of amorous love, assumes a break with religious tradition up to that point in showing two possible modes of Christology: one of “incarnation and descent,” the other of the “passion of ascent.”⁹ The path that Lull will follow, though constructed on this model, introduces a further rupture from tradition in that it seeks to integrate the rational with the emotional and devotional. *Amància* presupposes previous insight into knowledge as the intellectual experience of God—as we see in the efforts Lull made in his period of formation and study—in order that at a second stage, certain of the experience and moved by divine grace, love may be emanated to the other.

Typological differences in patterns of the contemplative ascent and descent within the Christian tradition, whose roots are to be sought in what McGinn has called “the Greek contemplative ideal,”¹⁰ show surprisingly few references to this kind of mysticism whose rational and intellective basis prepares the soul not for the delights of the *visio beatifica* but for the pains of union with the beloved who accompanies it in its voluntary passion for the world, as we see in numerous passages in *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*. The fiery verses of this book, perhaps Lull’s best known, have often been read only from the bright perspective of the ecstatic ascent of the soul in search of God, neglecting the ineluctable complement of a dark descent growing out of the central importance he gives to the *vita Christi*.

The *Book of Contemplation*, while lacking the order and synthesis of works after the enlightenment of Randa, focuses mainly on exposition. It falls in the genre of “meditation literature”¹¹ and to some extent is the fruit of a process of self-understanding that will complete the turnabout initiated eleven years previously.¹² It is less an account of contemplative states than it is a description of the reflective life that leads to a way of “reading” creation, one that marvels as much at the glory of the creator as at the openness of the human spirit on its way to understanding the secret order of the world. Like every exercise of meditation in the Christian tradition, the reading of books is framed by a consciousness of time. There is a time for reading and a time for life, and the four levels of reading that Lull proposes at the conclusion of the work are intended to shape a gradual understanding of what it expounds: (1) to read the book from beginning to end, (2) to jump from one paragraph to another, (3) to select one of the items in the table of contents, and (4) to reflect on or intellectually understand a text.¹³ Reading allows consciousness to open up and move about freely between the time of the self and the time of the world in the desire to shorten its distance from the Creator.

A COSMIC CHRISTOLOGY

The complex symbolism that pervades *The Book of Contemplation* and includes the disposition of its division into a wealth of chapters and fragments, with its trees, geometric figures, and ladders, is a deliberate didactic strategy on Llull's part, though at this early stage of its creation his intentions are not yet spelled out. The contemplative calling of the author is announced only once, in an act of confession and frenetic reflective activity, and does not assume immediate understanding on the part of the reader or listener. If *The Book of Contemplation* deploys language to the limits of its capacity in order to course the wide spaces of outer creation and at the same time of memory as the site of inner creation, it is because of an exceptional desire to invoke all of creation as if in the reflection of a mirror. To the eyes of the meditator, the world can seem mute to the bodily and spiritual senses if there is nothing of the contemplative in the soul. Nothing exists without first having been encountered in the inwardness of the soul. This was the aim of the great book: to travel every road and open every way for the spiritual encounter that had taken place eleven years before. Only a continued openness to putting questions can lead to the encounter; the way itself was without direction or meaning. The questions and answers are all there, but it is up to the lifetime of the individual to set the course in the direction of a response or in the formulation of a question. In the language of Llull, creation remains mute to those who, like the Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes, have never asked the question.

In this work, which runs to around one million words, Llull is at pains to organize into a conversation with God as much as possible of what lies between heaven and earth. The idea is to seek out the limits of our capacity to love and to know, so that the force of this love will form the foundations for a contemplative path that will open one's eyes to a final insight: "As people venture to obtain what they love, so do we willingly cast ourselves into the adventure of attempting this book."¹⁴ But even if Llull is aware of the need for a model of wisdom based on the contemplative life, it is an immense task of which he hopes to relieve himself as soon as possible in order to crown his work with active life and martyrdom.

The task turns out to be an excruciating one. In some sense he knows that in writing down everything he is capable of perceiving internally and externally he is reaching for the limits of creation itself, and he therefore begs God to be present for the duration in order that, when done, he may be able to "exile himself from the work" and return it to its real author.¹⁵ What makes the work insufferable is the responsibility it puts in his hands. Who is

he, Ramon Llull, to take all of creation into account, from the dark and hidden essence of the divinity to the lowest creatures on the latter of beings, plants, metals, and stones? There is a certain mood of unhappiness in the opening and closing pages of the book. On the one hand, he knows that his science is the result of a creative impulse brought about by his conversion. On the other hand, he is weighed him down by the fact that although his eyes have opened to the great mystery of creation and the spirit has made him sensitive to the secrets of revelation, he lacks the power to transmit and communicate it. The *Book of Contemplation* is the fruit of inner experience, of ascesis and prayer. The windows of his heart have been thrown open and the world rushes in with a force, calling out to him in a multiplicity of tongues and with a rich diversity that he can only express with the clumsiness of an infant. The dialogue with God is full of insecurities, reflecting his own existential situation as he waits for a form to emerge from the chaos in which his spirit has submerged itself. The strong eschatological tone that breathes throughout the book is due to the fact that he finds himself in a state of heightened attention for that definitive understanding of which his first experience had assured him.

In the course of the book we witness the first unfolding of Llull's most important theological and mystical doctrines, as well as indications of the logical and algebraic formulations that will be announced later when he is less uncertain of them. We also recognize the presence of that poetic inspiration needed for the most important principle of his thought: the method of distinction. In this regard Llull's analytic ability is impressive but does not in the least diminish his synthetic powers of expression, as can be seen a few years later in *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* (1283). At various time during his life he had to face the fear of an inability to express the certitude of his message intelligibly. This is why Llull continually alters his modes of linguistic discourse, from the logical and philosophical to the fictional and purely poetic. He seems obsessed with the discovery of form and method. Each time he succeeds in applying a new method he feels liberated. Knowledge and information reach him from a variety of sources, from the usual channels of cultural transmission to highly unusual sources, such as his Saracen slave and teacher of Arabic.

The form itself is another matter—it comes from God and will arrive with the Art. Reading some of the most abstruse passages of the final chapter, for instance, where Llull suddenly introduces algebraic terminology into a discussion of contemplative method,¹⁶ one is aware that he is groping his way towards a new way of speaking. It is as if he had intuited an angelic tongue that only the initiated can understand. Still, he prays to God for the ability to transmit the Art to others and especially to those who have strayed from

the path, the infidels. The revelation of Randa will represent the unifying vision of the form that, for the moment, appears only timidly in his writings, in stammering and fragmented fashion. It is almost as if he knew that this was necessary and unavoidable. The patience he shows in writing this book is an indication of the author's own asceticism, but also of the asceticism he demands of his readers—all in the hopes of finding that one unifying gesture that will give new order to the words that had been given to him.

In this climate of expectation, the book sets out to speak from the time of the world and the factual awareness of existence, which is understood as the temple of creation, in preparation for that moment from eternity in which, once again, clarity and order will be introduced into the disorder and disorientation of the human search for God. This is probably why the author makes use of a numerical symbolism to divide the work into chapters, books, and distinctions.¹⁷ The effect is a kind of diary in which to note down the comings and goings of the affairs of heaven and of earth, leading us to understand that contemplation is an act of love directed at the All manifest in everyday life, that contemplation of divine essences is nothing if not a stimulus to see with new eyes, the eyes of the spirit, every act in the created world, human or otherwise. This active seeing contains within it the will to creativity of individuals on earth and constitutes the essence of contemplative prayer. Seeing also signals a change of direction. Llull identifies the state of sin with the failure to attend to the original unity of things because of "having turned my face to other things,"¹⁸ confounding the true principle of reality:

For I have loved persons, O Lord, many times, so much that night and day my heart was full of nothing but the desire to love them. In my great folly, Lord, I took the things I loved there as God, for I loved them in the manner that you should be loved.¹⁹

This is the misguided seeing that leads the soul to contemplate and love itself,²⁰ and as a result to lose itself in the multiplicity of things. The state of conversion marks a personal recovery in which the mind and heart are full of God. The exclusivity of divine love avoids the sin of idolatry by rejecting the worship of the idols that the soul erects on earth, as the Israelites did on their march through the desert. The adventure of the encounter with God in the world opens the soul to attend to and contemplate the unity of the divine.

We see, then, how Llull's contemplation has its foundation in conversion and in redirecting seeing²¹ to discover the proper place of things: above, the virtues of God; below, in proper measure, the human faculties of knowing. Through his experience of the marvel that would later provide the title of

one of his books, *Felix, or the Book of Wonders* (1287–1289), the spirit manifests itself to the soul and shows it the way, in order that its faculties may be regulated in contemplation.²² The event is marked by a state of joy²³ for the Being that permeates everything, extending to the joy for one's own being, to which one has come from a state of poverty and ontological deprivation, as well as joy for the being of others. So great is Lull's joy, indeed, that he is on the verge of losing his mind. If the animals who do not know God are happy, how much more those who through knowing arrive at the love of God! The idea springs from a distinctive idea of divine reality as completely committed to life. From the first it breathes a cosmic confidence and an extraordinary solidarity with matter. The nobility of the creator is too much for the creatures of the world to contain, but Lull sees more value in their limitations than in the fragility of the human will that despairs of knowing the limits of the possible or ventures into the impossible and so loses touch with reality. For Lull the adventure of entering the world is marked first and foremost by the encounter with the being of God. It is from there, as if in a cosmic ritual, that the "feast" begins, a feast that has no end in time and whose only activity is contemplation.²⁴ The essential fullness of creation requires the highest openness of the senses, which, in clear indication of their importance for the exercise of meditation, he calls the "holes and doors of my house."²⁵

The explosion of literary beauty of the first chapters of *The Book of Wonders* shows how conversion can lead a person to a new birth in which there is no room for vacuity or differentiation. Everything is fullness: "So full am I that the sea is not so full of water."²⁶ From the outset Lull introduces the element that knowledge lacks in order to understand God:

Lord, God! Since my understanding cannot grasp the grandeur of your essence, I beg you, if you will, to put in my heart a love for loving you so great that my understanding cannot imagine its greatness.²⁷

Knowledge must love what it knows, and love must know what it loves. Both perspectives give an idea of the art of combining linguistic terms that Lull practiced, since words and our interaction with them draw us towards changing and mutable reality. There is no abstract order of ideas separate from the things of the world. The human being lives divided between knowing and loving, but not as if the two corresponded to distinct realities.²⁸ In divinity the two join in undifferentiated unity. Isolated from love, knowledge becomes a cause of sin and is the origin of humanity's fallen state. The negativity implied here is not due to the imperfection or evil of the created world, as it would be in Gnostic thought. It is rather that the earth suffers the "dishonor" of lodging people who are ignorant of the one

who created it.²⁹ Thus it is that the will leads to the encounter with God who, in the infinity of his being, is present in all things: “If people want to seek you, they can find you everywhere, at every place and every shortcut.”³⁰ Accordingly, Ramon’s lament is great as he remembers how in his youth he had forgotten about God, closing his eyes to his soul so as deliberately to lose him and not find him.

The first section of the book presents the model of contemplation through a description, not yet in its definitive form,³¹ of the divine virtues. Llull distinguishes between attributes of the divine essence (*activitas ad intra*)—among them, Infinitude, Eternity, Wisdom, Power, Love, Virtue, Simplicity, and Perfection—and attributes of creative activity (*ad extra*)—among them, Creation, Grace, Mercy, Justice, Sovereignty, Humility, Generosity, Grandeur, and Glory. Treating Infinitude gives him the opportunity to deal with human finiteness. He sets up an order of knowledge based on knowing and its defining boundaries. Paradoxically, the closure of reason is not aimed at limiting its possibility. The point is rather that since the nature of reason stems from the nature of its object, the world, it can only grow and multiply if it applies itself to the world. It forfeits its natural condition if it attempts to transgress the limits of creation.

From the standpoint of the history of myth—or in this context, “sacred history”—these transgressions may be seen as a result of a loss or weakening of human powers brought about by the gods. But if we see Llull’s reflections in the the context of the exercise of meditation, the moderation of the faculties appears to be directed towards a greater explosion of perceptual and cognitive capacity through the bodily senses and the spiritual senses of the soul. Transgressing the limits of reason brings about the fall in that it obstructs the intended realization of our mental faculties, and this in turn inevitably leads to a defective knowledge of reality and, consequently, to a lack of freedom.

This dialectic of limits runs through the book in an attempt to demonstrate that knowledge of what lies beyond our grasp is not reached by breaking into it from without, but by penetrating to our own limits. This splendid image of the relationship between “near and far,” familiar to troubadour poetry³² but also found in religious literature from Augustine to the Koran, is adhered to faithfully by Llull: “There is no need for you to go far to seek; you are already very near....”³³ In this way contemplation is continually expanded by the faculty of wonder and surprise.

After dealing with Infinitude, Llull takes up the Eternity of God’s Being, examining the attributes which, “by analogy with our human nature of reason and personality” we are aware of as “qualified by restriction and limitation,” but which in God are thought to be absolute.³⁴ Insofar as they are

principles of contemplation, the predicates of God are unique in having a true foundation in being, since they have no beginning and are eternal. And from contemplation of that which has no end, Lull says, there must obtain a being that itself has no end.³⁵ The being of creatures is a temporal sustenance whose hope is for final salvation, for if “you leave creatures without protection, they will all return to not-being.”³⁶ Near and far, infinitude and finiteness, being and not-being—Lull’s contemplative thought runs dialectically between an above and a below that in the end are mediated. Contemplation is a gift of the heart in which eternity finds its place in time. Like the German speculative school,³⁷ Lull sees being as belonging only to the divinity, in which all beings are taken up, so that only through participation in the fullness of God’s being can humans be saved.

This exclusivity of being in God stands in marked contrast to the multiplicity of things and the perdition to which they lead. One of the guiding principles of Lull’s thought, and the basis for his method of contemplation, is the idea that God is a single substance, but one to which multiple virtues can be attributed. This shifts the ground of the question of monotheism. Lull has no problem introducing into the picture the doctrines of the Trinity or the divine attributes, which, in contrast to the idleness ascribed to them in Islam, he sees as active.

Lull’s theology, like that of Augustine, is a theology of conversion. The high degree of freedom this gives him in thinking about God as well as his intimacy with the terms of contemplation make it difficult for the dogmatic theologian unaccustomed to the paradoxes of mythical thinking to understand him. Conversion introduces a new way of seeing and a multifaceted perspective. The contemplative grasps in a single glance the indivisible unity of God and his personal activity in relation to history and creatures. Accordingly, both the incarnation of Christ and the Trinity are motifs of mystical reflection for Lull. Far from hiding mystery in the misty uncertainties of faith, his approach urges the intellect to rational construction. This is not a mere arbitrary manipulation of language (the combinatory logic), but is something carried out because a spirit capable of seeing with new eyes has looked on the world as first and foremost a place of transformation in which to seek out its body and materiality.³⁸ The argumentation by way of “necessary reasons” that will emerge out of Lull’s disputational writings points to the expediency of relying on a single, novel, reconstructed ground of understanding far removed from the state of sin where the one and the many are unable to come together.

Nonetheless, conversation with the divinity requires that the distant show itself in the proximity of the here and now. The relation among the three persons of the Trinity offers the proper framework for understanding eter-

nity in temporality, beginning with the Neoplatonic idea of divine “generation and procession.” The internal activity of the persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in their movement of trinitarian circularity, continually generating and being generated, provided Llull with a solid basis for acknowledging the need of the different, the “other,” a need whose ultimate ground lay in the love among the persons. This vital activity within the divinity is reflected in the tripartite formation of human nature as “body, soul, and spirit,”³⁹ this last serving as the nexus.

Reflection on the Trinity becomes an obsession in Llull’s writing, not only because he recognized it as one of the central points of contention with Islam, where the Christian dogma is seen as a form of polytheism, but also because for Christianity it makes the contemplative life a possibility within time and history. While it is precisely this idea of the Trinity that sets Christian theology apart from the other two Abrahamic religions, mystics like Llull are also aware of the personal value of the Trinitarian experience of God as well as of its universal reach. What Llull will propose to the unbeliever is therefore a certain a “way of believing.” In the limited, exclusively Christian context, the starting point is the Passion and Incarnation; in a universal context, it would be an understanding of the divine-human unity of Jesus Christ as a model for wisdom in this world, and above all as a model for the salvation of others. In a strictly typological description of mystical experience, it is not difficult to speak here of a convergence of religions, each of them representing a comparable way of drawing near to and uniting with the divine.⁴⁰ Not only because of the essentially Christocentric character of Llull’s language, but also and principally because of the temporal and personal realization of the divinity he sees in the Trinity, Christian mysticism is also cosmic and human (cosmotheandric⁴¹) for him, and indeed all the worldly activity of his preaching has its reference in this spiritual dimension of the others, the “neighbor.”

The trinitarian model is likewise decisive in the creation of a language to reflect the conversion that the terms of his grammar have undergone. This is one of the most characteristic traits of mysticism. Thus Llull can write, “For as your substance, Lord, is in three persons, so are the three persons one substance.”⁴² Yet when he comes to analyze “divine science,” Llull makes it clear, following in the tradition of Christian Neoplatonism, that knowledge of the three persons does not imply knowledge of the divine substance or essence itself, of the unknowable unity of God.⁴³ Life within the Trinity demonstrates the principle for grasping the necessary unity of life and knowledge in the human being, each of them finding its full meaning and realization in the other. The mystery of the ultimate essence of things, what they are in themselves, extends to the human person as well: “A great marvel

it is, Lord God, that we should be something of which we neither know nor understand what it is in itself.⁴⁴ The mystery of the “thing in itself” belongs to the plan of salvation; meantime human beings have to understand themselves through the extension of themselves into nature and others.

The experience of conversion has overturned the standpoint from which things are perceived. Lull’s theology is a theology of conversion and its central themes are governed by the need to be transported from the realms of ecstasy they are used to occupying. This sort of combination and conversion of terms has its origins in an experience of passage and personal transformation. Once one has come to a new way of seeing, the world presents itself as a conjunction of parts, none of which is fixed because its true being lies in the other, and the other in it. The quest for essential being is driven from start to finish by this continued abandonment of oneself, whose model we have seen in the inner life of the Trinity but whose full realization is in the Incarnation, one of the Christian doctrines that Lull was convinced he could communicate rationally or through appeal to experience. We should note, however, that he is thinking here of experience on the model of wisdom deduced from the Passion of Christ and made visible only through conversion. Therefore, the dialogue he aims to initiate is directed almost exclusively to the sage. The principle of rationality to which he appeals has to be seen from a standpoint of experience whose communicability is guaranteed by the language of the Names of God. Rationality therefore rises out of the trinitarian mystery and is the fruit of a spiritual vision of the world and matter. It emerges from a very tangible and proximate vision of reality.

The ontological principle governing the rhythm of the combinatory language is applied both to spiritual insight into the sensible and to the sensible dimension of the spiritual. In practice this leads to the highest understanding of Trinity in unity and unity in Trinity.⁴⁵ The mystery of the one in the many brings into the picture a paradoxical logic that seeks to know the secret of the language of God. Its wisdom does not flinch from the contradictions entailed by temporality,⁴⁶ since only the divinity itself is lacking in internal contradiction.⁴⁷

Contemplation of the divine virtues or “properties,” the next of which to be taken up is Power, is a special way of seeing how they participate in beings and act in them. Thus Lull speaks of the revelation of nature that accompanies us to the end of our days, after which the revelation of God will become comprehensible:

The more we ponder your knowing, Lord, the more virtuous and marvelous we find it—may it be blessed! For you know how many are the mountains and the plains; you know all the rivers and all the springs, all

the wells and all the seas; you know how many places there are in the world and how many grains of sand there are and how many atoms. Of everything you know the quantity.⁴⁸

Contemplation covers the range of divine power and wisdom in a detailed account of creation, bringing eternity into the course of time whose primary nature is one of quantity. In truth, there would be no difference between natural and divine revelation were it not that the human mind associates them with time and eternity respectively. There is no disdain implied here for the time of creatures, since without time and history the end could never arrive and we would find ourselves instead in an infinite cycle, which in turn would require a completely different cosmos from our own, one without salvation. Salvation takes place in time: “Our salvation, for whose coming we hope in your pity and mercy, is nothing other than to look on and contemplate you, to rejoice and love you.”⁴⁹ To be in time and yet out of time is the paradox of Christian revelation itself: the analogy with heavenly glory glimpsed in contemplation carries with it the idea that this life is not the true one. This introduces a certain nostalgia for paradise that belongs essentially to Christian thought:

I marvel, Lord, that this life is worldly and vain and that there is little truth in it, considering what becomes of it—at one moment a person is alive, and at the next dead.⁵⁰

For this reason, Christian mysticism struggles to take leave of fallen and moral nature in order to ascend to the vision of reality. When Llull comes to the lower element of the world’s reality, he resumes the ascent in search of another divine virtue, Goodness, from whose “diffusive” nature—as the Christian Neoplatonic formula has it, *bonum est diffusum sui*—the goods of creation are multiplied without being the cause of the defects that accompany them as accidentals.⁵¹ With Goodness Llull considers the first level of archetypal contemplation to have come to its end. He continues in the second book with the contemplation of creation, where the activity of the divine virtues is to be seen in their exemplary beauty.⁵²

Creatures do not emanate from the mystery of the divine essence in creation, but are created *ex nihilo*. The creator is seen as a great Orderer of the cosmos, prior to it but, in a coincidence of power and will, giving to the creature its being, creating it together with time and place. All corporeal beings are composed of a “primal matter” born of nothingness. This is unchangeable and harbors within it a contradiction: it is at once form and the absence of form. Our mode of understanding proceeds by way of things we perceive or know. Matter participates more in form in the case of percep-

tion than it does in the case of knowledge, which is why matter is perceptible to the bodily senses but lacks body and form as an object of the spiritual senses.⁵³ The order of the cosmos depends on the opportunity given matter to receive form. This analysis of matter is crucial in the development of Lull's contemplative thought. If matter and form remained separate, they would not be visible to the eye, and this would make it impossible to grasp the divine and human nature of Christ. The conjunction of matter and form, as well as the necessity we see in that conjunction, show us how to understand the incarnation and divinity.

Primal matter is composed of the four elements plus the firmament—the *quinta essentia*, as Lull refers to it—which, because of its more subtle nature, envelops the other elements. The firmament is a place of unchanging purity, in whose contemplation the individual draws near to the beauties of creation. But it is necessary in the first place to make oneself worthy of that place until it becomes one's own.⁵⁴ From there we are led to a first incursion into what we may call a “cosmic Christology,” the origins of Lull's contemplative method:

For just as you have created the sun in the middle of the firmament to give life and warmth to the earth, so have you desired to place the holy cross on earth to enlighten the blind and warm the hearts of Catholics.⁵⁵

The cross is seen as an *axis mundi*; as Lull says, “You were crucified in the middle of the world.”⁵⁶ It is for him the supreme symbol of contemplation and develops into an obsessive Christocentrism. Its heliocentric symbolism has to be sought in what Mircea Eliade has termed “cosmic Christianity,”⁵⁷ an idea that goes back to an archaic and pre-Christian substratum and points to an idea of universal salvation. From the beginning of the book the imagery reminds us of the one and only “object” of contemplation: the Son, the humbled humanity of God, prefigured in the solar star at the center of the universe. At the same time, this cosmic conception of the Christian mystery that emerges from the cyclic rhythm of *The Book of Contemplation* integrates the eschatological dimension, which appears time and again in the text. It is always the pale of the cross, driven into the center of the earth, that reminds the contemplative of the viewpoint from which this message of salvation has to be confronted: not postponed to a totally transcendent beyond, but brought to the proximity of the here and now, refusing to allow us to abandon prematurely the matter of which the world is made.

Matter is the foundation of contemplation, provided we see it as a receptacle of God's passion. In the subtle gradations of the elements, matter manifests the perfect order that leads to divinity. Fire, air, water, and earth, in their affinities and oppositions,⁵⁸ constitute the first typology of the soul's

ascent as it passes through metals to plants which, like the three that “renews its leaves, its flowers, and its fruits,” reminds the person at prayer of the cross, where divine essence and human nature flow together towards death whose image is the fruit, the final stage of life but also the first to announce the renewal of the plant:⁵⁹

The best and noblest plant in all of creation is the tree of the holy cross where you were martyred. At the beginning it was covered in green, full of leaves and flowers and sweet and delicious fruits; and at the end, it was covered and dressed in your deity and your humanity, bathed in the precious blood and tears of life.⁶⁰

Devotional traditions surrounding the cross are brought into clear relief here, elevating the cross and the crucified, arms extended to gather in all people and the whole of nature,⁶¹ to the status of a universal symbol in which every element on the ladder of beings participates in the analogical model that is always in the back of Llull’s mind. Thus, for example, divine generosity makes blood and water pour out from the body of the crucified over the rock in which the cosmic pale or tree of the cross is driven, while human greed does not even succeed in summoning tears from its eyes or sweat on its clothes.⁶² Here, as elsewhere, the cross is an all-encompassing symbol of sacrifice and love, whether as the “deathbed” or as the place at which God seeks human beings to unite with them and redeem them.⁶³ It is the central motif of Llull’s contemplation, “depicted with wind and rain, set between heaven and earth,” exposing to the elements the sacrificial body, the place where human wickedness and divine goodness are inverted.⁶⁴ The cross is the mirror⁶⁵ in which to complete the divine virtues, the “corporeal eyes” seeing the image and the “spiritual eyes” penetrating to the passion within it.

The relation between these two kinds of sensation in contemplation is one of great harmony. For example the smell of a rose, symbol of passion *par excellence*, stirs the soul to remember the divine figure, but the horrible stench of death in distant Jerusalem keeps it from forgetting its sufferings. Finally, it is the virtues of the soul (memory, understanding, and will) that harvest the greatest fruit of contemplation, the analogy with the fertility of the earth reaffirming the cosmic character of this method of prayer.⁶⁶ But in the process of depicting his representation of the cross, Llull gives special importance to imagination and contemplation⁶⁷ for uniting the sensible and the intelligible as well as the human and the divine, and thus providing all meditation with its core and spiritual home.

In the context of contemplative activity, which is carried out in the world, God’s creative action is understood as a total re-creation of fallen nature that

carries with it an important salvific dimension. This re-creation takes on a symbolic value superior to that of creation⁶⁸ in that it signals the way of “theosis” (divinization) in the human person⁶⁹ and at the same time represents the re-creation of human nature in a display of the awesome grandeur and nobility of God: “With your godhead you created us, and with your humanity you re-created us.”⁷⁰ This re-creation of the human family is spoken of as a restoration to health for which the symbolism of the blood of the Son of God and his sacrificial body serves as a continual summons to meditate on the cosmic tree.⁷¹ It is there that we meet all the suffering and evils of this world and at the same time all its good and virtues, as we see in *The Tree of Knowledge* (1295–1296), where the cosmic tree appears as a tree of virtues and vices. The power of the symbol is underscored here by its moral charge, but above all it is seen as pointing to reality as a whole as the place where the contraries of good and evil nature are reconciled. Llull’s meditation has slowly found its way to a devotional language. It is the soul of the human person that must be fortified throughout the sight of the passion on the cross.⁷² From metals and plants to animal and angelic nature, the whole of the divine plan shows its will to re-create the human nature that has suffered the loss of paradise and can return to it, not through any kind of nostalgic regression but only through knowing and loving this fallen nature itself.

The cultivation of the virtues, like the cultivation of the soil, needs the wisdom to distinguish “one time from another,” “one place from another,” “one seed from another.”⁷³ The image is reminiscent of the prophet Qoheleth’s call for an ordering of the time of events and history in light of a trans-historical and virtual time. The great challenge of the Christian contemplative model proposed by Llull rests on a difficult equation of time and eternity, of the natural order and the revealed order. One who contemplates has to pursue a historical model of creation in the making, since to talk about creation and interpret it requires a real time in which the soul can trace, step by step, the divine plan, which serves as the outer limit of its spiritual senses, and the earthly passion of Christ, which sets the lower limits for the bodily senses that are awakened through devotion to it. The time of meditation must provide a measure for the cosmic history of creation and the history of the individual soul.

For this reason, although divine activity in the cosmos is the model of meditation for Llull, the person at prayer follows the course of the natural order, confident of finding there the only One who is in continual communion with animals and plants. There is no conflict with creation, nor is there any moral judgment concerning it. From the outset he accepts the order that governs it as a copy of the celestial order. This idea of order plays a

dominant role in Llull's reflection, bringing greater consistency to the relations among the two worlds and reconciling the great disparity between the divine order and our human inability to grasp it. For Llull it is this latter that inclines the soul to disorder and sin, precisely because of its resistance to perceive the order of the cosmos—that is to say, to contemplate.

THE BODY OF CONTEMPLATION

The idea that the external order of things corresponds to an inner order was common in the Middle Ages, where a close relationship was assumed between macrocosm and microcosm.⁷⁴ As a result, it was possible to detect the harmony of the cosmos in the human person and the faculties that enable us to see the world without falling into confusion. This is the reason for the five potencies the soul has at its disposal: vegetative, sensitive, imaginative, rational, and motor.⁷⁵ Like other spiritual figures of his age, Llull sees a close connection between spiritual progress on the one hand and asceticism and mortification of the body on the other, reckoning these latter as only way to forget the self and love the other.⁷⁶

The sense potency that activates the five “sensible” or corporeal senses⁷⁷ for hearing, sight, taste, smell, and feeling permit us to perceive the diversity spread through nature (colors, sounds, tastes), which in turn arouses the imaginative potency from its state of vigil or sleep to create an image. It is at this point that the person passes from knowledge of the sensible to knowledge of the intelligible. Llull follows here the well-known medieval formula *ad invisibilia per visibilia*: “For to the extent that humans possess knowledge of sensible things, they perceive the truth of invisible things.”⁷⁸ The germ of this higher knowledge contained in sensuality is planted there by the great virtue that nature is endowed with through the theophanic activity of God. Llull's analysis of the senses shows a clear concern with reconciling a sensible multiplicity with an intelligible and spiritual unity. The idea of order found throughout his system, according to which the only thing that leads to sin is disorder, is present here as well. It is not human nature as such that leads us in the direction of disorder, but ignorance and the inability to make proper, “orderly,” use of our faculties. It is therefore necessary that everything proceed in accord with the natural order of things. Only in knowing the natural order can its harmony with the supernatural order be revealed without underestimating either our spirit or our created nature. Indeed, the harmony of the two orders is itself the result of a certain grasp of the human experience of God.

Our sensual potency tends to “look at itself and love itself,” whereas our

rational tendency urges us toward the good. For a Christian philosopher like Lull, there is nothing surprising in this view of human nature, but it is worth noting the distinctive relationship between the inclination to evil (the senses) and the inclination to good (reason). The good, which leads to the supreme Good, one of the uncreated virtues of God, is something alien and distant for the human being, and the main objective of the rational tendency is therefore to turn the attention away from the self trapped in a disproportionate attraction to the senses. The good represents a departure from the self and a reorientation of seeing that brings with it a forgetting of the self. Lull's idea that God willed there to be two worlds⁷⁹ is in agreement with Christian Platonism, which sees the capacity for reason as subject to the captivity of the senses because of original sin.⁸⁰ In any case, the rational potency serves as an intermediary between the most distant potency, the imaginative, and the most proximate, the motor.⁸¹

Lull's idea of wisdom is made concrete in the capacity to preserve the order of things⁸² through contemplation, devotion, and love.⁸³ Accordingly he sees the sage as one who knows the two roads or intentions that God has ordained in human nature. The doctrine of the "first intention" means that it must arrive at knowing and loving the creator; the second, that it must do everything possible to achieve the first intention. The first intention is presented as the distant goal or model of life, and the second as the instrument for achieving it. Disorder comes about when love of self becomes central in the first intention. The entire theory of the two intentions and of order in the world leads to a possible understanding of the ruling dualism of the day. Thus for Lull the "second intention" may be said to serve as a *via negativa* that reveals the need for the first in much the same way that the existence of evil leads us to acknowledge the good and knowledge of the good, without at the same time presupposing that evil exists prior to good. It is only after the fall that this recognition comes about. In any case, there is no question here of a theory of justification or a primitive theodicy. Lull's way of thinking about moral dualism is really no more than the path that must be followed to achieve unity, just as time and multiplicity lead to the unity of eternity. Furthermore, only by shifting attention to what lies outside of itself can the human soul come to understand why the state of sin is necessary for the way that leads to salvation. Put this way, salvation can only proceed on the assumption of sin and evil, and of the distinction between the two.⁸⁴ These theological digressions that shows up in Lull's analysis of the senses are meant to remind those at prayer of the temporality and multiplicity of the human condition and thus to place contemplation in its proper theological framework.⁸⁵

The special "distinction" given to the sense of sight serves to locate medi-

tation in time. The reading of these chapters—Llull’s symbolism requires that the reading should take an entire day—seems to be a response to the slow pace of sense perception as it passes through creation, seeing and remembering each thing that becomes an object of its attention. Sight, in effect, is a privileged sense in this system. It perceives difference: in the case of bodily sight, the differences intrinsic to creation; in the case of spiritual sight, the difference between the distant referent, God, and the proximate reference, created things. Therefore, the object of the perception of difference is to draw attention to the spiritual nature that lies hidden in things, just as divinity lies hidden in the human nature of God.⁸⁶ Sight contributes powerfully to the practice of meditation, given that it is the means for seeing in the cross, as if in a mirror, the beauty and the ugliness within oneself.⁸⁷ The eyes of the spirit are able to see through the basic self and to place itself, as we have seen, at the scene of the passion of Christ. Interior beauty is visible to the spiritual eyes when one’s attention is properly directed to the devotion of the glory of the godhead. The role of devotion is crucial in all of these passages, since it is devotion that directs conversion, namely, the “alteration” of the state of sin to a state of the love of God, just as water can be changed from cold to hot. Alteration and change are seen here as the result of temporality acting on the senses.⁸⁸ Consciousness of time, the aspect of life as the transitory locus of contemplation, is probably one of the traits that distinguish this kind of method from Eastern traditions where the suppression of the temporal element in meditation seems to be a prerequisite.

The perception of difference leads the contemplative to value the various levels of being and the richness they give the created world. Llull scours the vicissitudes of creation, broadening his scope from plants and animals to the various classes of people, each according to its state in the temporal world. It is the cosmic trust of the author that enables him to see the great beauty that divine virtue has deposited in the lower beings of creation. Llull the contemplative contrasts his sterile years (up to the age of thirty) with the great cosmic year and the rich fruition it made possible,⁸⁹ comparing the change to the leaf of the evergreen that symbolizes eternity in contrast to the leaf of the deciduous tree that marks the passing of time until death. In this way the *sapientia luliana* follows the example of the natural order in overcoming the change and degradation of the body at the same time as it gives us a model of healing and salvation.⁹⁰

It is worth noting the importance this complex work, with its prismatic way of seeing, gives to the natural order. In imitation of animals and plants, human beings have the opportunity to turn their attention away from themselves and, through those lower beings, direct their gaze to the heights. The

contemplative sees the beasts that serve humans as examples of wisdom⁹¹ and the flight of birds as they cross each other in the skies as a symbol of the cross.⁹² In the end, however, the faculties have to be overcome. In the same way that the higher animals triumph over the lower, so is the rational faculty called to rule over the senses. The important thing to remember here is that the dominion of the faculties and their inner dialectic take place within human nature itself: "Therefore the human being conquers itself with what it is in itself."⁹³ The conditions for salvation are assuredly within the person. There is an infirmity of soul in the disorder of its underlying roots, that is to say, in the five potencies of the soul, its three natures (memory, understanding, and will), and the five spiritual senses.⁹⁴ From the roots to the fruit, it is the bodily senses and their harmony that lead to the spiritual senses.⁹⁵ The soul is depicted as a ship tossed about on a stormy sea because of one or the other of the senses. The spirit needs to be seen in strict relationship with the sensible life and its proper disposition,⁹⁶ which is why, for example, the spiritual senses are called shepherds of the bodily senses.⁹⁷

The analysis of the fifth bodily sense is dedicated to sensuality in general,⁹⁸ culminating in a list of vices to which the human being is susceptible. It is worth noting here how, in contrast to Eastern and eremitic Christian tradition, sadness is not a source of sin but rather invigorates the soul and moves it to change.⁹⁹ Sensuality pervades everything, from birth to death,¹⁰⁰ both the life of the body and the life of the spirit, setting up a distinction between a sensible sensuality (of the body), an intellectual or intelligible sensuality (the accidents of the soul),¹⁰¹ and a third composed of the first two:

When the religious person, Lord, looks on your figure on the cross with your wounds and your labors and the severe death you underwent, he is sensually sensitive; and when, through this sensual sensitivity he begins to recall your passion and death, he senses intellectually; and when he begins to weep and sigh and love, to feel contrition and devotion, it is a sentiment composed corporeally and intellectually.¹⁰²

Already at this point the margin of differentiation between the spiritual and the intelligible is very small. Thus in order to attain knowledge and experience of the deity, the soul has to be activated through prayer and contemplation,¹⁰³ and in this way guided to see the virtues of God. The discourse on the senses reaches its high point with the purification of the senses through an ascesis that will lead to an expansion of sense perception itself.¹⁰⁴

The importance of imagination in this whole process of converting the many into the one is explained in great detail. And even though the imaginative potency mediates between the sensitive and rational potencies, it is

always subject to the activity of the present moment. The imagination cannot imagine opposite things at the same time,¹⁰⁵ whereas the rational potency can move freely between the past and the future. The object of imagination rests, therefore, in the natural order of things;¹⁰⁶ otherwise it would give way to fantasies, as when it upsets that order by giving more attention to sense impressions than to the rational potency.¹⁰⁷ The imagination fixes the present in a strictly virtual place, since it is a bridge between the past and the future, though its virtue rests between the sensible and the intelligible.¹⁰⁸

The idea of “sense” in Llull is certainly a complex one. At the beginning, for example, he makes a clear distinction between seeing with the eyes of the body and seeing with the “spiritual eyes” or the “eyes of the soul”:

For the reason, Lord, that the bodily eyes are limited and finite, it is fitting that the spiritual eyes should reach beyond the limits within which the bodily eyes are finite. As a result, Lord, the eyes of the soul come to see things that the bodily eyes cannot.... In a similar way, Lord, we understand that the spiritual eyes reach beyond the limits of the bodily eyes, for as these latter cannot see spiritual things, in what the bodily eyes demonstrate to the spiritual, the spiritual eyes see and perceive intellectual things in the sensual.¹⁰⁹

The perception of differences and identities present on this field of mutual limitation where “the sensualities limit the intellectualities, and the intellectualities limit the sensualities” is aimed at uncovering the divinity hidden in the human nature of God. As always, this is a model for the discovery of the divine nature in human beings.

At the same time, the limits of the body ultimately imply the spiritual, which is not capable of perceiving the whole grandeur of creation. That is, certain of the spiritual senses are in reality limited to rational discourse, their function being to extend the symbolism of the lower senses:

Benign Lord, just as bodily sight is limited in the vision of invisible things, so, too, the eyes of the soul, which are spiritual eyes, are limited in the vision of visible things; for the eyes of the soul do not see except by thinking, remembering, imagining, and understanding.¹¹⁰

We have to do here with a consideration of the spiritual rooted in the body and the senses. This must not be seen as a limitation of the contemplative system. Rather it gives us an idea of how seeing, which takes place in the temple of creation, is forever subject to nature. The distinction between the sensible and the intelligible is invoked to preserve the differentiation in human seeing which both contemplates and has the capacity for seeing or

intuiting the secret of a higher revelation within the realm of the finite and limited. No doubt Lull accords a wider range of activity to the eyes of the soul, with their subtlety and refinement, than he does to the eyes of the body, but at no point does he exaggerate their function.

The nomenclature for the second group of senses is not altogether clear. "Spiritual senses" is meant to include what are referred to vaguely as "eyes of the spirit," "spiritual ears," sensation "of the heart" or "of the understanding," as well as "intellectual taste." The religious use of the classical Latin *sensus* not only for *sensus carnalis* but also for *sensus spiritualis* or *sensus intellectualis*, a usage particular to the authors of the twelfth century, continues on into the high Middle Ages. In the thirteenth century, for example, Albertus Magnus relates the spiritual senses to mystical knowing, taking them in general as acts of the intellect directed at the contemplation of divine realities and not as faculties or potencies of the soul. In the exhaustive treatment of the "spiritual-intellectual" senses that Lull offers in *The Book of Contemplation on God*, however, one is hard pressed to find anything parallel to the doctrines of Bernard of Clairvaux or Bonaventure.¹¹¹ What is surprising about the way the faculties of the soul are divided is their dependence on the sensible world, and still more their discursive and intellectual capacity. All of this is due, as we have seen, to the unifying intentions of Lull himself, for whom knowledge of the unseen is generated, even if in a secret form, in the midst of the visible world. It is therefore as important not to reduce sensuality to the merely physical as it is to prevent the spirit from flying too high above reason's grasp. Of course, Lull reserves knowledge of the articles of the creed and mysteries of dogma to faith; but it should not be forgotten that his contemplative system has a clear apologetic aim which needs reason rather than dogmas.

In the study of "cogitation" (meditation) that Lull refers to as "spiritual-intellectual,"¹¹² we see the need for the soul to direct its gaze exclusively towards the divine Dignities or virtues without being distracted by things sensual:

The best contemplation in which a person can partake, Lord, is to have cogitation fixed on your nobility and virtue, the soul free of all preoccupation with the sensual; for fervor and love are better and greater when one intellectual thing contemplates another, than when something intellectual contemplates something sensual.¹¹³

Rising above the level of the sensuality of the bodily senses, the soul opens itself to a higher perception. In Lull's language, this does not mean a renunciation of the sensual, but rather a recognition that the only optimal sensuality is one that comes from God, and it is to God that one's gaze must

be directed. In other words, it is of no use for the soul to have spiritual senses at its disposal if these senses cannot make themselves felt in the human-divine order of nature witnessed in the Incarnation, which gives spiritual dignity to the body and the senses.¹¹⁴ The spiritual senses continue to be subject, in a certain sense, to the life of the body. Distraction can overtake them, drawing them down from contemplation of the divine virtues. Reflection on the humanity of Christ is the intermediate step towards contemplating the godhead, which is why it is necessary to avail ourselves of a spiritual model of the body and the senses. Working at his highest capacity, cogitation escapes the dominion of space and time, moving freely among past, present, and future. In such a state, says Llull, the soul is “united and reclining” with God in its contemplation.¹¹⁵ But it is the eyes of the spirit that gain intellectual insight into God’s humanity in this world, whose form cannot be seen sensually by the eyes of the body:

In this world, Lord, human beings see your humanity intellectually, cogitating; but they cannot see it sensually in the form in which it is. Herein is recognized the superior nobility intellectual sight has over the sensual; for the eyes of the soul suffice to capture and see what the eyes of the body cannot.¹¹⁶

What we are presented with here is an intellectual vision of the spiritual body of Christ, whose form escapes human sense perception that has not risen to the sensible-intelligible level. In the advance of the soul to the purely intelligible, God opens a way of communion with humanity through grace, and the human person turns to God through the three virtues of the soul (memory, understanding, and will).¹¹⁷ The whole of Llull’s epistemological system, enclosed as it is in the cycle of the sensual and the intelligible, makes the individual who cannot break free of that enclosure a slave of reason,¹¹⁸ whereas faith is able to go beyond the intelligible, passing beyond the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible to a relationship between one intelligible and another. Llull reserves to reason questions of truths, since reason is much better disposed than faith to handle these matters.¹¹⁹ Cogitation, with its “spiritual-intellectual” nature, has shown itself as a higher state of soul, perhaps close to what certain medievals, like Bonaventura, called the *apex mentis*.

In “apperception,”¹²⁰ the second of the spiritual senses, the individual is able to elevate sensuality to the level of the spiritual, not through any special grace granted to the body by the spirit, but through the proper disposition, harmony, and order of the senses, which form the basis of intelligible knowing at the same time as they can be the cause of its deviation. The body is a mirror in which things should be reflected in the highest transparency and

purity in order that the intellect can contemplate them. This is why spiritual birth in the human being depends on the proper disposition of the senses. The sensible order is so important that, where it is wanting, the vision and contemplation of intelligible reality can elude the soul or arrive at it in a deformed shape:

For just as a woman, Lord, seeks out the clearest mirror that will not deceive her in showing her features, so, too, one who would apperceive things intellectual through things sensual, must first see that the sensualities are not disturbed, disordered, or confused in the way they show intellectual things, and must make every possible effort to seek out those sensualities that are most useful to demonstrate and signify those intellectual matters concerning which one desires certainty.¹²¹

The special quality of this sense of apperception is that it permit us, beginning from the sensible, to prepare and understand intellectually the nature of things sensed.¹²² This means that in some way the sensible is the first thing to be understood. But this is only the beginning. Knowing what the sense object is in itself depends on a higher level that moves dialectically between the two levels of the sensible and the intelligible. Comprehension of each of the two natures remains, therefore, outside of either of them. In the same way, if one moves in dialectical manner between the natural and the supernatural order, abandoning now one and now the other, one is able to gain a certain knowledge of the desired object. Only that which is made to stand outside of itself can be effectively known:

As a man walking down a road, Lord, puts one foot down in order to lift and advance the other, so, too, it is fitting that one who would apperceive what is natural place the understanding in what is supernatural, and one who would apperceive what is supernatural, place the understanding in what is natural.... For one is the occasion of the other when one is apperceived by the other.¹²³

This relation of alterity is associated with a theory of contraries presented in the four degrees of signification already met in the *Compendium* (sensible-sensible, sensible-intelligible, intelligible-intelligible, intelligible-sensible¹²⁴). Llull develops this idea in the context of this spiritual sense, presumably intending it as a discipline for the spirit on its intellectual and contemplative ascent to the higher faculties:

For according to what it is, Lord, the color black will signify the color white, and according to what the color white is, it will give meaning to the color black, for the more contrary the colors are, the better they demonstrate one another.¹²⁵

Knowledge is shown here to be an adventure, a moving from one side to the other, mistrustful of having understood anything of what has been seen. It is a kind of intellectual ascesis aimed at self-knowledge and preserving the order of the faculties. “Apperception” presents itself as a phase of consciousness higher than “cogitation” (the meditative and reflective phase), where the soul simply realizes the different subjects of creation. But now the spiritual capacity of the person is itself put to the test, beginning from the mastery of the higher distinctions. This way of “grasping one manner by another”¹²⁶ is the basic method of understanding that follows on the experience of conversion, since only one who has undergone a change from one life to another can appreciate the working of such a topology of the soul, converting understanding without confusing it, grounding itself on a clear conviction of the ascetical life and of the need to let go of the self and forget the self.

Failure to understand this whole system of orders, the sensible and the intelligible, the natural and the supernatural, is attributed by Llull to a fundamental human ignorance of the harmonies and oppositions that obtain between the two sides and that shape the great secret of the world and existence.¹²⁷ The true *modus cognoscendi* that fosters apperception consists, then, of an adventure that arrives at certitude only insofar as we come and go within the scene, confirming our successes and recognizing the doubts that have overtaken us. The language of Llull is replete with the great perplexity that arises from the surrounding world, to the extent that clarity has to be reconfirmed by the distance that separates the possible from the impossible.¹²⁸

One of the great themes of Llull’s thought is the encounter with the revelation of the natural, which catapults one to the knowledge of dark and weighty secrets. This order of nature shows more than the disposition of created things. The spiritual person finds it impressed with traces of the divinity, which are necessary to scale the ladder of beings.¹²⁹ It is within the human being, composed of the sensible and the intelligible, that these secrets can best be sought, beginning with the dialectical moment among the four degrees of signification,¹³⁰ and in particular within the soul, which is a mirror that reflects the secrets when it contemplates on the divine virtues. Despite the contemplative power of the soul, a spiritual substance composed of matter and form,¹³¹ the soul is denied knowledge of the divine essence in the same way that it is impossible for a mirror to know the images reflected on its surface. What is contemplated in the mirror of the soul are the divine virtues, but not the essence of God. Llull therefore recommends, in a great display of realism, that persons exert themselves to know the possible, not the impossible. What is perceived of God is not the

divine being in itself, but the manifestation of that being, that is, the substance in three persons and the virtues.¹³² We know that God is Being, but we have no idea what that Being might be in itself.¹³³

An analysis of “conscience,” the gate to repentance,¹³⁴ follows the treatment of cogitation and apperception. Through this spiritual sense the individual comes to know of the enormous limits to which the soul is subject.¹³⁵ If the previous two senses were respectively reflective and self-reflective in character, conscience reminds us of the highly religious nature of Lull’s intellectual project by locating those reflection in the context of the moral life of human beings. “Subtlety,” the fourth sense, is a certain form of human creativity or disposition that inclines the soul more towards the life of the body or that of the spirit.¹³⁶ And finally there is “courage or fervor” which is related to valor and devotional attitude.¹³⁷

How are we to understand this labyrinth of human faculties? To take sensuality as a principle of knowledge does not imply blind acceptance of everything sensible.¹³⁸ The road of knowledge that leads to the higher realities of intellect only opens up through a proper progression of correspondence and meanings between the two extremes of the sensible and the intelligible. There is therefore a process of selection, a proper art of searching for the truth and finding it (*ars inveniendi*). All knowledge, in effect, begins in sensible experience, but only at the level of the intelligible, where we are conscious of the contradictory reality, can we turn our attention in that direction with the aim of uncovering which sensualities are hiding the higher secrets. In a certain sense this system gives us to understand that creation, too, as a locus of divine revelation, is the natural place for the supernatural to hide itself. The natural course of things is an immense mystery that remains impenetrable until the soul has visited the heights of contemplation.

This relation of alterity, which lies at the heart of the system, is associated with a theory of contraries, whose four degrees of meaning, first met in the *Compendium*, now reappear in *The Book of Contemplation* as part of the analysis of the spiritual senses:

Whoever would acquire the art and manner of apperceiving and knowing the contraries of sense and intellect requires four means: the first is, Lord, to begin with the sensual contraries, seeing one sensual contrary through another; the second means is to seek for intellectual contraries by way of sensual contraries; the third way is to look for some intellectual contraries by way of others; the fourth way is to seek for sensual contraries by way of the intellectual contraries.¹³⁹

The greater the degree of contrariness, the higher the level of meaning and demonstration. At the same time, the tight structure of the scheme

unveils its profound ascetical and mystical meaning, with an unavoidable moral and symbolic aspect that obliges the seeker again and again to step away from the places of life that are known and familiar. But the contemplative model, even in its most sublime aspirations, is subject to a topology of upper and lower. A topological conversion is required wherein the above and the below exchange the meanings ascribed to them. This Llull will take up in the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* and through the full use of the *ars combinatoria*.

ENLIGHTENED DESCENT

Llull's spiritual anthropology, especially in the second part dedicated to the five intellectual senses, has opened a path previously unknown in the tradition. This is due principally to his commitment to raise the rational substratum to all the levels of being, thus avoiding a mere fantasy view of reality. The symbolism of the center had contributed to the shaping of a spiritual topology in which the multiple levels of being and creation find their corresponding place in the classification of the faculties of the human soul. The relation between macrocosm and microcosm, which is already reflected in the internal structure of *The Book of Contemplation*, was a response to an *imago mundi* shared and much appreciated by sages in the monotheistic religions, who not only strived to adjust their rational interpretations to the accounts of their respective scriptures but also confided in the synthesizing power of Platonism and Aristotelianism, convinced that if these were true models they would be discoverable in reality.¹⁴⁰

Llull welcomes the best and most prestigious language of tradition into his geometric figures when he locates the symbolism of the cross in the center of the "intelligible sphere"¹⁴¹—an arrangement clearly reminiscent of the Neoplatonic aim of dissolving every possible attempt at representation of the divinity—in accord with his non-ecstatic and all-embracing soteriology.¹⁴² Llull's mystical Christology, even when it gleans splendid elements from pre-Christian paganism embedded in the symbol of the cross, does not give rise to divinizing adventures that bypass the necessarily dual human and divine nature of the Christian religious experience. The eyes of the contemplative are lifted to the cross as a mirror in which the "bodily eyes" and the "spiritual" eyes concentrate their attention.¹⁴³ His motives for elevating his rational discourses to the highest degrees of mystical contemplation were powerful. The principle on which preaching was based had to come from extraordinary experience, creating a "mystical means of communication"¹⁴⁴ between the preacher and the listener by appealing to the attributes

of God. These he considered the foundation of a theological grammar whose context of meaning was guaranteed by “necessary reasons.” Rational principles, therefore, rested on the authority of ecstatic experience. Mystical topology, on a model of spiritual ascent, offered the same steps to the process of intellectual abstraction, so that a single scheme provided the pattern for scientific knowing and contemplative knowing.

Nevertheless, the principal novelty of the *Art compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, the book revealed at Randa, is its blend of a combinatory language, visual imagery, and the method of *inventio*, or discovery. The religious intent of the work is announced in the prologue: “To describe truth, to contemplate and know God, as well as to enliven virtue and mortify vice.”¹⁴⁵ But it is first and foremost a kind of conversion founded on the capacity of the human mind to convert propositions according to the language of syllogistic logic: given a subject, to seek and discover all possible predicates, and vice versa. The idea is to present in a single book everything that can be thought, from the highest to the lowest, as well as everything that can be said about each of these. From the binary combination of terms in this universal grammar, conceived as general principles, it would be possible to find a solution to any question the human mind can pose. As an art of questioning and getting answers to a variety of matters, it is applicable to all the sciences. The combinatory logic is a logic of conversion because the mind’s ability to convert the language of the world contains within it the condition for inner conversion.

Leaving aside the immense complexity involved in learning these arts, which for centuries were used as mnemonic devices,¹⁴⁶ and trying only to grasp the essence of his invention, we see the altogether revolutionary nature of his concept of a language of “transgression,” the unequivocal outcome of an underlying mystical experience. The forging of a new language responds to the need to destroy previous codes and meanings as lacking the power to express the reality of the world, and above all to the need for human beings to communicate with each other. This is the standpoint of Lull’s Art: to introduce a new interpretation without having to replace the terminology. The novelty consists in displacing the meanings of existing terms, and for this reason the reader has to be initiated in the way of losing oneself by way of language in order to find a new meaning, or many new meanings, in the combination of one and the same sensible reality. This is why his combinatory logic can be understood as a “logic of conversion.” For Lull, to convert means to shift one’s gaze, to displace and let go of the former focus of attention. The need for constant displacement, for passing one’s mind through the “chambers” by means of the combination of letters, reflects the need of the religious spirit to exile itself from its own soul.

All of this Llull accomplished through five principal figures designated in algebraic notation.¹⁴⁷ The first is the letter A, which represents God in the center of a circle with rays extending from him towards the circumference, where the divine virtues or attributes are assigned to 16 chambers, each virtue with its own letter: B=Goodness, C=Grandeur, D=Eternity, E=Power, F=Wisdom, G=Will, H=Virtue, I=Truth, K=Glory, L=Perfection, M=Justice, N=Generosity, O=Mercy, P=Humility, Q=Dominion, and R=Patience.¹⁴⁸

These are essential virtues, and their binary combination generates 120 chambers through which it is possible to arrive at knowledge of God by “necessary reasons.” Each Virtue is made into a subject that takes on the other virtues as predicates, demonstrating thereby the capacity for conversion that gives rise to the combinatory logic: Thus we have, for example, Goodness is grand, Goodness is eternal, Goodness is powerful...; Grandeur is great, Grandeur is eternal... God is a single essence with multiple attributes or, as Llull says, is “the being in which Goodness, Grandeur, Eternity, and the other Dignities convert each other reciprocally.”¹⁴⁹

The second figure is represented by the letter S, and signifies the rational soul and its potencies (memory, understanding, and will) in a circle of 4 concentric quadrangles that give rise to 16 chambers on the circumference, each quadrangle being assigned a color: blue, black, red, and green. The rest of the figures follow: T (principles and meanings), V (virtues and vices), and X (opposites or predestination). To these three figures two others have to be added: Y (truth) and Z (falsehood), as well as a number of secondary figures for S, T, and V.

The detailed, though still concise, explanation of these figures and their application is followed by a distinction devoted to 16 “universal Modes” from which derive certain “Conditions” and “General Rules,” and then a final section in which 16 “Questions” are posed concerning the Modes. The whole intricate lattice is aimed at solving any question related to God, knowledge, or the dogmas of religion. Of interest to us here is the evolution of the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible that we met in the *Compendium* and *The Book of Contemplation*, and how it is transformed in this new logical context into a ladder of meditation.

The figure S, symbolizing the rational soul and its potencies, is in turn divided into 4 quadrangles (E I N R), each of them assigned a color (blue, black, red, or green), which in turn generates distinct ternaries of individuals or acts particular to each potency (B C D, F G H, and O P Q). An auxiliary figure S shows the different combinations in which the potencies of the soul can act, but in order to interpret all of this, the figure T (principles and meanings) is needed. The characteristic of T is that through it one can

descend from the universal to the particular, and then from the particular to the universal. This double movement takes place by means of the green triangle (E F G), which signifies the difference (E), agreement (F), and contrariness (G) between sensuels, between sensual and intellectual, and between intellectuals.¹⁵⁰

We may turn to the chapter dedicated to the 16 modes, some of which allude to the question that interests us here. In the third of these modes, which deals with interpretation and demonstration under the general title *De significatione*, Llull explains the way in which S attempts, with the aid of T, to broaden the field of meaning and the knowledge of A V X and E I N.¹⁵¹ That is to say, the soul and its potencies interpret, through principles and meanings, the metaphysical and moral reality of the remaining figures. In the mode entitled *De sensualitate et intellectualitate* it is explained how the potencies of the soul bring sensible species from potency to act by way of the modes of signification already known” sensual–sensual, sensual–intellectual, and intellectual–intellectual.¹⁵² In the section dedicated to the “Rules,” the ascent and descent of the universal and the particular is stressed in connection with the figure T.¹⁵³

From all of this, as cryptic as it sounds, we are able to conclude that for Llull the activity of the potencies of the soul (S) in the modes of signification (T) is something necessary, as is the ascent and descent, the characteristic way of facilitating the movement of knowledge among the distinct levels or grades of abstraction between the sensible and the spiritual-intelligible. We should also mention the seventh mode, *De oratione*,¹⁵⁴ where the topic of prayer that had appeared in the final chapter of *The Book of Contemplation* is taken up again in the context of the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible.

Between 1274 and 1283, roughly the period to which the *Ars compendiosa* and derived works belong, there are no developments of interest to us here. The *Ars demonstrativa* (“Demonstrative Art,” ca. 1283–1289) inaugurates a new stage in Ramon Llull’s creation. In it his complex system is simplified in response to the poor reception of his public expositions, as we recall from the *Vita*. He reduces the number of the attributes to 9 and the number of figures to 4, and introduces an alphabet and a table.

For the first time there also appear 9 subjects, the aim being to include all the distinct degrees of being in the universe (divine, angelic, heavenly, human, imaginative, sensitive, vegetative, elemental, and instrumental). The listing of subjects also represents a resumé of problematic questions related to the syllogistic logic that governs Llull’s various Arts. The list shows up for the first time in the *Regulae introductoriae artis demonstrativae* (“Introductory Rules of the Demonstrative Art,” 1283–1285),¹⁵⁵ where a series of

problems are laid out: “De Deo, Alterius vitae, De angelis, De anima, De imaginative, De sensitia, De vegetative et elementativa, De motivae potentiae, De moralibus.”¹⁵⁶

Some years later, in the *Liber propositionum secundum Artem demonstrativam* (“Book of Propositions according to the Demonstrative Art,” 1283–1287)¹⁵⁷ Llull announced his intention to apply the particular to the universal.¹⁵⁸ The chapter devoted to the disposition of the 10 figures, presented in this work in a most extraordinary way, opens with T, whose description appears even before A. The principles that T now signals are the sensitive, the imaginative, and the intellective.¹⁵⁹ Here we observe how the three degrees of abstraction between the sensible and the intelligible have changed into principles of signification mediated by the imagination.

A few years later, the *Compendium seu commentum artis demonstrativae* (“Compendium or Consideration of the Demonstrative Art,” 1288–1289)¹⁶⁰ shows a use of the figure T not only for the activities of the higher faculties but also for those of the lower.¹⁶¹ The *Ars inventiva veritatis* (“The Art of Discovering the Truth”),¹⁶² a work that presents a series of gyrating circles, opens a new period (1290–1308) marked by the inclusion of ternary principles. In it Llull insists on the importance of certain “transcendent points” to serve as a method of ascent that begins from the natural elements and passes progressively to the vegetative, sensitive, imaginative, intellective, moral, celestial, angelic, and finally the divine levels—in short, traversing the entire ladder of beings.¹⁶³

Such descriptions are reminiscent of what we find in the *Compendium* (the section on the secret) and *The Book of Contemplation on God* (the section on apperception). The rules of Llull’s Art provide the structural context for the ascent and descent of understanding into the comprehension of objects positioned each in its place on a hierarchical ladder of beings that is meant to cover the whole of creation. What are here called “transcendent points” may have originated in the secrets or degrees of meaning and abstraction in the *Compendium*, which are an advanced form of the topology of mystical knowledge (of science and *amància*). They represent a convergence of the demonstrative methods of the figure T and the ascent of the faculties (figure S), all described here in terms of the ladder of subjects. This configuration is maintained all the way up to the *Ars generalis ultima* (“Final General Art,” 1305–1308), the mature and most complete work in this series of treatises (see the illustrations on pages 62–65), and even figures in the *Ars brevis* of 1308, an abbreviated version of the same.

To what extent, one might ask, do these final elaborations maintain a relationship with the primitive apologetic project of the *Compendium* or even with the meditative treatment of the great *Book of Contemplation*? In terms

of the genesis of the question, the *Compendium* was the first attempt to develop what we may call a “transcendental scheme,” a mystical topology of the secret with apologetic aims. Already in that work we find a description of that scheme as well as certain considerations on the nature of perception, imagination, and intelligible knowing. In a section devoted to sense perception,¹⁶⁴ Llull takes up the five bodily senses for the first time. In a later chapter he describes the transition to intelligible knowing through the imagination, where the five senses are brought together in a “common sense,” and from there brought to bear on fantasy.¹⁶⁵ In subsequent texts, such as the *Doctrina pueril* (“Childish Doctrine,” 1274–1276) he would return to the imagination in similar, though somewhat clearer form:

You must know, son, that with the imagination the soul takes up and adjusts in common manner everything offered to it by the five bodily senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling; and in fantasy it offers it to understanding, and after understanding goes higher to understand God and the angels and intellectual things that the imaginative faculty cannot imagine. Fantasy is a chamber located in the palate above the forehead; in the forehead the imaginative brings together what it has taken from corporeal things, and what it has thus taken enters into fantasy and illumines that chamber so that understanding can take what imagination offers it. When, through some accident, this order is disrupted, the person becomes fantastical, or has a crude understanding, or goes mad.¹⁶⁶

The subtle difference that Llull sets up between imagination and fantasy may be seen as two functions of one and the same faculty: imagination collects the sensible species that the various bodily senses put at its disposition, in order, in a second stage, to pass a single image of them to fantasy, where the activity of intellection takes over. In modern terminology we might even speak of the one as a reproductive or synthesizing function and the other as productive or creative. In any case, this function is limited by the activity of the intellect now in the picture, since it is not needed to continue the ascent. Imagination is thus seen as a kind of mediator, opening the way to the activity of the intelligible and spiritual life of the human being.

What prompted Llull to introduce this brief treatment of anthropology into a context dealing with logical questions and theological polemics? Everything in his logic seems to be oriented towards the necessity of resolving the mystery of religious dogma and to unveiling the secrets of the mystical life. We might in this sense speak of a logic of *tertium datur* that seeks a convergence of the distinct dualities that affect reality: on the gnoseological level, the duality of sensible and intelligible knowing; and on the theological level, of the human and the divine in Christian dogma. Imagination, as the

Figure I

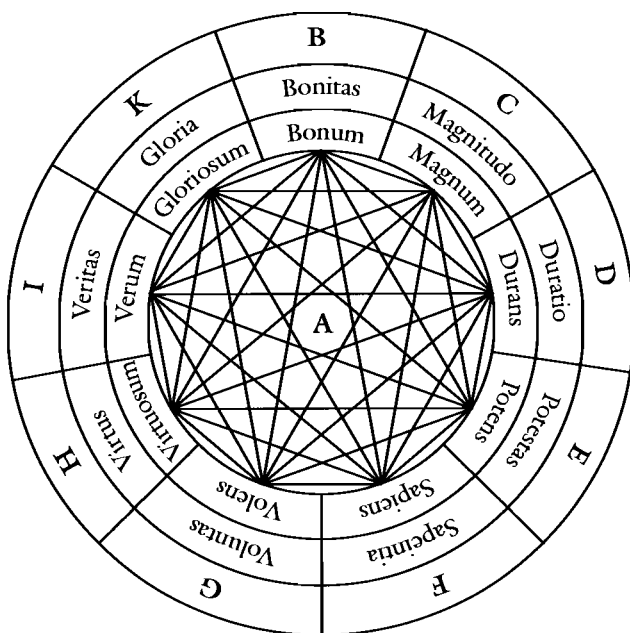
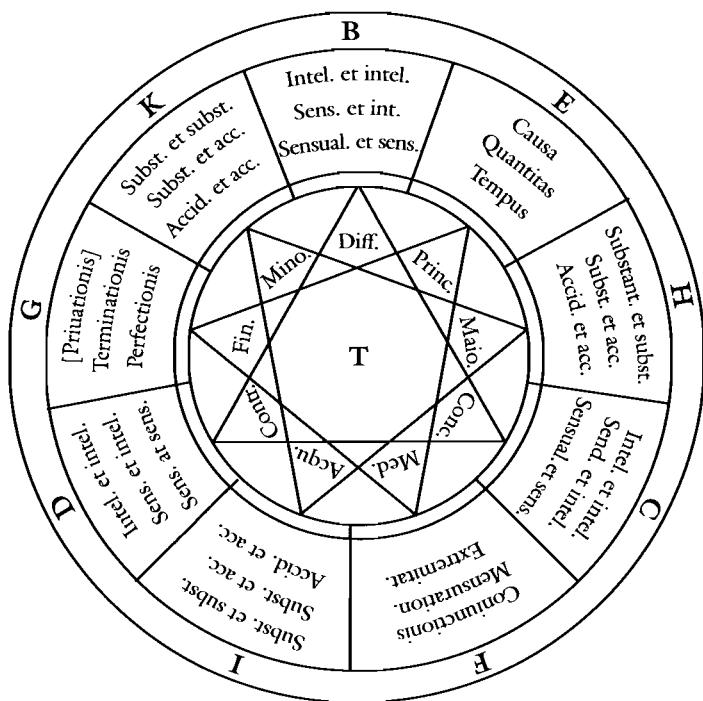
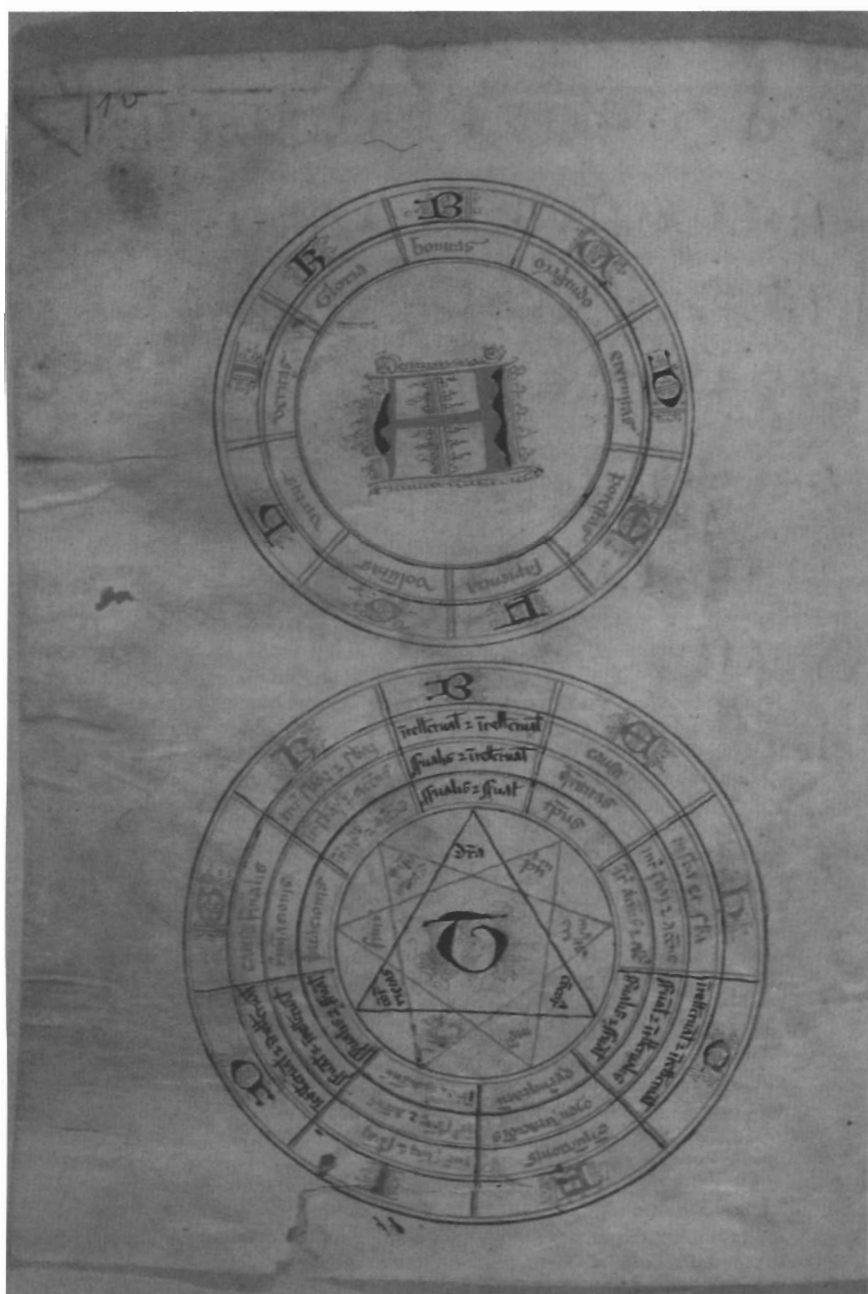
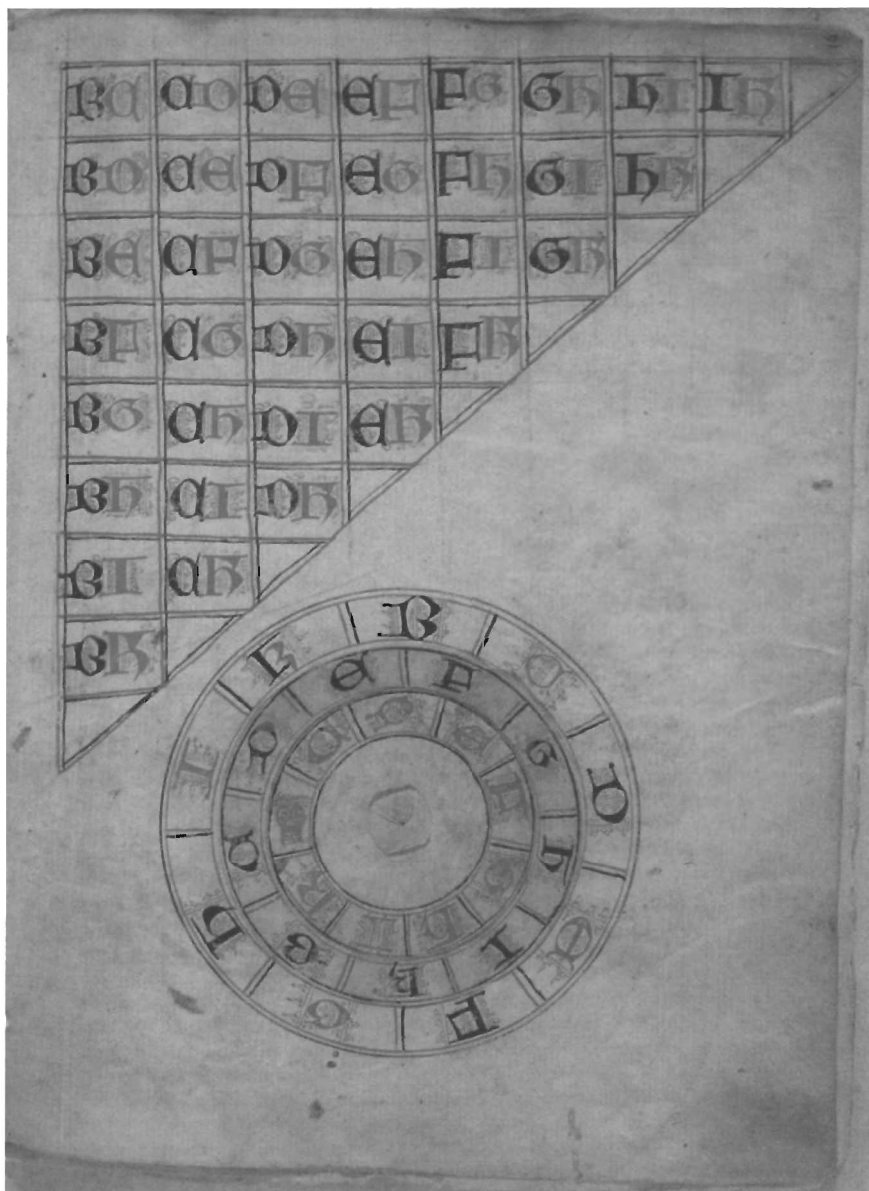


Figure II





Figures 1 and 11 of the *Ars generalis ultima* (ROL 128).
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (clm 10522), fol. 1^r.

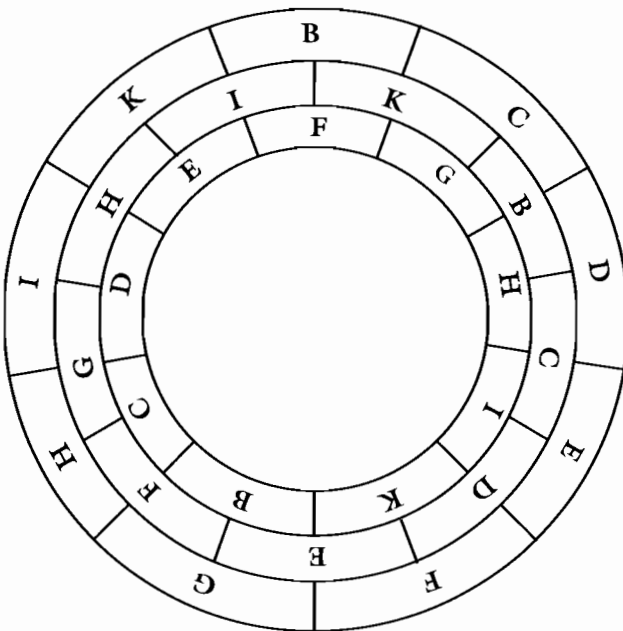


Figures III and IV, fol. r^o.

Figure III

BC	CD	DE	EF	FG	GH	HI	IK
BD	CE	DF	EG	FH	GI	HK	
BE	CF	DG	EH	FI	GK		
BF	CG	DH	EI	FK			
BG	CH	DI	EK				
BH	CI	DK					
BI	CK						
BK							

Figure IV

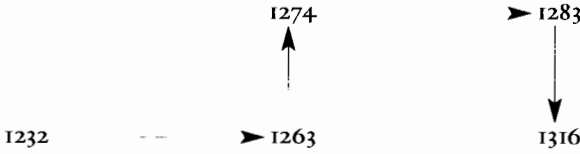


bridge between body and spirit, has its model the mediation of the divine and the creaturely in Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁷ All of Llull's writings are built on a conviction of the radical distinction between the lower world and the higher; but it was his religious philosophy, basically a Christology and philosophical reflection on the figure of Christ, that he considered the best model to use for preaching to the gentiles. The two books that preceded the enlightenment of Randa, the *Compendium* and *The Book of Contemplation on God*, gave Llull a "Christocentric" structure, represented in the ordering of the human faculties through the mediating function of the imagination that acts between the sensible and the intelligible. Since he wanted a contemplative model that would function apologetically, he had to place the figure of Christ at the center of scientific and mystical language, as perhaps the only figure capable of serving as a first bridge to the dialogue.

The reader of these two books, and of the works derived from the *Ars compendiosa* that try to cut through the intricate labyrinths and transformations of language, comes away with the sense that behind the whole exposition there must be a kind of perfect symbolic order, the key to which, however, eludes one's analytical way of seeing. Three systems may be deduced up to this point from the complex model of contemplation Llull gives us: the cognitive, the mystical, and the apologetic. From there we may venture the following scheme: On a first level of signification (sensible-sensible), according to the *Compendium*, the bodily senses are at work. On a second level (sensible-intelligible), we find the synthetic faculty of imagination. On a third and higher level (intelligible-intelligible), the faculties or virtues of the soul (memory, understanding, and will) are active and contemplation of the divine comes into the picture. At a fourth level or degree of meaning (following the language of the *Compendium*), that of the five spiritual-intellectual senses, we see that to the extent that these senses are always subject to the sensuality of the body they facilitate the descent of virtue from the heights of mystical contemplation, bearing a new order to be applied to the world of sensualities and thus transforming matter and the life of the body. The return from the supreme mysteries to the lower mysteries of the sensible realm is therefore an attempt to comprehend the "kenotic" experience of God within the framework of the gnoseological processes implied in Llull's idea of contemplation.

In this way, the doctrine of the "transcendent points,"¹⁶⁸ as it unfolds in the works after Randa, can be understood as a logical development of the "transcendental scheme" of four degrees of meaning in the *Compendium*. We are also able to establish a close relationship between this doctrine and the symbolism of ascent and descent¹⁶⁹ in the *Vita*:

	<i>Vita coetanea</i>	<i>Compendium</i>	<i>Book of Contemplation</i>
1232–1263	Conversion	sensible-sensible	bodily senses
1263–1274	Formation	sensible-intelligible	imagination
1274–1283	Contemplation	intelligible-intelligible	virtues of the soul
1283–1316	Preaching	spiritual/intelligible-sensible	spiritual senses



The fourth of Llull’s levels leads, in some sense, to talk of a mysticism of descent, whose most profound expression would have to be sought within the feminine spirituality of the thirteenth century in Mechtild von Magdeburg, but whose general structure approaches closely that of Richard of St. Victor in his *De quatuor gradibus violentiae caritatis* (“On Four Degrees of the Violence of Love”). The fourfold divisions of what has been called Richard’s “phenomenology of love”¹⁷⁰ (*caritas vulnerans, ligans, languens, deficiens*: wounding, bound, weary, and dwindling love) throws some light on our own scheme:

In the first degree, God enters into the soul and the soul turns toward him; in the second, it ascends beyond itself and reaches God. In the third it enters into him. In the fourth, by the will of God, it leaves and jumps beneath itself.

While the third degree corresponds properly to contemplation or *excessus mentis* in the tradition from St. Paul and Augustine, the fourth indicates the commencement of a descent that displays the Christological intentions of this mystic.¹⁷¹ It is a question here of an anti-mystical state that can be thought of only as a reversal of the “mystical alienation” of “excess of mind.” In the case of Llull, too, the fourth degree of meaning represents an overcoming of contemplative states with a clear intent to the activity of preaching. But this could not unfold without a complete reform of language resulting from spiritual conversion.

3

The Alchemy of Language

THE TRANSGRESSIVE element found in all mystical religion is manifest first of all in its language. If mystics have been viewed with suspicion by the ecclesiastical tradition, where original religious experience is given its place in the rhythm of history, it is because of the untraditional way they express themselves. Already in the thirteenth century women writers used the vernacular, out of necessity, to speak of the experience of God; even certain theologians, among them Meister Eckhart, were completely without prejudice when it came to employing their mother tongue rich in “new words” (as Teresa of Avila would later put it) side by side with the Latin used in academic discourse. Religious patterns changed with the introductions of a new language, or at least the public changed, given that the philosophies and theologies composed in the vernacular were directed in large part towards the laity.

In general the *modum loquendi* of mystical literature sets it apart from other modes of more static religious or ecclesiastical discourse. New modes of speech result from sudden shifts in the realm of religious meanings, where any displacement or substitution on the semantic plane is viewed at once as an attack against the foundations of common understanding, or against official interpretations accepted by consensus. What is annoying—and transgressive—is the manner of speaking itself. This is obviously true for those who venture to adopt a new idiom without knowledge of the divine sciences being taught in the academies. But it also holds for those familiar with the field, including those learned masters who, like a farmer

plowing up the soil before a new seeding, seek to air out the musty language of tradition¹ with provocative formulas aimed at shaking thought out of its encrusted complacency.

In all written traditions, sooner or later, we meet questions relevant not only to the normative uses of language but also to the special hermeneutical situation in which particular authors express their experiences in writing. This is the case with the Abrahamic religions, especially in Christianity, which has tended not to make language and writing the literal foundation of its self-understanding as we see more commonly in Judaism and Islam. The high degree of knowledge of and familiarity with sacred texts we find in the Cabalists, for example, shows the extent to which a scriptural magisterium is viewed as indispensable even for mysticism. Christian mysticism, however, demonstrates a rather special reception of the spiritual value of the Word as revealed and reborn in the pure soul of one who contemplates the mysteries of divinity.² Here again, it is the Christological model that sets it off from its sister religions. The cross, as Henry de Lubac recalls, is a fact of language, and this of itself frames the meaning of the *sermo humilis* without in any way excluding its permanently transgressive nature.

In studying an author's mystical language, one has always to remember that it is mystical *texts* and not mystical *experiences* as such one is dealing with.³ This does not mean that we need restrict ourselves to an analysis of explicit forms of language, but rather that we have also to take into account the silence⁴ in which the ineffable is given voice. This is why we are thrown into the only forms of expression that can perform this function: paradox, oxymoron, and negation. As Alois M. Haas has observed, these are all linguistic forms of impotence which, in the end, show the power of language.⁵

The tension between experience and understanding grows in proportion as the mystic becomes aware of the peculiar form of expression being used, which can range from pure poetry to mystagogic language. To be sure, there is little clarity when it comes to differentiating between texts considered to be the product of personal experience and those in which system or commentary take the place of the confessional account. But in a situation where silence and not articulation is the core of experience, it is worth considering whether the so-called mystagogic style might not be the result of a more radical desire to hide all possible personal identification in order to give greater purity to the resulting text. In the realm of Christian mysticism, it seems as if everything can be solved ultimately by an authentic understanding of the mediating character of the Logos incarnate in the figure of Christ. To what extent is the mystic unaware that what takes place in language itself is not yet the first, and final, manifestation of one's experience of God?

CONVERSION AND CONVERSATION

The different uses of language we meet in Ramon Llull rely on a deep structure of alternating rhythms of silence and speech—with their corresponding symbolism of ascent and descent—expressed as a relationship between contemplation and action. This alternation of discourses is not the sign of a mind driven by whim. If the difficult tension between experience and understanding we meet in analyzing mystical texts is clearly the result of relationship between time and eternity that such experiences attempt to transmit, it is no less clear that tradition has furnished spiritual authors with convenient models for preaching and communicating. For these reasons, and despite the will to silence, mystics have been verbose in the extreme. The mystic treads a difficult path in trying to adapt a novel idiom to maintain a sense of being enveloped in tradition, while at the same time affecting an unavoidable rupture because of an equally novel experience. Already in Llull's language of *amància* with its talk of "spiritual senses" we see how, in the contemplative descent, language has to discover what it can do and what it cannot. In fact, the descent, both in its theological and its gnoseological aspects, corresponds to the fact that language itself represents Word become flesh. The faculty of preaching the silence of contemplation comes to light in the descent. With some degree of clarity, we can detect in Llull's path of descent four forms of discourse stemming from the experience of conversion: conversation with God, with oneself, with others, and one final conversion that applies the former three and is set completely in the realm of symbolic experience,⁶ namely, the conversation of the natural elements among themselves, which, as we shall see, is not always metaphorical and allegorical.⁷

On completing the *Vita coetanea* the reader is surprised at the plainness of the facts recounted there and the almost complete absence of self-reflection on them. This may be no more than a sign of the author's intention to distance himself freely from his work so as not to influence by too emotional a style those who approach the text. It is one of the few examples in Llull's works where the pattern of a cosmic conversation, so pervasive in most of his writing, is missing altogether. The lack of style and the paucity of personal details are aimed at directing the attention of the reader to the only thing that matters: the call to personal conversion and the discovery of inner truth through the reading of the *Vita*. Still, the style of conversation is that of a universal interlocutor; his idea is to offer the work as an example for others. There are certainly enough indications in the text to consider the use of autobiography a rhetorical method, but this is only one side of its

profound meaning. The hagiographical element is no doubt aimed at promoting a traditional and well known model of sanctity. At the same time, the *Vita Beati Raimundi* makes a clean break with cultural and intellectual precedents to elevate a certain kind of rational thought and paradoxical mode of expression—typical of the “poet-thinker” of the age that Georg Misch has studied in connection with Lull and Dante—to the stylistic level of a wisdom text.⁸ This mysterious combination of the rational and the irrational, of devotion and fury, of ascesis and explosion of the senses, marks a new direction in the history of European spirituality, which at the time was experimenting in new, even dangerous, transgressions of traditional language.

In the *Vita*, as we noted, the conversation takes place with a universal interlocutor, unlike Lull’s other writings which always make use of a real or surreal conversation partner, as for instance in the invocatory style of *The Book of Contemplation on God*. In that work the style is one of a cosmic listening to the divine Word. This is due to the basically passive character of contemplation whose active complement would only come in the new linguistic creations of *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*. As for the style of invocation, it should be added that the presence of the one invoked is not always desired. The tension between presence and absence makes possible the use of paradox, whose ascetical purpose is to force the reader to let go of ordinary habits of understanding. If the text of the *Vita* is the best source for a symbolic understanding of the facts of Lull’s life in the light of the scientific-mystical principles of his thought, it is principally in *The Book of Contemplation* that we find a hermeneutics of the experiences recounted in the *Vita*. The work cannot be understood without appreciating Lull’s capacity to express, through a system of signs all his own, the extraordinary experiences of which the autobiography speaks. For authors like Lull and Augustine, hermeneutics is itself an experience of language as a reliving of prior experience, so that we may well ask whether it is not until the time of this later language that true insight is had.

The Book of Contemplation poses the following question: How do I seek what I have already found? The quest for God, which had made such a spectacular appearance some years before, entails following every path of the soul and coursing the length and breadth of the world. God therefore becomes an occasion for knowledge of the hidden self, a process set in motion by the prayer of invocation.⁹ Insight into lived experience is thus gained through forms of religious expression. And prayer, as a privileged form of that expression,¹⁰ becomes the locus of God’s presence, the place where his word acquires a meaningful language. At first, it must be said, God is a way to the self, just as the self becomes a new way of access to

God, once the ego-centered nature that scatters its attention in all directions has been annulled. If experience is lived only in its expression, then there is true contact with God only as long as the expression lasts. The length of *The Book of Contemplation* is itself a clear indication of the interminable nature of this kind of prayer, unable to extricate itself away from the source of words. "How can allocation give birth to knowledge of the other?" asks M. de Certeau.¹¹ In Llull this knowledge of the other precedes its articulation, since it is the former that unlocks the potency of the latter. The entire invocative rhythm of his writing becomes a meditation on the Word, which arises almost automatically when one is caught up in the wonder of outer and inner reality, and of the mysteries that it is quick to uncover.

Llull's conversational model changes noticeably in other works where the necessary condition of the absence of the other is substituted with an alter ego, as in *Disconsolation*, with other conversational forms, as in *The Song of Ramon*, or with religious dialogues with infidels. Written in Majorca in 1300, *The Song of Ramon* lays out the life of Llull in 84 verses approximating in form a lamentation or elegiac recitation. Tired and apparently frustrated by the scant attention his philosophic and religious project has evoked, he raises his voice in great beauty and with unshakable certitude to attest to the unique experience of which he is both witness and transmitter:

New knowledge have I found;
through it the truth can be known
and falsehood destroyed.

. . . .

I am an old man, poor and despised,
without the help of anyone born
and bearing too great a burden.
Something great I have sought of the world
and very good example have I given,
but little am I known and loved.

I wish to die in an ocean of love.¹²

In a certain sense *The Song of Ramon* contains the whole of the emotional ingredient that, in part, is wanting in the *Vita*. But then again, his intentions are different. There is nothing here of theological rhetoric. The poet simply seeks a song to reattach his life, nearly at its end, to that distant beginning. The form of the dialogue that Llull had practiced throughout his life with religious figures and politicians left emotions out of the picture in order to gain a clearer insight into doctrinal matters. When literary texts that are obviously aimed at preaching make use of autobiographical details, they rarely do so to awaken sentiments in the reader, but are reduced to very con-

crete meanings integrated into a broader theory. We see this, for instance, in certain sections of *Felix*.

As noted above, this same textual rhythm can be seen in *Disconsolation*, Lull's "expression of a brief existential crisis."¹³ In it Lull sets up a conversation between two persons, each of whom discloses one of the two levels of meaning of his life. On the one hand, there is the sense of an ideal never achieved: the conversion of the infidels and the acceptance of his Art. On the other hand, there is the sense of a reality beyond his reach, the awareness of having initiated a spiritual project for which he was not suited. The hermit that appears in the poem serves to keep Lull located on the plane of the possible, converting his existential situation up until then into the highest level of spiritual reality he is capable of understanding. It is a kind of self-justification in which an "alter ego" attempts to save the self that is tempted again to give itself over to doubt. In Lull's dialogue with the hermit—a genre found also in works like *Blanquerna* and *The Book of Wonders*—the author feels obliged to self-reflection in order to shed some light on the causes of his failure. The hermit, like one of the friends of Job, forces Lull to consider whether his situation might not be the result of sins of immoderation or excess of zeal that have darkened his judgment to the point of confusing the lofty spiritual objects that guided his first conversion with a purely personal passion.

In time of crisis, we should note, Lull always reacts in the same way: recollection of the truth to be transmitted is a guarantee that he will see his way through every project he undertakes and that it will end in triumph. Lull's rationalism and his commitment to expand it to the full might be seen as his way of avoiding a lapse into meaningless discourses on dogma or the irrational fantasies that accompany creative impulse. Comparing Lull's *Disconsolation* to Nietzsche's aftersong to *Beyond Good and Evil*, "From High Mountains," Vittorio Hösle finds it altogether remarkable that the two thinkers invoke a figure whom they recognize as a friend and at the same time a projection of themselves. In each case the projection stems from a need for intersubjectivity at a particular point in life.¹⁴ Viewed in terms of what Hösle calls an "objective idealism of intersubjectivity," *Disconsolation* shows a strong need for reconfirmation by an other, although as such this does not speak to the overall value of the work.¹⁵ This relationship of alterity, effected here through the poetic creation of an opposite to represent common sense, survives in Lull's disputational work under the guise of the religiosity and polemics of his dialogues. What we see clearly come to the fore in *Disconsolation*, however, is the problematic nature of a personality whose good judgment is often disturbed to the point of affecting his view of reality.

It is more clearly in works of an apologetic nature that Llull uses the keys of dialogue to open the gates to his passion for preaching. *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* stands out in this regard. Perhaps the aspect most deserving of our attention not only in this work but in all his apologetic works is the model of religious philosophy that can be deduced from it. *The Book of the Gentile* has frequently been taken as a model of inter-religious dialogue, but the clear ecumenical elements it presents need to be looked at carefully. They probably have less to do with essential questions of religious creed than with a *modus significandi* (way of signifying) that belongs exclusively to the community of contemplative sages, for whom the common principle is the value of the word revealed by God as a unique fact form which all other facts follow.

In the book's prologue,¹⁶ it is stated that once the author became convinced of the need for the infidels to correct their false views and praise God, he sets down to write the work using *The Arabic Book of the Gentile* as a model. There has been some debate as to the origins of that work. One view sees it as an earlier work of Llull's written in Arabic but since lost. Another argues that it is based on an earlier source, for example the *Cuzary* (Kitab al-Khazarí), written in Arabic by a Jewish author, Yehudá ha-Levi (twelfth century), or perhaps on the writings of other authors. This question aside, what seems decisive for Llull is the soteriological purpose of what he is writing. In effect, his aim is none other than to construct what we might call a "philosophy of salvation," or what Franz Rosenzweig, the German Jewish philosopher and translator of the poems of Yehudá ha-Levi, called, for the same reasons, a "philosophy of redemption." From the start, then, one fact bears pointing out: conversion tries to transmit a model of salvation based on personal experience. At least in this book, even when the description of religious dogmas is faithful to tradition, the question of the criteria of truth for the different revelations is bracketed, and the focus of attention is fixed on the construction of a common linguistic context that can give meaning to discussion and conversation. Llull adopts the uncreated virtues of God as principles of life and a point of reference within the universe of language. These not only shape discourse, but insofar as they provide a cross-cultural context they also offer a topology of meaning. The possibility of discourse rests on the correspondence of the terms of this "theological grammar," reflecting the capacity for conversion among the terms themselves.

This correspondence of terms takes place on two levels: on a horizontal level, in the activity of God *ad intra*; and on the vertical, symbolic level of God's activity *ad extra*, in revelation to creatures. In this exemplary activity *ad extra*, the virtues of God show a descending process of signification. They are consistent with a theophanic model of clear Neoplatonic

antecedence, according to which nature records these divine signs in secret, and in some sense also records the correspondence of terms or divine Names and their particular activity. The divine attributes are principles of meaning and at the same time function as principles of communication—of God with humans, of religious persons among themselves, and of these persons with God. Interreligious understanding begins from the assumption of the value of the Names of God, the only *a priori* of religious conversation, since it is one that the three sages take to be principles of reality itself. There is, therefore, a common linguistic presupposition that establishes a single framework of meaning and understanding. Therein lies the value of this theology that works like a grammar¹⁷:

Every science needs words to express itself. Given that this demonstrative science needs obscure words not used by lay persons, and given that we are making this book for lay persons, we will speak briefly and with simple words of this science. Confiding in the power of the One who is the perfection of everything that is good, we also hope, through more suitable language, to extend the book to lettered persons and lovers of speculative science. For it would do an injustice to this science and art if it were not presented in the proper language and were not marked by those subtleties of reason that present it best.¹⁸

This passage from the prologue lays out the methodology to be adopted in the rest of the work. There are to be two levels of reading. The first, directed to the uneducated, begins with a narration and an interpretation of the symbolism of the tree by way of the allegory of “Dame Intellect.” This comprises the argument of the whole of the first book. The aim of this level of reading is to offer a simple introduction to the work accompanied by an allegoric symbolism, and in this way to explain the starting point of the discussion: the belief of the three wise men in a single God and in the resurrection of the body. The second level of reading, directed at the educated, is explained throughout the remaining four books, through the subtle reasons and philosophical terminology that each of the interlocutors is allowed to voice in order to spell out the differences that separate their faiths from one another. Each of the two levels of reading represents a distinct use of language. Both function to give meaning to the same divine context: the attributes of God. The first use we have called “allegorical symbolism” because of the literary images Lull uses to give the surface meaning of the context. In this way he attempts to reach the widest possible reading public. The second, which we may call “speculative symbolism,” represents a complex process of signification in which difficult concepts are employed to extend the symbolism of the first level.

The book's prologue lays out the gist of the superficial meaning of the "allegorical symbolism." It opens with the description of a pagan philosopher, now an old man facing death, who inquires desperately after the meaning of life. Unable to find consolation, he decides to travel far from his land and enter a luxuriant forest, there to meditate and live a life of retreat. But neither the fantastical Eden that opens before his eyes nor his thoughts on death and the futility of existence calm his anxieties. Llull's account, composed in the distinctive style of the Franciscan school, unfolds in a woods full of symbols that introduce the reader to the complex logical-combinatory principles of his system.

As the poor unfortunate man laments in solitude, three wise men from the city, engaged in friendly conversation, come to the place: a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew. Eventually they arrive at a fertile field (*locus amoenus*) with a spring that waters five trees. Manuscripts of Llull's opus depict letters hanging from the branches of these trees like fruits, symbolizing the figures of his system. The image of the tree,¹⁹ whose cosmic dimension is brought into relief in *The Book of Contemplation on God*, here serves Llull as a universal symbol of great importance to preaching, not only for its Christological meaning, but also for the meaning it has for the Jew, the Muslim, and the gentile who represents natural religion.

Into that place rides a beautiful woman on horseback, the allegorical image of Intellect, who teaches them the meaning of each of the tree figures. The first and most important of the trees has 21 flowers, symbolizing God and the uncreated, essential divine virtues. The second, with 49 flowers, signifies the 7 divine virtues of the first tree and 7 created virtues. The third tree also has 49 flowers, referring to the 7 vices and 7 virtues of the first. The fourth has 21 flowers for 7 created virtues. The fifth and final tree, with 49 flowers, represents 7 created virtues and 7 mortal sins.

Once Intellect has left that beautiful spot, one of the sages addresses the others and reflects with a sigh how good it would be for the three of them if there could be a single religion and belief for the trees they are looking at. Since they cannot come to understand each other by appealing to the authority of any of their traditions, they decide to discuss using necessary and explanatory reasons, following the rules and conditions that Intellect has shown them.

The curtain is drawn on the first act of this religious drama with the arrival to the *locus amoenus* of the gentile, whose beard and long hair are those of one who has chosen the life of a wanderer. Once the gentile has refreshed himself at the spring and greeted the three sages "in their language and according to their custom," Llull has them respond with these words:

May the glory of God, who was Father and Lord of everything that is and who had created the whole world, and who will raise up the good and the evil, give you courage and consolation and help you in your sufferings.²⁰

The gentile is perplexed by their joint salutation in that they speak of one God and one resurrection, something he had never heard before. He goes on to ask them to explain, “in vivid reasons,” that resurrection of which they speak, thinking that perhaps he would finally find consolation and peace for his tortured soul. The three then decide to demonstrate what they had just affirmed, explaining to him the truth of their respective religious doctrines.

Setting aside the authority of the sacred books,²¹ the sages need a limited framework for adjusting their respective faiths to the terms of rational argumentation. The divine virtues serve as philosophical principles insofar as that they represent reality for the three men, and as logical principles insofar as they are the general principles by which all divine grammar must be governed. The common context of language and reality is meant to provide a single religious meaning.

Unlike the prologue, which is full of images of symbols easy to learn and understand, the remaining books are aimed at the “educated.” To understand them requires mastery of the Art. The symbolism of the trees lays out two paths of meaning: a sensible path that proceeds by way of images, and an intelligible path that proceeds by way of the universal concepts that images represent. The first kind of signification finds its perfection in the second, as if an extension of the original symbolism. The whole middle section of the book manifests Lull’s firsthand knowledge of the dogmas of Judaism and Islam. The account concludes with a scene in which the gentile, having listened to the reasons of each of the sages, begins to pray in gratitude to the Lord of creation—a gesture of profound ecumenical character²²—for having opened his eyes to reality. He then prepares to proclaim to them the religion that he would follow from that moment on. But imagine the surprise of the new convert when the three men get up from that place and graciously take leave of him without showing any interest in knowing which of their religions he had decided was the true one! Lull adds an epilogue to the work, where we meet the three sages, now returned to the city, remarking how good it would be if “just as we have one God and one Lord, we were to have one faith, one law, one sect, one way of loving and honoring God,”²³ where no one would try to convince the others by force or preaching.

What is truly amazing, given the state of apologetic literature in Lull’s day, is that at no time does the form of the story turn to the power of Christian truth to preach to the partners engaged in peaceful conversation. At the time of its preparation, Lull had more confidence in the power of his sys-

tem—the combinatory logic, the Art, and the application of these two to doctrine—than he did in the power of the revealed Word of the scriptures. Despite the important differences that divide the three religions of the Abrahamic tradition, Llull believed it was possible to reach agreement with those sages beginning from general principles accepted by all of them, principles that formed part of the unique revelation of God in the Bible and the Koran. But Llull still had a long road to travel: the three sages would have to confide in the power of reason to adjust the accounts of their respective scriptures to a reality stamped by the activity of the Word, and then structure this reality around a system of correspondences, which the common view of the medieval cosmos understood as a movement of participation between the supreme Being and created beings. Jews, Christians, and Muslims, at least in a strictly mystical setting, accepted a priori the oneness of God in the context of the divine Names. The Jews knew it from the reading of Cabalistic texts (*sefirot*) and the Muslims through certain forms of Sufi mysticism that had probably reached Llull's attention. His concern was to show how the rational system of demonstration that begins from the Names of God had been revealed in a book he had written under divine inspiration. So it was that he found himself at the very core of the tradition of communities who believe in a book descended from heaven. Llull, who was very familiar with the "people of The Book," knew that the only way of making a single revelation understandable was to place it in the interpretative context of the revealed book, and to show how it functioned as a "universal language."

Seen in terms of Llull's conceptual development, *The Book of the Gentile* may be reckoned a strategic work, given that he needed to have some initial theoretical confrontation with Jews and Muslims. At the same time, the fact that it belongs to a very early stage of his work means that it is very much under the influence of the contemplative ideal of those years. The entire work draws on a great wealth of material in order to come to a theory or criterion of truth in the religions. But even as we see him move easily in and out of theoretical realms, we cannot forget the goal of all these efforts. The central framework of the book, the doctrinal exposition of the creeds, is certainly important, but Llull's main purpose is concentrated in the prologue and epilogue, where he puts everything in its proper context: the prayerful contemplation of the virtues of God, the only common ground of the three sages. Contemplation of the virtues, the confession of monotheistic faith, and the declaration of belief in a creator God and the hope of resurrection summarize all religion at a stage prior to disputation. The contemplation in the *locus amoenus* represents a neutral place that belongs to no one. The path that brings the sages from the city into the forest implies that it is culture

that establishes differences, whereas in a more natural state, ruled only by symbols, a new and renewing language emerges.

The Names of God and their mystical-contemplative use serve as principles of reality and offer a universal criterion of truth, but it is faith that allows one to assume truth in the other and faith that truly enables dialogue.²⁴ The religious philosophy of Ramon Llull dislocates faith to a place outside of reason. The foundation for dialogue must be shared, but it is right intention, guided by a longing for truth, that finally leads to understanding and the discovery of rationality in the other. Dialogue is the result of a desire to know and faith rests on the possibility that the truth lies outside of oneself. It is, therefore, the gentile, the man without a religion, who guides the steps of the believer in Llull's book to a theory of truth.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

The language of conversation directed to the Other has already appeared in the invocative rhythm of *The Book of Contemplation on God*. The actual practice²⁵ of prayer is presented now as a common activity towards which all interreligious interest is directed. Towards the end of his masterpiece, love and prayer are taken up, in books five and six respectively. In the section dealing with prayer, Llull meticulously applies earlier ideas on the theoretical-contemplative life based on three forms of prayer: sensual, intellectual, and a form of prayer that combines the two. These categories represent a single pattern corresponding to the image of the world: one in form and three in shape (sensual, intellectual, and animal). Sensual prayer is what we may call vocal; intellectual prayer is based on the virtues of the soul (memory, understanding, and will); and the third form points to action in the world grounded in knowledge of the virtues.²⁶ This latter is a spiritual form of prayer to the extent that it is able to contemplate the sensible dimension (active or practical) from the life of the intellect (contemplative or theoretical). The human body, with its gesture and external senses, is oriented towards sensual forms of prayer,²⁷ while the three potencies of the soul—imagination, reason, and the spiritual senses—orient it to intellectual prayer.²⁸ The third form of prayer does not concern itself with the human person talking to God, or even remembering or understanding God, but only with virtuous acts. This is the highest form of prayer in that good deeds include these other elements.²⁹ The effect of sensual prayer on the intellectual, and vice versa, reiterates the power of the contraries. But the true content of prayer is love, of which there are three forms: love of God, love of oneself, and love of one's neighbor.³⁰ The method that Llull follows

ends by converting all activity between heaven and earth into a single prayer that unites these three forms into an appeal for divine unity³¹:

Loving God of glory, your servant, imploring your holy unity, tells the firmament, the sun and the moon, all the stars, and all virtues created in heaven to adore and implore your glorious unity; and it likewise tells the four elements and every genus and species and individual; for all these many things, Lord, are created and sustained and benefited by your holy unity, the mother of all unity and of all created pluralities; for this reason, your servant adores with all his strengths your loving unity.³²

The perfect prayer would take up all of one's time. Were there no need of sensuality in eating and sleeping and speaking, even these activities could be directed to the creator.³³ In the final chapter of *The Book of Contemplation*, Llull introduces a system of algebraic numbering³⁴ and geometrical shapes. In addition, he proposes a newly graded scale along which understanding can ascend to the adoration of God through the use of the letters of the incipient combinatory language.³⁵

In the revealed form of the Art, too, the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible used a topology as the basic structure for contemplative prayer, a typology we find inserted in a circle showing us how to elevate the soul to contemplation by way of these three modes of prayer. In the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* ("The Abbreviated Art of Discovering the Truth"), we met the "seventh rule" devoted to prayer; and in the *Ars amativa boni* ("The Art of Loving the Good"), which according to Llull's analogical symbolism is the counterpart of the former work, there is a section dealing with the "transcendent points."³⁶ Between the first formulation of the "secrets" and the later formulation of the "transcendent points" in the Art, Llull seems to have succeeded in offering a method of prayer as the context for a religious polemic, so that prayer and conversion represent the two modes of a single religious objective—all within a general framework of the uninterrupted search for truth. With the *Ars compendiosa*, the above and the below, as well as the method of ascent and descent, have disappeared. Everything is now absorbed into the art of seeking in a circularity whose end is a *coincidentia oppositorum* much like we saw in his scheme of the four points. The meditative function of Llull's "wheels" is secured by the "Cabalistic use" of the attributes of God that appear in the letter A. In their contemplative function, however, the figure S intervenes to make a place for the rational soul and its potencies, since these are what activate the entire mechanics of the Art through the ascent and descent, all facilitated by the imagination, as we have seen earlier.

The "sensible figures" of the Art show a clear pedagogical purpose, and

their religious context can be seen explicitly in other traditions close to Llull. The power of the “divine Dignities” to incline one to contemplative praxis may have reached Llull through Sufism, as he relates in *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*. The assignation of letters to each of the “Dignities” was aimed at facilitating meditation on the combinations of the powers of God, which has parallels in Islamic and Sufi literary mysticism,³⁷ as well as in the Cabala,³⁸ whose texts attest to the value of purifying the recitation of the Names of God by annihilating all meaning through an experience of the One Name of God. All of this seems to be related to the “science of letters” (*ilm-al-hurūf*) or the “magic of letters” (*ṣimiyā*) practiced by some extremist Sufis who referred to it as the “science of the secrets of letters.”

In any case, what survives at the bottom of this method of meditation is not something one has to learn through the magic power of letters but their contemplative purpose. The contemplative ecstasy achieved by combining the letters should not be seen as a kind of delirium, since it was preceded by the intervention of the “agent intellect” reflecting on the soul and thus conferring a prophetic character to imaginative seeing. If we consider the text of the *Doctrina pueril* (“Childish Doctrine”), where imagination illumines that which lies beyond all comprehension by way of sense images and thus adds a prophetic dimension to the experience of knowing, it is not difficult to correlate the use of sense imagery, its activation through the faculties of the soul (especially the role of imagination in mediating between the sensible and the intelligible), and the methods of contemplative prayer.

How much did Llull really know of these other tradition? Studies of Scholem and Corbin have offered clear indications that he understood a theory of contemplative prayer shared by the religions of the Abrahamic tradition, but more recent studies have focused on the shaping of the historical and doctrinal framework that could have influenced Llull. According to this view, Llull’s “Dignities” seem to play a role similar to that of the *sefirah* in what Moshe Idel has called the theocentric-theurgical school of thirteenth-century Cabala in distinction to the ecstatic-anthropocentric school.³⁹ Although Llull would not have known how to distinguish these two currents, Hames suggests that he could have made use of a form of combination of letters with diagrams and circles that was very close to what is found in the ecstatic school, presumably incorporating systems associated with the Cabala of Abraham Abulafia. For both the Cabalists and Llull, the Names of God inform us of the essence of the godhead,⁴⁰ giving us a ladder of ascent and descent with nine rungs, each of which includes the Dignities. Like the *sefirot*, the Dignities diffuse their likeness on the lower levels, so that the ladder connects the higher levels (the intelligible) with the lower (the sensible). The combination of the diagrams of the tree and algebraic notations that

Llull adopts in *The Book of Contemplation* is likewise important and does not seem to contradict any possible Sufi source.

Still more interesting is that fact that colors were also commonly used among the Cabalists both as a way of distinguishing the stages of mystical experience and as an aid to meditative techniques. As an aid to imagination, Llull associates color with figures when he combines different chambers. There seems to be a connection between the visualization of the *sefirot* through the imagination and the use of colors at appropriate times in prayer. This would make color a covering or wrapping (*hashmal*) of the *sefirah*, while for Llull “color is habit contained in the figure.”⁴¹ In both cases the use of colors, as well as the use of rotating circles (as in the *Ars brevis*), are attested to as a form of reaching unity in prayer. There are therefore grounds to consider these mixed techniques as the basis for a relationship between Llull and the Cabalists, since they appear in the same temporal and spatial context. In any event, the figures or circles of meditation, both in Llull and in those traditions, have an ecstatic end whose gnoseological aspect consists in the destruction of meaning, whose contemplative end is annihilation or *mors mystica* (mystical death), and whose visionary and prophetic value is facilitated by the imagination that mediates between the sensible and the intelligible.⁴²

LANGUAGE AND DESTRUCTION

We also find a language born of spiritual conversion in Llull’s literary works and fiction. In *Blanquerna* he explains his contemplative method in terms of the way the virtues of the soul (memory, understanding, and will) order the five spiritual senses,⁴³ always in the context of the combinatory capacities of one who has undergone conversion: “If we know how to remember, we will know how to forget; and if we know how to forget, we will know how to understand and to love.”⁴⁴ We have already seen how this use of language illustrates Llull’s preference for contemplative prayer, a preference whose meaning can be found only in the presence of a mystical will for which “prayer is the noblest work there is in religion.”⁴⁵

On this point he concurs with the great spiritual traditions. As in *The Book of Contemplation on God*, the four distinct forms of prayer reconfirm the special inclination of the mystic to the active life, seeing works as the most perfect form of prayer:

Prayer has four ways: the first is when the heart contemplates God without the mouth uttering a single word; the second is when the heart and

the mouth join in prayer, the soul understanding what the words are saying; the third way is when one leads a good life free of mortal sin, where everything one does is a prayer; the fourth way is when the mouth speaks words of prayer and the heart thinks of other things.⁴⁶

In the fourth type of prayer, it is the absence of virtues that leads to the sterile use of language, as when, at prayer, “the soul forgets itself and ignores the meaning of the words.”⁴⁷ Harmony between the soul and words results from a good disposition and use of the list of virtues and vices.⁴⁸ The opposition between vices and virtues realized in contemplative practice ends up becoming a model for preaching to gentiles and infidels. As explained at length in *Blanquerna*, the foundations of Lull’s meditation are thus closely bound up with his idea of language, since proper agreement between word and meaning affects correct understanding among different religious persons. For this reason, Lull saw the unity of language as containing the assumptions for a unity of religions.⁴⁹

But there are many problems that follow from a comparison of models of religiosity based on experiences of a contemplative nature. *Blanquerna* has been seen to echo the story of Barlaam and Josaphat (in its Romanic version⁵⁰), from which Lull must have drawn liberally. A common though distant heritage of the two can be seen in the classic pattern of the desert fathers: renouncing the world, retiring from public office, keeping a distance from civilization, separating from his spouse, and so forth. It does not seem advisable, however, to adopt a typological distinction between the supposedly static nature of Eastern asceticism and the more dynamic models of Western spirituality to identify Lull’s model of the ascetic life. It is hard to speak of asceticism in Lull in the sense it was practiced by Antony, Macarius of Alexandria, and others, but not because of his missionary activity and his desire for martyrdom. For Lull everything begins from contemplative and illuminative activity, which in some sense portends a rejection of the world. In the story of Śākyamuni the Buddha, in contrast, the rejection of asceticism precedes his enlightenment, as enlightenment precedes his preaching activity.⁵¹ Following our scheme of the four grades of knowledge and contemplation, we could adopt the classical scheme as well: *via purgativa*, *via illuminativa*, and *via unitiva*, to which we would have to add a *via predicativa*. Like the Buddha, Lull’s major renunciation is directed at static contemplation, including renunciation even of one’s own liberation and salvation, as we see in the crisis of Genoa where Lull is prepared to forfeit his soul in order to save his work.

In *Blanquerna*, a book dedicated to the eremitic life, we see the protagonist, who had lived the life of a monk and held various ecclesiastical posts all

the way to the papacy, return at last to the original desire that had led him to abandon family and friends in the first place, namely, to live the life of a hermit. In pursuit of this aim, he settles down in a cell in the forests outside of Rome. Life in the hermitage is divided among prayer, work, conversation with a helper who visits him occasionally during the day, and the contemplation of nature:

Blanquerna arose at midnight and opened the windows of his cell to see the sky and the stars, and began to pray with the greatest devotion so that his whole soul would be with God and his eyes would flow with tears and laments.⁵²

The conversations with his assistant that take place between periods of prayer maintain the bond between the contemplative life on the one hand, and preaching and the transmission of experience to his disciple on the other. The pattern is close to meditative disciplines of the East, where the solitariness of meditation and the dialectic interchange with the master combine to create a single, sublime comprehension of reality.⁵³ Blanquerna's approach to nature and the night sky also recalls a motif to be repeated centuries later in St. John of the Cross, where it would become the core of his mystical-contemplative speculation.⁵⁴

Blanquerna ends with the idyllic image of one who, having led an active life, submerges himself in the silence of divine love. At the same time, the exemplary character of the story suggests a new beginning and a new life for the reader. The theoretical model of Blanquerna—abbot, pope, and hermit—is meant to initiate the reader into the meditation exercises of *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, which follows *Blanquerna* chronologically. In this way, the example of one person's life serves as a moral, spiritual, and intellectual mode. But the actualization of this model can only take place in the life of one who recognizes the truth of what is written there and, above all, who knows with certainty that the next step must be to give words over to the silence that presents itself. The tension between quiet (or as Teresa of Avila will call it, "mental") prayer and the prayer that constitutes the whole of a life devoted to realizing the will of God and thus participating in the plan of salvation, cannot be left out of the picture. The contemplative moves between silence and word with the aim of putting one's own will at the service of the creator, forgetting one's own plans for salvation.

One day, the novel tells us, when Blanquerna is in his hermit's quarters he is paid a visit by another hermit from Rome, who comes to request that he write a rule of the eremitic life, so that other persons who had retired from the world might learn how to achieve contemplation. In response, Blanquerna devotes himself to adoring God with all his strength so as "to be

shown the manner and material” for writing the book. As Blanquerna is exerting himself to the limits and in a state of ecstacy, his soul rapt in the contemplation of God, he is struck by the frailty of the love that the lover has for the beloved—metaphors for the human soul and God himself. This is what prompts Blanquerna to write *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*.

While Blanquerna was thinking in this way, he remembered that once, when he was pope, a Saracen had told him that the Saracens had certain religious men, among whom the most highly considered were those called “Sufis,” and that these men had words of love and brief examples which aroused great devotion in men. These are words that require explanation, and through their explanation the understanding rises up higher, and carries the will with it, increasing its devotion.⁵⁵

It may strike one as curious that Llull, who had wrestled with questions of religious polemics throughout his life and sought an original model all his own, does not seem to have any great difficulty here accepting a method known among the mystics of Islam.⁵⁶ But if we consider that the verses of the book he now intends to write represent the best model of preaching for those who are already accustomed in their meditation to use short exemplary stories that require inner insight to be understood, this is not so surprising. What serve in *The Book of the Gentile* as principles of meaning, in the contemplative work become principles of destruction of all meaning in virtue of the suspensive function of language that no longer seeks to engender new meanings but to destroy images.⁵⁷ *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, the culmination of Llull’s mystical poetry, is offered as a collection of “moral metaphors.” Even this way of referring to it suggests a clear intent for words not to have any meaning of themselves, since they already *are* the reality that the image points to, so that all distance between the model and the copy disappears and all metaphor is reduced to absurdity. The prologue of the book announces Llull’s acceptance of this other tradition into his own:

Blanquerna was in prayer, and he thought about the manner in which he contemplated God and his virtues, and when he finished his prayers he wrote down the manner in which he had contemplated God. And he did this every day, bringing new reasoning to his prayers, so that he could compose *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* in many different manners, and that these would be brief, so that in a short time the soul could reflect on many of them.⁵⁸

In effect, contemplation is clearly seen as a theoretical activity, a “consideration” as the text says, but one that takes place in a state of prayer. Con-

templation or prayer here may be taken to mean the most perfect mode of sensual-intellectual prayer. When Blanquerna is said to be “in prayer,” this may refer to the level of what Llull called “sensual prayer,” while the writing that follows assumes the fuller process of meditation that ends in divine contemplation, as Llull understood it from the time of his first visions. Writing fulfills the discursive need of meditation in time. The consideration is of God and his virtues, but the “manner” of the consideration (*modus contemplandi*) consists in a continual discovery of “new reasons,” by which is meant not so much new principles, as is the case in the works of the Art, but new “words.” As is clear from reading the book, the words themselves are never really new; what is new is the place they occupy at each occasion and the meaning they take on. The soul considers the many ways of combining the terms of this grammar in which the Lover and the Beloved alternate as subject and predicate of the prayer and are reduced to metaphors of the soul and the godhead. Language serves as a multiplier of “explosive images”⁵⁹ of divine potency which, like an echo, ceaselessly reverberates the goodness and beauty of God.

With his combinatory method Llull erases the meanings of the world in order to achieve, in a new naiveté, a higher understanding. His moral metaphors are *metaphors* of the logical principles to which they correspond, and are also *morals* because they serve the active life as theoretical and contemplative ideals. If we speak of this as a practical activity, it is because the act of writing itself represents the practice most suited to virtuous life and activity. The book is an aid to contemplation, which accounts for its didactic nature. At the same time, the writing and dictating (if there was any) are themselves acts of contemplation performed by one who knows the mystical secrets and makes use of a language that seems manifold, surprising, and paradoxical to one not initiated into the secrets being talked about. In this sense, *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* is clearly a sensible expression of one who has encountered the virtues of God in their archetypal and logical setting. And yet, in the search for a suitable linguistic expression for the experience, all logic is destroyed by the force of the underlying aim: to renew the world. Furthermore, it should be noted, a complex of new reasons and arguments are introduced to persuade the soul to loosen the reins and head out in a new direction. This objective was already present in the combinatory art and the reading of the Art. But as indispensable as this may be for ascending to the pearls of contemplation, once one has reached the top, as Wittgenstein says, the ladder is no longer of any use. Or as the Zen saying has it, once you have crossed the river, there is no reason to carry the boat with you. The language we meet in *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* is reminiscent of the Art, but it is not the fruit of “artistic” experience. It is a

method—as the revelation of Randa recalls—for the creation of new words to embrace as much as possible of an inexhaustible mystical experience.

As is the case with mystical languages in general, constant reference to the idea of “novelty” has to be seen as part of the incessant search for expressions that drive one back to the obsessive nature of the experience itself. Language does not exhaust nor can it embrace the totality and depth of mystery. The novelty here consists in looking for and finding a place for the only words that fit such an experience, which end up being reduced to two, “lover” and “beloved,” and in the end to one final word that sums up the whole project of Christian mysticism—“love.” Each of the thoughts gathered in the book, one for each day of the year, confirms Lull’s objective of bringing the higher mental faculties to bear on the highest state of contemplation. Unlike traditions that feel the need to disregard the discursive and reflective dimension, for Lull it is understanding that moves the will on its final ascent to God.

This would in fact represent the supreme achievement of transcendental perception, except that it is of little use if not followed by the descent to the active life on the basis of the newly acquired knowledge from contact with the divine nature. The Christian model cannot conceive of the *unio mystica* as the final resting point.⁶⁰ The eschatological horizon of Christian doctrine necessitates a return to the body and the senses. This is why Lull insists on the intelligible stages (memory, understanding, will), since only a grasp of the factual state of existence can give full meaning to the incarnation of the Son of God.

The formulae of the moral metaphors have to be “short,” Lull says, so that the soul can cover many of them “in a short time.” The tension between time and eternity belongs to the substratum of the Christian contemplative life, the pressures of time contrasting with the suspension of pressure that marks the exit from time. There is no gainsaying the special quality of this mysticism. The contemplative’s certitude that everything known and experienced of the divine is accomplished in time follows the example of the cross, which is the reference point for life from then on, all the way to its ultimate consummation. Time becomes the sensible ground of eternity, which is its distant and intelligible referent point. Life mediates between the two as the place where the self is to be sacrificed, where consciousness needs to be overcome and destroyed.⁶¹

Up to now life has been presented as an open space between two secrets, the one marked by experience and the other, following a rhythm of time that is not always continuous, by comprehension. This is the leitmotif of Lull’s thought. The distance between these two points creates a cognitive tension expressed in the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible

that the Art tries to overcome through the conversion of linguistic terms from one context to the other. But all of this takes place in the field of understanding. The *Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, without fusing these two contexts, attempts a theory of their encounter. The hermeneutic setting of the encounter is a conversation, which offers an ideal situation for converting understanding into sensible experience and vice versa. In fact, although the language adopted here is that of the mystical song, the underlying question of the book is one it shares with *The Book of the Gentile*: Where or what is the locus of the encounter that conversation gives rise to? The lover and the beloved do not exhaust the ultimate form of the sublime experience communicated in the verses of the book; they are mere mediations that reveal the secret they hide in themselves. In this sense, they are both depositories of a revelation that does not end with them. To borrow an image from Augustine, we might say that they are transparent “vessels” or recipients through which their divine content shines.

As a work composed during a phase of Llull’s life when the need to understand what he had experienced was still asserting itself, *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* should be read alongside *The Book of Contemplation*, the *Ars compendiosa*, and *The Book of the Gentile* as another experience of language. That is to say, it is directed to preaching, though it is obvious that preaching requires initiation into prayer and contemplation. As we have noted, it is a book for those initiated in the secrets of mystical love, but it can also be read as a pedagogical work intended for those who have trained themselves in the terms of the grammar as Llull uses it in other works and are therefore able to recognize it in the verses. Indeed there are three possible levels at which the book can be read: a sensible level, for readers who recognize the words; an intelligible level, for those who know how to combine the words in different arrangements; and finally a mystical reading, for those in whom the sensible and the intelligible, the lover and the beloved, so narrow the field of experience that they lead to an annihilation of meaning and a unification of all meanings through the reduction of all metaphors to nothing.

There are various orders of meaning from which to interpret *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, but the central question seems to be the presence of duality in its verses. The approach of mystical language seems to offer the most clues to resolving the intellectual and “philosophical dualism” of Ramon Llull. One of these verses opens a direct path to the theme we have been pursuing thus far:

The secrets of the beloved are revealed in the secrets of the lover, and the secrets of the lover are revealed in the secrets of the beloved. And the ques-

tion is, which of these two secrets is the greater occasion for revelation?
(160)⁶²

The entire paradoxical world of Lull is contained in these verses. Just as we saw the impossibility of knowing any order of things in itself except through knowledge of another and different order, that is, beginning from the experience of alterity (which implies in this case a personification of the divinity), so here, too, the lover and the beloved are presented as distinct and necessary terms. But the difference between the two primarily affects the order of knowing, that is to say, the one who wishes to uncover the secrets. The revelation itself is clearly conceived as something unitary. Neither of the two terms is a better occasion for revelation than the other. Theologically, revelation can only come to term in the integration of creatures, which is why God revealed himself in Jesus Christ, the beloved. The problem here is how to grasp the meaning of the revelation to which it alludes. The idea of two distinct orders of revelation, one historical and the other mystical and personal, is excluded as a possibility. Revelation takes place only in the encounter of the lover and the beloved, in the knowledge that their mutual love brings, and in the love that the knowledge of both makes possible. The two are distinct, but the secret of each lies in the other. The secret of the sufferings of the lover cannot be grasped by the lover but only through the secrets of the beloved: the sufferings of being continually abandoned and forgotten by the lover. Secret and revelation are the two poles of a duality that is finally resolved in the tension that the paradox of mystical language brings into play.

A first reading of *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* shows us the conditions of this spiritual topology: remembering and forgetting (which are associated with absence and presence), love and fear, pleasure and suffering, near and far, love and death, and so forth. Each of these pairs of terms, contrasted as lovers' sentiments, give an idea of the profound separation that reflects reality as it actually functions in the world. The apparent dualism that runs throughout the book from start to finish is accompanied by an imperative to overcome duality. This is accomplished through a paradoxical form of discourse that shows up in the sort of inversions of meaning to which Lull was already accustomed. The following examples show how such inverted meanings are used in mystical literature to resolve opposites through their union (*coincidentia oppositorum*), or to heighten the expression of moral suffering:

The lover wept, and said: "When will darkness leave the world, and the paths to hell cease to exist? When will water, which always flows down-

ward, change its nature and flow upward? And when will the innocent outnumber the guilty?" (4)

"Tell us, fool, where do you feel your will to be stronger, in loving or in hating?" He replied, "In loving, for I have only hated in order to love. (164)

"Tell us, lover, what do you understand better, truth or falsehood?" He answered that he understood truth better. "Why?" "Because I understand falsehood only so I may better understand truth." (165)

"Tell us, fool, which is greater, difference or concordance?" He answered that, apart from his beloved, difference was greater in plurality and concordance in unity, but that in his beloved they were equal in plurality and in unity. (290)

The beloved filled his lover with love, and had no pity on his suffering, so that he might be loved more greatly. And in his increased suffering the lover found pleasure and recovery. (31)⁶³

From reflections such as these, the reader comes to understand how every road to salvation assumes the fallen state, and how passing through suffering and sin is an inevitable condition of salvation:

The lover was sick with love, and a doctor came to see him. The doctor increased his suffering and his thoughts, and then the lover was healed. (88).⁶⁴

The embracing of suffering as a way to spiritual realization, so widespread in the mystical and ascetical literature of the Middle Ages, overflows into exquisite metaphor by transforming pain into a source of insight. This is not some kind of veiled masochism, but simply a desire to unite the experience of the body with that of the spirit. For this is how the spirit finds itself in the pain of the body, and how the pleasures of the body find themselves in the sufferings of the spirit. The contrast is resolved in provocative images like the following:

The lover followed the paths of his beloved absorbed in thought. He tripped and fell among the thorns, and it seemed to him that they were flowers and that he lay on a bed of love. (36)

The relation of mutual love between the two is that between the active love of the lover and the passive, suffering love of the beloved.⁶⁵ The union of action and passion unfolds on multiple levels, but it is the action of the Spirit in the form of "love" between "lover" and "beloved" that succeeds in fusing the opposites and overcoming the dual structure of Llull's verses. A

logic of *tertium datur* is at work here. Everything passes through a “third,” without which nothing can belong to either of the two lovers. Love, understood not as an activity but as the place or person in which lovers recognize themselves as lovers, is nothing in itself. It is a *locus non locus* (a place that is no-place) that enables the mutual conversion of contraries into one another, like pleasure into suffering and suffering into pleasure, like death becoming a principle of life. The inclusion of a third does not, however, destroy the dual nature of the mystical experience. The question, “Where is the beloved?” is repeated, reminding us that that the beloved is in love, in a place where both cease to be what they are in themselves, God and human, in order to be the other.

These three central terms—lover, beloved, and love—create a space of questions and answers, whose greater or lesser degree of comprehension conditions the success or failure of the encounter between lover and beloved. “Love” stands as the only mediation between them, as if it represented being and yet at the same time the personal metaphor through which the lover can face the beloved:

Love and the beloved came to see the lover as he slept. The beloved called to his lover and love awakened him. And the lover obeyed love and answered his beloved. (277)

Love here is word, and even in a certain sense the divine Logos in the form of Jesus Christ, the beloved Son who calls for conversion through love. In any case, “love” always stands as the “copulative,” the intermediary between the two, as in the following two verses that show clearly the symbolism of the cross in which this mystical topology has to be situated:

The greatness of his love caused the lover to die. The beloved buried him in his land, where the lover was raised up again. And the question is, from whom did he receive the greater gift? (258)

The beloved kept misfortunes, dangers, griefs, dishonors, and distractions in his prison, so they would not hinder the lover from praising his honors and from filling with love those who held him in contempt. (259)

In the second of the verses cited above the beloved seems to change places with love, thus breaking down the logic of the “middle term,” but the place of the beloved is a no-place, belonging to no-one and no-thing:

The lover was praising his beloved, saying that he had transcended “where,” for he was there where the “where” could not be reached. Therefore, when the lover was asked where his beloved was, he replied: “He is,”

but one knows not where. However, he did know that his beloved was in his remembrance. (219)

The only question repeated obsessively is the question “Where?” This extreme form of language is similar to the following lines from a poem by the Persian mystic and martyr Husayn ibn Mansūr Hallāj:

With the eye of the heart I saw my Lord
 And I said, Who are you? And he replied to me: You!
 For you “where” is not a place
 And where you are is not any “where.”
 Of you the imagination has no image
 With which to know where you are,
 You who contain every “where”
 Like a “no where.” Where are You?⁶⁶

The friend must always respond from the place where the beloved is encountered, but the only place or time the beloved has is in the memory of the lover, where the beloved is made present through the desire of the lover to transform the beloved into an act of love. To what extent can we speak of the words that they address to one another, or that other persons occasionally direct to them, as constituting a dialogue? Only rarely does the response contribute anything new not already contained in the question. The interchanges read almost like a syllogistic game. The reader who approaches the book as a means to meditation, using one verse for every day of the year, is made to concentrate attention on the small world that it offers, in the form of no more than two or three sentences, in order to deduce the order of things. For meditation is presented as an art of ordering and disordering with one end in mind. It is an art of combining given terms—faculties of the soul, virtues of God, human vices, or whatever they might be—in order to clear away from the words and one’s reading all meaning for the outer world and thus create a silence for what lies beyond the focus of one’s attention. The submission of oneself to a minimal datum, be it a short example from nature or a gesture of the beloved, already presupposes a high degree of freedom in meditative activity. If we understand meditation in the way Llull does, namely, as a search, the lover who restricts the world and the human faculties for grasping it to the world of the beloved, concentrates desire on the words and attitudes of the beloved.

Neither the lover nor the beloved have exclusive control over the questioning, which passes back and forth from one to the other in seemingly arbitrary fashion, allowing the reader to assume both positions freely with the ultimate aim of joining the two voices into a sure path to silence:

The bird sang in the garden of the beloved. The lover came and said to the bird, “If we do not understand each other through language, let us under-

stand each other through love, for through your song my beloved appears before my eyes." (27)

The bird suggests the figure of the Holy Spirit who, seen in the light of a trinitarian theology in which the Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son, functions as a mediator between the lover and the beloved. No language is produced from their unity and identity since, as it is also said in the Koran, it is a matter of a higher, primordial language.⁶⁷ The expression of the lover remains within the realm of representation and therefore speaks the language of the soul's potencies:

With his imagination the lover painted and formed the traits of his beloved in bodily things, and with his understanding he made them shine in spiritual things, and with his will he worshipped them in all creatures. (332)

The disappearance and annihilation of representation can only take place through a *mors mystica* (mystical death):

The birds sang of the dawn, and the lover, who is the dawn, awoke. The birds ended their song, and the lover died in the dawn for his beloved. (26)

The dawn, an image found universally throughout mystical literature and especially evident in the spiritual tradition of Europe, represents both the end of the sufferings in a life longing for perfection and the arrival of the fullness of time. Union occurs in the silence of the words the two direct to one another:

The lover and the beloved met, and the lover said, "You need not speak to me. Just signal to me with your eyes, which are like words to my heart, and I will give you whatever you ask of me." (29)

The silence that yields here to the representative capacity of spoken language points to a resolute desire to disable the possibility of the two belonging to distinct realities. For this reason, Lull pushes language to such an extreme that the experience of the *unio mystica* can no longer be disclosed except through the automatic repetition of the same response. The aim of this reiteration is to lead one of the two parties—in this case, the lover—to lose all sense of self, to be cast into the reality of God in whom "love and loving were one and the same thing" (86), as in this dialogue in which "the destruction of meaning and the suspension of time are at work":⁶⁸

The lover was asked to whom he belonged.
He answered, "To love."

“What are you made of?”

“Of love.”

“Who gave birth to you?”

“Love.”

“Where were you born?”

“In love.”

“Who brought you up?”

“Love.”

“How do you live?”

“By love.”

“What is your name?”

“Love.”

“Where do you come from?”

“From love.”

“Where are you going?”

“To love.”

“Where are you now?”

“In love.”

“Have you anything other than love?”

“Yes, I have faults and wrongs against my beloved.”

“Is there pardon in your beloved?”

The lover said that in his beloved were mercy and justice, and that he therefore lived between fear and hope. (97)

Repetition serves the intention of annihilating meaning. Llull had recourse to this rhetorical device in times of maximum crisis, as during the preparation of *The Tree of Knowledge*. The meager success of his expositions had forced him to try out a new language. Something similar took place years earlier in his first visit to Paris with the composition of the novel *Felix*, although there it was a question of an extended treatment, encyclopedic in nature, in which the symbol of the tree is substituted for the language of syllogism, and where an ongoing conversation is carried out between a master and his disciple covering all the branches of human, angelic, and celestial knowing. In *The Tree of Knowledge* the reader is presented with a complex analysis of the orders of knowledge, constructed in the form of a series of questions and answers, and through examples. The labyrinth of language into which the reader, who also becomes a disciple at a certain point, is introduced makes an impressive display of Llull's symbolic and contemplative abilities, giving voice to elements of nature like fire and air, but also to the lower orders like minerals and plants, all of which enter into the conversation in a kind of linguistic alchemy like that found earlier in *The Book of Wonders*.

We have already seen how Lull's mystical system is an "art" of looking for a solution that already exists somewhere, not only in a "secret" place between the sensible and intelligible levels, but also in some chamber of the *Tabula* in which all possible responses and their combinations are summarized: a convergence of the Names of God, the subjects of the world, the forms of questioning, the places from which questions are posed, and so on. The solution that is found is not itself the end but obliges the seeker to look further. The search is thus made to look like something that has to follow the solution, so that logically the question—the *right* question—is also something one has to wait for. To ask is to seek by starting from what has already been encountered. But what, then, can that encounter actually be?

Lull's method is a technique for meditation and prayer whose only objective is to show that "comprehension is a simile of infinity and apprehension a simile of finiteness,"⁶⁹ despite the fact that sensible and intelligible knowledge is finite and limited. The acquisition of knowledge comes about through the disciple's continued posing of questions, one after the other, to be resolved without concern for the enigmatic nature of the responses. Thus we find a group of questions like the following:

Question: "Ramon, how long does the torment caused by love last?"

Answer: "Go to the fourth paragraph of the rubric above."

When the disciple proceeds to the passage indicated, he does not find an answer, but only the following:

Question: "Ramon, how large is the goodness of paradise?"

Answer: "Go to the second paragraph of the rubric above."

Once again, the disciple obediently follows the instructions, there to find:

Question: "Ramon, does a scraph understand God naturally or supernaturally?"

Answer: "Go to the previous rubric."

Following the counsel of Master Ramon the disciple goes again to a higher rubric, once again meeting the identical response: "Go to the earlier rubric." What possible meaning can these "traveling questions," as Lull calls them, have?

To question is to ask for what is not known, that is, to ask for something that the human being does not understand but wants to understand.⁷⁰

It might be a question about an ascetical model for letting go of the desire to know, or simply a way of obliging the disciple to let go of the self, to

deny oneself, a way of constantly fleeing the question as presently posed and travel on, like Abraham, to another place.

The two great silences of the *Vita*, during the period of formation and in his contemplative withdrawal, explain the exhaustion of ordinary language, both the polemic and apologetic language of the first period and the language of the logic of the Art. The very capacity of these languages to communicate and to preach drives them to the mystical experience of unity with the ineffable divinity. The *Vita* shifts back and forth between what, from the standpoint of the reader, are periods of darkness and silence and periods of the shining brilliance of Llull's systematic discourse. All of this has profound significance as an appropriation of the Neoplatonic and "Dionysian" tradition of the *via negativa* and the *via affirmativa*, and as an immediate application of experience to theological discourse.

THE ANIMALS, METALS, AND PLANTS SPEAK

Llull's view of language as the simplest mediation between the divine and the human reflects the Christological tenor of his thought, but this does not exclude the possibility of such mediation, which begins from the creator through the incarnate Logos, being extended to other creatures. Fables are common in traditional societies from Vedic India to the medieval West. Scholars tend to focus on the allegorical imagery, on the morals being taught, and on aspects that affect theories of representation and interpretation. In the case of Llull, mainly in *The Book of Animals*, which forms part of *Felix, or The Book of Wonders*, we are made to consider how well this use of language is suited as a foundation for mystical thinking and how far it can be applied.

Clearly Llull stands at that crossroads of East and West, where the genre took shape. But perhaps the best context within which to understand his use of it is the cosmic consciousness of Christianity alluded to earlier, which was often passed on through popular channels and folklore, and the way it was transmitted through what we might call the "natural mysticism" of the Franciscan school. This covers the theological contents of the doctrine, but here again, the distinctiveness of Llull's thought lay in his form of language and way of speaking. While the combinatory method is suited to the transmission of difficult material, this is not the only element that structures his thinking. *Felix* makes clear how explanation by way of examples and "likenesses" helps language adjust better to analogical thinking, to the point that formulas of associative thought of a more "archaic" nature can even crop up at times:

“Felix,” the hermit spoke, “there once was a land whose king greatly loved justice. Above his royal throne there stood a human arm made of stone, and in its hand a sword, at the tip of which was a heart of red stone, signifying that the king’s heart wished to move the arm so that it would move the sword, which thus signified justice. Now it happened that the palace was taken over by a great serpent so that none could dwell there. One day a holy man entered into the palace to do penance and contemplate God. Seeing the arm and the sword, and the heart on the sword, he marveled greatly at the meaning of the sword, the arm, and the heart, but so wrapped was he in thought of that image that he lost sight of what it had been made of.”⁷¹

The passage introduces Felix, another of Lull’s heroes who had ventured forth into the world to find God. The principle of his wisdom was guided by the use of similes: “It is only natural that every creature loves its own likeness.”⁷² The elements to be drawn from the passage cited above, all of them serving the lesson to be taught, correspond to the traditional principle of “like loving like.” It is thus possible to speak of a mixture of analogical and combinatory thought suggesting an archaic pattern of relationship (ab, bc, cd,...⁷³) among the elements: arm, man, sword, and heart. The function of such examples is to lead the reader away from the problematic context of questions that only leave spirit, will, and understanding paralyzed before the huge gap between knowing and not knowing. The example brings to light a world of likenesses linked by a hidden meaning that only one who patiently makes way through the labyrinth can come to understand fully. The narratives have as their object to introduce one into the temporal plane of associations and help one understand that questioning cannot be arbitrary or motivated by uncontrolled desire. The result of the hard asceticism required by the question is closely bound up with the difficulty of the example: “The darker the likeness, the higher ascends the understanding that understands it.”⁷⁴ None of this, however, should lead us to think that it is a matter of simple intellectual knowledge. Thanks to the Art we know that understanding wants what the will understands, thus demonstrating that the object of comprehension always lies outside of itself, in something other that completes its meaning and *raison d’être*. Accordingly, the examples do not offer an immediate answer but oblige the questioner to go outside and understand because of love, to love because of understanding, and so forth.

The introduction of this slow and repetitive rhythm is kept closely bound not only to the principles of the *ars combinatoria*, but also and above all to the circular symbolism of Lull’s thought. We cannot approach these texts from a purely analytic point of view. We have already seen in a passage from

The Tree of Knowledge how the form of the dialogue does not indicate an immediate response or solution. The literary examples of Llull undoubtedly have a pedagogical aim and a moral to teach, but the main lesson one learns from reading them is an ascetic practice that leads to a reform of understanding. In the same way that the “moral metaphors” of *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved* cannot be viewed simply as literary images adjusted to the mystical intentions of their author, so, too, these examples need to be seen as expressions of an experience that has overturned the meanings of things and inverted the paradigms of knowing. The dialogues of Felix with the various guides he meets on his travels are marked by an obsessive recurrence of questions whose end is to re-form the reader according to the “forms” or images presented. The questions themselves are born of the great sense of strangeness that the world stirs up in those who travel through it. As a result, Llull’s “wonders” do not seem very close to the philosophical principle of wonder, since they contain a double meaning that applies likewise to the impact of God’s activity on the world, both in its positive and its negative aspects. So greatly does Felix “wonder” at the goodness and beauty of nature that it opens up before his eyes the cruelty of God at permitting a young shepherdess to die in the jaws of a ferocious wolf, and brings his faith in a good God crashing to the ground.⁷⁵ This sense of “wonder” is closer to a sense of perplexity that cannot always be interpreted naively.

The Book of Wonders can, of course, be read as a politico-religious utopia, but such a reading hardly makes sense outside of the context of his contemplative work. The basic question here, as in *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, is about the place of God: “Felix questioned the hermit as to where God is, so forcefully did he wonder at not seeing him.”⁷⁶ The hermit replied with a parable:

A fool once asked a sage if God is in hell and in unearthly places of pestilence and rot, or if God is in rocks or in sinful people. And many questions like these he put, since it did not seem to him that God, who is so high in sanctity and nobility, could be present in places of vileness and filth. The sage proved to the fool that God is infinite in grandeur, goodness, and holiness. To be infinite, it is fitting that he should be in every place and outside of all places; that he is good, holy, and noble, means that he is in every place without being contaminated. For if the sun is not sullied in passing over the dung heap, neither does the just person get sullied in imagining and abhorring sin; and if human understanding can understand the stone and carry within itself an image of the stone, how much more God, who is far nobler, grander, more powerful and just than human beings, can be in every place without befouling or limiting himself?⁷⁷

It is not created things as such that harbor good and evil, but the intention that drives them. Indeed, God makes the sun to shine on the good and the evil alike, in an act of “indifference” that directly affects our human sense of justice.⁷⁸ But Llull’s idea of wisdom reaches beyond a God made or thought in the image and likeness of humans and their needs. For these reasons, Llull extends divine virtue to all of creation: from the beings most distant from, though still illuminated by, the primordial light, to the angels. The *scala creaturarum*, which we saw depicted in the Art as a ladder of subjects, offers the ideal setting for a hermeneutic grounded in the action of an “other,” in that every being gets its meaning from the place that it occupies in the ontological order of creation, which in turn is governed by the place where the “is” of God overlooks everything.

Felix presents ten orders: God, angels, heaven, the elements, plants, metals, animals, humans, paradise, and hell. The space that mediates the relationship among these orders is the “way”⁷⁹ along which the experience of understanding travels in wonder. Already in the exposition of the four “elements” we find a model according to which nothing exists by itself but is always present in an other:

Of the four elements, fire is a simple element in that it has its own form and matter, each of which possess the appetite to be in another without admixture of any element. The same follows for the simplicity of the other elements, namely, air, fire, and earth, for all the elements are mixed and each is in an other.⁸⁰

This relationship, which announces a dialogue among the elements⁸¹ based on what each lacks but is necessary to it (matter and form), is the same principle that governs the dialogue among religions for Llull and permeates a dialogical way of thinking grounded on the mystical foundations of surrender and the union of opposites:

Fire asked water to accompany it to the sun, as friends that could talk along the way of this and that. Water replied that two contraries cannot easily walk the same road, and even less so since the sun is its enemy but a friend of fire. But if fire wanted to accompany it to the moon, it would willingly take the road with it on condition that they go to the moon at night and not during the day.⁸²

Plants, vegetables, and animals are also good examples of how the virtue of God is contained in them through the bodily nature of the Son of God⁸³ which has finally to recuperate the whole of the created cosmos. This view of symbiosis among the various orders of nature leads Llull to fit them each out with its own personality and faculty of speech, as in the dialogue

between iron and silver that appears in the chapter on “metals.”⁸⁴ This is made possible by the great virtue that the human nature of Christ has introduced into creation, as Llull’s cosmic Christology has shown.

The Book of Animals adds a new and important chapter to the use of language. In it the entire theory of literary representation and the value of scenery are seen as crucial elements for this cosmic liturgy in which human beings and other beings that engage in conversation can do no more than stammer about their creator. Hans Robert Jauss has drawn attention to alterity in medieval texts as one of the elements of major hermeneutic, scientific, and didactic interest. The ever-present background of the oral element contributes greatly to a sense of strangeness that in some measure accounts for the examples of Llull’s “wonders.” To some extent, these wonders are whimsical flights of the imagination since, as Jauss notes, the medieval is a creator of systems and a codifier for whom everything has its place.⁸⁵ Here again, the question of the “locus” surfaces in our search for understanding. How combine the need for invisibility and silence that permeates this literature with the strong symbolism emitted by the adventures of animals?

The Book of Animals, whose origins can be traced to the ancient narratives of India and Persia and whose closest cultural affinities lay in medieval tales, is a clear indication of that utopian world that Llull uses to expose the moral crisis of society.⁸⁶ The domain of “religious reference” cannot be represented by mimesis but only by allegory, which works like a “poetry of the invisible.” At the same time, in the dialogues of “Na Renart” (the fox) with the lion and the ox we also glimpse a sense of the need to take a language that has exhausted itself through academic use and transport it to another realm. The literature of talking animals is not a mere allegorization of human intellect and moral will. It is a search for a final reference point for meaning from which all the orders of creation can find their place, through the power of the divine Word, as a principal medium of revelation. It is no longer a question of humans making parables from the elements of creation, but of the animals themselves offering parables that refer directly to humans.⁸⁷ It is hard to see *The Book of Animals* as a work that could have come about independently of *The Book of Wonders*. Most likely he took as his model an existing text like the French *Roman de Renart*, but the conceptual content of the book would have had to be worked out in conjunction with the wider theological symbolism of *Felix* in the light of “Dionysian” ideas about the hierarchies and orders of creation.⁸⁸ In this sense, this splendid book, too, can be read as another step on the contemplative itinerary the author has set for all his work.

Epilogue:

A Hermeneutics of the Secret

IN A 1948 LETTER the Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung, whose interest in the religious nature of the human soul accompanied him through his long career, wrote: "Life, so-called, is a short episode between two great secrets, which yet are one."¹ Looked at in these terms, the question about life has always to come at the end, when life itself, its course nearly completed, can sketch out a reply. In the text of the *Vita* of Ramon Llull, we see the facts of a life laid out according to a theoretical scheme as the end of life approaches and the circle of one man's history is about to close. The written text is offered as an answer to persons seeking the way of conversion, which is perhaps the only sense in which it can be called an apologetic work. The full meaning of its model of holiness requires that it be understood as a union of wisdom and compassion or, in Llull's own words, of love and knowledge. This synthesis is reached through saintliness which, together with joy, purity, cosmic nature, and sensory expansion, in the words of William James, is "the collective name for the ripe fruits of religion in a character."² But insight into the experience of God's love did not follow as a direct consequence of religious conversion. When Llull suffered those first visions of the crucified that were to turn his life upside down, he was overwhelmed by a desire to understand the grace that had been given him. It was then that his search began for something that, in a certain sense, he had already found but did not yet know where to put. This tension between seeking and finding, or between the ecstatic experience of eternity and the temporal experience of the historical individual, heralded the conception of

an art into which the wise must be initiated, an art that we may understand as discovery of one's own "secret of life." In light of the stages laid out in the *Vita*, and borrowing the terminology of Llull's combinatory logic, we might refer to this art of discovering life's secret as an "understanding of experience" that is at the same time an "experience of understanding," the two combining into a single hermeneutic event.

To the extent that we accept the *Contemporary Life* as speaking to our own lives, our reading needs to advance to what Heidegger, referring concretely to the eschatological situation of the Christian, called "the factual experience of life,"³ a reading in which we become spectators of the facts of our own lives. In so doing, religious conversion becomes a kind of a new totality that takes one over. To experience in a single instant the death and birth that this conversion entails almost as if the time of the world had been suspended, requires a new perspective on the events of the future. At the same time, beginning with the example of St. Paul, this eternity-in-a-moment quality of conversion has been seen as part of a historical project of giving meaning to the experience of the past. Thus the event of conversion undergone in a single moment opens up between two historical times, each grasped as a manifestation of the divine in a distinct perceptible form, but together constituting the form and content of a single revelation.

Religious experience has a prophetic and eschatological dimension. The history of an individual's past life and the announcement of the time remaining to be lived are woven tightly into the history of salvation. The origins of one's new life and the origins of the life of the world itself meet at a single point—the point where history and "trans-history" coincide. From that time on, it is no longer a question of two distinct histories; one's existence is completely enveloped in the history of the world and the salvation of others. In Llull's case, life is the working out of an idea first conceived, through the mystery of revelation, in the early years of adulthood, namely, the search for concrete incarnation in the history of the individual; at the same time, from a theological viewpoint, it is the extension of a plan of salvation for all of humanity. The "secret of life" is the secret of the spirit finding its more real expression and manifestation in the sensible. In renouncing the exclusive devotion to contemplation, the adventure of life is thus transformed into a labyrinth of holiness by projecting itself into the world and by immersing itself in the mystery of its chaos and darkness.

The *Vita Beati Raimundi* belongs to a long tradition of texts, most of them anonymous, aimed at initiating the reader into a life adventure that begins with the transmission of secret knowledge. In terms of what Niklas Luhmann and Peter Fuchs have called "a semantics of the secret,"⁴ the intent of the *Vita* is to reveal, that is, to veil and unveil at the same time. The mar-

vel of Lull's case is how the visibility and invisibility of the secret are seen to depend on a time that both belongs to the present and yet does not. The secret dislocates the use of temporal paradox as a means of communication. Indeed, the alternation between periods of silence and periods of speech throughout the *Vita* may be seen as a communicative technique or tactic that only the secret can make sense of, since only the secret can overcome the textual discontinuity between time and eternity to define a mystical experience that is both revealed and hidden. It will not do to dismiss this as purely esoteric. While the text needs to be read against the backdrop of its corresponding hermetic tradition, it needs to be freed of association with the alchemical and Cabalistic pseudo-Llullianism of the renaissance,⁵ whose scientific and technical objectives are very far from Lull's own. Our reason for consigning it a hermetic context is to locate it in a mystical tradition for which knowledge of things is not given immediately. Michel de Certeau explains:

The secret is not only the state of a thing that eludes knowing or is disclosed for the knowing; it designates a play among actors.... It introduces an erotic element into the field of knowledge. It brings passion to the discourse of knowing.⁶

In its internal structure, the *Vita Beati Raimundi* offers a way to search and find these same life stages in his writings as movements of the spirit. If "the secret is the condition of all hermeneutics,"⁷ the *Vita* is full of enigmas to be solved.

Lull's theory of the contemplative life was born of an initial resolve to comprehend what he had experienced and was aimed at a "philosophy of conversion."⁸ The resulting shift in his way of looking at things led him to settle on "place"⁹ as the principal focus of meditation for a self that is constantly engaged in occupying and leaving places, caught up, as it were, in a dialectic of *via affirmativa* and *via negativa*. This prepared the way, in turn, for a conversation with an other—hence, the importance of preaching—where the secret of the self's own salvation entails an extension outside of itself. The life of the saint is therefore depicted as a "composition of places" that can be occupied meditatively in his written work. Lull's travels, reflected in the repetitive and cyclical rhythm of his language, are transformed into a pilgrimage, an ascesis of the spirit whose principal obsession lay less in finding an answer than in properly formulating the question that drives us out of ourselves and towards a new land. Western medieval spirituality had seen this exercise of letting go of the self as a principle of life already from the time of Abbess Hildegard von Bingen (twelfth century), of whose itinerant career Victoria Cirlot remarks:

Leaving a place with the initial intention of arriving at the unfamiliar (but which, in the end, will really turn out to be one's own) seems to be a necessary stage in acquiring identity. This is why it is related to authentic spiritual progress.¹⁰

As is the case with Asian spiritual traditions, the central motif of this kind of voyage and pilgrimage is the discovery of one's own secret, the emergence of one's true and unselfish nature. The discovery is mediated by the understanding of an abstract scheme, in Llull's case the fourfold scheme of the secrets, which work for him much like the solution of the *kōan* in Rinzai Zen,¹¹ reminding the one who bears the secrets of the frailty of the mind and of the inexorable obligation to bow one's head in total humility. In providing his mystical conceptions with a speculative context, Llull comes very close to the kind of "religious philosophy"¹² "or spiritual philosophy"¹³ that was becoming necessary at the time in the European tradition as it turned its attention again to horizons opened up by new experiences of knowledge whose elaboration required transgressions of language.¹⁴

Notes

1. THE SECRET OF LIFE

¹ The “intelligible and the “spiritual,” as we will see in Part 3, are treated as strictly identical in Llull. Cf. *Llibre de contemplació en Déu*, “Distinction XXVIII. Which treats of cogitation, which is a spiritual-intellectual sense in humans.” OE II, 432ff.

² Failure to recognize the relationship between the possible and the real leads to disorder in the theoretical life and disrupts its subsequent application to practical life.

³ For an understanding of sanctity as a perfect union between the theoretical and the practical life, see the following fragment from *Felix, or the Book of Wonders*: “The sanctity of order does not consist in a multiplicity of persons, nor in riches, nor in worldly honors, but in the sanctity of persons who are regulated and well accustomed to serve, love, and know God.” OS II, 41.

⁴ On the close relationship between life and reading in an author nearly contemporaneous with Llull, Meister Eckhart (whom Martin Heidegger brings into relief in his brief work, *The Pathway*), see HAAS 1995, 19. Understanding this relationship all but obliges us to know more of the preaching activity of these authors, particularly when preaching is seen as a faculty of language acquired through the spiritual birth of the Word. In the case of Llull, the immense capacity for writing has to be seen as closely related to the inspired nature of his work.

⁵ *Vita coetanea* is the title most used in academic circles, though it is also known by other names: *De Beato Raymundo Lull*, *De conversione Raymundi Lullii*, *Epitome Vitae Raymundi Lulli*, *Vita ab anonimo coaevio scripta ipso Beato adhuc superstite*, *Vita Beati Raimundi Lulli*, *Vita Beati Raymundi Lulli*, *Doctoris Illuminati et Martyris*, *Vita Magistri Raymundi Lullii*. See ROL 8, ed. by H. Harada, 1980, 259–309. The Catalan edition of the *Vida coetània*, with an introduction and commentary by M. Batllori, based on a fifteenth-century manuscript that has most certainly been corrupted as the result of a previous campaign against Llull unleashed by the inquisitor Nicoláu Eimeric, can be found in OE I, 31–54. The Latin text is the most important basis for

reconstructing the life of Llull until a few years prior to his death, which, according to the most recent data, took place in March of 1316. The *Vita* goes as far as August 1311, at which point, it is surmised, the redaction of the work was undertaken at the hands of the Carthusian monks of the Abbey of Vauvert in Paris, formerly located outside the city in what are now the Luxemburg Gardens. In reconstructing the *Vita*, the Latin text had to be taken into account as the oldest source. The *Vita* is not the only text to provide us with significant data concerning his life. An alternative and crucial source for insight into Llull's personality is the *Desconort* (*Disconsolation*, a selection of which is included at the end of this book). Other works consulted include: *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* (OE II, 97–1258), *Llibre de meravelles* (OE I, 309–511), as well as *Blanquerna* and *Obras rimadas de Ramon Llull*, ed. by J. Roselló (Palma de Mallorca, 1859); *Poesies*, ed. by R. d'Alòs-Moner (Barcelona, 1925), cited in CARRERAS Y ARTAU I, 1939, 238. The most relevant studies on the life of Llull are those of MISCH 1967, 55–89; PLATZECK, VOL. 1, 1962, 3–59; LLABRÉS MARTORELL 1968; GAYÀ 1982; DOMÍNGUEZ 1987; BATLLORI 1993, 3–93, who sees the *Vita* as breaking away from hagiographic patterns and adduces several arguments in favor of the authenticity of the autobiography (see, for example, p. 54); and HILLGARTH 1998, esp. 27–71, 73–4, where the strong authority of the text is demonstrated due to its dating, though one has also to recall the thesis of Rufini (“Il ritmo prosaico nella Vita beati Raymundi Lulli,” SL 5 1961, 5–60), cited by DOMÍNGUEZ 1987), for whom the *Vita* shows a superior literary skill that puts in question the idea that it is a direct transcription of the reminiscences of Llull.

⁶ According to the latest catalogue prepared by Bonner, there are a total of 265 works. Cf. OS II, 530–89.

⁷ “The ‘confessional discourse’ is based originally on religious experience, although in a second stage it is expressed by means of a “religious discourse.” DUCH 1984, 358.

⁸ Although according to WEINTRAUB, it is “individual consciousness” that marks the birth of modern autobiography, compared to other accounts from the Middle Ages, Llull shows a commitment to a certain self-image modeled on saintliness, which gives the text of the *Vita* at once a cognitive and an experiential intentionality. In a chapter devoted to medieval autobiographies, Weintraub remarks: “Occasionally there appears an author who discloses something of himself in a peculiar form of autobiography as autobibliography; Gregory of Tours, Bede, and King Alfred in his translation of Boethius, provide a minimum of information about themselves in commenting on, or simply listing, their literary activities” (1982, 105). This would seem to confirm our idea that the text of the *Vita* demonstrates a clear self-consciousness.

⁹ Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 73–163.

¹⁰ Llull wrote freely in Catalan, Arabic, and Latin, and even translated some of his own works between those languages. It is interesting to note that many of them contain autobiographical facts of sufficient relevance to form a comprehensible unity with passages in his theoretical work dealing with conversion. Cf. LOHR 1986, 9.

¹¹ RUH suggests that in the Middle Ages the equation of dictation with writing was far more widespread than we might imagine (1993, 380).

¹² See RIQUER'S introduction to his book on the troubadours (1975, 9ff).

¹³ *Breviculum*, 3. The miniatures of the *Vita* can be found in the *Breviculum seu Electorium parvum*, written by one of Lull's first disciples in Paris, Thomas Le Myésier, around 1325. Several of the drawings are reproduced in the present volume, pages 2385–7.

¹⁴ The Latin text reads: "Denique, dante Patre luminum (James 1:17), consideravit Christi mansuetudinem, patientiam ac misericordiam, quam habuit et habet circa quoslibet peccatores. Et sic intellixit tandem certissime Deum uelle, quod Raimundus mundum relinqueret Christoque corde ex tunc integre deseruiret." *Vita coetanea*, 274, 40–4. On the term *consideravit* see BATLLORI 1993, 39ff, who argues that such a decision was not brought about in an "extraordinary and mystical" fashion but rather "naturally and rationally." In fact, Lull is so committed to a reform of understanding and reason that his principal missionary activity will remain under the guiding influence of this rationalist orientation. This does not, however, exclude mystical experience. On the contrary, Lull presents "consideration" and the certitude to which it gives rise as insight consequent on the extraordinary experience of the visions.

¹⁵ The term is from William JAMES, who gives it as the fourth of his traits of saintliness: "The shifting of the emotional center brings with it, first, increase of purity. The sensitiveness to spiritual discords is enhanced, and the cleansing of existence from brutal and sensual elements becomes imperative" (1985, 221).

¹⁶ V. CIRLOT remarks: "I believe that the work of Jaufré Rudel contains an experience for which I can find no better name than that of inner pilgrimage, a voyage within to which he is drawn by the face of his beloved. And it is here that this poetry connects directly to mysticism" (1996, 20). This special perception of the divine, Cirlot argues, is found in the context of the *amor de lonh* (love from a distance): "From this perspective I consider Rudel's work not so much a transposition of the sacred into the profane as a cleansing of amorous feelings in order to arrive at a profound metanoia that entails becoming a child of God" (30).

¹⁷ Lull was married to Blanca Picany and had two children with her. To silence the complaints of his wife against the state of abandonment and poverty in which he had left them, he had to provide them an income since "her husband was so given over to things of contemplation that he did not tend to the administration of his temporal good" (HILLGARTH 1998, 31 n. 20).

¹⁸ Neither the vision nor the *excessus mentis* or rapture should be interpreted as moments of unreality and flight from the world, but rather as the acquisition of a model of reality that transforms the whole of life beginning with profane life. Basic studies of the vision have been made by BENZ 1969 and more recently by V. CIRLOT and GARÍ, 1999.

¹⁹ The vision of Christ plays a decisive role in the development of Western Christology, as BENZ has shown (1969, 517).

²⁰ Cf. NISHITANI 1982, 4.

²¹ Compare the following: "Hinc sibi quandoque dictabat atque conscientia, quod mox relicto mundo Iesu Christo ex tunc integre deseruiret. Illinc vero sua conscien-

tia ream se prius et indignam Christi servitio adclamabat vel accusabat.” *Breviculum*, 3–4.

²² This term appears widely among the Rhine and Flemish mystics. Its origins probably go back to Beatrijs von Nazareth (d. 1268). Cf. V. CIRLOT and GARÍ 1999, 107–35.

²³ In the *Desconort* (1295–1296), a poetic work of great documentary importance, sin is presented as a necessary state for conversion; there can be no proper consciousness of sin unless one has first sinned.

²⁴ Even though the visions take place when Llull is around thirty years of age, the full cycle of his conversion, I wish to argue, is not completed until the “enlightenment of Randa,” when he was around forty-two.

²⁵ Cf. BROWN 1993, 559.

²⁶ ORL, chap. 86, 19–20.

²⁷ Conversion indicates a displacement of the selfish life: death to the ego and to the old self gives way to life—God himself. The forgetfulness spoken of here is not meant in general but rather in specific reference to forgetfulness of God. Cf. WEINRICH 1999, 51.

²⁸ The idea of suffering as an *imitatio Christi* insofar as it is a form of preaching has been treated by HAAS (1996, 148); GAYÀ has considered the question in the life of the fourteenth-century Dominican mystic Heinrich Seuse and as an alternative form of mission in contrast to other models of the age (1994, 5).

²⁹ HILLGARTH places the stage of formation between 1265 and 1274, after Llull returns from his pilgrimage (1998, 176).

³⁰ Having already passed the age of thirty, Llull did not seem a candidate for academic study in a traditional program. At the same time, the personal goals he had set for himself demanded a kind of formation very different from what was offered in the schools of Europe. The reality in the infidel lands where Llull wished to apply his missionary zeal required very special preparation for disputation, beginning with fluency in the Arabic language. Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 31–2. Nowhere would he find better conditions for his formation than in Majorca. Once a great master had given his recognition of the facts of the situation, Llull was able to pursue training on his own model. Why immerse himself in the great theological treatises that were being read in Paris in search of arguments to convert the infidels, when conditions were so distant from the reality of the south where Christians and Muslims lived together day to day? Llull was confident that he would find the elements of his own doctrinal grammar in the place he had had his first experience, through direct contact with others, and only later elevate it to the category of the academic book. Here again we see how experience serves him as a basis for understanding.

³¹ On the Muslim environment on the island, see URVOY 1980 and LOHR 1986.

³² Only Latin and Catalan translations by Llull have survived.

³³ According to a document dated 13 March 1275, Blanca Picany requested of a judge power to administer the goods of her husband because he was no longer inter-

ested in them (reference in note 17 above). See also P. Pasqual, *Vindiciae Lullianae*, t. 1, c. 6, 6, 45, cited in LLABRÉS MARTORELL 1968, 27, n. 120.

³⁴ HILLGARTH 1998, 33.

³⁵ The power of the word in preaching has a biblical reference in the story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4), but the understanding of this as a spiritual birth, at the time of Llull, stems from the northern mystical tradition and in particular Meister Eckhart; see HAAS 1989, 160 and VEGA 2001, 14.

³⁶ The Latin version of the work, *Compendium logicae Algazelis*, includes not only sections from *The Logic of Algazel* but also sections from *The Book of Philosophy*, as well as sections dealing with Anselm's principle of *credo ut intelligam*. For the sources of this book, see CARRERAS Y ARTAU 1939, VOL. 1, 348–56; *Lògica* 1985, 111ff; and above all LOHR 1967, 11–17.

³⁷ Cf. CARRERAS Y ARTAU 1939, VOL. 1, 345ff.

³⁸ In a number of articles I have studied this text and its evolution in the later work of Llull; see VEGA 1992, 2000.

³⁹ On the influence of this author on Llull, see YATES 1985, 78–125.

⁴⁰ *Lògica*, 153, vv. 673–707. The Latin text reads: “Quattuor modis secretum investigari potest: Primo enim, per unum sensuale debet investigari aliud sensuale. Unum enim sensuale signum alterius dare potest, ut forma artificialis suum magistrum significat./ Secundo vero, per sensuale demonstratur intellectuale, ut per istum mundum sensuale aliud saeculum demonstratur./ Tertio autem, per unum intellectuale aliud intellectuale significatur, ut verum et falsum, quae contrariantur ad invicem, Deum esse demonstrant. Nam si supponeretur Deum non esse, verum et falsum essent ex eo in diversitate et contrarietate minora. Ex eo autem quod ponitur, Deum esse, existit maior contrarietas et diversitas inter ipsa. Et quia verum et falsum propter maiorem contrarietatem et diversitatem melius conveniunt cum maiori, et maius convenit cum esse; et propter minorem contrarietatem et diversitatem conveniunt cum defectu et privatione; sequitur igitur ex eo necessario Deum esse./ Quarto vero, per intellectuale sensuale demonstratur, ut per theoreticam secreta practice propalantur.” *Compendium*, 118.

⁴¹ In later versions, Llull associates these four grades of signification with the doctrine of “transcendent points,” since they result from the excess that every human potential has over every other, again arranged in a dialectical relationship between the lower and the higher. Cf. MOG v, 47.

⁴² In the *Compendium*, the enumeration of *individua* among the *praedicabilia* as indicating a way of ascent and descent of the spirit seems to have an antecedent in the school of the Ikhwan as-Safa or “Brothers of Purity.” See the introduction in LOHR, 68.

⁴³ Cf. PRING-MILL 1991, 53ff.

⁴⁴ In terms of Augustine's three sorts of visions (*visio corporalis*, *visio imaginális*, *visio intellectualis*), it would appear that the first visions of the crucified correspond to the *visio imaginális*, while in the descent of the Book from heaven Llull can be thought to

have undergone a *visio intellectualis*, given the stress that he will later place on the newly acquired language. Cf. HAAS 1999, 17.

⁴⁵ On the term *inlibration* see VAN ESS 1992, 47ff.

⁴⁶ The divine Dignities of *The Book of Contemplation* are presented as principles by which truth may be sought, both principles of knowledge and principles of being, which may then be combined. The expression *spiritual hermeneutics* is from CORBIN 1986, 21ff.

⁴⁷ Concerning the relationship between the historical and the transhistorical, see CORBIN 1981.

⁴⁸ Ivo Salzinger understands it this way in his introduction to MOG 1.

⁴⁹ This is the subject of the whole of the final “distinction” in the book (xl: On prayer), OE 11, 1005–1258. Llull is aware of the importance of situating the discourse on the faculties, and above all imagination, at the heart of his Christic mysticism. In the same way that the human-divine nature of Jesus Christ is able to negotiate between two separate worlds, so, too, does the imagination function as a synthesis between the sensible and the intelligible. Already during the period prior to Randa he had tried out an image of the cross that integrates not only the divine virtues and the faculties of the soul but also the list of human virtues and vices.

⁵⁰ Cf. PLATZECK 1964, 1978.

⁵¹ The idea of God as “intelligible sphere” has a long history in the tradition. For an intercultural demonstration see, for example, *The Book of the 24 Philosophers*, 11, 47.

⁵² CARRERAS Y ARTAU 1939, VOL. 1, 369.

⁵³ “Secundum Exemplum. De potentia et Obiecto Secreti. Qui vult adorare et contemplari sanctum secretum Dei, convenit, quod sciat formare et figurare sensualiter et intellectualiter tres Figuras Orationis, cum quibus scias adorare et contemplari sanctum Secretum virtuosum in sancta Unitate et Trinitate gloriosa et in Virtutibus perfectis Dei.” MOG 1, 424.

⁵⁴ This is the case with angels in the Iranian tradition, but also in the *Shepherd of Hermas* in the hermetic and Christian tradition. Cf. CORBIN, 1995, 59.

⁵⁵ On several occasions Llull shows an interest in angelology. Cf. his *De locutione angelorum* (“On the Discourse of Angels,” 1312), ROL xvi (1988), 207–36.

⁵⁶ These are surmised as the probable dates of its composition from the fact that he cites the *Ars compendiosa* (1274), though it is possible that he wrote part of it in Montpellier, as Bonner and Badia suggest. Still this does not prevent the conclusion that it may have been edited in Majorca together with his project at the eastern school of Miramar. See NEORL 11, XIX–XX, ed. by A. Bonner.

⁵⁷ Cf. DOMÍNGUEZ 2000.

⁵⁸ St. Raimon de Penyafort played a decisive role in establishing a new and rationally grounded setting for polemical-apologetic literature. His thinking stimulated, for example, the *Summa contra gentiles* (1258) of Thomas Aquinas, as well as the *Explanatio symboli* (1257) and the *Pugio fidei contra Iudaeos* (1278) of Raimon Martí. Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 32–3, and COLOMER 1997, 181–238. On the contents of Llull’s formation,

which included the Bible, the Koran, the Talmud, Plato, Aristotle, Algazel, Anselm, Richard of St. Victor, and Avicenna, among others, see BONNER and BADIA 1988, 16–17.

⁵⁹ As distinct, for instance, from Roger Bacon, who, perhaps under the influence of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*, thought that wisdom should not be disseminated. Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 69. In Lull we see a universalist attitude, albeit one that rests on special previous insight.

⁶⁰ Bonner, author of the critical edition of this work, argues nevertheless that this represents Lull's most important work of apologetics. See the introduction to OS, VOL. 1, 91.

⁶¹ The school of Miramar must have been located between Deià and Valldemosa, where it received approbation in a papal bull of John XXI (Peter of Spain) dated 17 October 1276. Three friars minor were enrolled there to learn Arabic. Cf. BONNER and BADIA 1988, 22.

⁶² The return to Majorca from Montpellier seems to have occurred in 1276. He could have stayed there until 1287, though he is placed variously in Miramar, Montpellier, and among the Tartars of Asia. Cf. HILLGARTH, 176. For his part, BONNER supposes that Lull was in Montpellier earlier, during the years of his formation (1988, 23). Given the fact that the *Vita* has no wish to remark on the matter and that, according to our reading here, the spiritual topology is of central importance, I conclude that Lull probably did not move from Majorca.

⁶³ Taking the differences laid out by N. Söderblom and further elaborated by F. Heiler between “pious mysticism” and “prophetic mysticism” (cf. MARTÍN VELASCO 1999, 27) as a guide, we observe that in large measure Lull combines ecstatic experience, both passive contemplative, with an active element seen in the historical nature of the experience. The differences proposed by the phenomenology of religions do not hold here, due to Lull's special reception of the tradition. Even if visionary experience is not directly associated with the prophetic, it is from the contemplative experience that the prophetic force of his language springs.

⁶⁴ Some authors write “Blaquerna,” omitting the first *n*, thus setting up a play on words on the name of an image of the virgin venerated round the ancient imperial palace of Constantinople. This would mean that there is a certain association between Lull's protagonist and the idea of “whiteness” that suggests purity and virginity as his principle virtues. We follow the tradition established by Batllori in his *Anthologia filosòfica* of 1981; see Badia's prologue to the *Blanquerna*, 10.

⁶⁵ Rather than question the literary function of the *Blanquerna* in Lull's corpus, we may turn immediately to the original intentions of the author. In line with customary rhetorical models of the Middle Ages, this book has often been read as an exemplary novel or a utopian work that develops an ideal of the Christian life on earth. Granted the utopian element here, we have still to inquire into the religious elements that shape the way it is applied to certain masterpieces of medieval literature. Moreover, in the cultural context of medieval Christianity we see a strong eschatological ingredient, though it would be misleading to understand it in terms of a religious-

political utopia, which is more proper to rabbinic Judaism from which Llull was far removed. Still, there is reason to see this work as a model of spiritual life aimed at personal conversion and an inner call. This would draw it closer to Christian eschatology, which in turn—above all in mystical and contemplative settings—makes us question the validity of rushing too quickly to conclusions about matters of historical facticity. Certainly Llull found himself at the center of real political discussions that were far from fictitious, but everything realized on earth had also to be seen as an application of a model of a wisdom that is spiritual as well as intellectual or theoretical.

⁶⁶ “E cor estar en lo món és perill, e majorment a home jove, per açò vull fugir al món: anar vull a Déu, qui m’apella.” *Blanquerna*, 38.

⁶⁷ *Blanquerna*, 45.

⁶⁸ There are any number of elements that suggest a wide-ranging comparison between the two traditions in respect of this account. Later on Natana, despite the efforts of her mother to stop it, sees the body of a dead man pass by on its way to burial (70).

⁶⁹ *Blanquerna*, 51.

⁷⁰ See Part 2 of the present work.

⁷¹ “Segons que la divinal ordenació ha volgut ordenar home, és ordenat que home deja usar ordenadament de sa vista corporal, en tal manera que se’n seguezca ordenació en la vida espiritual; e per açò és bo que sia fet ordenament e establiment enfre nosaltres con de la corporal vista sapiam usar. On, primerament sien ordenats nostres ulls a veer lo Crucifici, e en la image de nostra dona santa maria, e en altres ligure que ens representen la vida dels sants qui són passats d’aquest segle. Honradament façam a aquestes figures, soplegant a elles tota hora que les vejam, e en nostra ànima remembrem ço que ens signifiquen.” *Blanquerna*, 83.

⁷² *Blanquerna*, 99.

⁷³ GAYÀ 1994, 5.

⁷⁴ Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 75–6.

⁷⁵ MOG v, 1.211.

⁷⁶ *Modum loquendi arabicum*. Cf. MOG III, 452.

⁷⁷ It would have to be demonstrated to what extent the model of martyrdom shows points of communality between Christianity and Islam. Cf. MASSIGNON 1975.

⁷⁸ Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 69.

⁷⁹ HILLGARTH indicates that already at that time Llull was aware that no argument is invincible, given the necessary role that grace plays in Christian theology. It seems more likely that he considered the contemplative model of the Names of God or Dignities to have greater force over understanding than the idea of grace added to reason did (1998, 50).

⁸⁰ OE II, 340, 10.

⁸¹ *Disconsolation* XI. See pages 208–25 in this volume.

⁸² HILLGARTH 1998, 23.

⁸³ Historical documentation on the polemic can be found in FLASCH 1989.

⁸⁴ ROL VI, ed. By H. Riedlinger.

⁸⁵ Lc Myésier was a direct disciple of his. They had met during Llull's first visit to Paris from 1287 to 1289, when he was still a young *socius* in the Sorbonne. Later when he had become canon of Arras he sent Llull a series of *Quaestiones* with the aim of testing the application of the Art. Llull answered him in a short tract entitled *Liber super quaestiones Magistri Thomae Attrebatensis* (1299). They kept their friendship alive and the two met again during Llull's final voyage to Paris between 1309 and 1311, the period in which Lc Myésier was already planning his *Electorium*. Cf. HILLGARTH 1998, 194–5.

⁸⁶ HILLGARTH 1998, 76, n.8.

⁸⁷ BADIA 1992, 211–29.

2. WISDOM AND COMPASSION

¹ Compare *Summa theologica*, III 40 a.1 ad 2: "...that form of active life in which a man, by preaching and teaching, delivers to others the fruits of his contemplation, is more perfect than the life that stops at contemplation."

² Concerning the *mors mystica* understood as a spiritual rebirth, see HAAS 1979, 1994.

³ MCGINN considers it more proper to speak of the "presence of God" or "immediate consciousness of the presence of God" as that which distinguishes mysticism from other forms of religious consciousness. He further reckons the contemplation or vision of the divine, along with deification, the birth of the Word in the soul, ecstasy, and the like as belonging to the major categories of mysticism, and in any case as different and complementary forms of showing that direct presence of God (1995, XIX).

⁴ See, for example, *Libre de oracions i contemplacions de l'enteniment* ("The Book of Prayers and Contemplations of Understanding"), *Art de contemplació* ("The Art of Contemplation"), *Contemplatio Raymundi*, which includes *Quomodo contemplatio transit in raptu* ("How Contemplation Passes into Rapture"), and the *Contemplatio compendiosa* ("Abbreviated Contemplation"). See BONNER's catalog in OS II.

⁵ "Primera entenció es tal/ qui.s cové ab causa final; la segona l'estructument." *Lògica*, 157, 1048–9; *Llibre de contemplació*, OE II, chap. XLV, 194–6. Cf. *Art demonstrativa*, OS I, 375; and *Doctrina pueril*, chapter 92, 4–9; *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, MOG I, Dist. II, 1.

⁶ Llull needs to be situated in the Christian tradition of *agapè* and *gnosis*. Regarding the relation of these terms, and others of the most important in the history of Christianity, to mystical vision and contemplation (*theōria*), see MCGINN 1995, 72.

⁷ ORL XVII, 4, cited in OS II, 501, n. 12. BONNER points out that his mystical experiences falls into the second category, that of *amància*, though this does not imply a

separation between them. It is rather the conjunction of science (knowing) and *amànica* that presupposed the entire process of mystical experience, since the “scientific” or discursive ascent of the faculties, which could be compared to the purgative or ascetical way, form part of the entire process. It is another thing, however, to designate *amànica* as the moment of *unio mystica*.

⁸ According to HAAS, for the mystic this “is not simply a constructive figure, but implies in the clearest terms all potential for thought and love” (1999, 99).

⁹ HAAS, 1999, 105.

¹⁰ MCGINN 1995, 23.

¹¹ STOCK, 1998, 17–18.

¹² “Ah Sènyer! Per ço com vós m’havets girada ma cara a vós, e tota ma confiança havets posada en vós, és raó, Sènyer, que jo lou vós e.us benneesca, plorant, suplicant-vos e confiant en la granea de l’auta vostra eternitat.” OS II, 118, 25.

¹³ “Qui vol haver art e manera per la qual sàpia contemplar en aquest libre e per aquest libre, cové que sàpia formar quatre maneres de contemplació: la primera és que hom començ al cap primer d’aquest *Llibre de contemplació* e que arreu liga tot lo libre; segona manera és que home qui sàpia lo libre e haurà molt lest en lo libre, que vaja ligent a aventura d’un palàgrafi en altre e d’un capítol en altre trinitat aquelles raons qui a ells mills se covenran en aquell temps, car enaixí com les viandes se convenen mills ab lo cors en diverses temps les unes que les altres, així les raons les unes se convenen mills ab l’ànima en un temps que en altre; terça manera de contemplar és que hom lija en la taula les rúbriques; quarta manera és que hom entel.lectuig la raó que haurà lesta d’un palàgrafi o d’un vers a altre, membrant e entenent e volent,” OS II, 1255, 19.

¹⁴ “Emperò, Sènyer, enaixí com l’home qui s’aventura per tal que conseqüesca ço que molt ama, enaixí nós volenterosament nos gitam a aventura en lo tractament d’esta obra.” OS II, Prologue, 107, 23.

¹⁵ “Vós, Sènyer, sabets bé que jo som vil e per natura pobre e per mes males obres; per què jo no som digne que en esta obra mon nom sia escrit, en que a mi sia atribuïda esta obra; per què jo mon nom exil e delesc d’esta obra, e ella, Sènyer, atribuesc e dó a vós, qui sóts nostre senyor Déus.” OS II, 108, 30.

¹⁶ OS II, chap. 328ff, 1064ff.

¹⁷ On the numerical symbolism of Llull’s work in the context of medieval culture, see PRING-MILL 1991, 53ff. See also the wider overview in SCHIMMEL 1993.

¹⁸ OE II, 120, 10.

¹⁹ “Car jo, Sènyer, he amades persones, moltes de vegades, tant, que nit ni dia no era altra cosa en mon cor sinó en amar aquelles. On, per gran follia, Sènyer, prenis aquelles coses que amava així com Déus, en ço que les amava segons la manera on vós devets éser amat.” OE II, 120, 17.

²⁰ OE II, 121, 29.

²¹ See note 12 above.

²² Cf. FROMAGET 2000, 17.

²³ While there is a negative meaning to joy in Llull (he speaks, for example, of “wicked and disordered joy,” OE II, 112, 24), it is also the distinguishing characteristic of his drive to know. In this respect, JAMES remarks of “an immense elation and freedom, as the outlines of the confining selfhood melt down” (1985, 220).

²⁴ OE II, 108, 8.

²⁵ OE II, 109, 15.

²⁶ OE II, 111, 25.

²⁷ “Ah Sènycer! Per ço com vós m'havets girada ma cara a vós, e tota ma confiança havets posada en vós, és raó. Sènycer, que jo lou vós e us benesca, plorant, suplegant-vos e confiant en la granea de l'auta vostra eternitat.” OE II, 113, 6.

²⁸ “Sequitur de prima et secunda intentione./ Quoniam cognitio primae intentionis et secundae et ipsarum recta ordinatio sunt plurimum necessariae hominibus huius mundi, ideo eas volumus breviter declarare./ prima enim intentio instrumentum est primae, ad quarum maiorem evidentiam potest exemplum tale breviter assignari. Quicumque pervenire desiderat ad gaudia sempiterna, ipsum oportet Deum intentione prima diligere; secunda autem intentione oportet, quod ipse aliquid sub Deo existens diligat, ut ex hoc Deum valeat honorare.” *Compendium*, 123. The Catalan, composed in verse, reads: “Saps qu’és primera entenció/ ni segona?; si dius que no,/ mostrar t’ò ay volonter,/ car a ton saber son mester./ Primera entenció es tal/ qui.s cové ab causa final; la segona l’strument./ Eiximpli t’en daray breument./ Primera entenció a Deu/ la dona, si vols esser seu;/ la segona entenció es/ si sots Deu ames qualque res,/ per ço que Deus pusques honrar.” *Lògica*, 157, vv. 1044–56.

²⁹ OS II, 113, 15.

³⁰ “Oh Sènycer Déus qui sòts gran, meravellós, Senyor perdurable per tots temps! Pus vós sòts infinit, bé fort tenc per desastrucs aquells qui vos perden; car pus vós, Sènycer, sòts per tots locs e per totes les drecceres, en tots los locs vos pot hom trobar, si cercar vos hi vol!” OS II, 113–14, 22.

³¹ Cf. GAYÀ 1994, 11.

³² The poetry of the troubadours is also full of this same spirit. See V. CIRLOT 1996, 9–33.

³³ “Déus nostre e amador nostre! No cal que hom vos vaja cercar luny, car molt sòts prop, pus que nós som fenits en vós.” OS II, 114, 13.

³⁴ OTTO 1958, 1.

³⁵ OS II, 118, 10.

³⁶ OS II, 132, 2.

³⁷ The ontological foundations of this “protologic” of contemplation are not uncommon in the speculative mysticism of northern Europe. Meister Eckhart, in one of his sermons (“In occisioni gladii mortui sunt”), writes: “God’s characteristic is being.... So far as our life is one being, so far it is in God.” ECKHART 1979, II: 243–4.

³⁸ The idea of arriving at God through the world is one of the foundations of mys-

tical thought that distances it from “gnostic religion.” The medievals begin from a consideration of the signs of nature and only later, in the language of the ineffable, approach the mysteries of the divine darkness.

³⁹ GAYÀ 1979, 84ff; FROMAGET 2000.

⁴⁰ For a recent typology of mystical phenomena, the reader may consult MARTÍN VELASCO 1999.

⁴¹ PANIKKAR, 1993.

⁴² “Oh Déus, Pare e Senyor de quant és! Sanctetat, e autea, e noblea e unitat sia coneguda ésser en vós, car cnaixí, Sènyer, com la vostra substància és en tres persones, cnaixí les tres persones són una substància.” OS II, 126, 1.

⁴³ OS II, 141, 20.

⁴⁴ “On açò és, Sènyer Déus, gran meravella, que nos siam aquella cosa que no sabem ni entenem què s'és en si mateixa. On, com a saber la cosa que som nos defall saber e enteniment, quant més, Sènyer, nos deu defallir a saber e concèixer la vostra substància què és en si mateixa.” OS II, 142, 9.

⁴⁵ OS II, 127, 18.

⁴⁶ “Encara, Sènyer, podem apercebre lo nostre saber ésser poc e frèvol, e.l vostre gran e noble, car si parlen dos hòmens coses contràries, ja aquell qui.ls oirà parlar, no porà apercebre l'enteniment de les paraules en un temps, car les uncs paraules perdrà, per les altres a entendre. Mas lo vostre saber, Sènyer, no s'embarga per multitud de paraules diverses, cnans tot ho sap e tot ho entén.” OS II, 145, 18.

⁴⁷ OS II, 148, 8.

⁴⁸ “On pus se pensa hom, Sènyer, en lo vostre saber, pus vertuós e pus meravellós lo troba, benicit sia ell, car vós sabets totes les muntanyes e tots los plans quants són, e sabets tots los flums, e totes les fonts, e tots los pous e totes les mars, e sabets quants són los locs del món, e sabets quants grans són d'arena ni quants àtomus són. De tot sabets lo compte.” OS II, 146, 6.

⁴⁹ “iVós, Sènyer Déus, qui sots pare e sostenidor de tot lo món! La nostra salvació, la qual nós esperam que venga de la vostra pietat e misericòrdia, no és altra cosa sinó veer vós, e contemplar en vós, e alegrar en vós e amar-vos.” OS II, 137, 10.

⁵⁰ “Meravellosament, Sènyer, me par aquesta vida mundana cosa vana e ab poca de veritat, quant per ella mateixa, car en un moment hic és hom viu, e en altre mort. On, beneit siats vós, Sènyer, car en aquesta vida d'est món, jo no veig altra veritat mas tan solament que per ella pervé hom a vida vera, ab que sia enamorat de la vostra glòria.” OS II, 155, 18.

⁵¹ OS II, 156–77 presents good material for reflection on a “theodicy” in Ramon Llull.

⁵² The entire passage devoted to Glory (chap. 97, 304ff), in which the five spiritual senses are introduced, provides an occasion for treating what Hans Urs VON BALTHASAR has called an “aesthetic theology” (1985).

⁵³ OS II, 164, 7–9.

⁵⁴ “Ah Rei de glòria! Com jo sia loc on vicis e pecats se són meses, e com jo sia vil e sutze esdevengut per pecats, parme que no som digne que lo firmament sia mon loc, per ço car, si hi entrava, la mia sutzura ensutzaria aquell.” OS II, 166, 9.

⁵⁵ OS II, 167, 25.

⁵⁶ “Humil Senyor, en totes quantes coses hom pusca pensar ni cogitar que viltat pusca caer en mort d’home, totes les troba hom en la vostra passió qui hi pensa, car vós fos penjat en vil loc, ab ladres, e fos penjat en alt, per tal que tuit veessen, e fos crucificat en lo mig loc del món, per tal que tuit sabessen l’honta que vós prenguéis, e per los vostres deixebles fos desamparat a la mort, per tal que tuit veessen que vós no haviéts amics, e les pus vils gents qui sien vos turmentaren e us auciren, e sens tota ocasió e sens tota raó que no havien que us aucieessen, vos auciren. On tot açò, Sènyer, covenc que fos enaixí com se féu, car enaixí com per la vostra passió se devia seguir gran honrament, covenc que vostra passió fos en gran viltat.” OS II, 217, 5.

⁵⁷ ELIADE comments: “We may speak of a ‘cosmic Christianity’ since, on the one hand, the Christological mystery is projected upon the whole of nature and, on the other hand, the historical elements of Christianity are neglected; on the contrary, there is emphasis on the liturgical dimension of existence in the world” (1982, VOL. 2, 405).

⁵⁸ On Llull’s theory of the elements, see YATES 1985, 29–120 and PRING-MILL 1991, 56ff.

⁵⁹ “Ah Jesucrist Sènyer! Enaixí com l’arbre qui renovella en tres coses, en fulla e en flor e en fruit, enaixí vós renovellàs l’arbre on morís, ab tres coses: ab divinal essència, e ab la vostra natura humana, e ab la mort que prenguéis en ell. 14. Laors e glòries e honors sien conegudes a vós, senyor Déus, car per raó del pujament que la vostra sancta humanitat féu en la crou, se renovellà tot lo món. 15. E per l’enclinaement que Adam pare nostre féu a peccat, s’envellí e s’endureí en peccat lo coratge dels hòmens. 16. Ah Senyor misericordiós! loat e graít siats vós, qui havets hàüda membrança dels pecadors, car enaixí com vós havets posat en l’arbre fruit, per tal que prena vida lo cors de l’home, enaixí posàs en l’arbre de la sancta crou lo vostre cors, per tal que sia salvació e glòria de les nostres ànimes. 17. Piadós Senyor, enaixí com vós havets volgut que los aucells se deporten e s’alegren cantant en les branques e en les rames dels arbres, enaixí volets que los hòmens s’alegren cantant, davant la figura del sant arbre crouat, en lo qual vós ploràs per nosaltres pecadors. 18. Pacient Senyor, enaixí com los aucells s’ajusten e s’acosten enans a l’arbre on pus és fullat e florit e ramat, e enans hi mou cascú sos lais e sos cants, enaixí se deurién los hòmens enans acostar a la sancta crou que a null altre arbre; e pus hi deurién plorar, on pus la veem tinta de sang e de làgremes. 19. Beneit Rei de glòria! Lo pus noble vegetable e mellor qui anc fos creat, fo l’arbre de la sancta crou, on vós fos marturiat; car aquell arbre fo en lo començament cobert de verdor e de fulles, e de flors e de fruits douços e saborosos, e puixes en la fi fo cobert e vestit de la vostra deïtat e de la vostra humanitat, e fo tot banyat de sang preciosa e de làgremes de vida. 20 Per la gran noblea que fo en l’arbre d’on la vostra crou fo feta, són, Sènyer, ennobleïts tots los altres arbres d’on són fetes totes les crous qui representen la figura de la sancta creu preciosa. 21. E doncs, Sènyer, beneïts sien tots los arbres qui aquell arbre remembren als nostres ulls, e beneïts sien

tots los hòmens qui denant les crous aoren, e ploren, e loen e beneeixen vós.” OS II, 172.

⁶⁰ OS II, 172; 297, 23.

⁶¹ “Ah Senyor douç, ple de douçor e de benedicció e de plaer! Glòria e honor sia donada per tots temps a vós e a tot quant de vós és, per ço com vós nos havets donada carta en la qual nos demostrats la vostra ajuda; car vós, Sènycer, nos havets dada la figura de la sancta crou, en la qual la vostra figura està ab los braços estesos, per demostrar que vós sòts aparellat a abraçar e ajudar a tots aquells qui per vós se combatran ne qui per amor de vós morran.” OS II, 276, 25.

⁶² “Loada e beneita sia, Sènycer, la vostra gloriosa larguea qui féu escampar la vostra sang sobre la roca on la crou fo ficada, e la beneita aigua de vostre cors féu decórrer sobre la terra; e la mia cobeca sia coneguda per molt gran, per ço car jo no he escampada l’aigua de mos ulls sobre los mels de la cara, ni la mia suor no és escampada en mes vestidures per bones obres.” OS II, 271, 15.

⁶³ “Si los romeus van cercar vós, Sènycer, cavalcants en palafrens ni en muls ni en mules, vós volgués cercar nostra salvació cavalcant en la somera. Si los pelegrins vos cerquen portant lo senyal de la crou en lur muscle, vós cercàs ells portant la crou en vostre muscle, en la qual fos clavat e mort. E si los romeus van cercant ab blancs draps en què jagueren e ab atzembles carregades de roba, vós cercàs nós en la crou, la qual fo lit de mort. E si los romeus porten salses ni barals plens de vi, vós portàs en la crou fe e suja e vinagre. E si los romeus porten aur e argent e diners per despessa, vós vengués a la crou pobre e despullat de tots vestiments.” OS II, 342, 5.

⁶⁴ “Los pintors, Sènycer, veem que pinten als prínceps e als hòmens rics, palaus e cambres e portxes e cases, d’aur e d’argent e de diverses colors. Mas lo vostre palau e la cambra que vós hagués en est món, no hac altre pintura sinó de sol e de vent e de pluja; car altre loc no haviets on estiéssets sinó defora los palaus e les cambres, en l’espai qui és enfre.l cel e la terra. Misericordiós Senyor, on és tota pietat e tota dolçor e tota benedicció! Los pintors pinten als reis les corones, d’aur e d’argent, e de perles e de péres precioses. Mas la vostra corona, Sènycer, fo pintada d’espines qui per tot lo cap vos entraven, e pintada fo de sang. E si los reis e ls hòmens rics fan pintar los capells de diverses colors, lo capell que vós portàvets, aquell era pintat de sol e de pluja, e de neu e de fred; car en lo vostre cap no havia altre capell sinó tan solament los cabells vostres, qui estaven defora al sol e al vent e a la pluja.” OS II, 361, 9-10.

⁶⁵ “Qui bé guarda, Sènycer, en la crou ab los ulls corporals e ab los ulls espirituals, e contempla en ço que la crou significa, en la crou porà veer la vostra gran misericòrdia e la vostra gran humilitat e la vostra gran pietat e la gran amor que vós havets al vostre pobre; car la crou és mirall en lo qual se poden veer, remembrant e cogitant, totes les vostres vertuts e les vostres noblescs.” OS II, 369, 3; 436, 26.

⁶⁶ “Oh Déus amorós! A vós sia coneguda tota altea e tota granea e tota honor, com a franc Senyor e a beneit que vós sòts, car nosaltres veem que ls lauradors lauren la terra e l’assaonen per tal que dó fruit; e vceem, Sènycer, que la terra on mills és laurada ni pensada, que mills dóna fruit. On si la terra, qui és cosa morta e cosa sens enteni-

ment e raó, dóna fruit on mills és pensada e laurada, semblant és que l'ànima humana deja dar fruit, si lo cors és obedient e sotsmès a ses vertuts.” OS II, 363, 1.

⁶⁷ “Com lo vostre servidor e.l vostre sotsmès sia estat, Sènyer, tan malvat pintor, clam-vos mercè que vós en lo meu cor, per imaginació e per obra de contemplació, pintets la vostra amor e la vostra passió e.ls vostres plors e les vostres langors e la vostra greu mort; car si vós, Sènyer, plantats ni posats en mon cor aitals remembraments e aitals enamoraments, porà's esdevenir que mon cors esdevenga tint de sang e mos ulls de làgremes, per donar laor e honrament de son senyor Déus.” OS II, 363, 30.

⁶⁸ OS II, 227, 6.

⁶⁹ This is a theme found in Eastern Christian theology, as in Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor.

⁷⁰ OE II, 244, n. 2.

⁷¹ OS II, 229, 21. Compare also the following passage: “Honorable Senyor, piadós, virtuos! Enaixí com lo gra del blat no pot renovellar ni multiplicar, tro que és e terra compodrit e transportat de sa forma e és renovellat. enaixí vós volgués que.l vostre benauriat cors fos mortificat e turmentat e mort, per tal que.ns aportàssets novell fruit e multitud de perdurable glòria.” 232, 16.

⁷² “Celestial Senyor, enaixí com lo malaute mellora e revé per la carn que menuga adoncs com lo mal l'ha jaquit, enaixí havets vós ordonat que l'ànima de l'home sia fortificada per la vista de la vostra passió en la crou, e per lo remembrament d'aquella sia pecat delit en ell.” OS II, 217, 12.

⁷³ “Aquells qui són, Sènyer, savis lauradors, veem que fan diferència enfre temps e temps, e loc e loc, e sement e sement; car segons que són les sements, cové que sien los locs e los temps. Mas d'açò fan los hòmens mundans tot lo contrari, car no esperen temps, ni fan diferència de loc a loc ni de persona a persona. E per açò quaix tot quant fan és fet vilment e àvolment e falsa.” OS II, 364, 6.

⁷⁴ Cf. PRING-MILL 1991, 35ff.

⁷⁵ OE II, 180ff.

⁷⁶ We nevertheless need to confront the idea of “mortification,” which was commonly associated with a certain excess. It seems necessary to rethink it in mystical, not merely ascetical terms, in line with criticisms leveled already in Llull's time by spiritual figures like Meister Eckhart, and later by Teresa of Avila and others.

⁷⁷ “Ah Déus gloriós, gran sobre totes granees, e meravellós sobre totes meravelles! Beneita sia la vostra vertut e.l vostre ordenament, qui ha ordonat en home la potència sensitiva, per la qual potència ha l'home cinc senys sentibles: oir, veer, gustar, odorar, sentir; car per oir ha conceixença de la diversitat dels lenguatges e de les vouts, e per lo veer ha conceixença l'home de les deversitats de les formes e dels colors, e per lo gustar ha l'home conceixença de les coses dolces e de les coses amargoses, e per l'odorar ha l'home conceixença de les odors, e per sentir ha l'home conceixença de les coses tocants e ha conceixença de sanitat e de malautia e de coses dures e molles.” OE II, 184, 1.

⁷⁸ “Honrat Rei de glòria, loat, e amat, e colt e obeït siats vós, qui havets ordonat en

home, que per raó de la potència sensitiva venga l'home a coneixença de les coses entellectuals, car en ço que los hòmens han coneixença de les coses sentides, aperceben veritat de les coses invisibles; e per açò se fa per ço car, jassia ço que vós siats als hòmens en est inón essència invisible, no roman per tot ço que los hòmens no hagen coneixença de vostra essència; la qual coneixença que n'han, Sènyer, és en ço que saben aquella vostra essència ésser tota poderosa, e tota misericordiosa, e tota dreturera, e tota vertuosa, e tota bona e tota acabada." OS II, 184, 7.

⁷⁹ "Déus gloriós, vertuós, granea e noblea sia donada a vós, car vós, Sènyer, havets ordonat home en ço que li havets dades dues entencions; primera entenció e segona entenció. E per ço car havets volgut que sien dos segles, aquest segle e l'autre, per açò havets volgut que sien dues entencions." OS II, 194, 1.

⁸⁰ "On com vós, Sènyer Déus, siats vengut en est món per deslliurar e per reembre la natura humana del peccat original, prec-vos, Sènyer, que us plàcia que vós delliurets la mia potència racional de la cativetat en què ha long temps estat sots la potència sensitiva; e plàcia-us que d'aquí en avant tota hora la potència sensitiva sia serva e sotsmesa de la potència racional; car enaixí.s tany, segons ço que vós, Sènyer, ho havets ordonat." OS II, 191, 26.

⁸¹ OS II, chap. 43, 189–91.

⁸² OS II, chap. 43, 189–91.

⁸³ OS II, 201, 10.

⁸⁴ OS II, 204, 25.

⁸⁵ Chap. 45, especially §§ 10–13, develops an entire theory of the justification of evil and the value of good acts, based on a doctrine of the two intentions (195–6).

⁸⁶ Cf OS II, 325, 15.

⁸⁷ "Senyor amat, Senyor servit, Senyor honrat, enaixí com la dona qui.s mira en lo mirall pot veer en lo mirall la bellea o la legea de sa cara ni de ses faiçons, enaixí, Sènyer, lo vostre servidor com guarda en la creu, totes ses belecs e totes ses legees veu e apercep en si mateix." OS II, 322, 28.

⁸⁸ "Per ço car temps, Sènyer, ha començament e fi, per açò lo temps present se muda en temps passat e.l temps esdevenidor se muda en temps present, e.l temps passat nulls temps no.s muda, per ço car ja ha haüda fi." OS II, 322, 2. Cf. also 327, 6.

⁸⁹ Cf. OS II, 327, 6.

⁹⁰ Cf. OS II, 348, 17–21.

⁹¹ "Divinal Senyor, gran sobre totes grances, a vós, Sènyer, devem fer gràcies e mercès, qui.ns havets dada vista per la qual podem pendre exempli en ço que fan les bèsties, car enaixí com les bèsties van cercant en los vegetables les fulles, e les flors e.ls brots e.ls fruits per tal que.n prenen vida, enaixí nosaltres, Sènyer, si savis érem, deuríem cercar e cüller en vós les vertuts e les bonces, per tal que.n vivíssim." OS II, 329, 1.

⁹² Cf. OS II, 334, 28.

⁹³ "Car los hòmens qui són, Sènyer, religiosos e bons crestians, aquells vencen ab la

potència racional la potència sensitiva; e car cascuna de les potències és en home, per açò home venç si mateix ab cosa qui és de si mateix.” OS II, 332, 5.

⁹⁴ “Aquells qui volen atrobar en la natura de l'ànima la malaltia d'on és malauta, cerquen-la, Sènycer, en les cinc potències de l'ànima, e en les tres natures de l'ànima, e en los cinc senys espirituals; car enaixí com la malaltia del cors humà és atrobada en les rails de les quals és compost, les quals rails se són desordenades en los cors, enaixí la malautia de l'ànima és atrobada en les rails e en les potències e en los senys de l'ànima qui.s són desordenats en ella.” OS II, 349, 29.

⁹⁵ Cf. OS II, 350, 5.

⁹⁶ Cf. OS II, 354, 18.

⁹⁷ Cf. OS II, 358, 4.

⁹⁸ As was the case with the previous senses, the image of the cross is dominant here, beginning with the severe suffering that Christ underwent on the cross. Cf. OS II, 395, 19.

⁹⁹ Cf. OS II, 397, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. OS II, 432, 27.

¹⁰¹ Cf. OS II, 428, 1.

¹⁰² “Com l'home religiós guarda, Sènycer, en la creu la vostra figura, qui demostra les vostres nafres e ls vostres treballs e la greu mort que sostengués, adoncs és sensible sensualment; e com per la sensualitat sensual comença a remembrar la vostra passió e la vostra mort, adoncs sent intel.lectualment; e com comença a plorar e a sospirar e a amar e a haver contrició e devoció, adoncs és lo sentiment compost corporalment e intel.lectualment.” OS II, 428, 5.

¹⁰³ Cf. OS II, 428, 12.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. OS II, 431, 14.

¹⁰⁵ OS II, 207, 8.

¹⁰⁶ OS II, 187, 10.

¹⁰⁷ OS II, 190, 14.

¹⁰⁸ “Car en ço, Sènycer, que lo sentiment comú, lo qual davalla dels cinc senys corporals, és ocasió a la imaginativa que dó a la potència racional, per açò s'esdevé que la imaginativa és mijà enfre la potència racional e la sensitiva, e és subjecta de la potència racional.” OS II, 187, 5; see also 184, 5-6.

¹⁰⁹ “Per raó, Sènycer, com los ulls corporals són termenats e finits, cové que los ulls espirituals s'estenen e passen los térmens tro als quals los ulls corporals són finits. On per açò, Sènycer, los ulls de l'ànima passen e veen part les coses que los ulls corporals no poden veer... On, per est semblant podem entendre, Sènycer, los ulls espirituals en qual manera s'estenen part los térmens on són termenats los ulls corporals, car com los ulls corporals defallen a veer les coses espirituals, en la demostració que los ulls corporals fan als espirituals, los ulls espirituals veen e apareben en les sensualitats les coses intel.lectuals.” OS II, 372, 5-6; 431, 12; cf. all of chap. 148, 430ff; chap. 106, 324-6.

¹¹⁰ “Benigne Senyor, enaixí com la vista corporal és termenada en les coses invisibles, enaixí los ulls de l'ànima, qui són ulls espirituals, són termenats en les coses visibles; car los ulls de l'ànima no veen sinó cogitant e remembrant e imaginant e entenent.” OS II, 373, 17. Concerning the place of “spiritual senses” in Christian tradition, though distant from Llull’s system, see RAHNER 1975, 139ff, and VON BALTHASAR 1985, 323–75; for their role in monotheistic traditions in general, see WOLFSON 1935.

¹¹¹ RAHNER 1975, 142–3.

¹¹² The section in question, OE II, 432, is entitled “Distinction XXVIII, which treats of cogitation, which is the spiritual-intellectual sense in man.”

¹¹³ “Tota la mellor contemplació en què home pusca ésser, és, Sènyer, que hom tenga sa cogitació en la vostra noblea e en la vostra vertut, sens que l'ànima de l'home no sia ocupada de nulla cosa sensual; car la fervor e l'amor és mellor e major com una cosa intel.lectual contempla en altra intel.lectual, que no és com cosa intel.lectual contempla en cosa sensual.” OS II, 432.

¹¹⁴ “Enaixí com los hòmens qui estogen, Sènyer, lurs tesaurus e lurs relíquies en lurs caixes, enaixí volria, si a vós plaïa, que la mia ànima fos armari de la vostra cogitació; e enaixí com los aucells fan lurs nius en los arbres, enaixí prec la mia ànima que pos sa cogitació en l'arbre de la crou, per tal que lo vostre servidor sia cogitant e contemplant en la sancta humanitat de son noble senyor Jesucrist.” OS II, 437, 30. “Qui cogita, Sènyer, en vós de totes les forces de la sua ànima, sens embarg e sens empatxament de les coses sensuales, aquelles cogitacions són bones e plenes de douçor e de plaer e d'amor; car adoncs és l'ànima ab vós unida e acostada, contemplant en la vostra gloriosa deïtat.” OS II, 434.

¹¹⁵ “Qui cogita, Sènyer, en vós de totes les forces de la sua ànima, sens embarg e sens empatxament de les coses sensuales, aquelles cogitacions són bones e plenes de douçor e de plaer e d'amor; car adoncs és l'ànima ab vós unida e acostada, contemplant en la vostra gloriosa deïtat.” OS II, 434.

¹¹⁶ “En aquest món, Sènyer, home veu la vostra humanitat intel.lectualment, cogitant; mas no la pot hom veure sensualment en aquella figura en la qual ella és. On, en açò pot hom conèixer la noblea que hom ha major en la vista intel.lectual que en la sensual; car los ulls de l'ànima basten e atenyen a acò a veer en què los ulls corporals no poden bastar ni atènyer.” OS II, 436, 15.

¹¹⁷ “En l'intel.lectual natura venits vós, Sènyer, als hòmens per gràcia, e en aquella tramets a hom los àngels, e aquella trameten los hòmens a vós amant, e cogitant, e entenent, e volent e remembrant...” OS II, 480, 29.

¹¹⁸ Cf. OS II, 445, 10 and 15.

¹¹⁹ Cf. OS II, 446, 28 and 29.

¹²⁰ Insofar as we have to do with a spiritual faculty, it seems fitting to translate “apercibimiento” as “apperception,” preserving an intended transcendental meaning.

¹²¹ “On, enaixí, Sènyer, com la dona encerca mirall dreturer e clar per tal que no li desmenta ses faïçons, enaixí qui vol apercebre les coses intel.lectuals ab les coses sensuales, primerament se guard que les sensualitats no sien torbades ni desordonades ni

empaxades a dar demostració de les coses intel·lectuals, e esforç-se hom aitant com pusca d'encercar aquelles sensualitats les quals són pus convinents a demostrar e a significar aquelles intel·lectualitats de les quals hom vol ésser certificat." OS II, 483, 3.

¹²² Cf. OS II, 483, 6.

¹²³ "Car enaixí, Sènycer, com l'home anant per la via posa la un peu per tal que l'altre pusca levar e mudar a avant, enaixí qui vol apercebre ço qui és segons natura, cové que pos son enteniment en ço qui és sobre natura; e qui vol apercebre ço qui és fora natura, cové que pos son enteniment en ço qui és segons obra de natura; car ço qui és segons cors de natura és apercebut per ço qui és fora de natura, e ço qui és fora de natura apercep hom per ço qui és segons cors de natura; car la un és ocasió a l'autre com sia apercebut la un per l'autre." OS II, 492, 26.

¹²⁴ See note 140 and accompanying text.

¹²⁵ "On, segons que serà, Sènycer, la color negra, significarà la color blanca, e segons que serà la color blanca, darà significació de la color negra, car on pus contràries seran les colors, més se demostraran l'un per l'autra." OS II, 586, 5.

¹²⁶ Cf. OS II, 25.

¹²⁷ Cf. OS II, 497, 5.

¹²⁸ Cf. OS II, 499, 21; and all of chapter 175, 503–7.

¹²⁹ Cf. OS II, 500, 1.

¹³⁰ Cf. OS II, 502, 21.

¹³¹ Cf. OS II, 512, 6.

¹³² Cf. OS II, 514, 24.

¹³³ Cf. OS II, 514, 30.

¹³⁴ Cf. OS II, 610, 2.

¹³⁵ Cf. OS II, 626, 1.

¹³⁶ Cf. OS II, 632, 1.

¹³⁷ Cf. OS II, 665, 1.

¹³⁸ See note 121 and accompanying text.

¹³⁹ "Ah Déus Pare e Sencyor, qui guarits e sanats nostres langors e nostres dolors! Qui vol prendre art ne manera com pusca apercebre e conèixer les contrarietats sensuais e entel·lectuals, quatre maneres ha mester: la primera és, Sènycer, que hom començ a les contrarietats sensuais e que per un contrari sensual encerc hom l'autre; la segona manera és que per los contraris sensuais encerc hom los contraris entel·lectuals; terça manera és que ab les unes contrarietats entel·lectuals encerc hom les altres contrarietats entel·lectuals; quarta manera és que ab les contrarietats entel·lectuals sia hom encercador de les contrarietats sensuais." OS II, 586, 1.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. BURCKHARDT 1975, 159–73.

¹⁴¹ See Part 1, notes 50 and 51 on page 116 above.

¹⁴² Cf. OE II, 276, 25.

¹⁴³ See note 65 on page 118 above.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Haas 1989, 160: The “mystisches Kommunikationsmodell” is obtained when a unity is achieved between the transmitter of revelation, the preacher, and the recipient or listener.

¹⁴⁵ MOG I, 443.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. YATES 1974 and ROSSI 1983.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. CARRERAS Y ARTAU, 1939, 370ff.

¹⁴⁸ “A. Ponimus, quod sit noster Dominus Deus; cui A. Attribuimus sedecim Virtutes; non tamen dicimus, quod sint cardinales, neque theologicae, nec quod sint accidentales, sed essentialis: de quibus formantur centum viginti Camerae, per quas amatores hujus artis poterunt habere cognitionem de Deo, et poterunt facere et solvere quaestiones per necessarias rationes.” MOG I, 434.

¹⁴⁹ “Deus est illud Ens in quo Bonitas, Magnitudo, Aeternitas et aliae Dignitates Dei convertuntur in eodem numero.” Cited in CARRERAS Y ARTAU 1939, 372, n.106.

¹⁵⁰ “Triangulo viridis continet tres angulos, scilicet differentiam, concordantiam, contrarietatem: in angulo differentiae haec tria membra scribuntur, videlicet sensualis a sensualis, sensualis ab intellectuali, intellectualis ab intellectuali...” MOG I, 487.

¹⁵¹ “Oportet, quod S tentet cum T ipsum E.I. & N., ut intelligat, in qua suarum specierum recipere majorem significationem & majorem notitiam ab A.V.X.; oportet, quod recipiat habitum illius speciei, cum qua camerae ei melius significantur; & quod sciat per significationes sensuales ad intellectuales ascendere, intelligendo & percipiendo quatuor quaestiones & quatuor causas universales.” MOG I, 444.

¹⁵² “Sensualitates sunt fenestrae, per quas S. Producit suas species & individua illarum de potentia ad actum, dum sensus sensuales moventur de una sensualitate in aliam, & sensus intellectuales per unam sensualitatem intelligunt aliam, & per una vel plures sensualitates intelligunt unam vel plures intellectualitates, & per unam vel plures intellectualitates secundum artem, quam S. Habet in T., intrando ad cognoscendum suas proprias cameras, & cameras A.V.X.” MOG I, 445.

¹⁵³ “Descensus universalium rerum ad particulares et ascensus particularium ad universales sit mediante T?” OS II, 474.

¹⁵⁴ De modo VII: Orationis. “C. Intelligit, quod B. Recolit, quod Oratio est triplex, scilicet: Oratio Sensualis, Intellectualis, et Composita ex utraque: Sensualis est, quando motiva sensualis movetur ad laudandum et benedicendum A. Et suas cameras: Intellectualis, cum motiva intellectualis movetur ad contemplandum A. Et suas cameras absque motiva sensuali: Oratio Composita est, quando sensualitas et intellectualitas simul moventur ad laudandum, orandum et glorificandum A, et suas cameras.” OS II, 445.

¹⁵⁵ MOG IV, 11–14; ORL XVI, 289–94.

¹⁵⁶ MOG IV, 18ff.

¹⁵⁷ MOG III, 503–64.

¹⁵⁸ “Ab Arte demonstrativa trahit hoc opus exordium, & quoniam per ipsius artis modos & regulas investigativas necessarium est quodlibet particulari in universali suo

invenire, ideo ipsa arte variata in hoc praesenti opere ad investigandum unumquodque particulare, ut sequatur ejus inventio.” OS II, 503.

¹⁵⁹ OS II, 504.

¹⁶⁰ OS II, 293–452.

¹⁶¹ OS II, 366–71.

¹⁶² MOG V, 1–211.

¹⁶³ “In omne materia punctum transcendentem dicimus invenire posse... Quomodo autem in omne materia ejusmodi puncta inveniantur, ad praesens exemplificare volumus, & primo a natura elementalī incipimus, deinde gradatim procedendo, secundo de natura vegetativa, tertio de sensitiva, quarto de imaginativa, quinto de intellectiva, sexto de morali, septimo de caelesti, octavo de angelica, nono de divina.” OS II, 47.

¹⁶⁴ *De sensibilibus particularibus, Compendium*, 122ff; *Lògica*, 157.

¹⁶⁵ “Los senys particulars translat/. Ben can ensems son ajustat/ ymaginativa.ls scriu,/ infantazia.y ha son niu/ de la qual pren demostrament,/ ço sapia ton entendiment./ de ço qui es de sensual,/ e puys puga en alt ostal/ qui es d’entellectuitat,/ on mant secret son ajustat.” *Lògica*, 157, 987–96.

¹⁶⁶ “Sàpies, fill, que la ànima ab la ymaginació pren e ajusta en comú tot ço que li offeren los v seyns corporals, vcent, oent, odorant, gustant, sintent; e offer-ho en la fantasia a l’enteniment, e puxes lo enteniment puya més a censús entendre Déu e àngels e les coses intel.lectuals les quals la ymaginativa no pot ymaginar. La phantasia és cambra qui és en lo paladar sobre lo front; e en lo front la ymaginativa ajusta ço que pren de les coses corporals, e entrsse’n en la phantasia açò que pren, e il.lumina aquella cambra per ço que l’enteniment pusque pendre ço que ymaginativa ly offer. On, com per algú accident açò se desordona, adonchs esdevé lo home fantàstich, o à gros enteniment, o es orat.” *Doctrina pueril*, 204, 31–43.

¹⁶⁷ I owe the idea of imagination as a representation of the figure of Jesus Christ to Francesco Santi of the University of Lece, with whom I discussed these matters during our time together as students in Freiburg.

¹⁶⁸ In his 1961 book E. COLOMER has studied the influence of Llull on Nicholas of Cusa, who held in his library a significant number of manuscripts and copies of Llull’s works, in which he made numerous annotations (Cod. Cus. 83, 229R–273V). Colomer relates the “transcendent points” to the method of the ascent and descent of understanding, which is in fact the subject of a book of Llull’s entitled *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (“The Book of the Intellect’s Ascent and Descent,” 1305). Among the books Cusa possessed was the *Arbre de filosofia desiderat* (“The Tree of Desired Philosophy”), in whose section on the doctrine of the “transcendent points” we read:

Punt trascendent és estrument del human enteniment ab lo qual ateny son object sobre les natures de les potències que estan desús, e ateny sobre natura lo subira object. Aquesta diffinició, fil, te sia molt cara en esta sciencia, car per ela pots aver conexensa de Deu e de la obra que ha en sí mateix, e de les altres obres que son sobre cós de natura. (Distinction 1, Part III, “On the Definitions of F.” ORL XVII, 415)

Annotation 157r in the copy of Nicolás of Cusa reads: “De operationibus supra cursum naturae” (operations beyond the course of nature). This may be contrasted with the definition of the *Ars amativa boni* (“The Art of Loving the Good,” ORL xvii, 1–398):

6. De la regla qui es de punts transcendentis. Punts trespessants consiram en dues maneres. La primera es com l enteniment trespasa entendre les coses veres sobre les potencies qui li son desots, e aquelles coses veres ateny en sí mateix segons sa natura. Les potencies qui son al entendiment desots, son la elementativa, vegetativa, sensitiva, imaginativa, qui son potencies del cors ab lo qual l umà enteniment es conjunct. La segona manera es com l enteniment entén sobre sí mateix, ço es a saber, sobre sa natura, atenyent veritat de les coses, lo qual atenyiment fa en vertut del object e en la natura d aquell. (*Art amativa*, II, regla sexta, 44–6)

Puncta transcendentia consideramus duobus Modis: quorum primus est ascensus intellectus ad intelligendum vera super potentias eidem subjectas, quae vera attingit in se ipso secundum suam naturam; potentia vero, quae sunt subjectae intellectui, sunt haec: scilicet elementativa, vegetativa, sensitiva, imaginativa, quae sunt potentiae corporis, cum uo humanus intellectus est unitus. Secundus modus est transcensus intellectus ultra vel supra propriam naturam, attingens veritatem rei in natura & virtute objecti. (MOG VI, 22)

For Colomer, the transcendent points can be summarized in three levels (sensual-fantastic, spiritual, and divine) which correspond to three forms of demonstrative logic. These three levels in turn correspond to three degrees of comparison (normal, comparative, and superlative) and with the three logical forms of demonstration (argumentum quia, propter quid, per acquiparantiam; argumentation why, because of which, and by comparison). The sensible, spiritual, and divine realms refer respectively to these three types of argumentation (78). Corresponding to the last of these is the symbolic figure A, which we have seen consists in converting to God with each of the divine virtues and also among the virtues themselves. According to Colomer, this is both a logical discourse and a method of spiritual contemplation. Nicholas of Cusa discovered a method of intellectual ascent reflected in his work *Docta ignorantia* (“Learned Ignorance”). At the third level, he has the intellect ascend to the infinite God in whom all contraries are overcome (1, 12). This marks the end of the path of ascent, but Cusa insists that the decisive stage is the second, from the sensible to the imaginable.

The methods of ascent of Llull and Cusa both take the same step of transcending the sensible-imaginable to the intelligible, the need for which has to be understood in the context of the anti-Averroist polemics that preoccupied Llull for many years. Cusa made a point of noting this: “Argumenta Averrois contra fidei articulos soluta per Raymundum in libro praefacto” (arguments of Averroës against articles of faith explained by Ramon in a previous book; cited in COLOMER, 1961, 79, n. 62). In any case, Cusa insists on the ascent “super sensum et imaginationem” (beyond sense and imagination) as a condition for philosophy and contemplation. In *De docta ignorantia* he adopts a similar method of ordering to overcome sensibility, imagination, and reason itself in order to arrive at the intellectual understanding of the Infinite:

Imaginativa, quae genus sensibile non transcendit, non capit lineam posse triangulum esse, cum improportionabiliter ista in quantis differant. Erit tamen apud intellectum hoc facile.

The imagination, which does not transcend the genus of sensible things, does not grasp that a line can be a triangle, since the two differ incomparably as quantitative things. (Liber 1 cap. XIV, 37. Cited in COLOMER 1975, 156)

Where Lull speaks of transcending the intellect, Nicholas of Cusa speaks of transcending reason (*ratio*). In either case, the two levels have to be overcome in order to reach intellectual contemplation of the godhead. In this way, what seems contradictory in the level of the merely conceptual, in God passes over into perfect identity. Accordingly Cusa thinks of God as a “coincidentia oppositorum” (coincidence of opposites), whereas Lull passes beyond the merely conceptual by means of faith. It would be interesting to examine how far the intellectual-spiritual senses of *The Book of Contemplation* experience the transcending of the intellect (the intellectual-intellectual level) by way of a contemplative path and not simply by means of faith.

¹⁶⁹ PLATZECK also considers necessary this circle marked by the secrets: “The transcendent points meet the limits of the capacity of human understanding—of sense representation and of discursive and intuitive thought. Beyond the limits lie the mysteries of beings. These mysteries present themselves in subhuman nature, but also in human nature itself, and especially in the Being that surpasses human nature” (1962, vol. 1, 270). Note that in his analysis of the *Liber ascensu et descensu intellectus* Platzeck gives more importance to the descent than to the intellect: “One might doubt, given this gradation, whether the circular structure is the right one for the so-called five expressions (sensible, imaginabile, dubitabile, credibile, intelligibile). It would be altogether unsuitable if there were no longer a way back from the ‘intelligible’ to the ‘sensible.’ But theoretical physics, philosophical cosmology, as well as poetic-symbolic and theological-symbolic thought show the propriety of relations between the ‘intelligible’ and the ‘sensible’” (380).

¹⁷⁰ RUH 1990, 387.

¹⁷¹ OS II, 394.

3. THE ALCHEMY OF LANGUAGE

¹ The expression comes from WITTGENSTEIN 1984.

² HAAS remarks: “Another and more serious problem is that of language in all of Christian mysticism. For a religion like Christianity, whose character of Logos cannot be left behind, whose deepest mystical experience is seen in the birth of the eternal Word in the human soul (and there is not just one possible metaphor among others!), whose decisive and fundamental event is the historical incarnation of the Word of God, can never at any time—even in the most sublime abstractions based on experience—allow a renunciation of speech, as if it were a question of a mere husk that drops away to let the sweetness of experience flow in” (1989, 24).

³ BARUZI notes: “And yet we have scarcely more than the texts.... It is to the texts, and not to beings, that we can have recourse” (1996, XXXI). MCGINN adds that “If mysticism needs to be understood contextually, and if the mystical text and its place in the tradition—not mystical experience (whatever it may be)—are the primary objects of study, we must still ask what mysticism is” (1995, xv). For an approach to the general questions of language and mystical experience, see MARTÍN VELASCO 1999, 49–64.

⁴ BARUZI notes that “If we follow mystics themselves all the way to the final stages of description, it is not their language that we accent but their silence” (1996, XXXIX).

⁵ Cf. HAAS 1989, 28–9.

⁶ “Symbolism would reveal to us, perhaps directly, a fact that no other mode of thought would permit us to reach. And therefore there would be no translation of an experience by a symbol; there would be, in the strict sense of the term, a symbolic experience” (MARTÍN VELASCO 1999, 62).

⁷ CERTEAU explains that in the context of Spanish spirituality (especially in the sixteenth century), “conversar” means conversing with God or with others, that is, prayer and oral exchange (1982, 217).

⁸ MISCH 167, 89. After the death of its author, the *Vita Raimundi Lulli* was immediately well received, but, as had happened to other spiritual figures of his time who wrote in the vernacular, Llull’s thought also met with resistance from the religious establishment in accepting the new modes of language accompanying the religious experience emerging in Europe. Llull’s fear of condemnation and his ever attentive eye towards ecclesiastical orthodoxy prompted him to repress the mystical bent of his writing in favor of its encyclopedic and “artistic” aspects. Still, it remains to be seen whether for Llull’s successors in the renaissance and later—figures such as Nicholas of Cusa, Pico della Mirandola, Giordano Bruno, Agrippa von Netthesheim, Johannes Alsted, Athanasius Kircher, and G. W. Leibniz—the core of mysticism can be separated so easily from the mnemonic and technical elements that served his speculations on the *lingua universalis*. In any case, fascination with the logical languages of Llull’s Art has resulted in a lack of understanding of his thought as a whole, the more technical aspects having come to mask the true mystical content of the contemplative doctrine to which the “arts of memory,” Cabalist in origin, are actually directed. In fact, one of Llull’s main contributions to tradition is his understanding of the Jewish Cabalist teachings in conjunction with the doctrine of the faculties—a sort of Christian Cabal—and his introduction of this into contemplation through Sufi recitation techniques. This is the truly ecumenical aspect of his message and not simply a dialogue of religions based on ecclesiastical propositions. The diffusion of knowing had to be universal, but its understanding required a suitable contemplative and intellectual setting from which a new language could emerge. On Llull’s thought in the renaissance, see CARRERAS Y ARTAU 1943, and on the Christian “Cabala” of the age, see SECRET 1979 and IDEL 1997.

⁹ “In various ways, the enunciation that determines the ‘spiritual’ elaborations begin from the assumption that the act of knowing is situated in the field of prayer (or, as Augustine had said earlier, in the field of invocation).” CERTEAU 1982, 220.

¹⁰ Cf. HEILER 1969.

¹¹ CERTEAU 1982, 220.

¹² “Novell saber hai atrobat;/ pot n’hom conèixer veritat/ e destruir falsetat./...Som hom vell, paubre, menyspreat,/ no hai ajuda d’home nat/ e hai trop gran fait emparat./ Gran res hai de lo món cercat;/ mant bon exempli hai donat:/ poc som conegut e amat./... Vull morir en pèlag d’amor.” OE I, 1301–2. Included in the selection of texts in this volume, pages 226–8.

¹³ As HÖSLE has shown, in contrast to the *Vita coetanea*, which speaks clearly of the principal stages of his outer life, *Disconsolation* is fundamental for anyone wishing to penetrate to the core of Lull’s personality (1996, 77).

¹⁴ HÖSLE, 91. “So who is he? It seems obvious to me that the hermit is Lull himself, as strongly as this contrasts with the usual structure of a tenso. The hermit is a projection through whom Lull succeeds in objectifying himself and so observing himself from without” (93).

¹⁵ HÖSLE, 99.

¹⁶ NEORL II, 5.

¹⁷ The expression “theology as grammar” comes from WITTGENSTEIN 1984, n. 373.

¹⁸ NEORL II, 6.

¹⁹ On the symbolism of the tree and its diffusion in religions, see J.-E. CIRLOT 1997, 89–92.

²⁰ NEORL II, 12, 193–8.

²¹ Cf. DOMÍNGUEZ 2000.

²² Elsewhere I have drawn attention to the communitarian atmosphere of this prayer (VEGA 2000). HAMES 1995 claims that it is a classical invocation of the name of God used among the Cabalists.

²³ NEORL II, 207.

²⁴ For an eloquent textual example of this in *Felix*: “Lonc temps ha que jo, per filosofia, volia haver coneixença de Déu; e de l’obra que Déus ha en les creatures venia a coneixença per filosofia tan solament. Mas per la teologia que el senyor ermità ha dita en sa disputació la qual ha haüda ab tu, e per la filosofia que jo sé e que he oïda en ell, són vengut a coneixença de la trinitat de Déu; a la coneixença de la qual tu pots venir si sotsposes esser trinitat, e si has plaser en esser trinitat en Déu, car provar trinitat no és sens subposició, ni hom no pot provar trinitat a entendement rebel.la que sia en coratge de hom ergullós.” OS II, 34.

²⁵ In the *Compendium* it is said that the secrets of the sensible realm are indicated in the intellectual, in the same way that “theory” hides in itself the secrets of “practice.” The model of the theoretical life has been shaped thanks to the sensible secrets of divine revelation, but this same model holds for the practical life. The scheme of secrets is both epistemological and mystical, but it is its moral dimension in the life of the individual that is fundamental. Even should one reach the divine contemplation of essences, historical time retains its own meaning and continuity. In effect the

model of the theoretical life—for Llull, the intellectual-spiritual life—supplies the secrets of the life of the body, of sensible life, and most definitively of the active life as it relates to the contemplative life and wisdom. In a scientific scheme like that of Llull's Art, the transition from the intelligible to the sensible is manifest only in symbolic form, in the moral life, in prayer, and in preaching. But both the "secrets" and the "transcendent points" as well in his treatises on prayer show a mystical and contemplative intentionality.

²⁶ "On, com açò, Sènyer, sia enaixí, doncs segons açò són figurades a l'humà entenment tres figures d'oració. La primera és oració sensual, així com home qui nomena e parla adorant vostres vertuts e vostres honraments demanant a vós gràcia e perdó e benedicció; la segona és oració entellectual, així com home qui en sa oració vós remembra e.us entén e.us contempla membrant e entenent e volent vostres honraments e vostres vertuts; la terça és així com l'home qui fa bones obres e fa bé e usa de dretura e de misericòrdia e de veritat e de les altres vertuts." OE II, 1005, 2.

²⁷ Cf. OE II, 1005, 6.

²⁸ Cf. OE II, 1005, 7 and 9.

²⁹ "Senyor humil, per lo qual mos ulls ploren e.l meu cor s'enamora! La terça figura d'oració se diu com hom fa bones obres e usa de vertuts, car tota hora que hom sia dreturer, e misericordiós, e vertader, e humil, e pacient, e continent e devot, vos adora hom e.us prega e.us reclama, jassia ço que en aquell temps hom no.us remembre ni.us entena e hom és remembrant e entenent e volent alguna altra cosa dreturament e vertuosament." OE II, 1006, 10.

³⁰ Cf. OE II, 1007, 26.

³¹ Cf. OE II, 1008, 1.

³² "Amorós Déus de glòria, lo vostre servidor adorant, soplegant a la vostra unitat sancta, diu al firmament, e al sol, e a la luna, e a totes les esteles e a totes les vertuts creades en lo cel, que adoren e sopleguen a la vostra unitat gloriosa, e açò mateix diu als quatre elements e a tots los genres e les espècies e.ls indivíduus d'ells; car totes quantes coses són, Sènyer, són creades e sostengudes e beneficiades de la vostra sancta unitat, qui és mare de totes unitats e de totes pluritats creades; on, per açò lo vostre servidor adora de totes ses forces la vostra unitat amorosa." OE II, 1009, 5.

³³ Cf. OE II, 1009, 8.

³⁴ Cf. OE II, 1040, 7.

³⁵ Cf. OE II, 1064, 2.

³⁶ *Art amativa*, ORL XVII, 44–6; *Ars amativa boni*, MOG VI, 22–3.

³⁷ LOHR 1986, 11 y VEGA 2000, 766–7.

³⁸ Cf. SCHOLEM 1996, 155ff; IDEL 1997 and 1998.

³⁹ Cf. IDEL 1988, 156ff.

⁴⁰ "The use of combination and visualization of letters in order to include mystical experience and indeed help one progress along the mystical path, culminating in the knowledge and combination of the different names of God, was popular in certain

Cabbalistic circles with whose members Lull could have engaged in conversation in Barcelona and its surrounding regions” (HAMES 1995, 99).

⁴¹ *Art breu*, OS I, 577 and *Ars generalis ultima*, ORL XIV, 346. Cf. HAMES 1995.

⁴² Cf. VEGA 2000.

⁴³ *Blanquerna*, 100ff.

⁴⁴ OE II, 101; cf. also 102–3.

⁴⁵ OE II, 104.

⁴⁶ OE II, 104.

⁴⁷ OE II, 104. There is a great similarity to note here with the explanation of Teresa of Avila in her *Book of Life*.

⁴⁸ “Estant en oració, devem remembrar, entendre, amar, les virtuts e les obres de Déu, e ab fe, esperança, caritat, justícia, saviea, força, temprança, devem ordenar nostra ànima e nostre cors per tal que pusquem en alt pujar memòria, enteniment e volentat a contemplar e a desirar sa glòria; e enaprés cové que membre e entenam e desamem nostres colpes e la viltat d’aquest món.” *Blanquerna*, 105.

⁴⁹ “Companyos e senyors, amics, fills amables-dix l’apostoli als cardenals: per la passió de Jesucrist a honrar, vos requir que m’ajudets a tractar com tots los llenguatges qui són puscam tornar a un tan solament; cor si no és mas un llenguatge, seran les gents entenents los uns los altres, e, per l’enteniment, amar s’han e pendran-ne mills semblants costumes en les quals se concordaran. E per aquest tractament, los nostres preicadors iran als infecels pus ardidament e pus secreta, e enans n’entenran veritat de la vida salutable; e per aquest negoci pot tot lo món venir en bon estament, on poden ésser los errats aduits a convertimen.” *Blanquerna*, 262.

⁵⁰ BADIA 1992, 99.

⁵¹ This pattern is clearly seen in the legendary account of Aśvagoṣa, the *Bud-dhacarita* XIV, 98.

⁵² *Blanquerna*, 270; see chap. 98, pages 177–8 in the present volume.

⁵³ Cf. UEDA 1994.

⁵⁴ On night as a motif in mystical contemplation, see HAAS 1999, 55–6.

⁵⁵ *Blanquerna*, 273–4; chap. 99, pages 178–9 in the present volume.

⁵⁶ Cf. SCHIMMEL 1985, 22.

⁵⁷ Cf. VALENTE 1991, 242.

⁵⁸ *Blanquerna*, 274. See chap. 99, pages 178–9 in the present volume.

⁵⁹ HAAS 1998, 13–34.

⁶⁰ Despite the immense difficulty in establishing a typology that covers states of ecstacy and models of mystical union in different traditions, these do not seem the most perfect moment of knowledge or illumination, since they are always followed by a return to life, as we also see in the Indian idea of *jivanmukta*, or liberation while still alive.

⁶¹ Cf. NISHITANI 1982, 14ff.

⁶² The numbering follows the translation of Eve Bonner. Most of the quotations are reproduced in selection of texts at the end of the volume, pages 180–90. See also no. 155.

⁶³ “Demanaren a l’amich qual cosa era benança. Respòs que malanança sostenguda per amor. –Digues, foll, quina cosa és malanança? –Membrança de les desonors qui són fets a mon amat, digne de tots honraments.” No. 66.

⁶⁴ See also nos. 51 and 22.

⁶⁵ “No ha en l’amat nulla cosa en què l’amich no aja ànsia e tribulació. Ni l’amich no ha cosa en si en què l’amat no aja plaer e senyoria. E per açò la amor de l’amat és en acció e l’amor de l’amich en languiment, passió.” No. 110.

⁶⁶ Cf. VALENTE 1991, 241.

⁶⁷ VALENTE 1991, 243.

⁶⁸ VALENTE 1991, 243. “It may be objected that it is not a question here of a current language but of an apocalyptic consummation; that, meantime, the memory of the encounter, the dialogue with God, cannot be sustained without entering ‘into the night of the symbol’; and that the symbols that characterize meditation become more and more abstract, as Francis de Sales has noted, for those who use them assiduously in practice. As a result, a primitively ‘inspired’ language flows into the quasi algebraic formulas of a logician, or for those who are not knowledgeable in such things, into a rhetoric or literary genre. Some exegetes get trapped here, such as those who reduce the activity of grace to an ‘enchantment,’ the sermon on the mount to a ‘rhythmic recitation,’ or the passage through the Red Sea to a hydraulic trick. They would reduce the ritual to the instrumental, and God to a rhetorical demiurge, when his existence is the miracle of miracles” (MASSIGNON 1999, 103).

⁶⁹ *Art breu* x 74, OS I, 975–6.

⁷⁰ OE I, 842. “Quaestio est petitio ignota. Hoc est petere aliquid, quod homo non intelligit, sed intelligere diligit.” *Logica nova* I, 6, 26.

⁷¹ OS II, 22; cf. also 27: “Per una aforest en la qual un ermità estava, passà un cavaller cavalcant en son cavall, guarnit de totes armes, lo qual cavaller encintrà lo ermità qui cullia de les herbes ab què vivia en aquell ermitatge. Aquell cavaller demanà a l’ermità què era Déu: e lo ermità respòs e dix que Déus és ço per què és creat e ordonat tot quant és; e Déus és ço que ressuscitarà los hòmens bons e mals, e darà glòria per tots temps als bons hòmens e pena als mals; e Déus és aquella cosa qui fa ploure e florir e granar, e que dóna vida e sosteniment a tot quant és.”

⁷² OS II, 70.

⁷³ Cf. SCHNEIDER 1998, 17ff.

⁷⁴ OS II, 72.

⁷⁵ After the event in which the shepherdess, who trusted in divine goodness, is devoured by a wolf, the text goes on:

Dementre que Fèlix en açò cogitava e.s meravellava de Déu, qui a la pastora no hac ajudat, pus que en ell se confiava, caec en gran temptació, e dubtà en Déu,

e hac opinió que Déu no fos res, car semblant li fo que si Déus fos res, que a la pastora ajudàs.

While Felix was pondering these things, he marvelled at God for not having helped the shepherdess who had trusted in him. He fell into a great temptation, doubting God and thinking God to be nothing, for it seemed to him that if God were something, he would have aided the shepherdess. (OS II, 21)

⁷⁶ OS II, 21, 38.

⁷⁷ OS II, 21, 38.

⁷⁸ Cf. NISHITANI 1999, chap. 2.

⁷⁹ "Cant Fèlix fo partit del rei e del pastor, ell se mès en la via, e venc en aquella vila on estaven los dos fills del rei." OS II, 84.

⁸⁰ "Dels quatre elements, lo foc és simple element en quant ha pròpia forma e pròpia matèria, la qual forma e matèria ha apetit la un a ésser en altre, sens mesclament de nengun element; e açò mateix se segueix de la simplicitat que és en los altres elements, ço és saber, àer, aigua e terra; car tots los elements són mesclats, e cascun està en l'altre. E per açò lo foc simple no pot ésser en loc sens los altres elements, ab los quals se compon donant sa calor e l'àer, e reebent secor de la terra, e escalfant l'aigua, per ço que la destruesca; e escalfant lo foc la àer, escalfa l'aigua, car l'àer dóna humiditat escalfada a la aigua, e la aigua la resepe, que mortifica la fredor de la aigua; la qual aigua mortifica en si mateixa aquella calor, la qual calor passa a la terra qui de la aigua resepe fredor, en la qual fredor la terra resepe la calor del foc entrada en la aigua per la àer. Aquella terra resepe humiditat de la aigua, reebent d'ella fredor, la qual humiditat entra en la aigua reebent de l'àer humiditat; la qual humiditat contradiu en la terra a secor, ab la qual secor mortifica la terra la humiditat de l'àer; e, reebent lo foc de la terra secor, resepe en si la humiditat de l'àer que passa en la aigua, e resepe la freor que passa en la terra, e recobra la calor que mès en la àer, e que la àer mès en la aigua, e que l'aigua mès en la terra, e que la terra mès en lo foc; la qual calor és digesta e mortificada con és passada per tots los altres elements." OS II, 85.

⁸¹ On the relationship of the elements to the symbolism of the number 4, see ZOLLA 1991, 25ff.

⁸² Cf. OS II, 802.

⁸³ "En aquell dia que Jesucrist venc cavalcant humilment sobre la somera, fo significat que Déus participa, en la natura humana de Crist, ab totes creatures; car per lo cors de Jesucrist fo significat que los arbres participaven ab la vegetativa de Crist, per ço car volia que la vegetativa dels arbres faés honrament al seu cors, on és vegetable natura. E per la somera fo significat que la virtut sensitiva de Crist e dels animals irracionals, és una en creació. E per los hòmmes qui feien a Crist reverència e honor, fo significat que Crist era en semblant natura humana ab ells. E car Crist és una persona en què són dues natures, ço és saber Déus e hom, per ço volc Déus que aquell dia totes creatures faessen reverència a la deïtat e humanitat de Crist." OS II, 111.

⁸⁴ OS II, 114.

⁸⁵ JAUSS 1989, 25.

⁸⁶ *The Book of Animals* is based on different sources: the adventures of the jackals Calila and Dimna in the court of the Lion, which came from India and arrived in Europe in Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic versions; and the French *Roman de Renart*. (§§ XII–XIII), whose origins go back to Latin sources. Cf. BONNER and BADIA 1988, 138.

⁸⁷ “Sènyer –dix lo Bou–, natura és dels reis dels hòmens, con trameten lurs missatgers, que ls trameten de lur consell e dels pus nobles qui sien en son consell. Los pus nobles consellers que vós havets, m’és semblant que sien la Onça e lo Leopard. De la altra part lo gat és en semblança de vostra image, e lo rei tenrà-s’ho a gran gràcia, si vós li trametets per joics lo gat e lo ca; lo gat per çó com és a vós semblant, e lo ca per ço que en caç, car los hòmens se alten molt de caça.” OS II, 143.

⁸⁸ Cf. ZAMBON 1984.

EPILOGUE

¹ JUNG 1973, vol. 1, 483. [The English translates the original word *Geheimnisse* as *mysteries*; it has been adjusted here to suit the author’s intention. —Trans.]

² JAMES 1985, 219.

³ *Fakitsche Lebenserfahrung*. See HEIDEGGER 1995, 11ff.

⁴ LUHMANN and FUCHS 1989, 104–6.

⁵ CERTEAU 1982, 133.

⁶ CERTEAU 1982, 135.

⁷ CERTEAU 1982, 135.

⁸ TANABE Hajime draws attention to the self-realization of metanoetic consciousness as kind of “philosophy that is not a philosophy” (1986, LI).

⁹ The final project of Nishida Kitarō was to develop a “logic of locus” into a foundation for a religious philosophy. See NISHIDA 1995.

¹⁰ V. CIRLOT 2001, 16.

¹¹ Cf. UEDA 1994.

¹² MANCINI 1991, 11.

¹³ ENDERS 1998.

¹⁴ Many of the peculiarities of the new modes of language in Heidegger’s philosophy, for instance, need to be seen against the backdrop of the mystical traditions with which the philosopher of the Black Forest was also familiar.

Selections from the Writings of Ramon Llull

THE FOLLOWING selection of texts from the works of Ramon Llull is based on two criteria: to provide textual support for the thesis developed in the foregoing chapters and to offer the reader a certain chronological sense of Llull's immense productivity. Since the book's argument is based mainly on symbolic elements in Llull's life, I have decided to present the text of *Contemporary Life* in its entirety, supplemented by autobiographical passages from others of his works like *The Song of Ramon* and *Disconsolation*. Although less extensive, these selections present something of the nature and character of their author. *The Book of Contemplation on God* constitutes another fundamental source. The prologue to the work and some chapters basic to his theory of contemplation, a useful resource for Part 2 of this book, have been included here. Also included are the Prologue and Epilogue to *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, in which the main elements to the argument of the work are laid out. This is followed by an extensive selection of verses from *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, preceded by several pages from *Blanquerna*. Together they represent the culmination of Llull's contemplative stage and bring into relief the peculiar traits of his mystical language. A few passages from *Felix, or the Book of Wonders* demonstrate Llull's use of the exemplary genre, whose highest expression is reached in the chapter on the "Tree of Questions" from *The Tree of Knowledge*. The selection of texts concludes with the description of the "figures" and "definitions" of the *Ars brevis*, which presents a synthesis of Llull's contemplative system.

Although Llull wrote in Catalan, Latin, and Arabic, the full splendor of his expression shines brightest when he is writing in the vernacular. The

greater part of the works written in Latin are either his own translations from works previously composed in Catalan or are the translation of others. Latin was necessary for the Art to reach academic circles, mainly in the University of Paris. With the aim of allowing the reader interested in the original texts in Catalan and Latin, numerous passages considered relevant to the argument have been included in the notes of the foregoing chapters. Llull's own written records indicate that he wrote some of his works directly in Arabic, among them *The Book of Contemplation*. There are indirect testimonials to the elegance of his literary style in that language, though to date not a single manuscript has been located.

The aim in the body of the book was to present Llull's thought as clearly as possible; the selection of texts here goes further in showing the eloquence of his literary style.

The Book of Contemplation on God

Llibre de contemplació en Déu. Majorca, 1274. OE 11, 107–11, 483–90, 500–3. English translation based on the Spanish translation of Amador Vega.

PROLOGUE

1. Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, just as you are twofold in your deity and humanity, so, Lord, do we begin this book through your grace with two intentions: the first, to do you honor; the second, Lord, to receive from you glory and blessing.

2. Therefore, Lord, we beg you to favor us with your grace and blessing and guide us in this book, but solely with these two intentions.

3. Lord, just as you show on the holy cross five wounds, so do we divide this work into five books.

4. And just as you, Lord, desired to fast in the desert forty days, so do we divide these five books into forty distinctions.

5. Lord God, our Creator, as you desired to divide the year into 365 days, so do we desire to divide these distinctions into 365 chapters.

6. Just as you, Lord, have added six hours to the year, which every fourth year makes a day, so do we wish to add to these chapters a chapter that we shall divide into four parts.

7. Oh, Lord, God, as you wished to give Moses ten commandments, so do we wish to divide each chapter into ten parts.

8. And as you are a unity in trinity, Lord, we, too, wish to divide each part into three.

9. Lord Jesus Christ, as you were sold for thirty coins, so do we wish to divide each chapter into thirty parts.

10. As you created nine heavens, Lord, so do we wish to assign nine distinctions to the first book.

11. Lord Jesus Christ, as you made thirteen persons with the apostles, so do we wish to assign thirteen distinctions to the second book.

12. Lord God, just as you have granted humans ten senses, five bodily and five spiritual, so do we wish to assign ten distinctions to the third book.

13. Oh Lord God, just as you have placed humans in the midst of six roads, so do we assign six distinctions to the fourth book.

14. Just as you have given humans two intentions, Lord, so do we wish to assign two distinctions to the fifth book.

15. Lord, God, even you are one, so do we join these five books under one name, *The Book of Contemplation on God*.

16. And as my thought has been long in this valley of darkness, we wish now to raise it and lift it up to you so that through your grace and blessing we may contemplate you forever.

17. Lord, as you are the occasion of every good thing, so do we trust that our contemplation of you may be the perfection and liberation of this work.

18. As the guilty person stands before his master pleading and begging for mercy, so do we, Lord, before your blessed altar and your holy cross, ask you to guide us and aid us.

19. For just as you recreated the whole world through the true cross, O Lord, so do we hope that you will liberate us from this work that weighs unbearably on us.

20. Lord God, like the man who is in love and begins to love joyfully and boldly, so at the outset of this work do we begin with great joy and great courage by force of great love. We therefore ask that this work come to be completed in love and joy.

21. And just, Lord, as the sailor in the vast sea trusts in you to deliver him from that place in joy, so are we hopeful that you will deliver us from this great work that weighs down so heavily on us, by force of great love and great joy.

22. Oh, Lord, God, well do you know that a person bearing too heavy a load desires to be freed of it, so do we desire through your grace to be unburdened of this work which has become so arduous.

23. But, Lord, like the man who ventures forth to know that which he loves, so do we freely cast ourselves into the adventures of this work.

24. Lord, like one who uses all his strength to lift up a heavy load, so do we exert all our force in the dictation of this book.

25. And Lord, just as the hare that has been cornered by the hound needs its four legs, so do we need all of our strength for this work.

26. But just as I have not come into being through my own efforts, so is it not possible for me to bring the heavy burden of this work to completion, Lord.

27. For if all these efforts flag under the burden of such weight, we beg you, Lord, to fortify us with your strength and help us to carry the burden.

28. Oh, Lord and true God, having spoken of the prologue of this work, it is fitting that we enter into it and take up its distinctions and its beginning.

29. And just as you, Lord, have been present at the beginning of the prologue and at its middle and end, we are hopeful that you are present throughout the whole of the work.

30. You know, Lord, that I am base and poor by nature and in all my works, that I am not worthy to have my name inscribed on this work or to have it ascribed to me. And so I distance my name from it and wipe it out, attributing and giving the work to you, who are our Lord and God.

BOOK ONE. DISTINCTION 1. JOY

Chapter 1. Why to Rejoice because God is in Being

1. God our Father, Lord of all that is! If one who comes upon a precious stone rejoices greatly at its finding, it is because it is beautiful and one knows that it is very good. It is with good reason, therefore, that we, who know that you are in being, rejoice in your being, since it is in being and not in privation. It would be a great wonder for one who rejoices at the discovery of finite things not to rejoice at the discovery of something infinite.

2. You know, Lord, that one who finds a treasure rejoices greatly even though that treasure cannot give life or ward off sickness. And so, one who judges in thought that you are in being, that you give life and ward off sickness, is a great fool not to rejoice more over you than over the treasure that has been found.

3. For just as we know, Lord, that you are truly in being, we rejoice greatly in you, in that great good comes from your presence in being.

4. Lord, God, when one finds oneself in a strange land and there meets a brother or son that one has not seen for a long time, one feels most pleased, happy, and comforted. As we have come from the privation of being and find ourselves in this world, greatly must each of us rejoice and take comfort in you who are our father and creator and benefactor.

5. If one who meets one's father knows, Lord, that he cannot forgive one's sins, bring one back from death, give one life, or protect one from sickness, and yet takes great delight in having found him, so too, Lord, how can we not rejoice at you who can pardon us, help us, and protect us from the pains of hell?

6. Know, Lord, that our reason for rejoicing in you is so great that I will rejoice at loving you, serving you, and praising you as best I can.

7. Oh, Lord, God, many people begin to feel happy on festive occasions

because they are fond of them and love to decorate their houses, to dress up, and to hold great parties. Since you are our repose and our feast, Lord, it is only fitting that we dress ourselves in virtues and cleanse our hearts of all vice, and that we gather into our homes the poor who seek our help out of love for you.

8. Holy and blessed Lord, you know that at festival times the lord of the house orders his disciples not to work but to lie down and rest. So do we, at the feast we prepare to honor the discovery of your being, instruct our members to rest and do nothing but contemplate you.

9. Oh Lord, this feast that we must prepare in celebration of having found you must not be like other feasts, which take place at one moment and are over at the next. The feast that we are to hold must last forever and not be bound by time.

10. Lord and creator of all that is! Just as creatures signify and demonstrate your great nobility and goodness, so must the measure of our joy be for you.

11. But creatures, Lord, do not suffice to signify the whole of your goodness, but are deficient, so high and noble are you, Lord. Thus the joy and delight that we feel on your account is not sufficient to reach your goodness and sublimity.

12. Even so, Lord, as well as creatures show your goodness and nobility, still we do not know how to rejoice over it, and this for reason of our frivolity and pettiness, since we do not wish to know what we are capable of.

13. Well do you know, Lord God, that your servants must so rejoice over you that no crime or anger can approach them.

14. Lord and true God, I beg of you that when I rejoice over you it may please you to close all the holes through which anger enters into me so that it cannot return.

15. Lord, open all the holes and doors of my house so that it may be filled completely with the happiness and joy that must be ours because you are in being.

16. Oh, Lord God, in you there is generosity and mercy! If certain persons wish to rejoice and fill themselves with enjoyment, let them come to me, for they will find me as full as a bubbling fountain is full of water.

17. These persons should come to me, Lord, and ask me where the great treasure lies through which one receives perfect joy and happiness. Be assured, Lord, that I will tell them that it is to be found in the deliberations of those who imagine the great good that follows from your being when it is in being.

18. And if they come to me, Lord, to receive whatever happiness and joy they can, there will be so much for them to take that there will be no room left in them for evil or anger.

19. Oh, Lord God, what heart could comprehend the virtue and goodness of your being? None can. Nor is it right that the unattainable joy be comprehended by any heart.

20. Oh, Lord, where are the eyes capable of seeing your goodness, where the mouths that could name your virtues, where the ears to hear the praises that belong to your goodness?

21. To be sure, Lord, if I have not happiness and joy at the discovery of your being, I will tell my soul, "May you know that if you do not rejoice at the nobility of your creator, suffering, work, and sadness will be in store for you forever."

22. O holy of holies! So great is your nobility and sublimity that the whole world cannot contain them. Therefore, Lord, it is fitting that our world, which we have in you, cannot be contained in our heart.

23. Glory and blessing be given you, then, Father, who have believed in this joy that cannot be contained in the human heart or body, or even in the whole of this world, for it is greater than all these.

24. May you be adored, sanctified, venerated, and served, Lord, you who have given me the grace to be able to say to my heart, "Ah, what good fortune will come to you since you rejoice at the discovery of your creator, and how much good has come to you because he is in being."

25. Honor and reverence to you, Lord God, who have given so much grace to your servant that his heart swims in joy and happiness like a fish swimming in the sea; joy and happiness come to him, Lord, when he considers your being as being in being.

26. For you, Lord, have given me so much grace that wherever I go, wherever I am, whichever way I turn my face, I am happy.

27. And this happens to me, Lord, because I am in you and you are all joy and happiness.

28. Oh, Lord God, will the nights and days of happiness and joy I feel because you are in being be enough for me? Will words to adore and bless you be enough for me?

29. If it is certain, Lord, that my days are short, still more certain are my pain and my anger for not having rejoiced over you and praised you in times past.

30. Glory and blessing be to you forever, Lord, who are the hope of the just and the mercy of us sinners. Open our mouths, Lord, that we may give you praise, you who are our Lord.

DISTINCTION XXIX. THE WAY PERSONS PERCEIVE TO
HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE THINGS THEY DESIRE TO
UNDERSTAND AND TO KNOW

*Chapter 169. How to Apperceive Intellectual Things with Sensual
Things*

1. Glorious God, complete in virtues, to you, Lord, be glory and honor at all times! For just as the mirror represents and shows the shape or shapes standing in its presence, so are sensual things the ladder and demonstration through which one rises to knowledge of intellectual things.

2. But when it happens, Lord, that the mirror is distorted and badly placed, it is not properly regulated in itself as to show the shape in its proper quality and position, but the deviation in the mirror itself falsifies what it shows into another quality and another configuration that does not belong to the shape. It is similar, Lord, with sensual things. When they are disordered and disturbed in their placement and regulation, they lie about what they show humans concerning intellectual things, which are arranged differently from what the sensualities are displaying.

3. For just as a woman, Lord, seeks out the clearest mirror that will not deceive her in showing her features, so, too, one who would apperceive things intellectual through things sensual must first see that the sensualities are not disturbed, disordered, or confused in the way they show intellectual things, and must make every possible effort to seek out those sensualities that are most useful to demonstrate and signify those intellectual matters concerning which the person wishes certainty.

4. Oh Lord God, you are the noble Lord of all lords and powerful over all powers! When humans hear a voice or a word, they have certitude of having understood something through that voice or word. Hearing, Lord, is sensual and the meaning that is brought to human understanding through the voice or word is an intellectual thing in human understanding. In this way, in accord with the quality of the sensuality, the quality of the intellectuality is apperceived in that meaning.

5. When someone, Lord, is careful, sensually and bodily, to see shapes and colors and the things that the bodily eyes display, then the soul of the person can choose with understanding between one color and another, one shape and another, one quality and another. For from the sensual demonstration made by the bodily eyes, one proceeds to understand and to apperceive intellectually what is shown to the soul and signified through the sensualities.

6. When someone smells or tastes or touches a bodily thing sensually, the sensualities signify and show the intellectualities the natures and properties

and diversities of the elemental things captured by smell, taste, and touch. Through smell or taste or touch, one can ascend to understand intellectually the nature of sensed things, whose nature is grasped in the generality of the thing understood and known through the individualities that one has sensed sensually.

7. Lord God, you are the source and root and perfection of all virtues and all perfections! When the master shipman intends to construct a ship and has before him the wood from which to build it, the material of the ship is seen sensually and the ship is seen intellectually. Through the sensual representation made by the corporeal eyes the form of the ship is represented intellectually to the soul.

8. Loving Lord, just as the master judges in the wood the possible size and quality of the ship that he intends to build, so, Lord, people who want to try to make something see intellectually the quality and quantity signified in sensual things, representing to intellectuality the way in which these things are harnessed to serve the thing that is to be made of them.

9. When the bodily senses, Lord, which are sensual things, function through the use that is made of them in sensual things, one goes on to understand and to know in intellectual things. For through the bodily senses one remembers what was not remembered, one understands what was not understood, and one desires what was not previously desired. As memory, understanding, and will deal with things other than those sensualities through which they have received the impulse to think, to understand, and to have awareness, subtlety, and courage, the human soul is dealing intellectually in the intellectual senses—remembering, understanding, and wishing.

10. Just Lord, whom it pleases to have mercy and pity! Just as through the composition, union, and mixture of elements the body is shown and represented sensually, so through the change that takes place from knowing sensualities to knowing intellectualities, Lord, does one come through sensualities to have a knowledge of intellectualities that were previously unknown. Just as the body that is sensed has come from potency to act through the union of the elements, so is the intellectuality that is known aware of being known by reason of the fact that the sensualities have made them known and have led them from potency to act through the representation that they have given of themselves.

11. For just as knights know intellectually that the king loves knights who have a beautiful appearance when they arrive, and take that knowledge from the face of the king and from the reception that the knight receives the first time he is in the king's presence, so also, Lord, are the intellectualities perceived in the state and circumstances of the sensualities.

12. By reason of the fact that sensual things are the eyes through which intellectual things are apperceived and seen in remembering, understanding, and wishing, people often try, Lord, to hide intellectual things in the sensual in order that they cannot be apperceived, and as a result they make contrary signs and semblances so that they can do things contrary to what the sensualities signify. But given that human beings engage in such deceit among themselves, it happens that in the contrary signs are apperceived the intellectualities that one wishes to guard and keep hidden from those one intends to deceive or from whom one wishes to keep them secret.

13. Holy Lord, you are abundant in virtues and above all powers! The cause and reason for people in cities or populated areas to have greater apperception and knowledge in intellectual things than those living in the countryside or outside of cities is that in cities and towns and places where there is a multitude of people there is greater diversity of sensualities than in other places, and where there are more sensualities, the intellectualities are more important for them.

14. When one person sees another, Lord, dressed in humble attire, hears that person speaking pious and humble words, and sees that person's humble bearing and performance of good works, then one can apperceive in such a person loyalty, truth, humility, and other intellectualities, for through the external signs are known and apperceived the intellectualities of the soul.

15. In order to deceive people and be praised by them, the hypocrites, Lord, give meanings to their sensualities that run contrary to their intellectualities: from the outside they are humble and speak beautifully, but their intentions and their affections are all full of falsehood and deceit. This is why the works they perform sensually point to the truth of the intellectual vices that they try to disguise through poor clothes and humble words.

16. Wise Lord, on all roads whence all your mercies come! In this world, Lord, which is a sensual house, we apperceive the other world, the intellectual house for those who live in this world. Through the works that we see and hear and sense and feel, and through the brief life that we see lived, we apperceive the other world, since we do not see many people repaid for the good or evil that they do in this world. Granted they are not repaid in this world, it is fitting that there be another world for them to be repaid. If there were no other world for recompense, you would not be just, since many a sinner who has led an evil life has received many goods in this age, and many a just person has had to suffer much grief in this world.

17. When one sees with the senses, Lord, all the things of this world that serve one—the firmament, the plants, the animals, the metals, and all elemental bodies—through this sensuality that is visible in creatures obliged to

submit to humans, one apperceives intellectually that humans are obliged and subservient to something that has honored them above the creatures and made them their lord and master.

18. When the intellectual has been apperceived through the sensual, it is fitting, Lord, that the intellectual thing be understood according to its intellectual nature. To suppose intellectual nature to be similar to sensual nature is an error and would destroy the apperception that one achieves in going from sensual things to intellectual things. Just as the sensualities are adjusted to understand the intellectualities, so would the sensualities be clouded if the intellectualities were understood to have the same nature as they.

19. Lord God, you are the love and delight of my heart, you fill my eyes with tears and weeping! Human apperception and knowledge begin to rise above sensual things to the intellectual; and when one is in the intellectual things that are known through the sensual, one rises another step to know and apperceive intellectualities through the first intellectualities; and later, when it is on the third step, it can ascend through faith to the fourth, where human knowing does not suffice nor comprehend. For reason cannot ascend as high as faith, since reason and understanding are human in nature and faith is beyond the nature of the human.

20. And so, Lord, just as human knowing ascends from one step to another up to the summit, so can human knowing descend through ignorance and forgetfulness from the highest step to the lowest, for the same steps that lead to the ascent also lead to the descent.

21. Just as the order made up of sensual and intellectual things directs the steps through which human knowing can ascend from the sensual steps to the intellectuals, so through the disorder arising in the sensualities and intellectualities can human knowing descend to become ignorant and lack understanding. For great anger or great enjoyment or great fervor obscures the steps by which one's knowing descends to ignorance and beastliness.

22. Oh Lord, in the sight of you my desires and my thoughts come and go! Sensuality for its part is sensed by a human being, and its full generality is intellective. Through a part, one ascends to apperceive the full generality: through the mouthful of honey or bile that one tastes, one apperceives that all honey is sweet and all bile is bitter.

23. Sensual quantity signifies and shows intellectual quantity, for in seeing a body whose shape has a finite and determinate quantity, one understands thereby that the soul has a quantity of virtue, whose virtue is finite and determined. For just as the body is finite in shape, so does one apperceive that it is necessarily fitting for the soul to have a finite quantity of virtue. Just as sensual quantity is reckoned in corporeal individuals and is extended

according to their number, so, Lord, is intellectual quantity extended through the works of virtue that are in the soul.

24. Loving Lord, through the differences and properties and conformities and contradictions that are felt to be present in sensual things are apperceived the concordances and properties that obtain in intellectual things. For just as the sensualities harmonize when they create and conflict when they corrupt, so do intellectual things agree in loving and disagree in hate.

25. Pious Lord, who improve my heart with love and delight, through the union of matter and form that we see made sensually in individuals we apperceive the union of intellectual matter and form made intellectually. Through the multitude of individual sensual animals we apperceive a multitude of intellectual individuals, for if the intellectual individuals were taken away, sensual animals would cease to be animate.

26. Every intellectuality, Lord, has its own sensuality to which it is subject in order to be known. For some intellectualities have certain sensualities through which they are apperceived, and other intellectualities have other sensualities, and so on in degrees, Lord, so that each intellectuality has a sensuality suited to signifying it and displaying it to human understanding.

27. Due to the great ignorance that human beings have of the sensualities, and due to the fact that they do not know how to apperceive the correspondence between intellectuality and sensuality such that the intellectuality is apperceived through the sensuality, therefore, Lord, there are in human beings many unknown intellectualities that would be known if there were knowledge of the sensualities that depend on them to be shown and signified. For just as infidels are unaware of your passion when they look on the image of the cross since they do not believe in it, so does the Catholic Christian apperceive in the form of the cross, which is a sensual thing, the grievous death that you underwent, which death is an intellectual thing since it is in the imagination and the memory.

28. Oh Lord God, you fill my eyes with tears and weeping, in my heart you combine acts of love and contrition, and in my mouth you place prayers and homage! In the grandeur that we see sensually in the world we apperceive your intellectual grandeur, for a world so grand as this signifies that its creator is most grand and marvelous.

29. In the beautiful arrangement and ordering through which we recognize the world sensually as something beautiful and orderly, Lord, we understand and apperceive intellectually your great wisdom and your great power and your great justice and your sweet mercy and all your other virtues. For all of this that you have shown our sensualities is a display of your virtues from which descend all the orders that are sensed in the sensualities.

30. Each day, Lord, we read and learn about intellectual things in sensual things. For just as the shape of the letters which are sensual things show us the intellectuality of the understanding they signify, so when the sensualities display to our eyes that they have a beginning, and end, and a middle, and that they have passion insofar as they are related to the body, it is thereby revealed and signified that there is a creator who has created the sensualities, for besides being finite they do not deserve to be without a beginning. And through the sorrows and pleasures that we feel sensually are signified intellectually the pains of hell and the glories that exist in your divine presence.

Chapter 170. How Human Understanding Apperceives and Understands Some Intellectualities through Others

1. Oh God, great in all your grandeur, when one has apperceived with the common senses those intellectualities that are apperceived and known through the common senses, one perceives and knows through those intellectualities apperceived through the common senses other intellectualities that are not as easily apperceived as those that can be apperceived through the community of the sensual and spiritual senses.

2. When human understanding, Lord, understands in a general way form without matter or matter without form, it apperceives an intellectuality that cannot be understood solely through the community of sensual and spiritual senses, but is understood beyond the intellectuality apperceived through the community of the sensual and the spiritual senses. Form without matter or matter without form cannot be sensed, since everything is apperceived in the intellectuality without the sensuality that is present in the apperception of it taking part.

3. When the understanding of the human being has so distanced itself from the sensual senses and has penetrated so far into the spiritual senses that there is no longer any question of sensuality, everything that it deals with at that point is intellectual and spiritual, Lord. It deals with another intellectuality perceived through the first intellectuality, as in elemental form or matter understood intellectually, insofar as matter is understood without form and form without matter: matter and spiritual form are apperceived as constituting the human soul created from nothing in the human body, whose composition is simple in comparison with the composition of the body.

4. Oh, Lord, all our strengths and all our hopes have recourse in you! When one ponders quantity in the soul as regards virtue, one understands the quantity of virtue to be greater than the virtue or strength of the human

body, whose virtues are not as extensive in their sensual quantity as the soul in its intellectual quantity.

5. The proof through which one apperceives that the soul is greater in its intellectuality than the body in its sensuality is, Lord, that the body cannot extend itself in sensual virtue through so many diverse places or across such wide areas as the soul. For the soul can apperceive in this world what lies in the other, and the soul that is in the east can have imagination and knowledge of what is in the west after it has been a sensuality, whereas the body itself does not suffice to do this.

6. In the understanding one has of the soul's virtue, Lord, one apperceives that whatever the substance of the soul might be, it is of a far nobler nature and disposition than the substance of the human body, for just as the substance of the soul extends its virtues further and faster than the virtues of the human body, so it is apperceived and understood intellectually how much nobler a thing the substance of the soul is in itself than the substance of the body.

7. Oh Lord God, you who endure through all time! When I ponder the human soul, Lord, and understand that it has life, through the life that I understand to be in it I apperceive that in the soul of the human being there is will and understanding and memory. And thus through life, which is an intellectual thing, I apperceive intellectualities existing and present in life. And just as through life one understands and apperceives the virtues that are present in life, so by apperceiving and understanding the intellectual virtues one apperceives and understands life to be in the soul, for without life the intellectual virtues could not be present in being.

8. In apperceiving that the soul has greater intellectual virtue than the body has sensual virtue, and in apperceiving through life wisdom and knowledge and love, two things are apperceived, Lord, and one is not apperceived without the apperception through which the other is apperceived: the greater quantity of virtue that is apperceived in the soul is apperceived according to its relation to the lesser quantity that the body has in its sensuality; and the apperception had in the soul that, prior to whatever virtues it may have, it is alive, is not something apperceived according to a relation of quantity, but according to the relation of qualities and of virtues present in the subject.

9. Through that which is apperceived in the human soul to have quantity of virtue, Lord, the human being apperceives that the substance and the subject of that virtue is finite and determined. For just as the virtue of the soul is not enough to apperceive or cogitate or imagine or love or desire or understand all things, so it is fitting that the substance in which the virtues lie be finite and determined, for if the subject of the virtues were infinite this

would mean that the virtues are infinite. But as the virtues are finite, it is apperceived and understood that the soul is a finite and determined substance.

10. Patient Lord, you are the cause of all peace and of all our wellbeing! When I ponder the human soul and imagine it to be something lasting, then I apperceive in the soul the third significance that is not like the first two: there is harmony and conformity in the substance of the soul, and this is what makes it lasting. For it makes more sense that the soul's durable substance consist in the durability of harmony and conformity than that the greatness or the life of the substance make it durable.

11. To understand and affirm, Lord, that the soul is a durable and incorruptible substance means that the durability that belongs to the soul through its nature of being incorruptible is apperceived by human understanding to be the nature from which arises the fact that the soul is wise, knowing, loving, desirous. For through the harmony that is present in the substance of the soul by nature between the life that is in the substance and the substance that is in life, the soul is lasting and incorruptible.

12. Neither greatness, Lord, nor life are of as much significance to the durability of substance as is the presence of harmony and conformity in substance, for many things are great and living that do not endure, whereas there cannot be durability in anything if the nature of its substance is not harmonious and conforming by nature, free of all corruption.

13. Humble Lord, you are full of sweetness and mercy! When we have apperceived that in the soul of the human being there are three meanings—one of greatness, another of life, and another of durability—we apperceive through these three meanings, Lord, that the three meanings point to three properties in the human soul, and that these three properties signify that the three constitute an intellectual being, that is to say, a spiritual substance.

14. When it is apperceived in the soul, Lord, that the substance of the soul is great, one thing is apperceived; and when it is apperceived that the substance of the soul is as much alive as it is great, another thing is apperceived; and when it is apperceived that the substance has harmony in its durable nature, another thing is apperceived. And from these three meanings apperceived in the substance of the soul it is understood that the substance consists in three things that make a single substance. What makes them one substance is that all the greatness that makes a substance great is alive, and all the life that makes the substance alive is great because of the greatness of the substance, and all the conformity that makes the substance lasting arises from that which accounts for will and wisdom in the substance.

15. When human understanding, Lord, has ascended so high that it has apperceived intellectually that there are three things in the soul, and

through these three things that understanding has apperceived, that the three are a simple substance; and when human knowledge has ascended so high that it has apperceived that the three things are one substance, it then ascends another step and apperceives that the three that are one substance are equal in virtue and in nature and in goodness. And when the soul has apperceived itself at the highest step of its self-apperception, then it ascends to the summit of itself; and just as the human being apperceives that the soul consists in three things and the three things are one substance and the three have equal virtue and goodness, so the soul contemplating your divine substance apperceives in its own nature that your divine nature is three persons in one substance, and that in that substance the three persons are equal in virtues, in goodness, and in glory.

16. Oh Lord God, to you go my affections, from you come my tears and my weeping! Whoever knows how to apperceive and understand well the intellectualities that exist in one's own soul, by desiring them and knowing how to attain them, would be able to apperceive and understand your divine essence. For through the meaning of the nature of the soul it would be possible for one's knowing to ascend to an understanding and apperception of your substance united in three persons.

17. Lord, just as we apperceive that the soul of the human person has a certain property by which it is greater in virtue than the body is in its virtue, and just as we affirm that your substance is in itself infinite in virtue, so do we understand and apperceive that in your substance there is some property that makes it greater than the greatness of the firmament, which is a finite greatness. Just as we apperceived that in the human soul there is a certain property through which it has will and wisdom, so do we apperceive that in your substance there is a property through which there is wisdom and will and knowledge. And just as we apperceive that in the soul there is some property that makes it lasting and incorruptible, so do we apperceive that in you there is a property by which you are eternal and lasting.

18. When human understanding, Lord, has grasped in your substance a trinity of persons and a unity in substance, then, through the meanings that exist in the human soul, it is able to apperceive in your substance generation and procession. For just as the property through which the human being remembers engenders the property through which one understands, and just as the property through which one remembers and the property through which one understands give rise to will, so too, and incomparably better, is the person of the Son engendered by the Father and does the person of the Holy Spirit emerge from the Father and the Son. But as the word cannot embrace as much as the understanding, the word fails. It is a sensual

thing and cannot signify and pronounce as well as the understanding, which is an intellectual thing, can apperceive and understand.

19. Celestial Lord, full of humility, sweetness, and delight! Although it is something proper and natural to the person of the Father that his greatness be infinite and that his life be infinitely great and that his eternity be without beginning or end, all of this does not mean that the person of the Father cannot be signified and shown to human understanding through his infinite greatness, in a significance and demonstration that does not apply to either the person of the Son or the person of the Holy Spirit, as these are signified by infinite greatness in other ways. For as infinite greatness in your substance signifies the Father in one way, the Son in another, and the Holy Spirit in still another, for this reason it is apperceived, Lord, that in your substance there are three persons, each one signified in its own way.

20. Lord, inasmuch as the life that is in your infinite and eternal substance gives one signification and demonstration in the person of the Son and another in the person of the Father, and another in the person of the Holy Spirit, it is apperceived that in your substance the Son is one thing, the Father another, and the Holy Spirit yet another, such that life gives significance and demonstration of each of the persons as an infinite and eternal life in one infinite and eternal substance. Just as one meaning is not another, so is it demonstrated that one person is not the other.

21. In the person of the Holy Spirit we understand, Lord, greatness, life, and infinite, eternal duration. But the person of the Holy Spirit is signified and demonstrated in one way through eternity, in another through infinite greatness, and in another through infinity and eternal wisdom. For since the significances and demonstration are not given to human understanding in one way but in three, for this reason, Lord, it is apperceived that your substance is in three persons which are one substance.

22. Oh Lord God, in you are our every treasure and our every hope! Many are deceived and concerned that your Holy Trinity cannot be apperceived in this world by necessary reasons or through syllogistic demonstrations. Given that they cannot understand your Trinity by natural and sensual reasons, they therefore affirm that your Trinity can only be understood by faith. But if they knew how to convert their understanding of sensual things into the intellectual, and these intellectual things into other intellectual things, they would be able, Lord, to apperceive and understand by necessary reasons, meaningful and demonstrable to human understanding, that your divine substance is a trinity of persons.

23. When the understanding, Lord, has become sated with sensual things and one wishes to have knowledge of intellectual things, it is not possible to apperceive them or to know them to the point that the understanding is

relieved of sensual things and takes leave of them, thereafter to ascend to intellectual things. But one who frees understanding in this way will be able to gain knowledge through various syllogistic, demonstrable, and meaningful reasons, through which human understanding can arrive at true knowledge of your Trinity.

24. What human understanding does not suffice to understand by necessary reasons, Lord, is the apperception of what your essence is in itself. For it is not necessary for human beings to know or to understand this, and it is not surprising if humans cannot apperceive your essence in itself. But just as one apperceived through intellectual and necessary reasons that in the substance of the soul there is life and a subject in which there is life, and that there is a harmony of nature between the subject and the life, that none of these three things is the other, and that the three are the being of the substance, so, beyond wanting to apperceive it through intellectual meanings, is it apperceived through your grace that there is a trinity of persons and a unity of substance in your glorious substance, Lord.

25. Loving Lord, honored Lord, Lord obeyed by all peoples! Just as cold is not natural to fire, nor heat to water, so it is not natural for human understanding to understand and apperceive what your substance is in itself. Whatever it is, human understanding is not suited to apperceive it, since understanding is deficient in itself and falls into the sensual and intellectual meanings of understanding through which one cannot apperceive what your substance might be in itself. For although the understanding of human beings is not sufficient to apperceive what your substance is in itself, it at least suffices to apperceive that your substance is a trinity and a unity, an apperception it attains because meanings are given to it intellectually.

26. Just as human understanding is sufficient to apperceive that the world has a creator, and suffices to apperceive that there is another world in being, and just as to apperceive that all of this human understanding is enough by reason of the meanings and the necessary reasons that these signify, so too, Lord, the understanding of human beings suffices to apperceive in your essence a trinity of persons by reason of the meanings that are demonstrated to it with necessary reasons.

27. In fact, Lord, foolish persons ignorant of your Holy Trinity do not know how to receive meanings demonstrated intellectually because they follow sensual meanings and cannot apperceive in their understanding the trinity of persons that is in your substance. This is not due to a lack of virtue potentially present in their understanding, which would come to act if it had an instrument to move from potency to act. But as understanding does not receive the meanings that demonstrate your Trinity, therefore apperception does not move from potency to act.

28. Virtuous Lord, in you is the completion of every virtue! In the essential quality and virtues present in you, Lord, which for us are intellectual things, we apperceive your works. Therefore, according as your infinity and your eternity, your strength and wisdom and other virtues are signified to our understanding, according to these meanings our soul apperceives which works are yours, for it is fitting that your works follow the meanings they give of your virtues and your qualities.

29. As your great goodness and great perfection, Lord God, signify to our intellect what works are suited to be yours according to the vision and relation of your goodness and your perfection, our intellect apperceives and understands intellectually the fourteen articles of the holy Christian faith. For the affirmation that you are all good and perfect in virtue, Lord, signifies to the soul of the faithful Christian that the fourteen articles accord with the truth. If they were not true, this would demonstrate intellectually that you are not perfect in goodness of virtues in your essence and in your works.

30. Whoever desires to apperceive the fourteen articles, Lord, through meanings and necessary demonstrations, should read in this *Book of Contemplation*, for in various places there is to be found and apperceived that the fourteen articles are all true. Let such ones, therefore, learn how to apperceive intellectual things with the sensual, and how to apperceive some intellectual things with others, and may their intention be to honor and love and serve their glorious God.

Chapter 174. How Human Beings Come to Apperception and Knowledge of Things that are Secret

1. Oh God, mighty in all powers, honored in all honors! Because humans, Lord, are a species composed of sensualities and intellectualities, sensual and intellectual things are veiled and hidden to them in accord with the limitations of their corporeal and spiritual senses, and everything that lies beyond the limits of the senses is more secret and hidden to them. The things hidden and unknown to humans are six: your divine essence, your works, angels, demons, nature, and animate creatures.

2. Besides these six things, Lord, there is something secret and hidden from humans because of the limitation of their senses. Whoever wishes to have knowledge and apperception of things unknown must look in these six things for what one wishes to know and apperceive of them.

3. For those who wish to be seekers of things secret and hidden, things difficult to apperceive and understand, have first, Lord, to gain knowledge of things revealed and demonstrated, things suited to apperception and

understanding. Through knowledge of these one can ascend and increase understanding in things dark and difficult to understand and know.

4. Lord God, you are the true truth, the fount of justice! The cause and reason why your divine essence cannot be known or understood in its totality by human understanding lie in the infinity of your divine essence and the finiteness of human understanding. For what is completely finished and infinite cannot be grasped or understood in its entirety by human understanding, which is something deficient, finite, and limited.

5. Let whoever wishes to see in your divine essence, Lord, the secrets that have been kept from the human species become a seeker of your godhead with the intellectual senses. For just as the material mirror shows sensual shapes and forms, so are the spiritual senses the mirror of intellectual things: one apperceives in your godhead those things that you wish to show through grace to human understanding, provided one is prepared and orderly disposed to know that which you deign to the spiritual senses to know and grasp of yourself.

6. Just as two material mirrors standing face to face show each other their form and quality and all the shapes that are displayed in them, so it is in the human soul, which is the mirror in which are revealed your secrets, when it is contemplating your virtues intellectually and the great goodness of your godhead without sensual things to block their view. Lord, the soul that sees your virtues and your perfection and your goodness sees itself in your virtue and in your goodness. And seeing itself, it apperceives knowledge of things that were secret to it when it did not see itself in your perfection.

7. Oh Lord, you are the love beyond all loves, praise beyond all praise! Just as the mirror cannot show any shape that it not set before it, so the human soul cannot apperceive any of your secrets unless you give it the grace to have knowledge of your goodness and perfection. Just as a sensual mirror sees in another what is already there, so does the soul of the human being that looks on your perfection recognize the deficiency in the human. The soul that sees the deficiency of the human being sees the perfection that is in you, and seeing divine perfection it apperceives the secrets that it had not apperceived before it recognized the defects of the human being.

8. When one places a small mirror in front of a large one and looks in the large mirror, Lord, one sees two forms emerge from one, since the large mirror shows the figure of the person standing outside the limits of the frame of the small mirror, and shows another form of the same person within the shape that the large mirror receives from the small, with the result that the face of the person, which is one, is shown in the large mirror in two parts. Just as the large mirror in itself sensually shows to the small mirror the figure of the person that is hidden to the small mirror because

that figures is standing behind it, so intellectually is it shown to the human soul how it perceives and knows its own nature. For seeing itself to be one substance in three things and three things to be one substance, it does not apperceive in your divine essence your trinity and your unity and the generation and procession of persons, which knowledge of your trinity and unity was hidden to the soul when it did not have knowledge of itself.

9. Therefore, Lord, as unbelievers, infidels, and heretics think to apperceive the secrets of your godhead sensually and do not seek them with the intellectual mirror in which the secrets of your godhead show and reveal themselves, so are they blind and ignorant in their search, and will never have certitude until they seek you with the spiritual and intellectual eyes through which one is empowered to see intellectually in your godhead things that are secret to our sensuality.

10. Lord God, how sweetly and calmly you love and pardon! Whoever would know and apperceive your works secret and hidden to human understanding, Lord, should follow intellectually the sensual way of the two mirrors, placing the smaller in front of the larger. As the large mirror shows two things—that is, the small mirror that stands in front and the face of the person that stands behind the mirror—it thereby displays in itself three figures: the figure of the small mirror and the figure of the person in two places. So, too, whoever looks on your goodness and on creatures, will apperceive and see three things: first, your goodness; second, your works; and third, those things that are not your work. These three things include everything that is [in being].

11. Contemplating and affirming your perfection, Lord, one perceives which works are suited for showing us your perfection; and contemplating which things are perfect and which are imperfect and defective, one apperceives which works are yours. For just as in the form made in the large mirror by two things standing in front of it—namely, the small mirror and the face of the person looking at the large mirror—three figures are produced, so in the soul of the one who sees, contemplates, and confirms your goodness three pieces of intellectual knowledge are apperceived, of which two are known by knowing and apperceiving: first is your goodness, second are your works, and third everything that is not you or your works.

12. Whoever would discover, Lord, if the law of the Christians is your work and is pleasing to you, should have knowledge of your goodness and your perfection. Apperceiving your perfection, one will apperceive if the holy Roman faith is your work, for looking at your perfection one will apperceive who is in the Christian faith, and apperceiving your goodness and the perfection of the Roman faith, one will apperceive the defect in things contrary to the Catholic faith.

13. Conquering Lord, victorious against all who have designs against your forces! Whoever would apperceive and know the secrets that exist in the angelic nature should see and behold the nature of their own soul. Just as two mirrors that display one to another the figures they receive, as it is in their nature to do, so does the rational soul, given that it is by nature similar to an angel, manifest angelic nature by showing itself to itself.

14. By reason of contemplating the nature of the soul in order to seek the nature of the rational soul, Lord, one apperceives that the rational soul is a substance composed of matter and spiritual form. For just as the soul is a substance composed of matter and spiritual form, so does one apperceive and understand that the angel is a spiritual substance composed of matter and spiritual form, and that its composition is a simple unity in comparison with the composition that is made of matter and bodily form.

15. Just as the rational soul is given the nature to do good and avoid evil, so is it given to the nature of the angel to do good and avoid evil. For just as the soul is designed to do evil accidentally through union with the body, so is the angel, on the contrary, disposed to do good because it is not joined to a body.

16. King of Kings who is honored above all honors and who honors above all honors! If one would have knowledge of the devil, one should know one's own soul, for in substance they are similar, except that the devil is not joined to the body nor is the evil he does a result of the natural inclination of the body towards sin, as is the human soul that is inclined to evil for reason of the body that is joined to it.

17. As a twisted mirror distorts a straight shape when it reflects it, so does the soul of one who is orderly disposed and not sated with the sensuality of the body look at itself and recognize there the very wickedness and disorder that are in the devil and that show it [the soul] things that are harmful and contrary to the virtues in the guise of things that are right and perfect in virtues.

18. In seeing the devil as contrary to your commandments and your works, Lord, the soul apperceives the secrets of the devil. For in affirming that your commandments are good and your works perfect, it is apperceived that all things that go contrary to your commandments and to the perfection that is in you are false works, disordered, deformed in ways that do not resemble the form in which they were ordained to be true works.

19. Oh Lord, God, living fountain from whom sinners trusting in your mercy draw purification and cleansing! Because the work of nature is so great and the individuals so numerous in whom nature exercises its body and its dominion, the secrets of nature cannot be demonstrated in the

human being, for everything cannot fit into human memory or understanding or will.

20. Whoever would seek the secrets of nature should look for them in sensual things and in intellectual things, for the entire body of nature works through sensual and intellectual things, or between sensual and intellectual things. Since humans are composed of sensualities and intellectualities, it is easier to apperceive in them, in more perfect form than in any other creature, the secrets of nature.

21. The secrets of nature, Lord, can be apperceived in sensual and intellectual things in four ways: first, when certain sensualities are apperceived with others; second, when certain intellectualities are apperceived with others; third, when the secrets of one intellectuality are apperceived by apperceiving the secrets of another; and fourth, when the secrets of a certain sensuality are apperceived by apperceiving the secrets of an intellectuality.

22. Your servant appeals to your generosity, Lord, for an abundance of love and weeping! When nature works in act and hides from the sensualities its secrets of potentiality, it deprives forms of their actuality and returns them to potency. Those who wish to learn these secrets, Lord, should look for them, with the intellectualities, in potency, and not desire those forms without belief or knowledge that they are well seated in the sensualities.

23. Just as one keeps secret one's plans and intentions for lack of words, Lord, so does nature have its secrets and its hidden potentialities, for things that are in nature potentially cannot be shown to any bodily sense. Therefore it is fitting to seek such things as nature keeps secret with the spiritual senses, which are the eyes through which one comes to knowledge of them when they are sought without the interference of the sensualities.

24. The secrets that nature hides in potency are found and shown by seeking for genus, species, differences, properties, and accidents in the four causes and in things that are given by chance without cause. It is fitting, Lord, that all these searches are made on the basis of the three beginnings, which are matter, form, and privation.

25. Celestial Lord, through you my heart breathes and my eyes weep! Whoever would seek and apperceive the secrets of human beings, Lord, should look in themselves and in their nature and in their own attributes. Just as one mirror displays the form of the other mirror in itself, so will one who knows one's own nature apperceive the secrets that are sought in human beings.

26. Because the complexities of human beings are so diverse, Lord, they are hidden and secret to human beings themselves. Whoever would seek and apperceive wisely things guarded and secret in human being should first

gain knowledge of human complexity and quality, and according to that complexity and quality seek what it wants.

27. The most perfect search that can be made of the human being is one that tests and probes the human being in all its sensual and intellectual senses. Whatever be secret in the human being, Lord, is properly kept secret in one or another of the bodily or spiritual senses. Like the *alduf* [Moorish drum] that makes a sound when touched, as long as one tests and probes human being in that sensuality or intellectuality that holds the secrets one seeks, it will disclose, through simulation or words, the things it holds secret.

28. Mighty Lord, through you my every strength exerts itself! Whoever would apperceive and know the secrets of any man or woman should first apperceive the two intentions and know which is the first and which the second. When one has gained knowledge of the first intention and of the second, it is the simplest matter to know the secret things, since all secrets, Lord, consist in ignorance of knowing which of the two intentions is first and which second.

29. The best way to search for secret things, Lord, is to seek in human beings which of the two movements approaches those things that contain the secrets that are sought. Knowing which of the two movements is practicable, one is suited to apperceive secret things: if the search proceeds by way of the first movement, it will have to do with virtues, good customs and good works; and if by the second, with vices, defects, deceits, sins, and wrongdoings.

30. At times one perceives secret things in human beings, Lord, through harmonious signs, at times through contrary appearances. The secrets of the heart of those who are just and true will be apperceived in outer signs, whereas those who are hypocrites and full of deceit and falsehood will be apperceived through contrary appearances, for they do not do what they say nor are they in their heart what they show themselves to be on the outside. By affirming the opposite of what they do and say, one apperceives the things they hold secret in order to deceive others—a deceit for which they will one day be held accountable in the presence of their Lord God.

The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men

Llibre del gentil i dels tres savis. Majorca, 1274. English translation
by Anthony BONNER 1985, vol. I, 110–18, 294–304.

SUPREME HIGH GOD, honorable in all honor, with your blessing, grace, and help, and with a view to honoring and serving you, I begin this book called *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*.

PROLOGUE

Since for a long time we have had dealings with unbelievers and have heard their false opinions and errors; and in order that they may give praise to our Lord God and enter the path of eternal salvation, I, who am blameworthy, despicable, poor, sinful, scorned by others, unworthy of having my name affixed to this book or any other, following the manner of the Arabic *Book of the Gentile*, wish to exert myself to the utmost—trusting in the help of the Most High—in finding a new method and new reasons by which those in error might be shown the path to glory without end and the means of avoiding infinite suffering.

Every science requires words by which it can best be presented, and this demonstrative science needs obscure words unfamiliar to laymen; but since we are writing this book for laymen, we will here discuss this science briefly and in plain words. Trusting, however, in the grace of him who is the fulfillment of all good, we hope to be able to enlarge on this book, using this same method, but with words more appropriate to men of letters, lovers of speculative science. For it would be an injustice to this science and to this Art not to demonstrate it with a suitable vocabulary, nor to explain it with the subtle reasonings by which it is best demonstrable.

This work is divided into four books. In the first book we prove that God exists, that in him are contained the flowers of the first tree, and that the Resurrection exists. In the second book the Jew tries to prove that his belief

is better than those of the Christian and the Saracen. In the third book the Christian tries to prove that his belief is worthier than those of the Jew and the Saracen. In the fourth book the Saracen tries to prove that his belief is worthier than those of the Jew and the Christian.

By divine dispensation it came to pass that in a certain land there lived a Gentile very learned in philosophy, who began to worry about old age, death, and the joys of this world. This Gentile had no knowledge of God, nor did he believe in the Resurrection, nor did he think anything existed after death. Whenever the Gentile thought about these things, his eyes filled with tears and weeping, and his heart with sighs and sadness and pain, for he was so fond of this worldly life, and he found so horrible the thought of death and the notion that after death he would be nothing, that he was unable to console himself or stop crying, nor could he drive the sadness from his heart.

While in the midst of these thoughts and tribulations, the Gentile conceived in his heart the idea of leaving his land and going to a foreign land, to see if he could find a remedy for his sadness. Once there, he chose a path that took him into a great forest full of springs and lovely fruit-bearing trees by which the life of the body could be sustained. And in this wood there were many wild beasts and many birds of different kinds, and he therefore decided to remain in that secluded place to see and smell the flowers, and because he thought that the beauty of the trees, of the springs, and of the river banks might bring him some relief from the grievous thoughts which so tormented and afflicted him.

When the Gentile was in the depths of the wood and saw the river banks and the springs and the meadows, and that in the trees birds of different kinds were singing so sweetly, and beneath the trees there were roe deer, red deer, gazelles, hares, rabbits, and many other beasts pleasing to the eye, and that the trees were laden with flowers and fruits of sorts which gave off pleasing scents, and when the Gentile tried to console and cheer himself with what he saw, heard, and smelled, there came to him the thought of death and of the annihilation of his being, and then pain and sadness increased in his heart.

While the Gentile was in the midst of these thoughts, by which his sadness was increased and his torments multiplied, a desire came to him to return to his native land; but he realized that such thoughts and sorrow as he suffered could not be driven from his heart without some help or chance occurrence. He therefore curbed his desire to turn back, and went on from spring to spring, from meadow to river bank, trying to find some pleasant sight or sound by which he could rid himself of his thoughts; but the far-

ther he went and the more beautiful the places he found, the stronger the thought of death weighed down on him.

The Gentile picked flowers and ate fruit from the trees to see if the scent of one or the taste of the other would bring him some relief, but when he remembered that he had to die, and that a time would come when he would be nothing, then his pain, tears, and tribulations were multiplied.

Amidst these tribulations the Gentile did not know what course to take, because of the great anguish his thoughts had brought him. He knelt down and raised his hands and eyes heavenward, and he kissed the earth; and while crying and sighing most devoutly, he said, "Alas, wretched creature! Of what wrath or pain have you become captive? Why were you conceived and brought into this world, if you can find no one to help you amid your tribulations? And if there exists something which has in itself such virtue that it can help you, why does it not come and take pity on you? And why do you not drive from your heart those thoughts which never cease multiplying the grievous torments you suffer?"

After the Gentile had spoken these words, a desire entered his heart to leave, and to go from one place to another until he could find some relief. While wandering, like a man distraught, from one place to another through the wood, he came upon a lovely lane, which he decided to follow until he could find some solution to his state of anguish.

It happened that while the Gentile was walking along this road, three wise men met upon leaving a city. One was a Jew, the other a Christian, and the third a Saracen. When they were outside the city and saw each other, they approached and greeted each other in friendly fashion, and they accompanied one another, each inquiring about the other's health and what he intended to do. And all three decided to enjoy themselves together, so as to gladden their spirits overtaxed by studying. The three wise men went on so long talking about their respective beliefs and about the things they taught their students, that eventually they came to that same forest in which the Gentile was wandering. And they came to a lovely meadow with a lovely spring watering five trees, the same five trees depicted at the beginning of this book.

Next to the spring there was a very beautiful lady, very nobly dressed, astride a handsome palfrey, which was drinking from the spring. The wise men, upon seeing the five trees, which were most pleasing to the eye, and upon seeing the lady, who was of agreeable countenance, went up to the spring and greeted the lady most humbly and devoutly, and she most politely returned their greetings.

The wise men asked the lady her name, to which she replied that she was

Intelligence. And the wise men asked her to explain to them the nature and properties of the five trees, and what was the meaning of the writing on each of their flowers.

The lady replied, saying: "The first tree, on which you see twenty-one flowers, represents God and his essential, uncreated virtues, which virtues are written on the flowers, as you can see. This tree has, among others, two conditions. One is that one must always attribute to and recognize in God the greatest nobility in essence, in virtues, and in action; the other condition is that the flowers not be contrary to one another, nor one be less than another. Without knowledge of these two conditions, one cannot have knowledge of the tree, of its virtues, or of its works.

"The second tree has forty-nine flowers, on which are written the seven virtues of the first tree and the seven created virtues, by means of which the blessed achieve eternal blessedness. This tree has, among others, two conditions. The first is that the created virtues be greater and nobler where they most strongly symbolize and demonstrate the uncreated virtues; the second condition is that the uncreated and created virtues not be contrary to one another.

"The third tree has forty-nine flowers, on which are written the seven virtues that are on the first tree, along with the seven vices, that is to say, the seven deadly sins by which the damned go to eternal fires. This tree has, among others, two conditions. The first is that the virtues of God not be concordant with the vices; the second is that everything which causes the virtues of God to be better represented to the human understanding by means of the vices should be affirmed, and that anything contrary to the above-mentioned greater representation, or which lessens the contrariness between the virtues of God and the sins of man, should be denied, excepting cases of conflict with the conditions of the other trees.

"The fourth tree has twenty-one flowers, on which are written the seven created virtues. This tree has, among others, two conditions. The first is that none of these virtues be contrary to another; the second is that whatever enhances them or, by their agency, causes man to have greater merit, must be true, and the contrary must be false, provided it not conflict with the conditions of the other trees.

"The fifth tree has forty-nine flowers on which are written the seven principal created virtues and the seven deadly sins. This tree has, among others, two conditions. The first is that the virtues and vices not be concordant with one another; the second is that the virtues most contrary to the vices be most lovable, and the vices most contrary to the virtues be most detestable.

"The above-mentioned ten conditions are themselves governed by two other conditions or principles. One is that all these conditions be directed

toward a single goal; the other is that they not be contrary to this goal. And this goal is to love, know, fear, and serve God.

“These conditions govern the flowers, which are principles and doctrine to rectify the error of those who have no knowledge of God nor of his works, nor even of their own beliefs. Through a knowledge of these trees, one can console the disconsolate and calm those in anguish. And by these trees one can subdue temptation and purify the soul of guilt and sin; and by the use of these trees—for someone who knows how to pick their fruit—a person can escape infinite pain and achieve everlasting peace.”

When the lady had spoken these words to the three wise men, she took leave of them and went on her way; and the three wise men remained by the spring, beneath the five trees; and one of the wise men began to sigh and to say: “Ah! What a great good fortune it would be if, by means of these trees, we could all—every man on earth—be under one religion and belief, so that there would be no more rancor or ill will among men, who hate each other because of diversity and contrariness of beliefs and of sects! And just as there is only one God, Father, Creator, and Lord of everything that exists, so all peoples could unite and become one people, and that people be on the path to salvation, under one faith and one religion, giving glory and praise to our Lord God.

“Think, gentlemen,” the wise man said to his companions, “of the harm that comes from men not belonging to a single sect, and of the good that would come from everyone being beneath one faith and one religion. This being the case, do you not think it would be a good idea for us to sit beneath these trees, beside this lovely fountain, and discuss what we believe, according to what the flowers and conditions of these trees signify? And since we cannot agree by means of authorities, let us try to come to some agreement by means of demonstrative and necessary reasons.”

The other two agreed to what this wise man had said. And they sat down and began to study the flowers on the trees and to recall the conditions and the words the lady had spoken to them; and they decided to hold their discussion according to the manner the lady indicated to them.

Scarcely had they begun their discussion, however, when they saw coming toward them the Gentile who was wandering through the forest. He had a long beard and long hair, and he came like a man exhausted, and he was thin and wan from the pain of his thoughts and the long journey he had made. His eyes streamed with tears, while ceaselessly his heart sighed and his mouth moaned. And because of the great anguish of his suffering, he was thirsty and needed to drink from the spring before he could talk to or greet the three wise men.

When the Gentile had drunk from the spring and had recovered his

breath and spirit, he greeted the three wise men in his language and according to his custom. And the three wise men returned his greeting, saying they hoped that the God of glory, who was Father and Lord of all existing things, and who had created the whole world, and who would resuscitate the righteous and the wicked, would protect, console, and help him in his suffering.

When the Gentile heard how the three wise men greeted him, when he saw the five trees and read what was written on their flowers, and when he saw the peculiar bearing of the three wise men and their peculiar clothing, then he began to think things over and to wonder greatly at the words he had heard and at what he saw.

“Good friend,” said one of the three wise men, “where have you come from and what is your name? You seem to be suffering and disconsolate over something. What is wrong, and why have you come to this place, and is there some way in which we can console and help you? Let us know what is on your mind.”

The Gentile answered, saying he had come from distant lands, that he was a Gentile, that he had been wandering about this forest like a man out of his wits, and that chance had brought him to this place; and he recounted the pain and affliction which temptation had brought him. “And since you have greeted me, invoking for me the help of God, who created the world and who will resuscitate men, I am filled with wonder at this greeting of yours, for I have never heard anyone speak of the God you mention, nor have I ever heard anyone speak of resurrection. And whoever could explain or prove the resurrection to me by convincing arguments would banish the pain and sorrow from my heart.”

“What, my good friend!” said one of the wise men, “You do not believe in God nor have hope of resurrection?” “No, my lord,” replied the Gentile, “and if it is something you could explain in such a way that my spirit would have knowledge of the resurrection, please do it; for, as you surely know, my grievous sorrow comes from feeling the approach of death and believing that after death I will be nothing.”

When the wise men heard and understood the Gentile’s error and how he suffered because of that error, then charity and pity entered their hearts, and they decided they would prove to the Gentile that God existed and had in him goodness, greatness, eternity, power, wisdom, love, and perfection; and they would prove these things by the flowers that were on the five trees, thus giving him knowledge of God and his virtues, and of resurrection, and thus gladdening his heart and putting him on the path to salvation.

One of the wise men said: “What method shall we use to prove these things? Perhaps it would be best to follow the method shown us by the

Lady of Intelligence. But if we use all the flowers to prove these things, it will take too long. I therefore propose that we use only some of the flowers to investigate and prove God's existence, the existence in him of the above-mentioned seven virtues, and the existence of the resurrection. One of you could begin by the first tree and use it in your proof; and the next get his proof from the second tree; and so on, in order, until we have, by the five trees, proved and demonstrated to the Gentile what he needs to know."

The other two wise men agreed to what the third had said, and one of the wise men began, saying: "Which of us will begin?" Each of them wanted to be polite and give the other the honor of beginning. But the Gentile, seeing them arguing among themselves and not starting, begged one of the wise men to begin, for he was most distressed at their delay in beginning something he so desired.

EPILOGUE

The End of This Book

When the Gentile had heard all the arguments of the three wise men, he began to recount everything the Jew had said, and then everything the Christian had said, and similarly with what the Saracen had said. As a result, the three wise men were very pleased, for the Gentile had understood and retained their words; and together they said to the Gentile that it was clear they had not spoken to a man without heart or ears. After recounting the above matter, the Gentile stood up and his understanding was illuminated by the path of salvation, and his heart began to love and to bring tears to his eyes, and he worshiped God saying these words:

Prayer

"Ah! Divine, infinite, sovereign good, which is origin and fulfillment of all good! To your holy goodness, O Lord, I give reverence and honor; to it I attribute and give thanks for the great happiness I have received.

"Lord God, I adore and bless your greatness, which is infinite in goodness, eternity, power, wisdom, love, perfection.

"Glory and praise be given to your eternity, O Lord, for it is without beginning or end in goodness, greatness, power, wisdom, love, perfection.

"Lord God, that power you possess, which is infinite in your goodness, greatness, eternity, wisdom, love, perfection, I worship and fear and honor above all other powers.

"Lovable God, who within yourself have infinite wisdom in your goodness, greatness, eternity, power, love, perfection, and in everything you have

created, your wisdom, O Lord, I love and worship with all my physical and spiritual strength.

“Your love, which is not an ordinary love, but a love above all other loves, a love which is perfect in your perfect goodness, greatness, eternity, power, wisdom—that love of yours, O Lord, I worship and love, and to it, with all my will, with all the strength of my intellect and with all that your love has seen fit to give me, I give everything, O Lord, to serve and honor and praise your love every day of my life.

“Divine perfection, you who are the light and cure of all imperfections, who are the hope of all sinners, and who are infinite through all your goodness, greatness, eternity, power, wisdom, love, to you I turn and to you I ask forgiveness and grace and counsel and help as to how to serve you and to recover, through you, the days I lost through ignorance and wrongdoing.”

After the Gentile, with sighs and tears and true contrition of heart, had worshiped the flowers of the first tree, he beseeched and asked God’s grace and blessing to give him the flowers of the fourth tree, saying these words:

“Ah, true faith, you who have taken so long in coming to enlighten my intelligence that my past days are lost and irrecoverable! Ah faith, which is unknown in the land I come from, on account of which ignorance so many men go to everlasting fires! Sweet faith, you are welcome in my soul, for it has been enlightened through you and in you, and you have banished from my mind the darkness in which I have existed all my life. Pain, ire, despair, anguish, tribulations, all these you have banished from my heart. To the God of glory I give thanks for you, and I beg that, by his virtue, you remain in me as long as I shall live, and that I serve you by recounting and spreading abroad your virtue and your fame and your honor.

“Hope, my friend, where have you come from and where have you been? Do you know the despair I have suffered for such a long time? While despair tormented me so grievously, why did you not come and help me against your enemy? Hope, you who are the consolation of the disconsolate, the wealth and treasure of the poor, you who strengthen the weak against the strong and cause the God of Glory to be in the heart of those who desire and love him, you have entered my heart so strongly that from now on I shall no longer fear your contrary who has so long been my mortal enemy. In you, through you, and with you I place my trust and hope in my Lord’s great power, that he fulfill my desire to honor and serve God, and make him known among those who neither love nor know him. I shall not despair of my poor power, knowledge, and will, nor shall I despair of my grievous and many sins, for you make me remember the great mercy of that Lord who can accomplish anything, can give any grace and can forgive any sin.”

While the Gentile was saying these words, he frequently knelt down and kissed the ground, and raised his hands and eyes heavenward. He then conceived the desire, with the help of created charity, to worship and contemplate uncreated divine charity, worthy of all honor.

“Ah charity, lovable virtue! Whoever has and loves you is pleasing and lovable by that divine charity which eternally and infinitely loves whatever loves. Charity, you who give of yourself to everyone who will have you, and of whom they may take as much as they want, by what stroke of fortune were you willing to have me beneath your sway without my recalling, knowing, or loving you? Fortune, who has long been my enemy, has, by putting me in your hands, healed all my injuries; but since I am a poor sinner, and since you have made me so love God and my neighbor, how could I repay the great good I have received through you? Alas, wretched creature that I am! In what poverty and misery are all those who neither love nor know charity! And of what use to a man’s heart are riches and blessings without charity? Sweet God, you who have enlightened and warmed me by the fire of charity, enlighten and warm with charity all those poor people lacking in charity who live in the land I come from, by which poverty they will be brought, through paths of darkness, to infinite, everlasting fire, where torments will not cease and where hope will be unable to hope for any alleviation.

“Do not let us forget justice in our prayer, for divine justice knows all my faults and can rightly punish me for all my failings. Whatever divine justice does with me, whether it punishes me and condemns me to everlasting torment, or pardons me to everlasting blessing, in every way I worship and bless God’s justice. Let him do with me what he will, for charity makes me love, fear, and worship God in his justice, which is always on the side of righteousness. And therefore, let my justice make me desire whatever God’s justice would do with me.

“Prudence, you who are the light of salvation by which wise men go to the divine radiance that illuminates all those who love it, my understanding has long been in darkness because you were not part of it. But since you have now brought me such happiness, I beg you from now on not to let my soul be without you. And may it please the high, excellent, lofty, sovereign good that through you I may have knowledge and light from sovereign wisdom, which gives its light to you and to all other lights; and that through grace and the illumination of this sovereign light you may help me to give light and direction to so many men who are in a state or in times of darkness, ignorant of the path of salvation.

“Fortitude, who strengthens noble hearts so they do not succumb to wickedness or deceit, would you strengthen the weak heart of a lazy, fearful

man so that he could suffer the hardships, dangers, and deaths necessary to give praise, glory, and blessing to the name of that Lord who is worthy of all honor and who wishes to be so honored that for the sake of serving him no torments are feared? Could charity, justice, prudence, and you (together, perhaps, with hope) agree to come to my land and there do the same good I have received from God through you?

“Temperance, abstinence, patience, perseverance, and the other virtues, what are you doing? Do not sleep, for the vices that are your contraries are awake night and day, and they never cease their work of destruction in the hearts of people who are gluttonous, lustful, avaricious, accidious, proud, envious, and full of ire.”

While the Gentile was speaking these words, he realized and saw that his eyes were not crying or shedding their usual tears. And in order that his heart bring to his eyes the water it once had—that which had bathed his eyes in tears—he wanted to recall in his heart the seven mortal sins, and he therefore said:

“Ah, how evil is the servitude of those who are serfs and captives of gluttony! For gluttony gives its servants continual torments; and it spares no one, neither rich nor poor; it brings death closer, and fattens our bodies, so that in a short time they become food for worms.

“Lust, you who not only soil the body, but also soil and deface the memory that recalls you, as well as the intellect that understands you and the will that desires you. And you are such a filthy thing that you are ugly and horrible to see and touch.

“Avarice, you who impoverish the rich and bring the poor beneath your sway, you who make men despair of God who alone can dispense every good, what do you do in this world to make the rich despise the poor and the poor hate the rich?

“Accidie, you who are a sign of damnation in those beneath your sway, and you who make men so indolent in praising and loving God (who is worthy of such praise and such great honor), when will you reward those whom you keep needy and poor, and why do you send them to Hell since they carry out so well your command not to love?

“Pride, if humility were naught, what would you be? And if humility raised you up instead of pulling you down, how great you would be! And just because you cannot be in glory, why do you prevent the humble from going there? For theirs is the glory you have lost and from which you have fallen.

“Envy, you who are sadness of soul, if you do not die while there is still time, when will you die? And if you are never satisfied envying what you do, why do you still desire it? And if you are always taking, when will you

give? And if in so many things you employ deceit and treachery, is there nothing in which you are true and loyal?

“Ire, you who are darkness of thought and darkness of intellect and mortal will, contrary to charity, what are you doing among us, and why do you keep us from loving the honor of our Lord, who loves the honor of all his servants and scorns all those who follow you?”

While the Gentile was speaking these words, he realized and saw that his eyes were still not shedding tears, and he said: “Ah, miserable wretch, what is it that keeps your eyes from crying? For if you do not do so, when you can, for joy at the great happiness that came to you by chance (how, you do not know), and if you do not cry for your wrongs and for your sins while you have the chance, when will you cry, you worthless thing? And yet before this day you were crying, because you thought that after your death you would be nothing.”

While the Gentile spoke these words, along with many others it would take too long to recount, his soul endeavored to recall, understand, and love divine virtue, which at last enabled his heart to bring tears to his eyes.

For a long time the Gentile cried sweetly and devoutly, saying: “Ah, God of virtue! How great is the difference between the tears I used to shed and those I am shedding now! For those tears tormented and afflicted the thought of my heart, and these tears are so agreeable and pleasant, and they enliven my soul with such great happiness that I would want no better happiness in the whole world than to have my soul remain in this uninhabitable spot in a continual state of loving, and my eyes forever in tears. Yet I must go from land to land, and I must return to my own land, and I must spread word of God’s honor among those who do not know God—that God through whom such good has come to me. To this end I must strive all the days of my life; and may it please you, Lord God, to let neither hunger, thirst, heat, cold, poverty, weariness, people’s scorn, sickness, torments, nor being abandoned by one’s lord, nor leaving one’s wife, sons, daughters, friends, or worldly possessions, nor to be exiled nor to suffer cruel death, nor any other thing, banish from my heart the thought of your honor nor the praising of your glorious name.

“Lord God, you who give and forgive so many things, may it please you to forgive your guilty sinner who asks your forgiveness and who begs the blessed saints in glory to thank you for the good you have done me, for which I alone could not thank you sufficiently. In this hour, O Lord, forgive this sinner who gives you his soul and all his powers, so that he may go in your path and perform those deeds by which you wish to be served by those beneath your sway.”

In this way the Gentile worshiped and blessed and thanked his Lord and

his Creator. And so great was his endeavor to worship and praise God and to beg forgiveness for his faults, that the three wise men had great pity on him, and marveled at how nobly he prayed. And so great was the devotion they saw in the Gentile that in their souls their consciences made them uneasy and reminded them of the sins in which they had persevered; and all the more so when they realized that the Gentile, in so short a time, had conceived greater devotion in giving praise to God's name than they who had known of God for a long time.

How the Three Wise Men Took Leave of the Gentile

When the Gentile had finished his prayer, he went to the lovely spring and washed his hands and face, because of the tears he had shed, and dried himself with a white cloth he carried, the one he had formerly used to wipe away his continual tears of sorrow. He then sat down next to the three wise men and said: "Through God's grace and blessing, I happened to meet you gentlemen here where God saw fit to remember me and take me as his servant. Blessed be the Lord, therefore, and blessed be this place, and may God bless you, and blessed be God for making you want to come here! And in this place, where I have received such good fortune, in the presence of you gentlemen, I want to select and choose that religion which, by the grace of God and by your words, seems to me to be true. And in that religion I want to be, and I want to work for the rest of my life to honor and proclaim it."

When the Gentile had spoken thus and stood up in order to kneel, and kneeling, proclaim the religion he preferred, he saw far away, coming through the forest, two Gentiles who were from his land, whom he knew, and who were in the same error in which he had once been. And the Gentile therefore said to the three wise men that he wanted to await the arrival of these two Gentiles, so that he could proclaim the true religion in their presence. The three wise men then stood up and most agreeably and devoutly took leave of the Gentile. Many were the blessings the three wise men wished on the Gentile, and the Gentile on the three wise men; and their leave-taking and the end of their conversation was full of embraces, kisses, tears, and sighs. But before the three wise men left, the Gentile asked them in astonishment why they did not wait to hear which religion he would choose in preference to the others. The three wise men answered, saying that, in order for each to be free to choose his own religion, they preferred not knowing which religion he would choose. "And all the more so since this is a question we could discuss among ourselves to see, by force of reason and by means of our intellects, which religion it must be that you will choose. And if, in front of us, you state which religion it is that you prefer,

then we would not have such a good subject of discussion nor such satisfaction in discovering the truth." With these words, the three wise men returned to the city from which they had come. But the Gentile, looking at the flowers of the five trees and recalling what he had decided, waited for the two Gentiles who were coming.

What the Three Wise Men Said as They Returned

One of the three wise men said: "If the Gentile, who was so long in error, has conceived such great devotion and such great fervor in praising God, that he now states that in order to do so he would not hesitate to suffer any hardship or death, no matter how harsh it were, then how much greater should be our devotion and fervor in praising the name of God, considering how long we have known about him, and all the more so since he has placed us under such obligation by the many blessings and honors he has given us and gives us every day. We should debate and see which of us is in truth and which in error. For just as we have one God, one Creator, one Lord, we should also have one faith, one religion, one sect, one manner of loving and honoring God, and we should love and help one another, and make it so that between us there be no difference or contrariety of faith or customs, which difference and contrariety cause us to be enemies with one another and to be at war, killing one another and falling captive to one another. And this war, death, and servitude prevent us from giving the praise, reverence, and honor we owe God every day of our life."

When this wise man had finished, another began to speak, saying that people were so rooted in the faith in which they found themselves and in which they were raised by their parents and ancestors, that it was impossible to make them break away by preaching, by disputation, or by any other means man could devise. And this is why, as soon as one starts discussing with them, showing them the error of their ways, they immediately scorn everything one tells them, saying they want to live and die in the faith their parents and ancestors gave them.

The other wise man replied, saying: "It is in the nature of truth to be more strongly rooted in the mind than falsehood, since truth and being are in accord, as are falsehood and nonbeing. And therefore, if falsehood were strongly opposed by truth, continually and by many people, then truth would necessarily have to vanquish falsehood; and all the more so since falsehood never receives any help, great or small, from God, and truth is always helped by that divine virtue which is uncreated truth, which has created created truth for the purpose of destroying falsehood. But since men are lovers of temporal possessions, and lukewarm and of little devotion in

loving God and their neighbor, they therefore care little about destroying falsehood and error; and they live in fear of dying and of suffering illness, hardship, and poverty, yet they do not want to give up their wealth, their possessions, their lands, or their relatives to save those who are in error, so they may go to everlasting glory and not undergo infinite suffering. And they should do this mainly in order to be counted among those who praise the name of God and proclaim his virtue, for God wants it to be proclaimed among all nations, and every day he waits to see how we will honor him among those who dishonor, despise, and are ignorant of him; and God wants us to do what we can to exalt his glorious name among us. For if we do what we can to praise God, how much more would God do as a result of having his name praised! For if he did not, it would be contrary to himself and to his honor, which is impossible and against the conditions of the trees. But because we do not prepare ourselves to receive God's virtue and blessing, nor to be his valiant servants, who praise him, strengthened by stout hearts to face any hardship to exalt his honor, God therefore does not bestow on us that virtue which must be present in those who, through God's virtue, would destroy the error of people on the road to damnation who think they are on the road to salvation."

While the wise man was speaking these words and many others, the three of them arrived at the place where they had first met by the city gates; and there they took leave of one another most amiably and politely, and each asked forgiveness of the other for any disrespectful word he might have spoken against his religion. Each forgave the other, and when they were about to part, one wise man said: "Do you think we have nothing to gain from what happened to us in the forest? Would you like to meet once a day, and, by the five trees and the ten conditions signified by their flowers, discuss according to the manner the Lady of Intelligence showed us, and have our discussions last until all three of us have only one faith, one religion, and until we can find some way to honor and serve one another, so that we can be in agreement? For war, turmoil, ill will, injury, and shame prevent man from agreeing on one belief."

Each of the three wise men approved of what the wise man had said, and they decided on a time and place for their discussions, as well as how they should honor and serve one another, and how they should dispute; and that when they had agreed on and chosen one faith, they would go forth into the world giving glory and praise to the name of our Lord God. Each of the three wise men went home and remained faithful to his promise.

Here ends *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*. Blessed be God, by whose help it was begun and finished, and in whose charge it is commit-

ted and placed, and for whose honor it is newly edited [and extracted from the *Brief Art of Finding Truth*, which most thoroughly investigates the cause and principles of all things in all fields of thought, in the liberal as well as the mechanical arts]; which book constitutes a doctrine and method for enlightening clouded minds and awakening the great who sleep, and for entering into union with and getting to know strangers and friends, by asking what religion they think the Gentile chose in order to find favor with God.

May he who dictated and wrote this book, as well as he who reads and studies it, find favor in God's glory, and be kept in this world from those paths leading to infernal fires, on which those who incur God's ire find themselves.

Blanquerna

Blanquerna. Majorca, 1283. English translation from the Spanish version of A. Maria de Saavedra and F. de P. Samaranch in *Antología de Ramón Llull*, ed. by M. Batllori (Madrid, 1961), vol. 1, 144–54. Final section from the English translation of Anthony BONNER 1993, 188–9.

BOOK FIVE. ON THE EREMITIC LIFE

Chapter 96. How Blanquerna Renounced the Papacy

Pope Blanquerna had grown old and remembered how he used to long to give himself over to the eremitic life. In secret consistory with all the cardinals, he spoke to them these words: “Through the blessing of God the papacy and the court of Rome are prospering, and the order it has achieved has led to an expansion of the Catholic faith. And so, by the grace that God has granted the court and in order that God keep it in this good order, it would be good to appoint an official to pray at all times and to live a contemplative life, begging God to maintain the present order so that it may redound to his honor and to the advantage of the court.” All the cardinals considered it a good idea and sought a holy and devout man, someone of great perfection whose prayer would be for that reason all the more acceptable to God.

When the pope had understood the will of the cardinals, he threw himself on his knees and begged them to allow him to renounce the papacy and to entrust to him that office of prayer. All the cardinals knelt before the pope and opposed him as a body, saying that it was not right for him to renounce the apostolic dignity, and above all that with his renunciation the court would run the risk of losing the great order that it had achieved through God and the holy life of Blanquerna. Pope Blanquerna replied that the cardinals had reached such a high level of perfection through the benefit of the offices of *Gloria in excelsis Deo* that henceforth that order could not be

undone, and that this was particularly so if they would be ruled by another pope elected the way that the Abbess Natana had been elected. So long did the pope remain on his knees and so greatly did he weep before the cardinals, and with such devotion and effect did he beg their mercy, that they came to obey his mandate.

Who can recount the joy and delight of Blanquerna at being absolved of the papacy and freed to serve God in the eremitic life! As he pondered these things in his delight, he spoke to the cardinals these words: "My lords, long have I desired to be a contemplative servant of God in the eremitic life, so that nothing should remain in my heart but God. Tomorrow, after mass, permit me, my lords, to leave and see my hermitage, and to receive, on my departure, your grace and blessing, you whom I will hold in my memory and in my prayers all the days of my life. I give thanks to God and to you in great measure for having assisted me so well in maintaining the papacy these many years."

Greatly displeased were the cardinals at hearing that he wished to go off into the woods to live as a hermit, and they begged him to consider remaining and staying behind in the city of Rome or in another city he would find more agreeable, there to give himself to contemplation and prayer. But the blessed Blanquerna did not accede to their requests, so aflame he was with divine inspiration, and the following day after mass decided to go off to his hermitage and take leave of his companions.

"Lord Blanquerna," spoke the cardinals, "we have all obeyed you for a long time and carried out your orders. You are now old and weak, and you need adequate lodging and food to sustain yourself physically in order to devote yourself better to the spiritual and contemplative life. We therefore ask you to remain among us until you have found a suitable hermitage and had it prepared for you to live and to chant and celebrate the divine office. In the meantime, we will, with your counsel, have elected a pope who will give you his grace and blessing at the time of your departure from us, who will remain greatly pained at your leaving." With such great devotion and reasonable words did the cardinals beseech Blanquerna that he had to obey their request.

While Blanquerna was with the cardinals in the city of Rome, they sent word throughout the forests and the hills to seek a suitable place to lodge him. And they arranged for him to live on a high mountain where there was a hermitage church and next to it a fountain, and they arranged that a monastery at the foot of the mountain would provide Blanquerna with his daily necessities. And while the cardinals were looking for a place for Blanquerna to live, they elected pope the cardinal of *Laudamus te*, who became pope in accord with the results of the means of election they used. And to

that pope was entrusted the office of *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, which Blanquerna used to hold, and the office of the cardinal was entrusted to another newly elected and appointed to the post of the cardinal of *Laudamus te*.

Chapter 97. How Blanquerna Took Leave of the Pope and the Cardinals

Blanquerna arose in the morning and celebrated the mass of the Holy Spirit privately. Afterwards the pope celebrated solemn mass and preached, referring to the good and the order that Blanquerna had brought to the court, how he had renounced the papacy and was going away to do penance in the high mountains, and how he desired to be in the company of the trees, the birds, and the animals to contemplate the God of glory.

So many good things did the pope speak of Blanquerna the hermit, and with such great devotion did he speak, that the cardinals and the people of Rome who were present at the sermon could not hold back their tears. They all felt sorry for Blanquerna at his departure, and all the more because he was an old man about to inflict his person with solitude and a hard life.

While the pope was preaching and the people weeping, a hermit who lived in the walls of Rome spoke these words to the pope: "Lord and apostolic father, there are many of us hermits who live in the city of Rome as recluses in the walls, and it often happens that we are tempted and do not know how to contemplate on God or weep for our sins. Since Blanquerna appointed many officials to serve God and organize the world, we ask in the name of all the hermits of Rome that he stay with us in the city as our master and visitor and assume that charge. It will be to his advantage and to ours, and he will be able to continue in the eremitic life."

The pope and the cardinals begged Blanquerna to remain in the city and assume the office of which the hermit spoke, since much good would come of it, especially for the good example that it would give to people. But Blanquerna excused himself and said that under no circumstances would he remain among the people, and he took leave of everyone at once, asking, imploring, and begging pardon of any he had wronged that they might forgive him and pray for him to the God of glory. When Blanquerna had finished his words, the hermit asked that he be appointed to the office that he had requested for Blanquerna, and the pope granted it with his grace and blessing.

Blanquerna assumed the humble clothes of the eremitic life and crossed himself with the sign of our salvation. He kissed the hands and feet of the apostolic father, commending him tearfully to God. The pope kissed him and ordered that two cardinals follow him as far as the hermitage where he

was to live, and that if anything there should need repair, that the two cardinals remain with him and do whatever was necessary. The two cardinals followed Blanquerna and all the people followed him as far as the exit to the city. Blanquerna asked the cardinals to return with all the people and to remain in the city. But they refused him and went as far as the cell in which his living quarters had been prepared.

In his habitat was a beautiful fountain, an old chapel, and a most comely cell. One mile distant from the hermitage were lodgings for a person to serve Blanquerna and prepare his food, so that he might devote himself more to contemplation. The man was a deacon, and Blanquerna desired his company so that he would help him to recite the divine office each day.

When Blanquerna was in his hermitage, furnished in a manner befitting a hermit, the cardinals took leave of him very pleasantly, commending themselves to his prayers, and returned to Rome.

Chapter 98. The Life that Blanquerna Led in his Hermitage

Blanquerna arose at midnight and opened the windows of his cell to see the sky and the stars, and began to pray with the greatest devotion so that his whole soul would be with God and his eyes would flow with tears and laments. When Blanquerna had contemplated and wept at length until it was time for Matins, he entered the church and prayed Matins with the deacon who had come to aid him in the recitation.

After dawn he said mass. When mass was done, he spoke a few words to the deacon about God to inspire the love of God in him, and the two spoke of God and his works, weeping together because of the great devotion in the words they spoke. Afterwards the deacon went to the garden to do some work and Blanquerna left the church to refresh his soul from the fatigue he had sustained in his person, looking to the mountain and the plains for solace.

When Blanquerna felt recovered he entered into prayer and contemplation, read from the books of holy scripture or in *The Book of Contemplation*, and so passed his time until the hour of Terce. Then he recited Terce, Sext, and None. After Terce the deacon returned to prepare some herbs and vegetables for Blanquerna. Blanquerna worked in the garden or at other things so as not to fall idle and to improve his health, and between Sext and None took his meal.

After eating he returned along to the church to give thanks to God. When his prayers were done, he spent an hour in rest about the garden and near the fountain, in places where his soul felt most happy. Then he slept in order to prepare himself for the hardships of the night.

After sleeping he washed his hands and face and awaited the bell for Vespers, which he attended with his deacon. And when they had recited Vespers they prayed Compline and the deacon returned while Blanquerna entered into reflection on things that were most agreeable to him and which best disposed him to enter into prayer.

When the sun had set, Blanquerna went up to the terrace atop his cell and remained at prayer until the first stages of sleep, looking at the sky and the stars with tearful eyes and a devout heart, wrapped pensively in thoughts of honoring God and of the failings that humans commit in this world against God. So absorbed was he and so fervent in his contemplation from the setting of the sun to the first stages of sleep, that when he lay down to sleep, he seemed to be as much with God as he had been during prayer.

Blanquerna continued in this life and blessed state until the people in that region came to have a great devotion to the virtues of the altar of the Holy Trinity in that chapel. In their devotion men and women would go to that place and disturb Blanquerna during his prayer and contemplation. Lest they lose their devotion to that place, he hesitated to tell them not to come any longer. Instead, Blanquerna moved his cell to a small hill a mile away from the church and another mile distant from where the deacon lived. And in that place he rested and dwelt, with no desire to go to the church when there were people there, and not wishing any man or woman to enter into the cell where he had moved his quarters.

Thus did Blanquerna live as a hermit, certain that never again would he find so pleasant a life or such a readiness to exalt his soul so greatly to God. So holy was the life that Blanquerna lived, that God blessed and favored all who felt devotion for the virtues of the place where the chapel was, and the pope, cardinals, and officials remained more in the grace of God because of the holy life of Blanquerna.

Chapter 99. How the Hermit Blanquerna Came to Write "The Book of the Lover and the Beloved"

It happened one day that the hermit, who was in Rome, as we said before, went to visit the other hermits and recluses living there, and found that they were often tempted by certain things because they did not know how to live in the manner best fitting their state. So he thought he would go to Blanquerna and ask him to make a book about the life of a hermit, so that through this book he would know how to keep the other hermits in contemplation and devotion. One day when Blanquerna was in prayer the hermit came to his cell and asked him to write the above-mentioned book.

Blanquerna thought a long time about the manner in which he would make the book, and the matter he would put into it.

Thinking in this way he decided to give himself over to the worship and contemplation of God, so that in prayer God might show him the manner and matter to be used in the book. While Blanquerna was thus worshipping and weeping, and when God had made his soul rise to the furthest limit of its strength in contemplation of him, Blanquerna felt himself overwhelmed by the great fervor and devotion he had, and he thought to himself that the force of love is overwhelming when the lover loves the beloved very intensely. Therefore Blanquerna decided to make a book, *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, in which the lover would be a faithful and devout Christian and the beloved would be God.

While Blanquerna was thinking in this way, he remembered that once, when he was pope, a Saracen had told him that the Saracens had certain religious men, among whom the most highly considered were those called "Sufis," and that these men had words of love and brief examples which aroused great devotion in men. These are words that require explanation, and through their explanation the understanding rises up higher, and carries the will with it, increasing its devotion. Now when Blanquerna had heard this idea, he decided to make the book in the above-mentioned manner, and he told the hermit to return to Rome, and that in a short time he would send him, through the deacon, *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, and with this book he would be able to increase fervor and devotion in the hermits, whom he wished to inspire with a love of God.

The Book of the Lover and the Beloved

Llibre de amic i amat. Majorca, 1283. English translation by Eve BONNER 1993, 189–236. Numbers in parentheses after the normal paragraph number refer to the critical edition of A. SOLER 1995.

2. The paths along which the lover seeks his beloved are long, perilous, filled with worries, sighs, and tears, and lit up by love.

3. Many lovers gathered together to love one beloved who filled them with love. Each held as his own his beloved and his pleasant thoughts, which caused tribulations that were sweet to bear.

4. The lover wept, and said: “When will darkness leave the world, and the paths to hell cease to exist? When will water, which always flows downward, change its nature and flow upward? And when will the innocent outnumber the guilty?”

6. The lover said to the beloved, “You who fill the sun with radiance, fill my heart with love.” The beloved replied, “Without plenitude of love, your eyes would not be in tears, nor would you have come to this place to see the one who loves you.”

7. The beloved tested his lover to see if his love was perfect, asking him what was the difference between the presence and absence of his beloved. The lover replied, “As ignorance and forgetfulness differ from knowledge and remembrance.”

8. The beloved asked the lover, “Can you remember any way in which I have rewarded you for wanting to love me?” “Yes,” he answered, “by making no distinction between the pains and pleasures you accord me.”

12. “Foolish lover, why do you destroy your body, spend all your money, abandon the delights of this world, and go about scorned by people?” He answered, “In order to honor the perfections of my beloved, who is unloved and dishonored by more men than honor and love him.”

13. “Tell us, fool of love! What is better seen—the beloved in the lover, or

the lover in the beloved? He answered, saying that the beloved can be recognized by love, and the lover by sighs and tears, pain and grief.

14. The lover was looking for someone who could tell his beloved of the hardships he underwent for love's sake, and of how he was dying. And he found his beloved, who was reading a book in which was written all the suffering love made him endure for his beloved, and all the pleasure he had from this love.

16. "Tell us, O singing bird, have you put yourself in the care of my beloved so that he may protect you from lack of love, and increase your love?" The bird replied, "And who is it who makes me sing, if not the lord of love, for whom lack of love is a dishonor?"

17. Love has made its home between fear and hope, where it lives on its thoughts but dies from forgetfulnesses when its foundations are laid upon worldly pleasures.

18. A question arose between the eyes and memory of the lover. His eyes claimed it was better to see the beloved than to remember him, but memory said that remembering brought tears to the eyes and made the heart burn with love.

19. The lover asked Understanding and Will which one was closer to his beloved. They both started running, and Understanding reached his beloved before Will.

20. The lover and the beloved were at odds with each other. Another lover saw this and wept long and bitterly until he restored peace and concord between the beloved and the lover.

22. The lover came to drink from the fountain whose waters make those who do not love fall in love, and his suffering was doubled. The beloved then came to drink from the fountain so as to redouble the lover's love of him, and increase his suffering even more.

23. The lover was sick, and the beloved cared for him. He fed him from his merits, gave him to drink with love, put him to bed with patience, dressed him with humility, and gave him truth as his medicine.

25. They said to the lover, "Where are you going?" "I come from my beloved." "Where do you come from?" "I go to my beloved." "When will you return?" "I will be with my beloved." "How long will you be with your beloved?" "For as long as my thoughts remain on him."

26. The birds sang of the dawn, and the lover, who is the dawn, awoke. The birds ended their song, and the lover died in the dawn for his beloved.

27. The bird sang in the garden of the beloved. The lover came and said to

the bird, "If we do not understand each other through language, let us understand each other through love, for through your song my beloved appears before my eyes."

28. The lover felt sleepy, for he had worked hard seeking his beloved. And as he was afraid he might forget him, he wept so as not to fall asleep and have his beloved absent from his memory.

29. The lover and the beloved met, and the lover said, "You need not speak to me. Just signal to me with your eyes, which are like words to my heart, and I will give you whatever you ask of me."

30. The lover disobeyed his beloved, and the lover wept. The beloved came and died within the lover's cloak, so that the lover might regain what he had lost. And the gift he gave him was greater than that which he had lost.

31. The beloved filled his lover with love, and had no pity on his suffering, so that he might be loved more greatly. And in his increased suffering the lover found pleasure and recovery.

36. The lover followed the paths of his beloved absorbed in thought. He tripped and fell among the thorns, and it seemed to him that they were flowers and that he lay on a bed of love.

40. The lover arose early and went in search of his beloved. On the way he passed some people and asked if they had seen his beloved. They answered, "When did the eyes of your mind lose sight of your beloved?" "Never," replied the lover, "for from the time I saw my beloved in my thoughts, he has never been absent from the eyes of my body, for all things visible reveal my beloved to me."

45. Two fires kindle the love of the lover. One is composed of desires, joys, and reflections, and the other of fear, suffering, weeping, and tears.

46. The lover desired solitude, and he left to be alone so that he would have the company of his beloved with whom he could be alone among people.

47. The lover sat alone in the shade of a handsome tree. Some men passed by and asked him why he was alone. The lover answered that it was only when he had seen and heard them that he had been alone, but before that he had been in the company of his beloved.

50. Between lover and beloved, nearness and farness are the same; for like the mixture of water and wine, the loves of lover and beloved mix together; like heat and light, their loves are linked together; and like essence and being they are in agreement and joined.

51. The lover said to his beloved, "In you are both my suffering and my cure. The more you heal me, the greater my suffering, and the more I suffer, the more am I healed." The beloved replied, "Your love is a seal and an imprint, displaying my honors to all men."

56. The lover's heart rose up to the heights of the beloved, so he would not be prevented from loving in the abyss of this world. And when he reached his beloved, he contemplated him with tenderness and delight. The beloved then let him down to the world again, so he would contemplate him with tribulations and suffering.

58. A bird was singing on a branch in leaf and flower, and the breeze stirred the leaves and bore with it the scent of the flowers. The lover asked the bird what the movement of the leaves and the scent of the flowers signified. The bird answered: "The stirring of the leaves signifies obedience, and the scent of the flowers suffering and sorrow."

60. The lover thought about death and was afraid, until he remembered his beloved. And he called out to those around him: "Ah, my friends, you must love, so as to fear neither dangers nor death in honoring my beloved."

62. "Tell us, fool, if your beloved ceased loving you, what would you do?" He answered: "I would love him still, so as not to die, for lack of love is death, and love is life."

65. The lover was asked the meaning of happiness. He replied that it was unhappiness borne for love.

66 (65). "Tell us, fool, what is unhappiness?" "It is the memory of the dishonors done to my beloved who is worthy of all honors."

68 (67). The lover said to his beloved, "You are all, and through all, and in all, and with all. I want all of you, so that I may have and be all of myself." The beloved replied, "You cannot have all of me without your being all mine." The lover said, "Have all of me, and I, all of you." The beloved replied, "Then what will your son, your brother, and your father have?" The lover replied, "You are all to such a degree that you can abound and be all to whomever gives all of himself to you."

74 (73). "Tell us, fool, which existed first, your heart, or love?" He answered that his heart and love came into being at the same time, for if they had not, the heart would not have been made for love, nor love made for reflection.

75 (74). They asked the fool where his love first began, whether with the secrets of his beloved, or with his revealing them to the people. He answered that love, when it is perfect, makes no such distinctions. Secretly the

lover keeps secret his beloved's secrets, and secretly he also reveals them, and with revealing them keeps them secret still.

84 (82). "Tell us, fool, what do you mean by a marvel?" He answered, "To love things absent more than things present, and to love visible, corruptible things more than invisible, incorruptible ones."

86 (84). The lover asked his beloved which was greater, love or loving. The beloved answered that in created beings love was the tree and loving the fruit, and the trials and suffering were the flowers and leaves, but that in God love and loving were one and the same thing, without any trials or suffering.

88 (86). The lover was sick with love, and a doctor came to see him. The doctor increased his suffering and his thoughts, and then the lover was healed.

92 (90). The beloved left his lover, and the lover sought him with memory and understanding, so that he could love him. The lover found his beloved, and asked him where he had been. He answered, "In the absence of your memory, and in the ignorance of your understanding."

97 (94). The lover was asked to whom he belonged. He answered, "To love." "What are you made of?" "Of love." "Who gave birth to you?" "Love." "Where were you born?" "In love." "Who brought you up?" "Love." "How do you live?" "By love." "What is your name?" "Love." "Where do you come from?" "From love." "Where are you going?" "To love." "Where are you now?" "In love." "Have you anything other than love?" "Yes, I have faults and wrongs against my beloved." "Is there pardon in your beloved?" The lover said that in his beloved were mercy and justice, and that he therefore lived between fear and hope.

100 (96). The light of the beloved's room lit up that of the lover, dispelling its darkness and filling it with joys, sorrows, and thoughts. And the lover chased all things from his room to provide space for his beloved.

123 (118). Love lit up the cloud placed between the lover and the beloved, and made it as bright and shining as the moon by night, the morning star at dawn, the sun by day, and understanding in the will. And it is through this shining cloud that the lover and beloved speak to each other.

147 (141). God created the night for the lover to keep vigil and reflect upon the perfections of his beloved, and the lover thought it had been created so that those wearied by love could rest and sleep.

152 (146). The beloved forbade his lover to speak, and the lover found comfort in the contemplation of his beloved.

155 (149). The lover met a squire walking pensively, and he was thin, pale, and poorly dressed. He greeted the lover and said, "May God guide you to find your beloved." The lover asked him how he had recognized him. The squire replied, "Some of love's secrets reveal others, and that is why lovers can recognize each other."

160 (154). The secrets of the beloved are revealed in the secrets of the lover, and the secrets of the lover are revealed in the secrets of the beloved. And the question is, which of these two secrets is the greater occasion for revelation?

164 (158). "Tell us, fool, where do you feel your will to be stronger, in loving or in hating?" He replied, "In loving, for I have only hated in order to love."

165 (159). "Tell us, lover, what do you understand better, truth or falsehood?" He answered that he understood truth better. "Why?" "Because I understand falsehood only so I may better understand truth."

167 (161). The lover wanted to go to a foreign land to honor his beloved, and he wanted to disguise himself so as not to be captured on the way. But he could not hide the tears in his eyes, nor his pale and drawn face, nor the laments, thoughts, sighs, sorrow, and suffering of his heart. As a result, he was captured on his journey and delivered for torture by his beloved's enemies.

170 (164). The beloved asked the lover the meaning of love. He replied that it was the presence of the words and features of the beloved in the sighing heart of another lover, and faintness from weeping and desire in the heart of the lover.

171 (164). "Love is the fervent mingling of boldness and fear. It is desiring the beloved as the final purpose of one's will. Love is that which kills the lover when he hears someone sing of the beauties of his beloved. And love is that which contains my death, and in which my will dwells every day of my life."

179 (172). "Tell us, fool, who knows more of love, he who has joy from it, or he who has pains and suffering?" He answered, saying that one could have no knowledge of love from either without the other.

190 (183). "Tell us, fool! What can be best compared and found most similar?" He answered "The lover and the beloved." They asked him why. He answered "Because of the love which exists between them."

196 (189). The lover was dying of joy and living through pain. And the joys and torments came together and united to become one and the same in

the lover's will. And so the lover was both living and dying at the same time.

198 (191). So great was the love of the lover for his beloved that he believed everything he was told by him. And so greatly did he want to understand his beloved that everything he heard about him he wanted to understand by the light of reason. Therefore the love of the lover lay between belief and understanding.

199. The lover was asked what thing was furthest from his heart. "Lack of love," he replied. "And for what reason?" "Because what is closest to my heart is love, which is the opposite of lack of love."

205 (198). The lover affirmed that all was perfection in his beloved, and denied the existence of any imperfection in him. And the question arose as to which was stronger, the affirmation or the negation.

210 (203). The lover tempted love, to see if it could remain in his heart without the memory of his beloved, and his heart ceased thinking and his eyes ceased weeping, and love was destroyed. The lover was left confused, and went about asking people if they had seen love.

211 (204). Love, loving, lover, and beloved are in such great accord in the beloved that they are one actuality in essence. And the lover and beloved are different but concordant, with no contrariety or difference of essence. The beloved is therefore lovable in a greater measure than any other object of love.

217 (210). The beloved wounded his lover's heart with rods of love, to make him love the tree from which he had gathered the rods with which to strike his lovers. For this was the tree on which he had suffered death, pain, and dishonor, so that he might restore love to those lovers whom he had lost.

219 (212). The lover was praising his beloved, saying that he had transcended "where," for he was there where the "where" could not be reached. Therefore, when the lover was asked where his beloved was, he replied: "He is," but one knows not where. However, he did know that his beloved was in his remembrance.

235 (228). Love is a great sea troubled by wind and waves, without port or shore. The lover perishes in the sea, and, in his peril, his torments perish and the work of his fulfillment begins.

236 (229). "Tell us, fool, what is love?" He replied, "Love is the concordance of theory and practice towards a given end, to which the fulfillment of the lover's will is impelled, the end being to make people honor and serve

his beloved. And the question is, does this end really accord with the will of the lover who desires to be with his beloved?"

241 (234). The lover said that infused knowledge came from will, devotion, and prayer, and acquired knowledge came from study and understanding. And the question therefore is, which of the two comes to the lover first, which does he find more pleasing, and which is the greater in him.

244 (237). Love tormented the lover, and he wept and complained of this torment. His beloved called to him to come to him and be healed. The nearer the lover came to his beloved, the greater were love's torments, for greater was the love he felt. But because he felt more joy the more he loved, the more effectively did the beloved heal him of his suffering.

245 (238). Love was ill. The lover treated him with patience, perseverance, obedience, and hope, and love was cured. The lover fell ill, and the beloved healed him with the memory of his virtues and honors.

249 (242). Love killed all that was in the heart of his true lover, to make room for himself to live. And the lover would have died, had he not had the memory of his beloved.

250 (243). There were two thoughts in the lover. One was a constant thought about the essence and virtues of his beloved, while the other was a thought about the beloved's works. And a question arose as to which thought was more luminous and more pleasing to the beloved and to the lover.

251 (244). The greatness of his love caused the lover to die. The beloved buried him in his land, where the lover was raised up again. And the question is, from whom did he receive the greater gift?

257 (250). The beloved planted a variety of seeds in the lover's heart, from which one plant sprouted, put forth leaves, flowered, and ripened into a single fruit. The question is, can this single fruit give rise to a variety of seeds?

258 (251). The beloved is far above love, and far below love is the lover. And love, which is in the middle, lowers the beloved to the lover and raises the lover to the beloved. This lowering and raising are the beginning and the life of that love by which the lover suffers and the beloved is served.

259 (252). To the right of love is the beloved, and the lover is to the left. Therefore the lover cannot reach his beloved without passing through love.

269 (261). The lover was praising his beloved, saying that if in his beloved there is the greatest possibility of perfection and the greatest impossibility of imperfection, it follows that his beloved must be simple, pure actuality in

essence and in operation. And as the lover was thus praising his beloved, the trinity of his beloved was revealed to him.

277 (269). Love and the beloved came to see the lover as he slept. The beloved called to his lover and love awakened him. And the lover obeyed love and answered his beloved.

284 (276). "Tell us, fool, what is sin?" He replied, "It is intention turned around and directed against the final intention and reason for which my beloved created all things."

288 (280). "Tell us, fool, where does wisdom begin?" He answered, "With faith and devotion, which are a ladder by which the understanding rises to understand the secrets of my beloved." "And faith and devotion, where do they begin?" He replied, "With my beloved, who illumines faith and kindles devotion."

295 (287). "Tell us, fool, what is love?" He answered that love is that which puts free men into bondage and gives liberty to those in bonds. And the question is, which is closer to love, liberty or bondage?

297 (289). "O, my beloved," said the lover, "to you I go and in you I go, for you call me. I go to contemplate contemplation in contemplation with contemplation of your contemplation. I am in your virtue, and I come with your virtue, which is the source of my virtue. I greet you with your greeting, which is my greeting in your greeting, from which I hope for eternal greeting in the blessing of your blessing, in which I am blessed in my blessing."

298 (290). "You are high, O beloved, in your heights, to which you exalt my will, exalted in your exaltation with your height. And this, in my remembrance, exalts my understanding, exalted in your exaltation to an understanding of your perfections, so that the will may then have exalted loving and memory have great remembrance."

299 (291). "Beloved, you are the glory of my glory, and with your glory and in your glory, you give glory to my glory, which has glory from your glory. By this glory of yours I find glory equally in the pains and sufferings I endure for the honor of your glory, and the joys and thoughts that come to me from your glory."

300 (292). "Beloved, in the prison of love you hold me enamored with your love, which has enamored me of your love, by your love and in your love. For you are nothing but love, in which you keep me alone, with the company of your love and your perfections. For you alone are in me alone, who am alone with my thoughts, since your aloneness—alone in perfec-

tion—has alone made me praise and honor its worth, without fear of those who are ungrateful, and do not have you alone in their love.”

301 (293). “Beloved, you are the solace of all solace, for in you my thoughts find solace with your solace, which is the solace and comfort of my griefs and tribulations caused by your solace, when you do not solace the ignorant with your solace, and do not increase the love of those who know your solace so they may more strongly honor your honors.

302 (294). The lover complained to his lord about his beloved, and to his beloved about his lord. The lord and beloved said, “Who is it that makes a division between us, when we are but one?” The lover answered, saying that it was pity from the lord, and tribulations on account of the beloved.

306 (298). “My beloved eternally begins and has begun and will begin, and he eternally does not begin nor has begun nor will begin. And in my beloved these beginnings are not contradictory, because he is eternal and has within himself unity and trinity.”

307 (299). “My beloved is one, and in his unity my thoughts and my love unite in one will. And the unity of my beloved suffices for all unities and all pluralities. And the plurality which is in my beloved suffices for all unities and pluralities.”

308 (300). “The good of my beloved is supreme good, and he is the good of my good. For my beloved is good without any other good, since if he were not so, my good would come from another supreme good. And since it does not, may all my good in this life be spent in honoring the supreme good, for this is as it should be.”

313 (305). The beloved created and the lover destroyed. The beloved judged and the lover wept. The beloved re-created glory for the lover. The beloved finished his work and the lover remained forever in the company of his beloved.

332 (323). With his imagination the lover painted and formed the traits of his beloved in bodily things, and with his understanding he made them shine in spiritual things, and with his will he worshiped them in all creatures.

342 (333). The lover thought about death and was frightened, until he remembered the city of his beloved, the city to which death and love are the gates and entrance.

350 (341). The lover gazed upon himself so he could be a mirror in which to behold his beloved. And he gazed upon his beloved so he could be a mirror in which he could have knowledge of himself. And the question is, to which of the two mirrors was his understanding closer?

351 (342). Theology, Philosophy, Medicine, and Law met the lover, who asked them if they had seen his beloved. Theology wept, Philosophy doubted, Medicine and Law rejoiced. The question is, what did each of the four reactions signify to the lover in search of his beloved?

352 (343). Full of tears and anguish, the lover went in search of his beloved along paths of the senses and ways of the mind. And the question is, which of the two roads did he take first while searching for his beloved, and on which did the beloved reveal himself to the lover most clearly?

355 (346). "Tell us, fool, what is the greatest and noblest love to be found in a creature?" He answered, "That which is one with the creator." "Why?" "Because there is no way the creator can make a creature nobler."

359 (350). "Tell us, fool, what is religion?" He answered, "Purity of thought, and a longing for death to honor my beloved, and renunciation of the world so there may be no obstacle to contemplating him and telling the truth about his perfections."

361 (352). The lover was asked in whom love was greater, in the lover who was alive or in the lover who was dying. He answered, "In the lover who is dying." "Why?" "Because love cannot be greater than in a lover who dies for love, but it can still be greater in one who lives for love."

363 (354). "Tell us, fool, why do you speak with such subtlety?" He answered, "To provide an opportunity for the understanding to rise up to the perfections of my beloved, and so that more men may honor, love, and serve him."

Felix, or the Book of Wonders

Fèlix o Llibre de meravelles. Paris, 1287–1289. English Translation from BONNER 1985, vol. II, 735–40.

HERE BEGINS BOOK FOUR, WHICH TREATS OF THE ELEMENTS

When Felix had been with the shepherd a long time, and the shepherd had explained to him about the heavenly bodies, Felix took leave of the shepherd, who accompanied Felix for some distance through a great forest. In fact he accompanied him until they arrived at a road on which they found a maiden who was riding on her palfrey.

“Sir,” Felix said to the shepherd, “do you know where this road leads?” The shepherd replied that the road led to a town which was quite near. “In that town there is a very noble and wise king with two sons who are students: the older son is studying natural science and the younger son is studying arms. The maiden you see is returning from a visit to the king’s younger son, sent there by the queen, who loves this younger son more than the older one.”

Felix wondered why the queen loved the younger son more than the older one. The shepherd said that the queen preferred knighthood to wisdom for a son of hers. Felix was in great wonder at such a preference, for by arms men are in danger of death, and by wisdom a person can avoid dangers and the risk of death.

“Sir,” said Felix, “why does the king have the older son taught philosophy and the younger one arms?” The shepherd replied, saying that a king had greater need of knowledge about nature than about arms; for by natural science a king can have knowledge of God and of himself, and he can know how to reign, and how to govern himself and his people. And since a king needs men accustomed to feats of arms, the king had them taught to the younger son, so that with arms he could guard the older son, who would be

king after the death of their father. Felix was very pleased with the attitude of the king and his sons, and he wished that many kings would act similarly.

While Felix and the shepherd were talking, they saw the king returning from a visit to his two sons, whom he had found well informed in the subjects they were learning. Felix and the shepherd bowed, as was proper before a king, and the king greeted them both. Then the king said to Felix: "Fair friend, what is your reason for bowing and doing me honor? How do you know that I am worthy of your doing me honor?"

"My lord," said Felix, "in a certain city there was a king of very evil ways. Once when he passed through the main square of that city, a pilgrim also passing through the square did not bow down to him as others did. The king was very angry with the pilgrim for not having bowed as the others did. The pilgrim, however, said to the king: 'Two pilgrims were leaving Jerusalem on the same day I entered it. They were both weeping and lamenting the dishonor that the Saracens' possession of Jerusalem represents for all of Christianity, for these Saracens honor their prophet Mohammed, who said that Jesus Christ was not God. While the two pilgrims were thus weeping, one of them said to the other that in all the world there were six men who were Christians and who were kings capable of recovering the Holy Land for other Christians, if they wanted to; but they did not worry as much about honoring Jesus Christ as about honoring themselves, which is why they are not worthy of honor. And you are one of these kings, which is why you are unworthy of being revered or honored.'" After saying this, Felix added that a king as such is worthy of honor, since God has honored him in order to honor his own honor. "And since you, my lord king, are teaching your sons to honor God, you are worthy of being honored."

When Felix had left the king and the shepherd, he set out on the road and came to the town where the king's two sons were living. Felix went directly to the royal palace where the king's older son was being given a lesson in philosophy.

19. The Simplicity and Composition of the Elements

A philosopher was sitting in a chair teaching philosophy to the young prince and to the sons of the other barons, saying: "Of the four elements, fire is a simple element to the degree that it has its own form and matter, which form and matter have an appetite to be one in the other, without the admixture of any other element; and the same is true with respect to the simplicity of the other elements, that is to say, air, water, and earth. Since, however, all the elements are mixed and each is in the other, simple fire cannot be anywhere without the other elements, with which it

enters into composition, giving its heat to the air, and receiving dryness from the earth, and heating the water so as to destroy it, for by heating air, fire heats water, since the air then gives its heated moisture to the water, which receives it, thereby mortifying the coldness of the water; at the same time the water mortifies this heat, which heat passes on to the earth, which receives cold from water, in which cold the earth receives the heat of the fire, which has entered the water through the air. In receiving cold from water, earth also receives moisture from the water, which moisture enters the water upon being received from the air; and this moisture counteracts the dryness in the earth, with which dryness the earth mortifies the moisture of the air. And fire, upon receiving dryness from the earth, receives the moisture of the air that passes into the water, and it receives the cold that passes into the earth, and it recovers the heat that it put into the air, and which the air put into the water, the water into the earth, and the earth into the fire, which heat is digested and mortified in passing through all the other elements."

Through the philosopher's explanation of fire and heat, the prince learned about the simplicity and composition of fire and of the other elements. And he repeated the lesson by giving an example, saying: "Fire wanted to engender a grain of pepper, so it combined three points from itself with three points from the earth, and two points from itself with two from the air, and one point from itself with one from water. There were therefore four degrees in the pepper, in which heat was in the fourth degree, dryness in the third degree, moisture in the second degree, and cold in the first degree. Thus pepper is compound fire in the fourth degree, compound earth in the third degree, compound air in the second degree, and compound water in the first degree. The essence of the fire, which is in the fourth, third, second, and first degrees, is simple fire; the essence of the earth, which is in the fourth, third, second, and first degrees, is simple earth; the essence of the air, which is in all degrees, is simple air; and the essence of water, which is in all degrees, is simple water."

20. The Generation and Corruption of the Elements

The philosopher explained that the generation of an element takes place when it engenders itself in some elemented thing, as when fire, in engendering a grain of pepper, engenders, under the complexion of its hot nature, the complexion of a dry, moist, and cold nature, corrupting the cold and moist complexion in the earth, the moist and cold complexion in the air, and the moist and cold complexion in water.

After the philosopher had explained the generation and corruption of the elements in a grain of pepper, the prince repeated the lesson, giving the fol-

lowing example: "Justice wanted to engender charity in a sinner, in whom there existed injustice. Justice moved this man's memory to remember, his intellect to understand, and his will to love God's charity. Wisdom gave him the means to recognize the justice by which his memory was moved to remember, his intellect to understand, and his will to love. It came to pass, however, that injustice opposed justice, and ignorance opposed wisdom; but fortitude, by means of temperance, helped justice and wisdom, by which help injustice, ignorance, weakness, and gluttony were overcome, and charity engendered, in which charity there was justice, wisdom, fortitude, and temperance."

Felix was in wonder at the prince's great knowledge, and he asked him how the elements, which lack discrimination, can engender and corrupt elemented bodies, and how they are able to give them their proper shape and color, for it would seem impossible to perform such a task without discrimination. The prince said that God in himself loves his likeness, and on account of this love, God the Father engenders God the Son, which Son the Father engenders from his own wisdom. And this is why God has given elements the virtue that, through God's virtue, each has an appetite to engender its own likeness, which likeness in compound bodies accords with the disposition of each particular species.

"Sir," said Felix to the prince, "how is it that a lit candle can light another candle without any lessening of its own light?" The prince replied, saying that the form and matter of the fire want to possess the lit candle completely; and in another candle that is not lit, the form of the fire can engender from itself another form, and its matter can engender another matter in the lit candle; and this is why there is no lessening of the light which engenders that of the candle it lights.

After the prince had said this, his teacher reprimanded him for not having answered Felix by means of an example, and therefore the prince said to Felix: "God has given man and woman, as well as plants, the ability to engender their own likeness without corrupting their specific being, for it is clear that a man and a woman can engender a child without either the father's or the mother's being corrupted by this generation. And the same happens with the generation of trees, for each tree engenders a tree similar to itself without any corruption of its specific being. And all these engenderings are so ordained in order to show that there is no corruption in the Son of God."

The Tree of Knowledge

Arbre de ciència. Rome, 1295–1296. OE 1, 555–6, 835–7, 842–3.
English translation from the Spanish version of Amador Vega.

Oh God, with your great virtue, I begin this book of *The Tree of Knowledge*.

PROLOGUE

Disconsolate and weeping, Ramon sat beneath a beautiful tree and sang of his grief to relieve some of the pain he felt at having failed to complete the holy business of Jesus Christ in the court of Rome and the service it would have done to all of Christendom.

And while he was in that state, in a beautiful valley abounding in springs and beautiful trees, a monk passed through the valley and heard Ramon singing. So sad and devout was the song that he followed the voice to the place where Ramon was. Seeing the habit and long beard of Ramon, he took him for a religious man from a foreign country and addressed him with these words:

“Friend, what is wrong? Why do you weep? What is your name? In what land were you born? If there is any way I might help you, I am willing to do so, for you seem to me a man deeply disconsolate and I wish you to find consolation and to rejoice in our Creator by despising and forgetting about the brief life of this world.”

Ramon answered the monk, telling him his name and recounting a great part of his situation. The monk was most pleased to have met Ramon, whom he said he had been seeking for some time in order to ask him to write a general book about all the sciences, easy to understand and useful for appreciating the subtleties of his general Art. The sciences of the ancient sages of former times are still so hard to understand, explained the monk, and require so much time to grasp that one can hardly get through them, not to mention the numerous doubts that some sages raise against others. This was why he begged for a general book that would aid in understanding the other sciences, for a confusion of understanding brings with it grave

danger and impedes the great devotion needed to honor, love, and serve God and to seek the salvation of one's neighbor.

Ramon replied: "Sir monk, for a long time I have labored to seek the truth through one subject or another, and through the grace of God, I have at last arrived at the knowledge of the truth that I so desired to know, and this I have set down in my books. I am greatly disconsolate because I cannot bring to conclusion something I greatly desired and to which end I have worked for the past thirty years, and still more because my books are little esteemed. I tell you, many people take me for crazy for engaging in such business, which is why I am unwilling to write the book you are talking about or any other. I rather propose to remain sad and disconsolate because there are so few who love Jesus Christ in this world, and to return to the Saracens to tell them the truth of our faith and to render it honor, according to my powers and the grace and assistance that I hope to have from the God who created me, and in rendering it honor, to reprimand those through whom it is dishonored in this world."

"Ramon," said the monk, "write the book I am requesting, and do it in such a way that your intentions are made known and that you will be excused of the conceit of which some accuse you because they do not know you or your books. Through such a book the other books you have written may be appreciated. You are not excused from doing the good you can among Christians, nor from reaffirming what you have already done. I promise you, if you write this book, I will circulate it here and there and do as much good as I can for as long as I live."

Ramon considered the request of the monk carefully and the good that could come if he were to compose such a book. And as he pondered, he looked at the beautiful tree that stood before him, at its many leaves and fruits, and wondered what that tree meant.

"Ramon," the monk continued, "what are you thinking about? Why do you not respond to my words?"

"Sir monk, I am thinking of the meaning of this lemon tree, for everything that exists is signified in it. It makes me want to write the book that you ask of me by taking the meaning this tree has for me in seven ways: through the roots, through the trunk (that is to say, the stem of the tree), through the branches, the boughs, the leaves, the flowers, and the fruit. I propose all seven as a way to organized the book.

THE DIVISION OF THIS BOOK

I divide this book into sixteen parts, which together make up this Tree of Knowledge. The first part is the elemental Tree; the second, the veg-

etable Tree; the third, the sensual Tree; the fourth, the imaginal Tree; the fifth, the human Tree, the sixth, the moral Tree; the seventh, the imperial Tree; the eighth, the apostolic Tree; the ninth, the celestial Tree; the tenth, the angelic Tree; the eleventh, the everlasting Tree; the twelfth, the maternal Tree; the thirteenth, the Christian Tree, the fourteenth, the divine Tree; the fifteenth, the exemplary Tree; and the sixteenth, the questioning Tree. Through these sixteen trees all the sciences can be treated.

The elemental Tree is presented in this science so that through it the natures and properties of elemental things may be known—what they are, how they function in themselves, and what results from them.

Through the vegetable Tree one can gain knowledge of plants according to their vegetation and of how they function in themselves according to the natures they possess in virtue of their instincts and natural appetites.

Through the sensual Tree one can come to know of sensible and sentient things and of how they sense.

Through the imaginal Tree knowledge is given of the impressions that remain in the imagination of things felt, vegetated, and composed of elements.

Through the human Tree knowledge is given of the principles and combinations of spiritual and corporeal things, of their natures, of the ends, and of things that exist for human beings, as well as of many other things of which we will speak in the fifth part of this book.

Through the moral Tree knowledge is given of the virtues and vices that exist among human beings, and of the things through which virtues and vices come.

Through the imperial Tree knowledge is given of the government of princes and of the end to which they are public persons.

Through the apostolic Tree knowledge is given of the office that Jesus Christ entrusted to Saint Peter, and of the holiness that is fitting for prelates and their subjects, and of the end to which they are elected to be public persons.

Through the celestial Tree knowledge is given of the imprint that celestial bodies make on earthly bodies, and of the natures that the earthly bodies take from them.

Through the angelic Tree knowledge is given of the quiddity of the angels and how they function in themselves, of the glory that they give to God and the help they afford human beings.

Through the everlasting Tree knowledge is given of heaven and hell, and of the unending duration of the other world.

Through the material Tree we understand our holy mother Mary, who is

mother of the just and sinners, of the hope that we have in her, of her help, and of the regard, glory, and love that exists between her and her son.

Through the divine-human Tree we understand Jesus Christ and the participation of his divine human nature, and how Jesus Christ is the end and fulfillment of all created things.

Through the divine Tree we understand God, his inner workings and his creations, as well as the end and fulfillment that he has in himself and that we have in him.

Through the exemplary Tree we understand the examples that can be given in order to explain the above-mentioned trees, and to seek and demonstrate their natures and properties. This tree is most useful for preaching.

Through the questioning Tree we understand the art and manner of framing questions and answering them, of discovering the truths of things, and of erasing the errors that exist in many books and that have left many people in the dark.

THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF EXAMPLES

1. The Example of the Elemental Fruit

It is said that the gold and emerald in the king's ring once had a discussion between them. The gold said there were more elements because of him than because of the emerald, because he was of greater service. The emerald said that she was of greater service to the king and the gold of greater service to the merchants. The gold asked the emerald if she knew what the iron had said to the wood.

"And what was that?" asked the emerald.

"There once was a king," began the gold, "who won a battle. There was a debate between the king's shield and his sword. The shield said that he had protected the king from being wounded in battle and had suffered the blows of the lances and sword that tried to kill him, and that the king would have died had he not been there. The sword said that it was he who had won the battle, since he had killed and wounded those who sought to kill the king."

The emerald replied that the example of the gold worked against him. For even though the gold might look beautiful on the king's shield, it would be no good against the sword that wounds and kills knights. The sword could not kill if it were made of gold. And besides, gold is given to the knights so that they can make iron swords to guard and protect the king and to kill those who seek to kill the king. Thus the sword has two functions: one to defend the king, the other to kill his enemies. But the shield has only one

function. And the gold felt embarrassed for having given an example to his own disadvantage, for well did he now that the emerald guarded the king against poisons and gave joy to his heart.

2. The Example of Vegetal Fruit

It is said that there was a discussion in an apple between the elementary potency and the vegetative potency. The elementary potency said that the apple was a fruit because of the elements that made up its body and that the qualities it had were due to the elements. The vegetative potency alleged to the elementary that he had not heard the judgment that a judge had pronounced between the beginning and the end.

“And what was that?” asked the elementary.

“They say,” the vegetative replied, “that flour and water and an oven made a loaf of bread that a man wanted to eat to stay alive. The water and the flour and the oven said that they did not want the man to eat the bread, and the man said that he did, because it had been made to feed him and keep him alive. So they went to a judge who decided that the man should eat the bread since the water, the flour, and the oven had been made for eating and keeping others alive, and he punished the water, the flower, and the oven for contradicting the end for which they had been made.

3. The Example of the Sensual Fruit

There was once a miller who fed a pig with corn he had stolen from others. It happened one day that when the miller was giving the corn to the pig, the ass tried to eat some of the corn. The miller struck the ass with a stick to keep him from eating it. The pig was greatly surprised that the miller did not want the ass to eat any of the corn, and asked the ass why his master had struck him. He replied that the master was wicked, and a thief, and that it was unjust not to give him any of the corn that he had helped to carry. The pig said that it seemed as if the master loved him more than he loved the ass, and that he was more esteemed since he did not have to work carrying corn or doing any work, and still the master gave him as much corn to eat as he wished, but would not give any to the ass who had worked carrying it for him. The ass said to the pig that he had misunderstood the kindness and esteem the master was showing him. The master had castrated him so that he would not make offspring, and kept him from working in order to fatten him up. When he had eaten a lot more and grown a lot fatter, the master would give him a club on the head, kill him, salt him, and eat him piece by piece.

The pig was greatly displeased at what the ass said to him, and decided it was bad to eat the corn only in order to die. Besides, he was eating stolen corn, a sin of which his fear of dying made him all the more conscious. He decided therefore go to a vineyard full of grapevines to do penance for his sin, and not to eat stolen corn again or to remain with the master who had treated him with such disrespect and done him the grave wrong of castrating him. For it did not seem to the pig that he belonged to the lineage of the beasts.

And so he went to the vineyard to eat grapes. But the grapes told the pig that they were the produce of the master of the vineyard and not his, that he was not thinking of the vineyard as the man did, and that therefore he was sinning. The pig replied that he did not want to think of anything but his fear of death, and with that began to eat as many grapes as he wanted. While the pig was eating the grapes, a deer told him that he was now the property of the lord of the vineyard whose grapes he was eating, and that the master would kill him when he had grown good and fat.

Thinking of all the grapes he had eaten, the pig left the vineyard and fled into the forest. There, he said, he would eat only to keep from dying, that he preferred to be think and live a long time than to get fat and die soon.

4. *The Example of the Imaginal Fruit*

It is said that the past and the future were debating about imagination, each claiming it for his own. The past claimed that imagination was his because it imagined things past, and the future said that imagination was his because it imagined things in the future. As they were arguing, the future suggested they select a judge to put an end to the dispute, and that this judge should be the present, who stood between the two. The past agreed that the present was between the two, but he could not agree that the present be the judge because the present liked things of the future things better than those of the past. He thought it best that understanding be the judge, since it stood in the middle and understood both past and future things. But the future did not think understanding a suitable judge, since he had more connection and harmony with the imagination in terms of things past than in terms of things future.

Unable to reach agreement or find a common judge, they continued to fight. And since imagination preferred belonging to the past rather than to the future, due to the constant requests that memory makes of it, the future was defeated, and complained to the present that it had been wrong not to help one who was so fond of him.

THE QUESTIONING TREE

This tree is divided into seven parts: roots, trunks, branches, boughs, leaves, flowers, and fruits. In the roots we look for questions that relate to questions made in the roots of other trees, and in the trunk questions that belong to the nature of the trunks of other trees, and so on. We propose this process with the aim of offering a doctrine to resolve unexpected questions that arise in connection with the nature of other trees, a doctrine that we will offer in the answers of the four thousand questions that we propose to put in this tree. In resolving those questions, persons knowledgeable in this science will be able to resolve the unexpected questions that arise. This is why this book is called a Tree of the general knowledge of all the other sciences, since it is composed of general principles, and its investigation is general and artificial. And the same can be said of the conclusion of this tree, which is the practice of the previous trees.

We propose to make the answers to the questions as brief as possible and to avoid wordiness. And naturally, the briefer the answer to a question, the more suited it is to the investigation and the art, since brevity of words is more general than verbosity. We have already presented this doctrine in *The Art of Discovery*, *The General Table*, and *The Tree of Philosophy*.

The process we propose for resolving questions comprises three methods. The first method is to refer the response back to places in previous trees where the answer can be grasped according to the nature of those places and the nature of the question and its terms. Thus when a question is posed about the goodness of fire, the response is located in the roots of the elemental Tree, the affirmation or negation of the question depending on a test of which signifies better than the other, recognizing the nature of the test and keeping the definitions of the roots from being damaged. The same holds true if we ask about the goodness of a pepper, where the Art dictates that the answer be sought in the roots of the vegetable Tree. And so on, according to the nature of the other roots and the nature of the questions suited to those roots. And what we say of the roots also applies to the trunks and other parts of the trees.

The second method is to resolve questions through a maxim conditioned by the natures of the trees, relating that maxim to an affirmation or negation of the question. If the maxim seems obscure to some, we advise them to have recourse to the nature of those trees and those places on the trees with which the maxim agrees, as if desiring a conclusion from the following maxim: every principle is nobler for being and effecting good works than simple for being. This maxim holds in general for everything that is said of principles in the trees, for what is said to be greater, of more goodness, of

greater duration, greater power, and so on for the other principles. The particulars lie partly in the roots of the elemental Tree and partly in the trunk and other branches, and this in turn applies to the other parts of the tree and to other parts in other trees. In this second method, we propose affixing a maxim to the question and placing it after the question.

The third method of answering is composed of the first and the second, since at times we propose to resolve certain questions by sending them to certain places in the trees and by offering a maxim to the question.

THE ROOTS OF THE QUESTIONING TREE

Questions of the Roots of the Elemental Tree

1. Question: As fire belongs to the good of duration, why does it do damage to the substances that it burns? Why does it consume them?

Answer: If it did not consume, it would not be creative nor would it be good for human beings.

2. Question: Of what is goodness full?

Answer: Go to goodness, in the roots of the elemental Tree.

3. Question: It is asked if the goodness of the fire is substantial.

Answer: Go to goodness, in the roots of the elemental Tree. If the substance of fire were not substantially good, it would be better for lesser things than for the greater.

4. Question: What are the accidents of goodness?

Answer: Go to goodness in the roots of the elemental Tree.

5. Question: It is asked if nothing great can be great without greatness.

Answer: Go to greatness, in the roots of the elemental Tree. If no entity could be great without greatness, it could not be small because of smallness nor great in substance.

6. Question: It is asked if fire is greater than its greatness.

Answer: Go to greatness in the roots of the elemental Tree. Every substance is greater than any part of it, and therefore the greatness of fire cannot be self-evident.

7. Question: It is asked if the greatness of fire can be idle.

Answer: Throughout the substance of fire there is a succession from beginning, middle, and end.

8. Question: It is asked if fire can be great outside of itself.

Answer: Just as goodness is good in its greatness, so is greatness great in goodness.

9. Question: It is asked if fire can last without working.

Answer: There would no longer be fire without its parts. See duration in the roots of the elemental Tree.

10. Question: It is asked if the duration of fire is substantial.

Answer: If no duration were substantial, duration would naturally be more lasting because of something other than itself.

Questions of the Roots of the Vegetable Tree

77. Question: It is asked if the goodness of the apple belongs to the goodness of the fire.

Answer: Go to the roots of the vegetable Tree.

78. Question: It is asked if bad taste belongs to the good of the elemental Tree.

Answer: Sweetness and bitterness are by their natures good.

81. Question: It is asked why fire has an appetite to be in peppers.

Answer: Natural virtue is greater in many species than in one.

82. Question: How does the essence of fire come to be in the essence of the pepper?

Answer: The vegetative makes bread into meat and wine into blood.

83. Question: If fire is in the pepper, why does it not burn it?

Answer: The vegetative lives from fire as the flame from oil.

84. Question: Why is the fire not as strong in the pumpkin as in the pepper?

Answer: Just as all the roots of the elemental Tree are present in fire through heat, they are present in water through cold.

Questions of the Sensual Tree

88. Question: Why is there sense goodness?

Answer: Through the goodness of the flower and the goodness of the water, the goodness of the bread is increased.

92. Question: It is asked if sense goodness senses.

Answer: An animal senses by nature and its thoughts are its instruments for sensing.

93. Question: It is asked if sensual goodness is moral.

Answer: If the simple part were moral, it would be simple and not simple.

Questions of the Roots of the Imaginal Tree

104. Question: What is imagination?

Answer: Just as the primary forms come under fire, so do the descriptions of the elemental, vegetable, sensual, and celestial Trees come under the imagination.

105. Question: It is asked if the imagination has color.

Answer: Imagination captures color with the description of color.

106. Question: It is asked if the imagination can imagine itself.

Answer: Imagination has too little entity to be able to imagine itself.

Questions of the Human Tree

108. Question: It is asked if corporeal and spiritual goodness are mixed.

Answer: All participation is without mixture, just as the angel who is in a certain city does not mix its parts with the length and breadth and depth of that place.

109. Question: It is asked if the soul takes on the nature of the body.

Answer: In the human being, difference preserves the spiritual and bodily nature, and harmony adjusts them. See also the roots of the human Tree.

114. Question: When a human being dies, where does the soul go?

Answer: No corporeal place is the prison of the rational soul.

Questions of the Roots of the Moral Tree

118. Question: Why does the hermit go down the mountain and into the city to see beautiful women?

Answer: The eyes see the beauties of creatures, and the understanding of a good person understands the beauty of God, the will loves it, and memory recalls it.

125. Question: It is asked if the shame that people feel in doing good is a virtue.

Answer: Neither Jesus Christ nor the virgin Mary felt shame.

Questions of the Roots of the Wicked Tree

135. Question: How is an evil temptation recognized?

Answer: The delight that lies beneath a wicked habit is where the vices find repose. See also the roots of the wicked Tree.

Questions of the Roots of the Imperial Tree

138. Question: It is asked if the goodness of a prince is greater than the goodness of the people.

Answer: Many knights buy a horse.

Questions of the Roots of the Apostolic Tree

146. Question: It is asked if a prelate is more to be feared than to be loved.

Answer: One is a prelate more for loving than for burning heretics.

149. Question: It is asked if the pope is obliged to see that the Gospels are preached throughout the whole world.

Answer: No power has been granted for idleness.

155. Question: It is asked why clerics do not have women.

Answer: It is a serious thing for a man to use the active and contemplative life well.

Questions of the Celestial Tree

158. Question: It is asked why flowers turn towards the sun.

Answer: There is a harmony between giving and taking.

162. Question: It is asked why the sun is brighter at midday than in the morning.

Answer: More smoke rises out of green wood than out of dry.

163. Question: It is asked why the water of fountains is colder in the summer than in the winter.

Answer: Winter draws the friends of the sun out of their house.

Questions of the Roots of the Angelic Tree.

169. Question: It is asked if angels are corruptible.

Answer: No simple circle, or so we say, is divisible.

172. Question: It is asked if angels are audible.

Answer: The idea can be considered between God and creatures.

Questions of the Roots of the Everlasting Tree

179. Question: If the devil has sinned in time, why is his punishment eternal?

Answer: See the roots of the everlasting Tree.

184. Question: It is asked if the devil by himself has any power over human beings.

Answer: No human being lives on stones. See also the roots of the everlasting Tree.

Questions of the Roots of the Maternal Tree

192. Question: It is asked if our Lady is a mother more because of the divine nature of Jesus Christ than because of the human.

Answer: Insofar as Jesus Christ is human, he did not make himself either a son or a human being.

195. Question: It is asked whether our Lady would be the mother of Jesus Christ God and man if she had not [sic] sinned?

Answer: The first intentions do not have as their end the existence of the second; nor do the hammer and pliers have as their end the nail.

Questions of the Roots of the Christian Tree

203. Question: It is asked whether Jesus Christ could have sinned while in this world.

Answer: It is impossible for the body to be a corpse while the soul is in the body. See also the roots of the Christian Tree.

205. Question: It is asked if the elements are contraries in Jesus Christ.

Answer: Just as Jesus Christ is human in his godhead and is human by nature, the elements in the body of Jesus Christ are harmonious and contrary according to his nature, where contrariness is obliged to be consumed in harmony.

Questions of the Dignities of God in the Divine Tree

207. Question: It is asked if there is production in God.

Answer: If there were no production in God, all his thoughts would be idle in infinite extension and infinite duration. See also the dignities and flowers of the divine Tree.

215. Question: It is asked if divine ideas are creative.

Answer: They are, and what is better still, as humans sense because of seeing, hearing, and the working of the other senses, God creates because of his ideas. And just as humans are sentient by the nature of their senses, God is creator by the nature of his ideas.

Questions of the Roots of the Exemplary Tree

216. Question: It is asked why knights in battle rush to their death to defend their lord the king.

Answer: See the first paragraph of the roots of the exemplary Tree, where the answer is indicated by similitude.

233. Question: It is asked how one recognizes fear in humans.

Answer: See the eighteenth paragraph in the roots of the exemplary Tree.

We have presented a doctrine for how to extract moral questions from examples of the roots of the elemental Tree. By this doctrine one can extract from those same examples exemplary questions to be asked of the roots of the vegetable, sensual, and other trees.

Disconsolation

Lo desconort. Rome, 1295–1296. English translation from the Spanish version of M. de Riquer (Barcelona, Madrid, Lisbon, 1950), 128–60.

This is the *Disconsolation* that Master Ramon Llull wrote in his old age, realizing that neither the pope nor other worldly lords desired to undertake the conversion of the infidels as he had implored them on many and diverse occasions.

Loving God, with your strength this disconsolation of Ramon Llull begins.

I

God, with your strength I begin this *Disconsolation*, which I compose singing in order to console myself and to make public the sin and offense being committed against you who will judge us at death. The more I console myself, the less firm is my resolve, since my heart is a harbor of indignation and suffering, so that consolation becomes a heavy disconsolation. I am caught torn between labors and pleasures, and I have no friend but you to bring me happiness. I bear the burden, falling and getting up again, and am in such a state that nothing I see or hear can bring me relief.

II

When I had grown up and come to know the vanity of the world, I began to do evil and entered into sin, forgetting the God of glory to follow the flesh. But Jesus Christ, in his great mercy, chose to visit me five times on the cross, that I might remember him and fall so deeply in love with him that I would seek to make him preached throughout the whole world and to make known the truth of his sublime Trinity and of how he became incarnate. This inspired me with such great resolve that I longed only for him to be honored, and so began to serve him willingly.

III

When I came to consider the state of the world, how few Christians there are and how numerous are the unbelieving, I gathered up my courage and went to prelates and kings, and also to religious, intending to undertake such an expedition of preaching with iron, ships, and true arguments that there would result a great increase in our faith and that infidels would come to sincere conversion. Thirty years I strived for this and in truth have not been able to achieve it. This brings me such affliction that I often weep and find myself in a weakened state.

IV

Thus [submerged] in sadness, and ever aware of the great affront being done to God by the decline of love in the world, I went off to a forest, like a tormented servant fleeing a wicked master, and there passed my days weeping and in such dejection that my heart ached. Yet I felt sweetness as I wept and also as I spoke with God, complaining that he listens so little to the needs of the just and sinners who seek his honor, for if he would be of more help and show them more favor, the world would sooner convert to faith in him.

V

In this state of melancholy, I raised my eyes and saw a man approaching with a crook in his hand. He had a long beard and was dressed scantily, a hair shirt about his waist. From his form he looked to be a hermit. Drawing near, he asked me what was wrong, what was the source of my grief, and if there was anything he could do to help. I replied that my indignation was so great that neither he nor anyone could console me, for the greater the loss, the stronger the wrath. "And who could put into words what I have lost?"

VI

"Ramon," spoke the hermit, "What have you lost? Why do you not take consolation in the King of salvation who provides for everything that proceeds from him? To lose him is to be struck down beyond consoling. If you have no friend to console you, speak to me of [the state of] your spirits and of what has happened to you, for if you are weak in spirit and disillusioned, it is very possible that my teaching could aid you. If you are beaten down, I will show you, with the help of God, how to conquer the indignation and pain that besiege your soul."

VII

“Hermit, if I could but perform the service to God I have so long sought, I should count nothing as lost. Rather than complain to him, I would count only the great gain of those in error being brought to conversion and of Christians having the Holy Sepulcher in their possession. But the fault lies with those whom God has set in higher places of honor. They would not listen to me but only looked down on my person and my words as if I were talking nonsense and out of my mind. Everything I try to do to the honor of God and the salvation of people falls apart because of them.

VIII

“I tell you, moreover, that I have in my possession a *General Art*, a recently inspired gift of the Holy Spirit through which all natural things can be known in accord with the way understanding arrives at the sensual. It serves for [learning] Law, Medicine, and all knowledge, as well as for Theology, which I esteem above all. There exists no art more valuable for resolving questions and destroying errors by natural reason, and I consider it a waste that hardly anyone is interested in it. This is why I lament and weep and feel moral indignation, for whoever has lost so great a fortune can never again be satisfied with anything earthly.”

IX

“Ramon, if you are doing everything necessary to seek the honor of God and to do good, then even if you are not listened to or helped by the powerful, that does not justify your displeasure. God, who sees everything, is as grateful as if you had accomplished what you desire, for those who conduct themselves well and seek his honor, acquire for themselves merit, improvement, facility, mercy, and favor. It is therefore a grave sin to harbor a spirit of indignation and disconsolation when God is granting a good that calls for happiness, hope, and faith.

X

“Ramon, do not worry about your Art. On the contrary, be happy and satisfied with it, for if God gave it to you, justice and strength will make it prosper among those whose love is steadfast. If you are going through a time of bitterness now, better times will come. You will have assistants to learn the Art, to conquer the errors of this world, and to perform many extraordinary deeds. For this reason I beg you, my friend, be consoled. Weep no longer for acts of virtue, but rather rejoice over acts of vice, trusting in the grace and help of God.

XI

“Ramon, why do you weep rather than put on a happy face and seek consolation for your bad temper? It makes me fear you are in a state of mortal sin and unworthy of doing good. God does not wish to be served by anyone who is sinning. And if that which you so desire is not realized, it is not the fault of those against whom you complain, [but] because God does not wish your undertaking to prosper while you are in a state of sin. No sinner can be the source of any good, for good and evil have nothing in common.”

XII

“Hermit, I do not mean to deny that I have sinned grievously and often, and have confessed as much. But from the time that Jesus Christ appeared to me on the cross, of which I spoke to you before, and I fortified my will in his love, I have not knowingly committed any mortal sin. Perhaps Jesus did not help me do good because of things I did when I was a servant of the world and in love with its vanity. But God would do me an injustice and a sin not to help me after I began to love him and forsook the world for his love.”

XIII

“Ramon, the negligent person does not know how to see anything good through to the end, and what makes him negligent is insufficient desire to keep his project in mind. You make me fear that the reason for the collapse of the general undertaking you want to carry out with those very important persons, who do not wish to help you, is that you are not putting all your love into it. If there is little love, nothing great is accomplished. If you are lazy, you should accuse yourself and not lay the blame for your failure on others. In your idleness you should be disappointed with yourself and not with others, since it is you who choose not to exert yourself and honor God with all your strength.”

XIV

“Hermit, see [for yourself] if I am negligent in seeking the general good of the just and the sinful. I left my wife, my children, and my estate, and was [plunged] in toils and sufferings for thirty years. Five times I went to the [papal] court, at my own expense; I was present at three general chapters of the Order of Preachers and another three of the Friars Minor. If you only knew what I have managed to say to kings and lords, and how

much I have labored, you would not fear that I have been lazy in this undertaking. If you are a pious man, you would rather tender me compassion.”

XV

“Ramon, anyone who sees an undertaking of great importance through to the end must know how to pursue it discreetly. If you are not a discreet man or are not informed of such things, and you cast recriminations, you act unjustly, censuring those who are discreet and are acting sensibly as befits a good undertaking and the extolling of the Christian faith. I therefore counsel you summarily to console yourself in your error, to consider that you are not suited to the undertaking, and to stand aside in humility and patience.”

XVI

“Hermit, I am not brilliant enough to trust my reason in something so important. If, in my ignorance, I fail at it for want of understanding and because I have not the necessary discretion for so great an undertaking, this is why I desire companions to help me bring it about. But the search for company has done me no good, great or small. On the contrary, I find myself alone and abandoned. When I look at them face to face and begin to speak of my plan, they do not wish to listen, and most say that I am deranged for preaching such sermons to them. But at the [final] Judgment, it will be shown who is lucid and who will receive pardon for his sins.”

XVII

“Ramon, the miser who wants to succeed in a venture finds himself unable to complete or bring about what he wants. Therefore, if you are miserly and are not prepared to divest yourself of what is yours in order to give honor to God, you should fault your own greed, which is what impedes you from attempting the good venture. If you cannot be generous, poverty will work against you. You should keep in mind that great [lords] are moved more by donations than by sermons about the requests being made of them. I therefore advise you, if you can be generous, to prepare to set out at once, for with donations you will get everything.”

XVIII

“Hermit, be assured that miserliness, money, and honors have never been pleasing to my heart, and that I have exhausted the whole of my patrimony in this business, and have been so liberal that my children are left in poverty. I do not fear the charge of avarice, therefore, but neither can I be as generous with people as I would like, because I am neither rich nor a city

lord. So consider me innocent of what you impute to me. For if I were lord of some empire or crown, I would spend my entire estate until there was no more, for who gives little is not listened to attentively.”

XIX

“Ramon, vainglory makes one love oneself in order to be spoken of highly by people, to be esteemed, loved, honored, and referred to often. So if you work to praise yourself, pride and vainglory will make you despicable in the eyes of those among whom you hope to complete your undertaking. They will not condescend to look at you or listen to you, since an undertaking so honorable must not be born by a vile person, and anyone who seeks to be spoken of more highly than is his due is vile and sinful. Therefore, do not try to blame others for your own error.”

XX

“Hermit, I do not know why you hold me in such low esteem. One should have a good impression, not a bad opinion, of those one does not know. And why do you not believe that someone can dedicate himself completely to so good an enterprise and be of some use to it? If I were altogether bad for it, I would aim at the opposite, as nature and reason demand. God forgive me, then, but I never had it in mind to preach such sermons to garner praise, since no tribute can do any good to a sinner.”

XXI

“Ramon, perhaps you are not known, and that is the reason your undertaking meets with disappointment, since no treasure hidden in the earth can be desired or fancied. If your knowledge is not noticed, how can you expect to be known? Show what you know so that your Art and your knowledge can be of help to you, since one who is unknown cannot achieve honor or power as long as he is ignored. My friend, if you wish the salvation of others and the honor of God, and that your knowledge not come to naught, try to make yourself known.”

XXII

“Hermit, how can you imagine that I am concealing a knowledge through which our faith would be demonstrated so decisively to those in error in order that they might be saved by God, whom I so desire all to love? Be assured, on the contrary, that I am weary of teaching it. If my books were studied assiduously and not neglected by other branches of knowledge, I would be known. But people read them like cats walking on coals, which is why I cannot advance my plan with them. If there were

someone to remember them, to understand them and not be afraid of them, the world could be put straight through my books.”

XXIII

“Ramon, everything I say, I say to console you. But since you have no desire to stop weeping, I may become angry. But listen and see whether what you ask of the pope is feasible, for it does not seem possible to prove our faith or to find the sort of people who spontaneously offer themselves to be martyred by the shameless Saracens in order to preach to them. So, friend, you should not be surprised if the pope and the cardinals do not wish to grant you what you ask, since it cannot be done.”

XXIV

“Hermit, if it were not possible to prove the faith, God could not hold Christians responsible for not wanting to teach it to the infidels, and they could reasonably complain to God for not allowing the greatest truth to be argued. I wrote my *Book of Passage* so that understanding might aid our love to love the Trinity and the Incarnation of God more and might better combat falsehood. In it I revealed clearly how to recover the most Holy Sepulcher and find people to preach the faith without fear of death, and [I have shown] who can do it.”

XXV

“Ramon, if it were possible for us to demonstrate our faith, we would lose merit, and for this reason it is not right for it to be demonstrated, since that good would be undone. And without the good, evil would be the direct cause of the demonstration, which goes against the merit humans have for believing a truth that cannot be seen through the force of argument but only through faith. Besides, human understanding cannot comprehend the full power of God, which is so infinite that there is nothing finite in it. It seems, therefore, that your reasons have no value and that you act improperly by not consoling yourself.”

XXVI

“Hermit, what you are trying to say would be true if humans had created themselves. But since God created people that they might do him homage, which is a nobler and more sublime goal than the goal of one who [only] wishes to achieve glory, your reasons are not valid. It has already been shown that the faith can be proved, if you recall. And if it can be proved, this does not imply that the created contains and comprehends all uncreated being, but only that it understands according to the measure that

has been given it, since one receives will, memory, understanding, power, and goodness completely from God.”

XXVII

“Ramon, how do you think that, through preaching, the Saracens can be brought to baptism? It seems useless to me to go [to them], since Mohammed commanded that no one who spoke ill of him should be allowed to escape and their arguments not be listened to. Besides, one [who goes to preach to them] would not know how to speak the Arabic tongue. You cannot get very far with them working through interpreters, and learning the language takes a great deal of time. Hence I counsel you to go and pray to God on a high mountain, and there to contemplate him with me.”

XXVIII

“Hermit, the Saracens are in such a state that the wise among them do not believe in Mohammed by force of arguments and despise the Koran because he lived a dishonest life. So if one could conduct a long discussion with them and demonstrate the faith through force of arguments, they would be converted at once. And once converted, they would convert the people. To learn their language does not take much time, and there is no need to start out speaking ill of Mohammed. One does what one can, and the Holy Spirit will complement it with whatever is deemed appropriate.”

XXIX

“Ramon, if God wanted the world to be converted, he would provide the languages through the Holy Spirit to convert the world, as you have heard it said of Christ and the apostles, and of which much has been written. This conversion would reach everywhere, uniting all people in a single flock that would never again be scattered throughout the world. That [flock] would be ours, established by God, and in it no sin would ever be allowed. But if everyone in our times has sinned so much that they no longer wish [the infidels] to be saved, God has to work miracles to counter the affront.”

XXX

“Hermit, God always loves truth and desires to be loved and known by human beings. This is why people always have the freedom to do good and avoid evil. It would be would unnatural if they did not have the power, in these very times in which we live, to seek the honor of God and love of neighbor. This is why I am dissatisfied with what you tell me. It would be a grave sin for you to say that people nowadays are constrained from convert-

ing those in error and from being helped by God in what concerns his honor. I am therefore unconsolated by your words.”

XXXI

“Ramon, the sensible thing to do is to hold on to your gains rather than to go off to convert the evil Saracens who have no desire to listen. It is better to preach the love of God more to Christians so that they might serve him. What is more, there is no knowing if things will go well with the Saracens or if will go so badly that they try to kill [those who preach to them]. Worse still, they would never make good Christians, since they cannot adapt to customs that are not their own. Hence it is better if you let go of your indignation and turn your desires to something else.”

XXXII

“Hermit, if the numbers of Preachers, secular clergy, Friars Minor, or even monks subject to an abbot or prior were small, what you say would be true. But I am displeased precisely because there are so many worthy men of our faith prepared to die for the honor of God—enough for us and for them—and because those in the highest position do not do what they must for the praise of God. If the converts themselves do not love the faith, their children will. What you say is nonsense, for no one who dies for the creator ends up losing.”

XXXIII

“Ramon, I have heard that many have gone to preach to the Saracens and to the Tartars, and that they have achieved but little. So I am surprised that you are so staunch in your plan. When one has ended up exhausted after repeated attempts, it makes more sense to abandon the undertaking, and indeed it is nonsense not to. I advise you, my brother, to take pity on the body you have so greatly afflicted, and to die in a quite place, seeking solace for your injuries.”

XXXIV

“Hermit, if one wishes to honor and serve his Lord much, nothing [in the world] should distract him or make him too weary to serve well. It is because your heart is lacking in love that you miss the point in counseling yourself and others. For if one cannot bring about an undertaking the first time, with proper planning it can be completed at another time. A good undertaking is not accomplished at the start; if the first achieve little, those who come later will be able to do much. I appeal to your mercy, therefore,

and ask that you leave me in peace, since I do not think I have anything to gain from you, and the longer you talk, the sadder I become.”

XXXV

Ramon was angered and had no wish to listen to the hermit, who kept pressing him to give up the great suffering in which he found himself. “Lord, God of glory,” he began, “is there any torment in the world like that which I suffer at not being able to serve you and at not having anyone to help me see to it that the Art which you gave me, and from which much good can come, will endure and not, as I fear, waste away after my death? In my opinion, no one knows it well and I cannot oblige anyone to learn it. Poor me! If it is all in vain, how shall I defend myself in your presence when it was you who entrusted me with it for your own exaltation?”

XXXVI

“Ramon, if the philosophers of antiquity did not know this Art of yours, it does not seem to be of much use. If it were true, they would have discovered it earlier, since their understanding was superior to yours. If I speak an untruth and you have [really] received it from God, then you are wrong to fear that it will come to nothing after your death, since everything that comes from God comes to a good end. What is more, the arts that the ancients invented did not succeed during their lifetimes but were acclaimed by others that followed them.”

XXXVII

He wanted to console, but Ramon only grew angry on hearing the hermit’s view that the ancient philosophers, who were not informed of the faith, had been the source of everything good and were knowledgeable about the Trinity and the Incarnation. The ancient philosophers could not have surmised that there is a Trinity in God or a union of the divine with the human. They neither knew nor loved what the inner workings of God have wrought. So why should the ancient philosophers have deeper insight than those who came later, who are devout and believe in the resurrection?

XXXVIII

“Ramon, I can do nothing to console you. Listen to my reasoning and do not become annoyed. What does God have to lose if things are not well in the world? Insofar as he exists, the world can neither elevate him nor lower him. He is perfect in himself and has no need of any creature. You should be satisfied, then, with the perfection that God has in himself by reason of his own goodness. But you, fool, are sad—as if God were somehow

diminished by the sorry state in which you find the world! Fool! Why are you not content with the fullness of the godhead? Why do you not give up worrying about created things and let your heart arrive at the immense greatness of God?"

XXXIX

"Hermit, your counsels do me little good, and the hour in which I met you was ill-fated. Did I not fear being shameless and without tact, I should never wish to speak with you again. What could you say to me that would console me when I see how God is affronted, not served, not remembered, not loved, not known? Even if God is all-sufficient unto himself, still the love in my heart would not be satisfied knowing that he is not sufficiently honored. I am disconsolate and unhappy when I see him scorned for such vile reasons. But I am consoled as far as the essence of God is concerned."

XL

"Ramon, everything God does, he does justly, and if he sends wicked unbelievers to hell, you have not to grieve over it. If you resent the justice of God, your indignation is a transgression and you sin mortally against him by loving those who believe falsely of the true God and disobey him. If there were good and faithful love in you, you would be pleased that God inflicts torture on those who constantly sin. One who loves deeply does not rail against what the beloved does when he does it with justice."

XLI

"Hermit, I do not lament what the Lord does. I praise and adore him for all his works. But since I wish to see him honored and loved above everything that exists, I complain and lament and am [plunged] in sadness. As you do not know whence my pain comes, you fail to console me or to be of any help to me. It is better, therefore, that you leave me in my indignation and my lament, and that you learn to be a better consoler, since you know so little about it. Thanks to you, sinners get no better. You show them no charity, whereas God pardons them magnanimously."

XLII

"Ramon, it is because I wish to see you happy and not angry or suffering over anything that I seek to console you and ask that you listen to me. God puts up with the fact that the world is so evil in order better to pardon it on all counts, for the more he pardons the greater his display of mercy and grace. Be assured, then, that God so loves love his people that

nearly everyone on earth will be saved. If the saved were not more than the condemned, his mercy would not be so loving. Take consolation, therefore, in the great mercy of God.”

XLIII

“Hermit, you keep me the whole day in debate and prevent me from remembering my anxiety and torment, and you do so to obliterate the indignation and disconsolation that weary me. But you come to no conclusion in appealing more to great mercy than to great justice. In this you err, since judging and pardoning are equally present in God, according to the ordering of his virtues. He allows nothing that would diminish his justice. This is why the sinner should be greatly afraid, and why I weep that God is not revered.”

XLIV

“Ramon, it is inevitable that the predestined will be saved. If they were not, God’s knowledge would be able to change to the contrary. But there is no possibility of such change; if there were, the knowledge of God would not be perfect but diminishable. Since it is perfect, console yourself in that perfection, for you sin against it by not conforming to the judgment and dispensation of the will of God, as your science knows and as truth assures.”

XLV

“Hermit, if you were an educated man, you would speak more correctly of the predestined. You would not forget the freedom that God has in himself and everything he has created, and that he has given to human beings so that they might serve him without coercion, for God is so good that he must be served willingly. There would be no such service if he were served and loved by those who were predestined. One would be saved without being judged, since there can be no judgment without freedom. But freedom is not constrained by the predestination of the condemned and the saved.”

XLVI

“Ramon, if you had great hope, even though the world is in grave danger, you would not suffer for its sorry state, since God, who is all mercy, will soon bring the world such happiness that people will rejoice. Be assured that this is certain, for God began human beings in the mercy and goodness they have in his likeness. If you do not therefore give up your sadness, you

are without pity and confidence in goodness, but would oppose God and his love.”

XLVII

“Hermit, before the world comes to a good state, there will be many outrages against the true God. I do not see anything happening to indicate that that time is near. The pope and the cardinals do not directly approve what I am proposing to the [papal] court, but have only held it up. This saddens me so much that I find no consolation. What I offer them shows in all clarity the order that can quickly be established in the world. Yet they see no value in it and only make fun of it, as if came from someone who is out of his mind. This is why such people make me despair.”

XLVIII

The hermit considered whether he could in any way console Ramon, who lamented so greatly. He told him that the Virgin Mary, and with her all the hierarchies of angels and the saints, beseech her son Jesus Christ day and night that it might please him to bring order to the world soon and to show it the way to honor and serve him. “This should console you, Ramon, since Jesus Christ always does what his pious mother, the angels, and the saints ask of him. Take heart, then, and let joy return to you.”

XLIX

“Hermit, when I consider that our Lady of love and courage, of the just and the sinner, and that all the saints are praying to our Lord that the whole world might give honor to Jesus Christ, and then see how greatly the world insults him, I feel as if I would die of indignation and sorrow. Wicked sinners are so unworthy that God can hardly suffer intercession on their behalf. And so the world continues in its error, with hardly anyone to praise God that would not rather praise themselves or their children or their falcons. Who can be happy and not sad at this?”

L

“Ramon, you do not seem to me a long-suffering person, since you have no desire to take consolation in anything. How can you not remember Job, who suffered so many losses and so many torments of body, who ended up so poor that he had nothing? Yet he resigned himself, whereas nothing in the world can make you resign yourself, even though you have your health and are in possession of an estate, money, clothes, children, and other things that bring satisfaction. Since God is not pleased with those

who cannot put up with suffering, he does not allow the divine undertaking you have embarked on to succeed or himself to be revered.”

LI

“Hermit, there is nothing great about being consoled for the loss of sons, money, and for becoming sick, if these things are God’s will. But who can find consolation when God is forgotten, slighted, blasphemed, and ignored in the extreme, which must be greatly displeasing to God. Moreover, you do not know to what extent I am despised for the sake of God, how many times I have been beaten, maligned, and reviled, put in danger of death, and dragged by the beard. Through the strength of God I have been patient, but there is none in the world to make me resign myself to the fact that God is so little loved in the world.”

LII

“Ramon, as I see it, you do everything you can to make God revered throughout the world. For this God must rightly be as pleased as if your undertaking had been realized. This should bring you consolation and mitigate your suffering, for you have accumulated much merit and can expect a great reward. Do not worry yourself about the sins of those who displease God. Rejoice at yourself and your conduct, and do not be too agitated about your plans or because others do not follow your will. Let it be enough for you to love and fear God.

LIII

“Hermit, human beings were not created in the beginning to accumulate merit and great glorification, but so that God might be revered by his people in the world. I do not rejoice, therefore, if my reward is great, nor am I saddened if it is diminished. This is not my aim. All my indignation, my suffering, and my pain are due to the fact that the world is not ordered in such a way that God is honored and loved by all people and that all people have come to faith in their salvation. It is no use for you to try to console where there is no consolation possible.”

LIV

“Ramon, what is this undertaking you so long for and through which God would be so greatly honored in the world? It is very possible that you are not the right person for it and that there is another more suited through whom the world would be brought to a good end. And if the undertaking belongs to another, you work in vain, and would continue to do so even if you lived for a thousand years, without ever achieving what

you seek. No one can bring about an undertaking when he has lost the way. So I pray you, explain the project to me clearly, and then let us see if it suited to make God more loved in the world.”

LV

“Hermit, if you remember well, I have explained to you the way in which God may be more honored. The idea is that the pope dispatch numerous educated and enthusiastic men willing to be martyred for God with the aim of making him understood and revered in all the world; and that each of them be instructed in the language [of the infidels], as was done at Miramar. (May the conscience of the one who was its ruin be smitten with remorse!) In addition, for [the expenses of] the expedition, clerics and prelates would give a tenth of their goods, to continue until such time as the [Holy] Sepulcher has been won. I have written a book on these matters.

LVI

“Hermit, there is still another provision that would greatly redound to the expedition and help to rid this people of their error: that the pope gather together the schismatics to hold a great debate. Of this, too, I have written. Once the schismatics, who are many in number, have been recovered, there would be no one to oppose the church with evil intentions or arms or any argument. The orders of the Temple and the Hospital should be unified with the head of the Holy Sepulcher as their king. I know no better way to revere God.”

LVII

The hermit thought him to speak the truth, and was worried at not having a solution more advantageous than the one Ramon was offering. He was therefore moved to pity and sincerely repented of having wearied him so. Sad and disconsolate, he wished to remain with Ramon, beseeching him in tears and sighs to forgive him. “Truth, devotion, charity!” he said. “Where is the gratitude that God deserves?” When Ramon saw that the hermit had come to agree with him, he approached to kiss him. The two wept long together.

LVIII

“Ramon,” spoke the hermit, “how shall we convince the pope and the cardinals and secure the undertaking? I want to persevere in something so noble forever and to invest my every strength in its pursuit, for the world will be better as a result of it. I am displeased not to have realized it sooner. If I had, nothing would have stopped me from studying Arabic and your

science in order to go to the [land of the] Saracens and keep the faith without fear of death, and to feel the pleasure of dying for the honor and love of Jesus. It is better to die for him than to live for oneself.”

LIX

“Hermit, I am tired of expounding this undertaking in the [papal] court and getting nowhere. If you wish to try to present this undertaking of Jesus in the court yourself and labor a long time to do as much as you can, you might succeed in bringing it about, although it might require that you become a kind of minstrel and sing to the court the *Hundred Names* that I have written about God and set in verse so they might be sung and spoken without fear [of forgetting them]. But I don’t think this good advice, since it would end up belittling the books that God has had me compose.”

LX

“When I am in the court, Ramon, where will you be? Why do you not attempt the undertaking of Jesus Christ there with me, since it was you who initiated it? And if they make sport of us, how can you be ridiculed [if you are not present]? You order me to do what you do not wish to do, and this makes me think that you are not capable of this venture nor of any other. Let us go to the court together and without fear. Do not be like those who pray, “Lord, do it for me” because they are not prepared to do it for themselves. You should feel ashamed, since you have no excuse and would be acting hypocritically, which would be a sin. For shame, you would undo the good that you have accomplished.”

LXI

“Hermit, I plan to return to the [land of the] Saracens to bring them our faith. I go without fear of death, which is easier to bear than the feeling ashamed for having honored Jesus Christ. Death does not frighten me at all; it must be loved. But in order not to expose my Art to ridicule by employing the style proper to the minstrels, and because I also believe I can do more good elsewhere, I propose not to return to the court now. And if you recriminate me now so harshly, perhaps you do so to excuse yourself from going to the court. Let us give up the idea, then.”

LXII

The hermit repented of having censured Ramon and told him that he set on him so roughly in order to persuade him to accompany him to the court. “Ramon,” spoke the hermit, “I propose to stay in the court two or three years, even if I can do nothing. But then I intend to begin traveling

the world, going to prelates, marquis, religious, and kings, and to do everything I can to bring to a good conclusion the undertaking you have entrusted me with. But I wish for another to occupy my place in the court to form a circle [of ongoing investigation] until this great project is realized in the court.”

LXIII

“Hermit,” said Ramon “you have considered well. With such a circle it will be possible to accomplish an undertaking so good and so important for Christendom as this. When you are there, tell the kings and prelates that if they do not take it up soon, it is already arranged that the Turks will join with the Saracens and that they have already converted a large number. Tartars who have been converted to Mohammedanism will have an easy time destroying most of Christendom, so that no Christian would hold any throne and no prelate would have his fat, sleeping horse. Consider, hermit, the state the world is in.”

LXIV

“Ramon,” said the hermit, “I would like to know why God chooses to treat the world this way, looking down on what it his, and how his goodness can permit so many sinners to go to the sufferings of hell. I beg you, Ramon, tell me the truth, for the more you speak to me the more good it does and the better I will be able to bear the undertaking that you charge me with. From the time the world was created until now, it seems to me, for every one that is saved there are a thousand suffering in hell forever. How can this happen without the Church or people doing anything [to stop it]?”

LXV

“Hermit, if you will recall, I already told you that God created people more to serve and honor him than for their own glorification. And if one does not remain within the ends for which one was created in seeking to secure one’s own salvation and well-being rather than the honor of God, then such a one cannot be in a state of grace, but in sin and at the edge of the abyss. This is why the world is lost and does not want to wake up. It does not surprise me that God chooses not to love such persons but allows the devil to do them harm, thereby avenging to the full the affronts he receives.”

LXVI

The hermit and Ramon took leave of each other, weeping as they kissed and embraced. Each one told the other to go with God and to

remember him in his prayers. As they parted they fell to their knees and prayed with great love, mercy, and sorrow. Each one blessed the other and gave thanks. They parted from each other heaving great sighs, for they did not think they would ever meet again in this world but only in the next, God willing. And no sooner had they drawn a short distance from each other than each longed intensely for the other.

LXVII

The hermit pondered the labors and strain that had saddened Ramon for many years and the great danger to which he was exposed. Kneeling with folded hands, he lifted his eyes to the heavens and spoke to God with piety and love: "Oh God, immense and merciful, I beseech you, please keep Ramon with you and preserve him from evil! Powerful God, I commend my friend Ramon, [asking] that you send to the world persons who yearn for death out of love for you, that they might teach the truth of the faith, preaching throughout the world just as Ramon is now doing."

LXVIII

When Ramon remembered the great tempest that had tossed him about for so long, and thought of the hermit who had cast himself into it, he wept copiously and felt compassion for him. Hands joined and on his knees, he prayed to Jesus Christ: "True God and true man, through whom I have striven that you may be known and loved in all the world! If it please justice that I be shown gratitude, may it please you that the hermit be rewarded, since he has bound himself to my company with such enthusiasm. May that in which I have succeeded so little be realized through him. Help me to make Christendom prosper."

LXIX

Here ends the *Disconsolation* that Ramon has written, in which he has explained the ordering of the world, setting it in verse so that it not be forgotten. It may happen that some persons will be inspired to join the undertaking until what Ramon has asked of the pope reaches its end. If the undertaking is organized by the pope and the cardinals agree to it, all evils can be lifted from the world and the whole world will be so caught up with God that the Christian faith will not be contradicted. I commend this *Disconsolation* to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This *Disconsolation* was composed in the court of Rome and sung in the tone of Berart.

The Song of Ramon

Cant de Ramon. Majorca, 1300. English translation from the Spanish version of Amador Vega.

I am created and given being
to serve God and thus be honored.
I have fallen into great sin
and come under the wrath of God.
Jesus came to me crucified,
and I wished God to be loved by me.

In the morning I went to beg forgiveness
of God, and made my confession
in grief and contrition.
With love and prayer,
with hope and devotion
has God provided me.

The monastery of Miramar
made a gift of Friars Minor
to preach to the Saracens.
Between the vineyard and the fennel gardens
love took hold of me, made me love God,
and left me in sighs and laments.

God the Father, Son, and God the Spirit,
which is a Holy Trinity,
I tried to show how they might be demonstrated.
God the Son has come down from heaven;
born of a virgin,
God and man, called Christ.

The world stood condemned;
Jesus died to bring salvation,

he through whom the world was created.
 Jesus rose to heaven on the throne;
 he will come to judge the evil and the good,
 and tears to beg forgiveness will serve nothing.

New knowledge have I found;
 through it the truth can be known
 and falsehood destroyed.
 Saracens will be baptized,
 and Tartars, Jews, and all who have strayed,
 through the knowledge that God has given me.

I have taken up the cross; I send love
 to our Lady of sinners
 that great succor may reach me from her.
 My heart is a house of love
 and my eyes fountains of tears.
 Between delight and sorrow I stand.

I am an old man, poor and despised,
 without the help of anyone born
 and bearing too great a burden.
 Something great I have sought of the world
 and very good example have I given,
 but little am I known and loved.

I wish to die in an ocean of love.
 Because of my years I have no fear
 of evil prince or evil shepherd.
 Every day I ponder the dishonor
 done to God by great lords
 who lead the world into error.

I pray God to send messengers
 devout, wise, and true,
 to know that God is human.
 To the virgin in whom God became man
 and to all the saints subject to her
 I pray not to be led to hell.

Praise and honor to the greatest Lord
 to whom I transmit my love
 that it may be bathed in his light.
 I am not worthy to render honor

to God—so great a sinner am I
and a troubadour of books!

Wherever I go I think to do good,
but in the end can do nothing because of my
anger and regret.

Contrite and weeping
I cry out to God for such favor
that he may choose to exalt my books.

Holiness, life, health, delight has God given me,
and freedom.

He has protected me from evil and sin.
To God I have entrusted my all;
no evil spirit and none irate
have any power in me.

May God tell the heavens and the elements,
the plants and every living thing
not to do me ill or torment me.
God grant me companions learned,
devout, loyal, humble, and timid,
to seek your honors.

Ars Brevis

Ars brevis. Pisa, 1308. English translation by Anthony BONNER
1993, 297–310.

God, with the help of your supreme perfection, here begins the *Ars brevis*, which is a replica of the *General Art*, that is, of the work beginning “God, with the help of your supreme perfection, here begins the *Ars generalis ultima*.”

PROLOGUE

We have written this *Ars brevis* so that the *Ars magna* may be more easily understood. For once the former is understood, the latter, along with the other Arts, can be easily understood and learned.

The subject of this Art is the answering of all questions, assuming that one can identify them by name.

This book is divided into thirteen parts, just like the *Ars magna*. The first part concerns the Alphabet. The second, the Figures. The third, the Definitions. The fourth, the Rules. The fifth, the Table. The sixth, the Evacuation of the Third Figure. The seventh, the Multiplication of the Fourth Figure. The eighth, the Mixture of Principles and Rules. The ninth, the Nine Subjects. The tenth, Application. The eleventh, Questions. The twelfth, Habituation. The thirteenth, the way the Art should be taught.

PART I, WHICH TREATS OF THE ALPHABET OF THIS ART

The Alphabet

We have employed an alphabet in this Art so that it can be used to make figures, as well as to mix principles and rules for the purpose of investigating the truth. For, as a result of any one letter having many meanings, the intellect becomes more general in its reception of the things signified, as well as in acquiring knowledge. And this alphabet must be learned by heart, for otherwise the artist will not be able to make proper use of this Art.

B signifies goodness, difference, whether?, God, justice, and avarice.

C signifies greatness, concordance, what?, angel, prudence, and gluttony.

D signifies eternity or duration, contrariety, of what?, heaven, fortitude, and lust.

E signifies power, beginning, why?, man, temperance, and pride.

F signifies wisdom, middle, how much?, imaginative, faith, and accidie.

G signifies will, end, of what kind?, sensitive, hope, and envy.

H signifies virtue, majority, when?, vegetative, charity, and ire.

I signifies truth, equality, where?, elementative, patience, and lying.

K signifies glory, minority, how and with what?, instrumentative, pity, and inconstancy.

PART II, WHICH TREATS OF THE FOUR FIGURES

1. *The First Figure, Denoted by A*

This part is divided into four sections, one for each of the four figures. The First Figure is that of A, and it contains nine principles, to wit, goodness, greatness, etc., and nine letters, to wit, B, C, D, E, etc. This figure is circular to show that any subject can become a predicate and vice versa, as when one says, "goodness is great," "greatness is good," and so on. In this figure, moreover, the artist seeks the natural conjunction between subject and predicate, as well as their relative disposition and proportion, so that he can find the middle term and thus reach a conclusion.

Each principle, taken by itself, is completely general, as when one says "goodness" or "greatness." However, as soon as one principle is applied to another, then it is subordinate, as when we say "great goodness." And when some principle is applied to a singular thing, then it is completely particular, as when we say "Peter's goodness is great." And thus the intellect has a ladder for ascending and descending; as, for instance, descending from a completely general principle to one neither completely general nor completely particular, and from a principle neither completely general nor completely particular to one that is completely particular. And in a similar fashion one can discuss the ascent of this ladder.

Everything that exists is implicit in the principles of this figure, for everything is either good or great, etc., as God and angels, which are good, great, etc. Therefore, whatever exists is reducible to the above-mentioned principles.

2. *The Second Figure, Denoted by T*

The second figure is named T. and it contains three triangles, each of which is general and all-embracing. The first triangle consists of

difference, concordance and contrariety, and it comprises everything which exists, according to its category. For everything which exists is either in difference, concordance, or contrariety, and outside of these principles nothing can be found.

One must know, moreover, that each angle of this triangle has three species. For there is a difference between sensual and sensual, as for instance between a stone and a tree. There is also a difference between the sensual and the intellectual, as for instance between body and soul. And there is furthermore a difference between intellectual and intellectual, as between soul and God, between the soul and an angel, between one angel and another, or between God and an angel. And the same can be said for concordance and contrariety, each in its own way.

And this difference existing in each angle of this triangle is the ladder by which the intellect ascends and descends, so that it can find the natural middle term between subject and predicate, with which middle term it can reach a conclusion. And the same is true for the ladder of concordance and contrariety, each in its own way.

The second triangle consists of beginning, middle, and end, and it comprises everything that exists. For everything that exists is either in beginning, middle, or end, and outside of these principles nothing can be found.

The word “cause” written in the angle of “beginning” stands for the efficient, material, formal, and final cause. The words “quantity” and “time” refer to the other nine predicaments, and to those things that can be reduced to them.

The angle of “middle” contains three species of middle. First there is the conjunctive middle, which exists between subject and predicate, as when we say, “man is an animal.” For between man and animal there are middle terms, such as their life and body, without which man would not be an animal. Then there is the middle of mensuration, which refers to the act existing between the doer and the doable, like loving between the lover and the lovable. And then there is the middle between extremes, like a line between two points. And this angle of “middle” acts as a general ladder with respect to the intellect.

The angle of “end” also contains three species. The first is the end of privation, which refers to a privative state and to those things that are in the past. The second species is the end of termination, which refers to the extremities, like the two points that terminate a line, or like the lover and beloved in relation to loving. The third species is the end of perfection, which refers to ultimate purpose, like man, who exists to multiply his species, and to understand, love, and remember God, and so forth. This angle also acts as a general ladder with respect to the intellect.

The third triangle is made up of majority, equality, and minority, and it is general and all-embracing in its way. For whatever exists is either in majority, equality, or minority. Majority has three species. The first is when there exists majority between substance and substance, as, for instance, the substance of heaven, which is greater than the substance of fire. The second species is when there exists majority between substance and accident, like a substance that is greater than its quantity; for substance exists of itself, which is something no accident does. The third species is when there exists majority between accident and accident, like understanding, which is greater than seeing, and seeing than running. And what we have said about majority applies equally to minority, since they are correlative to one another.

The angle of equality has three species. The first is when things are substantially equal, like Peter and Martin, who are equal in substance. The second species is when substance and accident are regarded as equal to one another, such as substance and its quantity. The third species is when there is equality between accident and accident, like understanding and loving, which are equal in their object. And this angle is a ladder by which the intellect can ascend and descend, as was said of the other triangles. And when the intellect ascends to general objects, then it itself becomes general; and when it descends to particulars, then it itself becomes particular.

The Figure T serves the First Figure, for through difference one can distinguish between goodness and goodness, between goodness and greatness, etc. And by joining this figure to the first, the intellect acquires knowledge. And because this figure is general, therefore the intellect becomes general.

3. The Third Figure

The Third Figure is a composite of the first and second; for the letter B that appears in it stands for the B that is in both the first and second figures; and similarly for the other letters. This one consists of 36 compartments, as can be seen in the illustration. Each compartment has many different meanings as a result of the two letters it contains. Thus the compartment of B C has many different meanings as a result of B C, and similarly the compartment of B D has many different meanings as a result of B D, and so on. And this should be clear from the alphabet we gave above.

Each compartment contains two letters, and these represent subject and predicate, between which the artist seeks the middle term that will join them, like goodness and greatness that are joined through concordance, and similarly for other terms. With this middle term the artist tries to reach a conclusion and state a proposition. This figure is meant to show that any principle can be attributed to any of the others: thus to B we can attribute

C, D, etc., and to C we can attribute B, D, etc., as can be seen from the illustration. This is so that the intellect may know each principle in terms of all the others, and be enabled to deduce many arguments from a single proposition.

To give an example with “goodness,” we make it into a subject and use the other principles as predicates, giving:

goodness is great	goodness is different
goodness is enduring	goodness is concordant
goodness is powerful	goodness is contrary
goodness is knowable	goodness is beginning
goodness is lovable	goodness is mediating
goodness is virtuous	goodness is ending
goodness is true	goodness is magnifying
goodness is glorious	goodness is equalizing
	goodness is lessening

What we have said of goodness can be applied equally well to the other principles, each in its own way.

This figure is very general, and by using it the intellect is made very general in acquiring knowledge. It is a condition of this figure that one compartment not be contrary to another, but that they be concordant in their conclusion. Thus the compartment of B C should not be contrary to that of B D, and so on for the others. With such a condition, the intellect is conditioned to the acquisition of knowledge.

4. *The Fourth Figure*

The fourth figure has three circles, the outermost of which is fixed and the two inside ones of which are mobile, as appears in the illustration. The middle circle revolves on top of the outer fixed circle, so that, for instance, C can be put opposite B. The innermost circle revolves on the middle circle, so that, for instance, D can be put opposite C. And in this way 9 compartments are formed at a time, one being B C D, another C D E, and so on. After that, E of the smaller circle can be put opposite C of the middle one, with which another 9 compartments are formed.

When all the letters of the smallest circle have been brought opposite B on the largest circle and C on the middle circle, then C is the middle term between B and D, since B and D are related to one another through the meanings of C. And the same is true of the other compartments. And thus by means of these compartments, one may seek out necessary conclusions and find them.

After that, we can bring all the letters opposite the B of the largest circle and D of the middle circle, and so on for all the letters of the middle and smallest circle, by rotating them, with the B of the largest circle remaining immobile, until we arrive at a position with B on the largest circle, I on the middle one, and K on the innermost; and this will make a total of 252 compartments.

This figure is more general than the third, because in each compartment of this figure there are three letters, whereas in each compartment of the Third Figure there are only two. Thus the intellect is rendered more general as a result of the Fourth Figure than as a result of the Third. The condition of the Fourth Figure is that the intellect must apply to a proposition those letters that are most applicable to it. And once the compartment has been formed from three letters, it must grasp the meanings of the letters, keeping in mind the agreement between subject and predicate and avoiding disagreement. And with this condition, the intellect can acquire knowledge by means of the Fourth Figure, and can form many arguments toward a single conclusion.

So much for the four figures, which the artist must learn by heart, for without them he cannot use or practice this Art.

PART III, WHICH TREATS OF DEFINITIONS OF THE PRINCIPLES

In this Art, the principles thereof are defined, so that they may be known by said definitions, and so that one may use them, affirming or denying in such a way that the definitions remain unimpaired. With such conditions, the intellect acquires knowledge, discovers middle terms, and dispels ignorance, which is its enemy.

- B. Goodness is that thing by reason of which good does good.
- C. Greatness is that by reason of which goodness, duration, etc. are great.
- D. Eternity or duration is that by reason of which goodness, etc. endure.
- E. Power is that by reason of which goodness, etc. can exist and act.
- F. Wisdom is that by reason of which the wise man understands.
- G. Will is that by reason of which goodness, greatness, etc. are lovable or desirable.
- H. Virtue is the origin of the union of goodness, greatness, and the other principles.
- I. Truth is that which is true concerning goodness, greatness, etc.
- K. Glory is that bliss in which goodness, greatness, etc. come to rest.
- TB. Difference is that by reason of which goodness, etc. are clearly distinguishable from one another.

TC. Concordance is that by reason of which goodness, etc. accord in one or in several things.

TD. Contrariety is the mutual opposition of certain things as a result of different goals.

TE. Beginning is that which is found in everything where there is any question of priority.

TF. Middle is the subject through which end influences beginning, and beginning reinfluences end, and thus it participates in the nature of both.

TG. End is that in which beginning comes to rest.

TH. Majority is the image of the immensity of goodness, greatness, etc.

TI. Equality is the subject in which the end of concordance, goodness, etc. comes to rest.

TK. Minority is the thing close to nothingness.

So much for definitions of the principles, which must be learned by heart; for without knowing these definitions, the Art is unteachable.

Contemporary Life

Vita coactanea. Paris, 1311. English translation from Anthony BONNER 1993, 11–40.

1. To the honor, praise, and love of our only Lord God Jesus Christ, Ramon, at the instance of certain monks who were friends of his, recounted and allowed to be put down in writing what follows concerning his conversion to penitence and other deeds of his.

2. Ramon, while still a young man and seneschal to the king of Majorca, was very given to composing worthless songs and poems and to doing other licentious things. One night he was sitting beside his bed, about to compose and write in his vulgar tongue a song to a lady whom he loved with a foolish love; and as he began to write this song, he looked to his right and saw our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, as if suspended in midair. This sight filled him with fear; and, leaving what he was doing, he retired to bed and went to sleep.

3. Upon arising the next day, he returned to his usual vanities without giving the vision a further thought. It was not until almost a week later, however, in the same place as before, and at almost exactly the same hour, when he was again preparing to work on and finish the aforementioned song, that our Lord appeared to him on the cross, just as before. He was even more frightened than the first time, and retired to bed and fell asleep as he had done before.

Again on the next day, paying no attention to the vision he had seen, he continued his licentious ways. Indeed, soon afterwards he was again trying to finish the song he had begun when our Savior appeared to him, always in the same form, a third and then a fourth time, with several days in between.

4. On the fourth occasion—or, as is more commonly believed, the fifth—when this vision appeared to him, he was absolutely terrified and retired to bed and spent the entire night trying to understand what these so often repeated visions were meant to signify. On the one hand, his conscience told him that they could only mean that he should abandon the world at once

and from then on dedicate himself totally to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, his conscience reminded him of the guilt of his former life and his unworthiness to serve Christ. Thus, alternately debating these points with himself and fervently praying to God, he spent the night without sleeping.

At last, as a gift of the Father of lights, he thought about the gentleness, patience, and mercy which Christ showed and shows toward all sorts of sinners. And thus at last he understood with certainty that God wanted him, Ramon, to leave the world and dedicate himself totally to the service of Christ.

5. He therefore began to turn over in his mind what service would be most pleasing to God, and it seemed to him that no one could offer a better or greater service to Christ than to give up his life and soul for the sake of his love and honor; and to accomplish this by carrying out the task of converting to his worship and service the Saracens who in such numbers surrounded the Christians on all sides.

Coming back to himself, however, he realized that he had none of the knowledge necessary for such an undertaking, since he had scarcely learned more than a bare minimum of grammar. This thought worried him, and he began to feel very sad.

6. While turning over these doleful thoughts in his mind, suddenly—he himself did not know how; these are things only God knows—a certain impetuous and all-encompassing notion entered his heart: that later on he would have to write a book, the best in the world, against the errors of unbelievers. Since, however, he could conceive neither the form nor manner of writing such a book, he was most amazed. Nevertheless, the greater and more frequent was his wonder, the more strongly the inspiration or notion of writing the aforementioned book grew in him.

7. However, thinking again, he realized that, even though in the course of time God might bestow on him the grace for writing such a book, he could still do little or nothing alone, especially since he was totally ignorant of the Arabic language, which was that of the Saracens.

It then occurred to him that he should go to the pope, to kings, and to Christian princes to incite them and get them to institute, in whatever kingdoms and provinces might be appropriate, monasteries in which selected monks and others fit for the task would be brought together to learn the languages of the Saracens and other unbelievers, so that, from among those properly instructed in such a place, one could always find the right people ready to be sent out to preach and demonstrate to the Saracens and other unbelievers the holy truth of the Catholic faith, which is that of Christ.



Breviculum, fol. 1^r. Llull's five visions of Christ crucified, his pilgrimage to Sainte Marie de Rocamadour and Santiago de Compostela. (*Vita coetanea*, §6–9)

8. Having therefore firmly made up his mind about these three intentions, that is to say: to accept dying for Christ in converting the unbelievers to his service; to write the above-mentioned book, if God granted him the ability to do so; and to procure the establishment of monasteries where various languages could be learned, as is explained above—early the next day he went to a church that was not far from there and, amid tears of devotion, fervently begged our Lord Jesus Christ to deign to bring about in a way pleasing to him those three things which he himself had mercifully inspired in his heart.

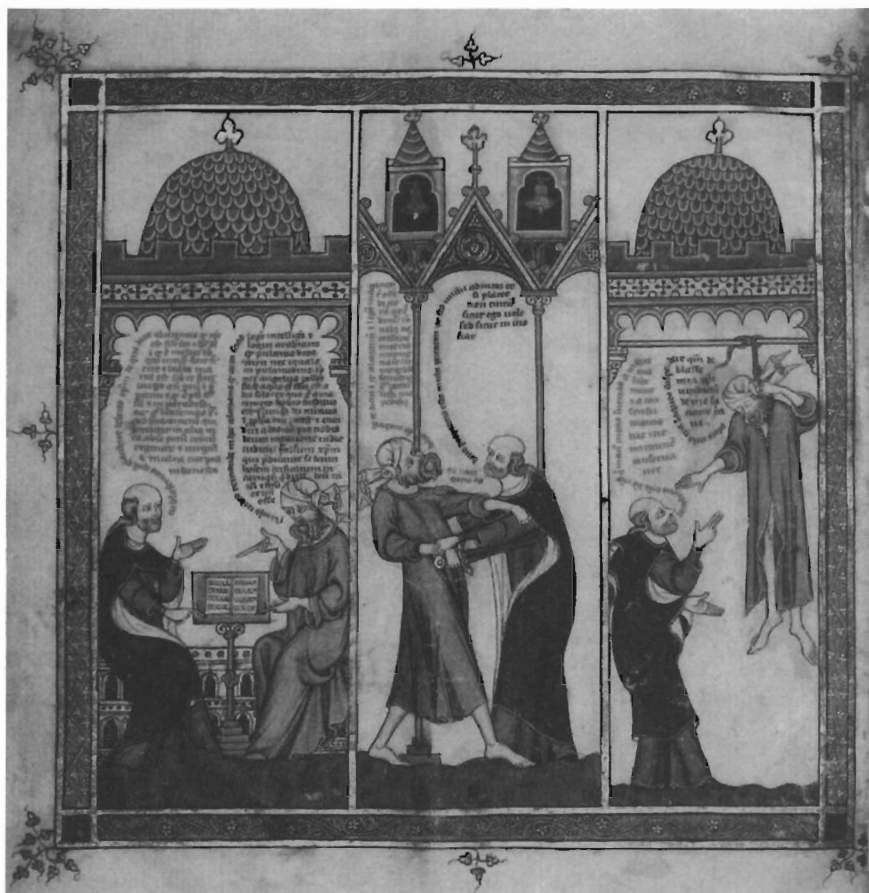
9. After that he returned to his own affairs. Since he was still too imbued with his worldly life and licentiousness, he was quite lukewarm and remiss



Breviculum, fol. 2^r. Ramon listens to a bishop preach on the feast of Saint Francis and two years later receives the habit from the same bishop. (*Vita coetanea*, §9, 11)

in carrying out the above-mentioned three projects for the next three months, that is, until the feast day of Saint Francis. Then on that feast day, a certain bishop preached in the Franciscan convent, explaining how Saint Francis had abandoned and rejected everything so as to be more firmly united to Christ and to Christ alone, etc. Ramon, incited by the example of Saint Francis, soon sold his possessions, reserving a small portion for the support of his wife and children; and, in order to ask the Lord and his saints for guidance in the three things the Lord had placed in his heart, he set out for the shrines of Saint Mary of Rocamadour, Saint James, and other holy places, intending never to return.

10. Having carried out these pilgrimages, he prepared to set out for Paris,



Breuiarium, fol. 3^v. Ramon discusses Islamic theology with his Saracen slave, who later threatens to kill him and finally commits suicide in prison. (*Vita coetanea*, §11-13)

for the sake of learning grammar there and acquiring other knowledge required for his tasks. But he was dissuaded from making this trip by the arguments and advice of his relatives and friends and most of all of Brother Ramon of the Dominicans, who had formerly compiled the *Decretals* for Pope Gregory IX, and those counsels made him return to his own city, that is, to Majorca.

11. When he arrived there he left the grand style of life which he had previously led and put on a lowly habit of the coarsest cloth he could find. And in that same city he then studied a bit of grammar, and having bought himself a Saracen, he learned the Arabic language from him.

12. He secretly got hold of a sword, and one day, when he saw his master sitting alone, he suddenly rushed at him, striking him with the sword and shouting with a terrible roar: "You're dead!" But even though Ramon was able, as it pleased God, to deflect his attacker's sword arm a bit, the blow nonetheless wounded him seriously, although not fatally, in the stomach. By means of his strength, however, he managed to overcome the Saracen, knock him down, and forcibly take the sword away from him.

When the servants came running to the scene, Ramon kept them from killing him, but allowed them to tie him up and put him in jail until he, Ramon, decided what would be the best thing to do. For it seemed harsh to kill the person by whose teaching he now knew the language he had so wanted to learn, that is, Arabic; on the other hand, he was afraid to set him free or to keep him longer, knowing that from then on he would not cease plotting his death.

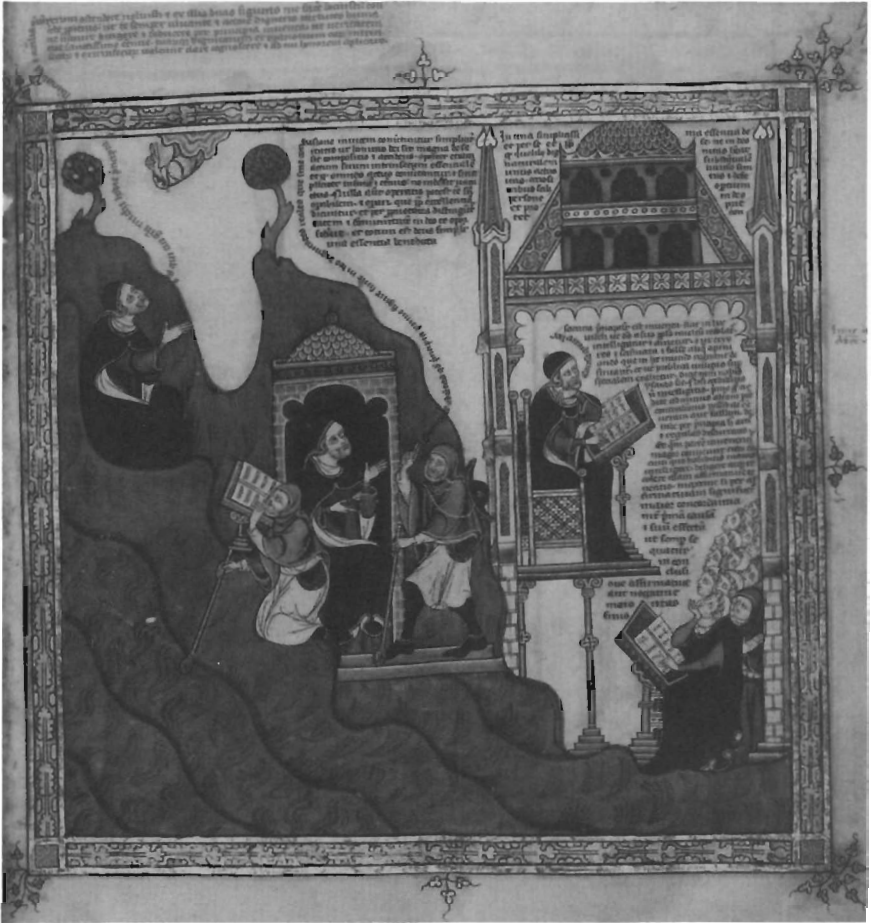
13. Perplexed as to what to do, he went up to a certain abbey near there, where for three days he prayed fervently to God about this matter. When the three days were over, astonished that the same perplexity still remained in his heart and that God, or so it seemed to him, had in no way listened to his prayers, he returned home full of sorrow.

When on the way back he made a slight detour to the prison to visit his captive, he found that he had hanged himself with the rope with which he had been bound. Ramon therefore joyfully gave thanks to God not only for keeping his hands innocent of the death of this Saracen, but also for freeing him from that terrible perplexity concerning which he had just recently so anxiously asked him for guidance.

14. After this, Ramon went up a certain mountain not far from his home, in order to contemplate God in greater tranquility. When he had been there scarcely a full week, it happened that one day while he was gazing intently heavenward the Lord suddenly illuminated his mind, giving him the form and method for writing the aforementioned book against the errors of the unbelievers.

Giving thanks to the Almighty, he came down from the mountain and returned at once to the above-mentioned abbey, where he began to plan and write the book in question, calling it at first the *Ars major*, and later on the *Ars generalis*. Within the framework of this Art he then wrote many books (as we will see below), in which at great length he explained general principles by applying them to more specific things, in accordance with the capacities of simple people, as experience had already taught him.

When he had finished the book written in the aforementioned abbey, he again went up the same mountain. And on the very spot where he had



Breviculum, fol. 10^r. The enlightenment of Mount Randa, followed by Llull's attempts to teach his Art in Paris. (*Vita coetanea*, §14, 15)

stood when God had shown him the method of the Art he had a hermitage built, where he stayed for over four months without interruption, praying to God night and day that by his mercy he might bring prosperity to him and to the Art he had given him for the sake of his honor and the benefit of his church.

15. While he was staying in this hermitage, there came to him a handsome young shepherd of cheerful countenance, who in one hour told him as many good things of God and of heavenly matters, especially of angels, and other things, as another ordinary person—or so it seemed to him—would have taken at least two entire days to recount.

Seeing Ramon's books, the shepherd got down on his knees, kissed them fervently, and watered them with his tears. And he said to Ramon that those books would bring many benefits to the Church of Christ. The shepherd also blessed Ramon with many blessings of a prophetic nature; and, making the sign of the cross over his head and over his whole body, he left.

When he thought about all this, however, Ramon was astonished, for he had never seen this shepherd before, nor had he heard mention of him.

16. Later on, upon hearing that Ramon had written several good books, the king of Majorca sent for him and had him come to Montpellier, where he was staying at the time. When Ramon arrived there, the king had his books examined by a certain Franciscan friar, and especially certain meditations he had composed as devotional material for every day of the year, with thirty individual paragraphs assigned to each day. These meditations the friar admiringly found to be full of prophecy and Catholic devotion.

In that same city Ramon then wrote a book based on the Art he had been given on the mountain, and this book he called the *Ars demonstrativa*, and he read it there publicly. He also wrote a *Lectura* on this same work, in which he explained how primary form and primary matter constitute the elemental chaos, and how the five universals, as well as the ten predicaments, descend from this chaos and are contained in it in accordance with Catholic and theological truth.

17. At that same time Ramon also obtained an agreement from the above-mentioned king of Majorca that a monastery be built in his kingdom, that it be endowed with sufficient property, and that thirteen Franciscan friars be sent there to learn Arabic for the purpose of converting unbelievers, as was stated above. To them and to those succeeding them in the same monastery, the sum of five hundred florins was to be provided every year from the aforementioned property for their maintenance.

18. After this he went to the Papal Court, to see if he could persuade the pope and the cardinals to establish similar monasteries throughout the world for teaching various languages. But when he arrived at the Court, he found that the pope, called Honorius, had recently died. He therefore left Rome and made his way to Paris, there to communicate to the world the Art which God had given him.

19. Ramon arrived in Paris in the time of the Chancellor Berthaud, and at the special order of said chancellor he read a Commentary on the *Ars generalis* in one of his lecture halls.

Having read this Commentary in Paris, and having observed the attitude of the students there, he returned to Montpellier, where he once again wrote and lectured on a book, this one entitled the *Ars inventiva veritatis*. In

this book, as well as in all others he wrote from then on, he used only four figures, eliminating—or rather disguising, because of the weakness of human intellect which he had witnessed in Paris—twelve of the sixteen figures that had formerly appeared in his Art.

Having duly accomplished all these things in Montpellier, he set out for Genoa, where, staying but a short time, he translated into Arabic the above-mentioned book, that is, the *Ars inventiva*. With this accomplished, he made his way to the Papal Court, attempting, as on previous occasions, to have monasteries established throughout the world for the teaching of various languages, as was said above.

But seeing that he could accomplish little of what he wanted there as a result of obstacles put in his way by the Papal Court, and after giving the matter due consideration, he returned to Genoa. His idea was to take passage there for Saracen lands, so as to see whether at least alone he could accomplish something among them by debating with their wise men, using the Art given to him by God to prove to them the Incarnation of the Son of God, as well as the Blessed Trinity of Divine Persons in the highest unity of essence, in which these Saracens do not believe, but rather blindly assert that we Christians worship three Gods.

20. Since it soon became known among the Genoese that Ramon had arrived, with the intention of traveling to the land of the Saracens in order to convert them, if he could, to the faith of Christ, the people were most edified by this, hoping that through him God would accomplish some significant good among the said Saracens. For the Genoese had heard that Ramon himself, after his conversion to penitence, had received by divine inspiration on a certain mountain a sacred science for the conversion of unbelievers.

But just when the Lord was thus visiting Ramon with an outburst of joy on the part of the populace, which for him was like a kind of dawn, he suddenly began to try him with a very serious affliction. For when the ship and everything else were ready for sailing, as we mentioned before, with his books and other belongings already on board, there came to him on several occasions a kind of fixed idea that if he traveled to the land of the Saracens they would slaughter him the moment he arrived, or at the very least they would throw him into prison forever.

Therefore Ramon, fearing for his skin, like the apostle Saint Peter during the Passion of the Lord, and forgetting his previously mentioned intention to die for Christ in converting the unbelievers to his worship, remained in Genoa, held back by a kind of paralyzing fear, abandoned to himself, by per-

mission or dispensation of God, perhaps to prevent him from becoming too vain or presumptuous.

But after the ship had set sail from Genoa, Ramon, on account of the huge scandal against the faith created in the eyes of the people by his not leaving, suffered such remorse of conscience that he fell into a profound despair, firmly believing that he would be damned by God. This thought brought him such inward pain of heart that outwardly his body became wracked with fever and he became gravely ill. And languishing thus in Genoa for a long time, without revealing to anybody the cause of his grief, he was brought almost to nothing.

21. Finally, when the feast of Pentecost arrived, he had himself carried or led to the church of the Dominicans, and when he heard the friars singing the hymn *Veni Creator*, he said to himself with a sigh, "Ah! Is it possible that this Holy Ghost could save me?" And in this feeble state he was led or carried to the friars dormitory, where he threw himself down on a bed. While lying there, he looked up at the highest point of the ceiling, and he saw a tiny light, like a pale star, and from the general area of the star he heard a voice which said to him: "In this order you can be saved."

And thus Ramon sent for the friars of the house and asked to be clothed at once in their habit; but the friars put off doing it because the prior was away.

22. Upon returning to his own lodgings, Ramon remembered that the Franciscans had accepted the Art which God had given him on the mountain much more willingly than the above-mentioned Dominicans. Whereupon, hoping that said Franciscans would promote the Art more efficaciously for the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the good of the Church, he thought that he would leave the Dominicans and enter the Franciscan order.

While turning these things over in his mind, there appeared next to him, as if hanging on the wall, a band or cord like those that the Franciscans wear around their waists. And when he had been consoled by this vision for scarcely an hour he looked farther off and saw overhead that same light or pole star he had seen earlier while lying in bed at the Dominican convent. And he heard the star say, as if threatening him: "Did I not tell you that you could only be saved in the Dominican Order? Be careful what you do!"

23. Ramon, therefore, considering that on the one hand he would be damned unless he remained with the Dominicans, while on the other hand his Art and books would be lost unless he remained with the Franciscans, chose (which was most admirable of him) his own eternal damnation rather

than the loss of the Art, which he knew he had received from God for the salvation of the many and especially for the honor of God himself.

And thus, in spite of the disapproval of the aforementioned star, he sent for the Guardian of the Franciscans, whom he asked to give him their habit. The Guardian agreed to give it to him when he was nearer death.

24. Therefore, although Ramon had lost hope of God's wanting to save him, he all the same decided to confess superficially and to make out a will, so that neither the friars nor the people would consider him a heretic.

When, however, the priest brought Christ's body before him and, standing in front of him, offered it to him, Ramon felt as if a strange hand were twisting his face from a position looking straight ahead to one looking towards his right shoulder, and it seemed to him that at the same time Christ's body, which the priest was offering him, passed over to the opposite side, that is, toward his left shoulder, and that it said to him: "You will suffer the punishment you deserve if you now receive me." But Ramon, firmly sticking by the decision he had taken, namely that he would rather be eternally damned than have his Art perish because of his bad reputation—that Art revealed to him for the honor of God and the salvation of the many—now felt as if a strange hand took his still turned head and twisted it straight again. In this position, seeing Christ's body still in the priest's hands, he straightway fell off his cot onto the ground and kissed the priest's foot. And in this way he then received Christ's body, so that, beneath such pretended devotion, he would at least save the above-mentioned Art.

What a wondrous temptation, or rather, it would seem, dispensation of divine trial! In olden times, the patriarch Abraham against hope believed in hope; this man, however, obstinately preferring that Art or doctrine, by which many people could be converted to understanding, loving and worshiping God, to his own salvation—like the sun which, though covered by a cloud, nevertheless keeps on burning—despairing of God in a wondrous way beneath a certain darkness of mind, proved that he loved God and his fellow man infinitely more than himself, as can be clearly gathered from the foregoing account.

25. While Ramon was still detained by this grave feebleness of body and soul he heard a rumor that there was a galley in port about to leave for Tunis. Upon hearing this, as if awakening from a deep sleep, he had himself and his books carried at once to the ship. But his friends, seeing him at death's door and feeling sorry for him, dragged him off the boat against his will, which made him very unhappy.

Nevertheless, not long afterwards, finding out about another ship, of the sort the Genoese commonly call a bark, preparing to go to the above-

mentioned Saracen city or kingdom, that is to say, Tunis, he had himself, along with his books and whatever else he needed, carried to this bark, against the will and advice of his friends.

As soon as they had left port and the sailors had the ship under way, Ramon suddenly became joyful in the Lord, and through a merciful illumination of the Holy Ghost, he regained not only the health of his enfeebled body, but also the hope which, beneath his former darkness of mind, he had thought forever lost. And this to such an extent that within a few days, to the amazement of everybody traveling with him and even of himself, he felt in as good a state of mind and body as ever before in his former life.

26. Giving due thanks to God, they soon afterwards entered the port of Tunis, where they disembarked and entered the city.

Ramon, after slowly gathering together, day by day, those most versed in the Mohammedan religion, said to them, among other things, that he knew the foundations of the Christian religion well in all its articles, and that he had come with the idea of converting to their sect if, having heard the foundations of their religion, that is to say, that of Mohammed, and having debated with them over this matter, he found them more valid than those of the Christians. And when men more knowledgeable in the Mohammedan religion started coming to him daily in greater numbers, explaining the foundations of their religion so as to convert him to their sect, he was easily able to answer their arguments, saying:

“It is proper for every wise man to hold to that faith which attributes to the eternal God, in whom all wise men of the world believe, the greatest goodness, wisdom, virtue, truth, glory, perfection, etc. and all these things in the greatest equality and concordance. And most praiseworthy is that faith in God which places the greatest concordance or agreement between God, who is the highest and first cause, and his effect.

“However, as a result of what you have set before me, I see that all you Saracens who belong to the religion of Mohammed do not understand that in the above and other similar Divine Dignities there are proper, intrinsic, and eternal acts, without which the dignities would be idle, and this from all eternity. The acts of goodness I call bonificative, bonifiable, and bonifying, while those of greatness are magnificative, magnifiable, and magnifying, and so on for the other aforesaid and similar Divine Dignities.

“But since, as I already see, you attribute those acts only to two Divine Dignities or Reasons, that is, to wisdom and will, it is thus clear that you leave the other above-mentioned dignities, that is, goodness, greatness, etc., in a state of idleness, consequently placing inequality as well as discord between them, which is not right. For by means of the substantial, intrinsic,



Breviculum, fol. 9^v. Ramon travels to Tunis, where he uses his Art to discuss with the Saracens. (*Vita coetanea*, §9, 25–27)

and eternal acts of the Dignities, Reasons, or Attributes, taken equally and concordantly, as they should be, Christians clearly prove that in one completely simple Divine Essence and Nature there exists a Trinity of Persons, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

27. “This I will be able to do with the help of God, using clear arguments based on a certain Art divinely revealed, as it is believed, to a Christian her-

mit not long ago, if you would care to discuss these things calmly with me for a few days.

“You will also be shown, if it pleases you, in the most rational way, by means of this same Art, how in the Incarnation of the Son of God, through the participation, that is to say, union, of Creator and creature in the single person of Christ, the first and highest cause agrees and accords with its effect in the most rational way; and how this becomes apparent in the greatest and noblest degree in the Passion of Christ the Son of God, which he voluntarily and mercifully deigned to suffer in the humanity he had taken on in order to redeem us sinners from the sin and corruption of our first forebear, and to lead us back to that state of glory and divine fruition on account of which and for the final purpose of which the Blessed Lord created us.”

28. When it seemed that Ramon was already enlightening the minds of the unbelievers on these subjects, it happened that a certain man of no little fame among these Saracens, who had understood Ramon’s words and intention, begged and entreated the king to order the beheading of this man, who was trying to subvert the Saracens and who with audacity and temerity was attempting to destroy the Mohammedan religion.

A council was convened, and at the instigation of the above-mentioned notable and of several other councilors, the king’s will was already inclining towards Ramon’s death. One of the councilors, however, a man of prudence and knowledge, tried to prevent such a crime by persuading the king that it would be dishonorable for him to kill such a man, who, even though he was attempting to spread his Christian religion, nevertheless seemed to possess abundant maturity of goodness and prudence; and he added that in the same way a man who dared to enter Christian lands for the sake of imprinting the Saracen religion on their hearts would be considered a good Saracen.

The king, therefore, giving in to these and similar words, desisted from executing Ramon; he did, however, immediately order him to be expelled from the kingdom of Tunis. When he was taken out of prison, however, he suffered many insults, blows, and vexations at the hands of the multitude.

29. At last he was taken to a Genoese ship which was about to set sail. And while he was on his way there, the king decreed that he was to be stoned to death if he were again found in the country.

Ramon was immensely unhappy about this, for he had already arranged for the baptism of some men of considerable reputation as well as many others whom he was aspiring to lead to the full light of the orthodox faith before his departure. While this man of God found himself afflicted by the

pangs of this dilemma, it happened that the ship to which he had been taken set sail for its own land.

When he saw this, Ramon felt that tribulations were pressing in on him from all sides. For if he left, he saw that the souls which he had already prepared for Christian worship would slide back into the trap of eternal damnation; but if he ventured to stay, he was already familiar with the madness of the Saracens who were quite prepared to kill him.

Nevertheless, all aflame with the love of God, he did not fear to face the dangers of death if only he could obtain some effect of salvation for these souls. And getting off the ship that was leaving, he secretly boarded another one that was entering the same port, for he hoped to be able to find some way to get on land without the hindrance of their brutality and violence, so that in the above matter he could carry out the good work he had begun.

30. While this was the way things stood, it happened that a certain Christian, similar to Ramon in bearing and dress, was walking through the city, and the Saracens seized him, thinking he was Ramon. When they were about to stone him, the man in question cried out: "I am not Ramon!" Looking into the matter, they found out that Ramon was on the ship, and the other man managed to escape from their hands.

Ramon remained there three weeks, but seeing he could do nothing in the service of Christ, he left for Naples, where he stayed, lecturing on his Art, until the election of Pope Celestine.

31. After this, Ramon went to the Papal Court to obtain from the pope something he had long desired for the sake of the faith of Christ, as was said above, and there he wrote some books.

Some time later, Pope Celestine v was succeeded by Pope Boniface VIII, whom Ramon entreated with all his might to have some useful things done for the Christian faith. And even though he suffered considerable anguish following the pope from one place to another, not for a single moment did he desist in his attempts, assuming the pope doubtless would deign to listen to him, since he was not petitioning for his own benefit or for some prebend, but rather for the public good of the Catholic faith.

32. At last, however, seeing that he could obtain nothing from the pope, Ramon made his way to the city of Genoa, where he wrote some other books.

He then went to see the king of Majorca, and after having had an interview with him, he went on to Paris, where he gave public lectures on his Art and composed many books. Later on he had an interview with the king, entreating him with regard to certain things of great usefulness for the holy church of God.



Breviculum, fol. 8^r. Ramon presents his plan to Pope Boniface and the cardinals, and later to the royal court. (*Vita coaetanea*, §31–2)

But seeing that he could obtain little or nothing with respect to such things, he returned to Majorca, where he stayed for a time, trying by means of both disputations and sermons to bring the innumerable Saracens living there to the path of salvation. He also wrote several books there.

33. While Ramon was laboring at these tasks the news happened to be spread abroad that Cassan, the emperor of the Tartars, had attacked the

kingdom of Syria and was trying to bring it all beneath his dominion. When he heard this, Ramon, having found a ship about to embark, sailed to Cyprus, where he discovered that this piece of news was completely false.

Seeing himself frustrated in his intent, Ramon tried to find some other way in which he could employ the time granted him by God, not in idleness, but rather in work acceptable to God and beneficial to his fellow man. For he had stored in his vigilant heart that advice of the Apostle who said: "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"; and of the Prophet who said: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

34. Ramon accordingly went to the king of Cyprus and eagerly entreated him to exhort certain unbelievers and schismatics, namely Jacobites, Nestorians, and Muslims, to come to hear him preach or to dispute with him. At the same time he begged the king of Cyprus to send him, once he had done what he could for the edification of the above-mentioned people, to the sultan, who was Saracen, and to the king of Egypt and Syria, so that he could instruct them in the holy Catholic faith. The king, however, was not interested in any of these things.

Then Ramon, trusting in him who preaches the word in great virtue, set to work among them with sermons and disputations, with the sole help of God. But, persisting as he did in preaching and teaching, he fell sick with a serious bodily illness.

Two people waited on him, a clergyman and a servant, who, not setting God before themselves, and forgetting their salvation, plotted to strip with their criminal hands this man of God of his belongings. And when he found out that they were poisoning him, he gently dismissed them from his service.

35. Upon arriving in Famagusta, he was cheerfully received by the master of the Temple, who was in the city of Limassol, and he stayed in his house until he had recovered his health. After this, Ramon sailed to Genoa, where he published many books. He then went on to Paris, where he successfully lectured on his Art and wrote several books.

In the time of Pope Clement v he left Paris and went to Lyon, where he resided for a while and entreated the pope in favor of something of the greatest benefit for the faith, that is, that the pope himself found monasteries in which suitable devout men would come together to learn the languages of different nations, so that they could preach the Gospel to all the unbelievers in accordance with the Lord's command which says: "Go ye



Breviculum, fol. 10^r. Ramon travels to Bougie, where he is stoned, imprisoned, and finally expelled from the country. (*Vita coactanea*, §36)

into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” But this petition was of little interest to the pope and to the cardinals.

36. From there, Ramon, after returning to Majorca, sailed to a certain Saracen land called Bougie.

In the main square of the city, Ramon, standing up and shouting in a loud voice, burst out with the following words: “The Christian religion is true, holy, and acceptable to God; the Saracen religion, however, is false and full of error, and this I am prepared to prove.”

Upon saying such things and using the Saracen language to exhort to the

faith of Christ the multitude of pagans gathered there, many of them rushed at him with impious hands, wanting to stone him to death. While these people were raging at him, the high priest or bishop of the city sent emissaries with orders to bring this man before him.

Once Ramon was before him, the bishop said, "What has made you indulge in such folly as to dare to attack the true religion of Mohammed? Don't you know that anyone who dares to do such a thing is liable to be put to death?"

Ramon answered, "The true servant of Christ who has experienced the truth of the Catholic faith should not fear the danger of physical death when he can gain the grace of spiritual life for the souls of unbelievers."

37. To which the bishop replied, "If you believe the religion of Christ to be true, and consider that of Mohammed to be false, give me a necessary reason to prove it." For this bishop was well known as a philosopher.

Ramon answered, "Let us both agree on a common point, then I will give you the necessary reason." Since this pleased the bishop, Ramon questioned him, saying, "Is not God perfectly good?" The bishop replied that he was.

Then Ramon, wanting to prove the Trinity, began to argue thus: "Every being which is perfectly good is so perfect in itself that it does not need to do good, nor ask for any, outside itself. You say that God is perfectly good from eternity and for all eternity, therefore he does not need to ask for, nor to do good outside himself; for if he did, he would then not be perfectly and absolutely good. Now since you deny the most blessed Trinity, let us suppose that it did not exist; in that case God would not have been perfectly good from eternity until he produced, in time, the good of the world. You do believe in the creation of the world, and therefore, when God created the world in time he was more perfect in goodness than before, since goodness is better diffusing itself than remaining idle. This, I claim, is your position.

"Mine, however, is that goodness is diffusive from eternity and for all eternity. And it is of the nature of the good that it be diffusive in and of itself, for God, the good Father, from his own goodness generates the good Son, and from both is breathed forth the good Holy Ghost."

38. Astounded by this reasoning, the bishop did not give a single counter-argument; rather, he ordered him to be thrown into jail at once. A crowd of Saracens had gathered outside, waiting to kill him, but the bishop issued a decree that in no way should anyone conspire to kill this man, for he himself intended to subject this man to an appropriate death.

Upon leaving the bishop's house, and on the way to jail, Ramon was beaten with sticks and with fists, and forcibly dragged along by his beard, which was very long, until he was locked in the latrine of the thieves' jail,

where for some time he led a painful existence. Later on, however, they put him in an ordinary cell in the same jail.

39. The next day, however, the Mohammedan clergymen gathered before the bishop, asking that he be killed. After having begun the council by discussing the best way to do away with him, they decided to have him appear before them. And if they could establish that he was a man of science, then he would be put to death at once; but if he turned out to be a foolish and stupid man, they would let him off as a fool.

Upon hearing this, one of them who had sailed with Ramon from Genoa to Tunis and who had frequently heard his discourses and arguments said to them, "Beware of having him brought here to the tribunal; he will bring up arguments against our religion that we will find difficult or impossible to answer."

They therefore agreed not to have him appear before them, and shortly thereafter they changed him to a less severe prison. Then the Genoese and Catalans residing there got together and asked that he be put in a more decent place, which was done.

40. Ramon remained in jail there a half a year. During that time clergymen or emissaries from the bishop would visit him frequently and seek to convert him to the Mohammedan religion, promising him wives, honors, a house, and large amounts of money. Founded as he was, however, on a firm rock, Ramon, the man of God, said, "If you wanted to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and would consider abandoning this mistaken religion of yours, I would offer you the greatest of riches and promise you eternal life."

Since they frequently insisted on these matters, it was agreed that each side would write a book in which each would confirm its religion by the most effective arguments it could find; the religion of the side which made use of the strongest arguments would be considered the truer one.

And when Ramon was already working hard on his book, it came to pass that an order was sent from the king of Bougie, who at the time was residing in Constantine, that Ramon was to be expelled from the country immediately.

41. So he then boarded a ship anchored in the harbor, and the captain of the ship was given strict orders that this man was not to be allowed back on shore.

On the journey to Genoa, when the ship was near the Port of Pisa, about ten miles offshore, a great storm arose, and the ship suffered the violent blows of the tempest on all sides, until at last it sank. Some were drowned, while others, with the help of God, escaped; among the latter were Ramon

and a companion of his, who, even though they lost all their books and clothing, and were almost naked, managed to make it to shore in a rowboat.

Upon arriving in Pisa, some citizens received him with honor. And there this man of God, although old and weak, persisting in his labor for Christ, finished his *Ars generalis ultima*. Of this Art, as well as of other books of his, one could say that only those who aspire, not to the glory and empty philosophy of this world, but rather to a firm love and knowledge of God as the ultimate goal and supreme good, are worthy of its immense efficacy and delectable and perfect knowledge.

42. Having there finished the above-mentioned Art along with many other books, and wanting to incite the Pisan community to the service of Christ, he proposed to their council that it would be good for their city to found an order of Christian religious knights devoted to doing continual battle against the treacherous Saracens for the recovery of the Holy Land.

Acceding to his pleasing eloquence and advice, they wrote letters to the pope and to the cardinals concerning this worthy project.

Having obtained these letters in the city of Pisa, he set out for Genoa, where he obtained similar letters. There many devout matrons and widows flocked about him, while the noblemen of that city promised him 25,000 florins in aid for the Holy Land.

After leaving Genoa he went to call on the pope, who was then residing in Avignon. Seeing, however, that he could obtain nothing of what he intended there, he went on to Paris, where he gave public lectures on his Art and on many other works that he had written earlier. A great crowd of masters as well as students came to these lectures. To them he not only expounded a doctrine reinforced by philosophical arguments, but also professed a wisdom wonderfully confirmed by the high principles of the Christian faith.

43. He saw, however, that as a result of what had been written by the Commentator on Aristotle, that is, Averroës, many had strayed considerably from the straight path of the truth, especially of the Catholic faith, saying that the Christian faith was impossible with respect to the intellect, although true with respect to belief. Since this was deplored by the community of Christians, Ramon therefore set out to disprove this concept of theirs by demonstrative and scientific means, managing to refute them in many ways. For if the Catholic faith is unprovable by the intellect, then it is impossible for it to be true. And on this subject he wrote several books.

44. After this, knowing that the holy father, Pope Clement v, was to celebrate a General Council in the city of Vienne during the calends of October of the year 1311, he decided to go to this Council to see if he could obtain three things for the restoration of the orthodox faith.



Breviculum, fol. 11^r. Llull discusses his symbolic alphabet with Thomas le Myésier.

The first was the establishment of an adequate place where men of devotion and vigorous intellect could be brought together to study different kinds of languages so as to know how to preach the doctrine of the Gospel to every creature.

The second was that of all the Christian military religious orders a single order be made, one that would maintain continual warfare overseas against the Saracens until the Holy Land had been reconquered.

The third was that the pope rapidly prescribe a remedy against the opinions of Averröes, who in many ways had proven to be a perverter of the truth, so that through the intervention of intelligent Catholics, who were not concerned for their own glory but rather the honor of Christ, an oppo-

sition be made to said opinions and to those holding them, which opinions seemed to block the way to the truth and to uncreated wisdom, that is, to the Son of God the Father.

On this subject Ramon wrote a little book called the *Liber natalis*, promising, moreover, that he had cogent philosophical as well as theological arguments against them, which arguments he discussed with the greatest clarity in other books of his.

This servant of God, true interpreter of the supreme truth and of the great profundity of the Trinity, wrote amidst his daily labors more than a hundred and twenty-three books.

45. By now forty years had elapsed since he had first directed all his heart, all his soul, all his strength, and all his mind toward God. In this period of time he had written books continually and with great diligence, whenever he had free time to do so.

He could justly have uttered the words of the prophet David, "My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king. My tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly." Truly his tongue was the pen of that uncreated scribe, that is the Holy Ghost, who gives "the word to them that preach good tidings with great power," of which the Savior spoke to the Apostles, saying, "For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Wanting his books to be of general usefulness to everyone, he wrote many in the Arabic language, since that was a tongue he had learned.

His books were distributed throughout the world; but he had them collected principally in three places, namely, the Carthusian monastery in Paris, the house of a certain nobleman of the city of Genoa, and that of a certain nobleman of the city of Majorca.

Chronology of the Life of Ramon Llull

- 1229 James I conquers the city of Majorca.
- 1232 Birth of Ramon Llull in the city of Majorca.
- 1257 Llull in the court of Prince James, whose father, James I, had conceded Majorca to him. Marriage with Blanca Picany, with whom he will have two children.
- 1263 Act. 30. First visions of the cross and conversion.
- 1264 Pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela and Sainte Marie de Rocamadour.
- 1265 En route to Barcelona meets Ramon de Penyafort, who counsels him to return to Majorca rather than go to Paris.
- 1265–1274 First period of silence in Llull's life. Probably dedicates himself to the study of Arabic.
- 1271–1272 *Compendium logicae Algazelis* (in Arabic).
- 1274 Act. 42. *The Book of Contemplation on God* (in Arabic). Revelation on the mountain of Randa, in which the manner and form of his Art is communicated to him, the first edition of which is the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*. Writes *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Sages*.
- 1274–1275 Travels to Montpellier, where *The book of Contemplation* is approved by a Franciscan monk appointed by Prince James to examine it.
- 1276 At the death of James I his son the prince becomes James II of Majorca. The College of Oriental Languages of Miramar is

- founded with Lull's inspiration and under the patronage of James II.
- 1276–1287 Second period of silence in Lull's life.
- 1282 *Vísperas sicilianas*.
- 1283 *Blanquerna* and *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*.
- 1287 First stay of Lull in Rome. Fails to meet with Pope Honorius IV before his death.
- 1287–1289 Act. 55. First visit to Paris. *Felix, or the Book of Wonders*.
- 1289 Stay in Montpellier. Simplification of the Art.
- 1290 Makes contact with the Italian spirituals.
- 1291 18 May, fall of St. John of Acre.
- 1291–1292 In Rome.
- 1292–1293 Act. 60. Crisis in Genoa. First mission to north Africa: Tunis.
- 1294 In Naples, Majorca, and Barcelona.
- 1295–1296 In Rome and Agnani. *The Tree of Knowledge. Disconsolation*.
- 1297–1299 Act. 65. Second visit to Paris. *The Philosophical Tree of Love*.
- 1299 In Barcelona.
- 1300–1301 Stay in Majorca.
- 1301 Travels to Cyprus. Meets the Grand Master of the Order of Knights Templar.
- 1302 Travels to Armenia Minor, Jerusalem, and Genoa, passing through Majorca.
- 1303–1305 Between Genoa and Montpellier.
- 1305 Montpellier, *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus*. Visits Barcelona.
- 1306 Act. 74. Third visit to Paris.
- 1306–1307 In Majorca.
- 1307 Second mission to the north of Africa: Bougie. Imprisoned for six months. After being expelled from the place, the vessel on which he is traveling shipwrecks near Pisa.
- 1308 In Montpellier and Pisa. *Ars brevis. Ars generalis ultima* (begun in Lyon in 1305). Probably makes contact with Arnold of Vilanova in Marseilles.

- 1309 *Liber de acquisitione Terrae Sanctae*. Partakes in the crusade against Constantinople and the destruction of the Knights Templar. In Avignon.
- 1309–1311 Fourth visit to Paris. Anti-Averroist works.
- 1310 Forty teachers and graduates of arts and medicine from the University of Paris approve the *Ars brevis*.
- 1311 Composition of the *Vita coetanea* in the Carthusian monastery of Vauvert (present-day Luxemburg Gardens of Paris).
- 1311–1312 Aet. 80. Travels to the Council of Vienne.
- 1312 In Montpellier.
- 1312–1313 In Majorca. Composition of his last will (26 April 1313), in which he expresses his desire for his books to be distributed among Paris, Pisa, and Majorca after his death.
- 1313–1314 In Mesina.
- 1314–1315 Third mission to the north of Africa, during which he dedicated works to the King of Tunis.
- 1316 Llull died in March at the age of 84. The place of death is certainly Majorca.

For further details on the historical context of Llull's life, see HILLGARTH 1993, 21–4.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- MOG *Raymundi Lulli Opera Omnia*. Ed. by Ivo Salzinger, 8 vols., Moguntia 1721–1742; Frankfurt: Minerva, 1965.
- NEORL *Noves Obres de Ramon Llull*. Palma de Mallorca: Patronat Ramon Llull, 1990–.
- OE Ramon Llull, *Obres Essencials*. 2 vols. Barcelona: Selecta, 1957.
- ORL *Obres de Ramon Llull*. Ed. by S. Galmés et al., 21 vols. Palma de Mallorca: Comissió Editorial Luliana, 1906–1950.
- OS *Obres Selectes de Ramon Llull*. Ed. by Antoni Bonner, 2 vols. Palma de Mallorca: Moll, 1989.
- ROL *Raimundi Lulli Opera latina* (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis). Ed. by F. Stegmüller et al. Brepols: Turnholti, 1959–2001.
- SL *Studia Luliana*. Palma de Mallorca.
- Blanquerna* Ramon Llull, *Llibre d'Evast e Blanquerna*. Ed. M. J. Gallofré. Barcelona: Edicions 62 i La Caixa, 1987.
- Breviculum* *Breviculum seu Electorium Parvum Thomae Migerii (Le Myésier)*. Ed. by Charles Lohr, T. Pindl-Büchel, and A. Büchel. ROL, *Suplementi Lulliani*, tomus 1. Brepols: Turnholti, 1990.
- Compendium* Charles Lohr, *Raimundus Lullus: Compendium logicae Algazelis*. Ph.D. dissertation. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1967.

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Index

- Abrahamic religions, 15, 17, 40, 69, 78, 81
- Abulafia, Abraham, 16, 81
- Accidie, 168, 230
- Aesthetic theology, 116
- Africa, 2, 22, 24–5, 29, 260–1
- Agrippa von Netthesheim, 128
- Ahl al-Kitâb, 13
- Alfred the Great, 106
- Algazel (Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazālī), 9, 109, 111
- Algebraic models, 10, 35, 58, 80–1, 132
- Allegory, 75–6, 96, 100; a. of Dame Intellect, 75–6, 161–3
- Aloma, 20
- Alsted, Johannes, 128
- Amāncia*, 18, 22, 32–3, 60, 70, 113–14
- Analogy, 38, 42, 44
- Angels, angelology, 10, 15, 45, 156, 197, 204–5, 230–1; discourse of a., 110
- Animals, adventures of, 100; imitation of, 48
- Anselm of Canterbury, 109, 111
- Antony, Abba, 83
- Apez mentis*, 52
- Apocalyptic language and symbolism, 15, 17–18, 77, 96, 132
- Apologetics, 2, 11, 14, 17, 19, 74, 101, 110–11, 121
- Apperception, 52–5, 60, 122, 142–58
- Arabic language, 6–8, 17, 23, 26, 35, 74, 106, 108, 111, 134–6, 159, 215, 222, 237, 240–1, 243–4, 258–9
- Aristotle, Aristotelianism, 10, 56, 111, 256; pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*, 111
- Arnold of Vilanova, 25, 260
- Ars combinatoria*, 8, 56, 97
- Ars magna*, 229
- Ascesis, asceticism, 7, 21, 23, 35–6, 46, 49, 54, 56, 71, 90, 95, 97–8, 114, 119; a. of the spirit, 12, 103; a. literature, 90; oriental asceticism, 83
- Asian spiritual traditions, 104
- Aśvagoṣa, 131
- Attributes of God, 13, 38, 75, 80. *See also* Names, divine
- Augustine of Hippo, 2
- Autobibliography, 106
- Averroës (ibn-Rushd), 126, 256
- Averroism, 28–9, 126, 261
- Avicenna, 111
- Bacon, Roger, 111
- Badia, Lola, 110–11, 113, 131, 134
- Barlaam and Josaphat, 83
- Baruzi, Jean, 128
- Batliori, Miquel, 105–7, 111, 174
- Beatrijs von Nazareth, 108

- Beauty, 19–20, 26, 37, 42, 48, 72, 86, 98, 160, 204; b. of God, 86, 204; b. of nature and creation, 43, 98, 204
- Bede, Saint, 106
- Benz, Ernst, 107
- Bernard of Clairvaux, 51
- Bernard Délicieux, 25
- Berthaud, Chancellor, 243
- Bible, 30, 78, 109, 111
- Boethius, 106
- Bonaventura, 52
- Boniface viii, 26, 250
- Bonner, Anthony, 106, 110–11, 113, 132, 134, 159, 174, 180, 191, 229, 236
- Bonner, Eve, 132, 180
- Bougic, 29, 253, 260; King of, 255
- Breviculum seu Electorium*, 107
- Brothers of Purity, 109
- Brown, Peter, 108
- Bruno, Giordano, 128
- Buddha, 17, 20, 83
- Buddhacarita*, 131
- Bugia, Bugie, 29, 253, 260
- Burckhardt, Titus, 123
- Cabala, 69, 78, 80–2, 103, 128–9; adepts of the C., 16; Christian C., 128; C. of Abraham Abulafia, 81
- Calila and Dimna, 134
- Canon of Arras, 113
- Cant de Ramon, 226
- Carreras y Artau, Tomás and Joaquín, 106, 109–10, 124, 128
- Cassan, 251
- Celstine v, 26, 250
- Certeau, Michel de, 72, 103, 128–9, 134
- Christ, human nature of 43, 48, 50, 52, 100; incarnation of, 13, 26, 33, 39–41, 43, 52, 87, 96, 214, 244, 249. *See also* Crucified
- Christology, 33–45, 56, 66–7, 76, 96, 100, 117, 107
- Cirlot, Juan Eduardo, 129
- Cirlot, Victoria, 103, 107–8, 115, 134
- Clement v, 29, 252, 256
- Cogitation, 51–2, 55, 105, 122, 148
- Coincidentia oppositorum*, 80, 89, 127
- Colomer, Eusebio, 110, 125–27
- Colors, 46, 53, 82, 118–19, 123, 142
- Combinatory art, 8, 86, 96; c. language, 41, 57, 80; c. logic, 39, 57–8, 78, 102
- Common sense, 61
- Conscience, 24, 55, 170, 222, 236–7, 245
- Consciousness, 4–5, 26, 33, 48, 54, 87, 96, 106, 108, 113, 134; c. of finitude, 5; c. of time, 33, 48
- Constantine, 255
- Constantinople, 111, 261
- Contemplation, 12–21, 34, 42, 44, 81, 83, 98, 111, 113, 127; c. and action, 19; c. of God, 36, 51, 66, 85, 179; c. of intelligible reality, 53; c. of nature, 84; contemplative ascent, 33, 53; c. descent, 70; c. ecstasy, 11, 81; c. ideal, 17–19, 33, 78; c. knowing, 130, 57; c. method, 8, 20, 31, 35, 39, 43, 82, 126; c. prayer, 14–15, 19, 36, 79–82; c. states, 33, 67; c. system, 50–1, 135. *See also* Meditation
- Conversion of the gentiles, 11; c. of infidels, 16, 73, 208
- Corbin, Henry, 81, 110
- Cosmos, 42–6, 78, 99; cosmic Christianity, 43, 76, 117; c. Christology, 34–45, 100; c. consciousness of Christianity, 96; c. harmony, 22; c. liturgy, 100; c. nature, 20, 101; c. tree, 45
- Council of Vienne, 2, 28–9, 256, 261
- Creation, 25, 36–7, 48, 254; beauties of c., 43; contemplation of c., 42; c. *ex nihilo*, 42; orders of c., 99–100;
- Crisis of Genoa, 24, 83
- Crucified, 43–4; body of the c., 44; visions of the c., 4–5, 13–14, 32, 101, 109, 226, 238
- Cuzary*. *See* Kitab al-Khazari
- Cyprus, 28, 260; King of, 252
- d'Alòs-Moner, R., 106
- Deification, 113
- Demonstrative science, 75, 159

- Descent, 10–11, 16, 29, 32–3, 56, 59–60, 66–7, 70, 80–1, 87, 109, 125, 127, 145; of the Book, 109; of the intellect, 125; of the spirit, 109; of virtue, 66; of the mountain, 31
- Dialogue of religions, 14, 18, 29, 41, 66, 72–4, 79, 99, 128
- Dignities of God, 13, 16, 51, 58, 81, 110, 112, 124, 206, 247–8
- Dionysian tradition, 21, 100; and the *via negativa*, 96
- Divine virtues, 41, 76; contemplation of, 32, 52, 78
- Divinization, 56
- Docta ignorantia*, 126
- Dominicans, 24, 108, 240, 245
- Duch, Lluís, 106
- Eckhart.** *See* Meister Eckhart
- Ecstasy, 11, 41, 81, 85, 113, 131; ecstatic experience, 57, 101, 111; e. intentionality, 32; e. interpretations, 15–16; e. school, 81
- Egypt, King of, 252
- Eimeric, Nicoláu, 105
- Eliade, Mircea 43, 117
- Enders, Markus, 134
- Eremitic life, 83–4, 174–6; e. Christian tradition, 49
- Excessus mentis*, 67, 107
- Eyes of the heart, 92; e. of the spirit, 36, 48, 51–2
- Famagusta, 28, 252
- Flasch, Kurt, 113
- Francis de Sales, Saint, 132
- Francis of Assisi, Saint, 239
- Franciscans, 18, 24, 30, 239, 243, 245–6, 259; F. school, 76, 96
- Fromaget, Michel, 114, 116
- Fuchs, Peter, 102, 134
- G**
- Garí, Blanca, 107–8
- Gauffredi, Raimon, 25
- Gayà, Jordi, 106, 108, 112, 115–16
- Genoa, 2, 23–4, 26–7, 29, 83, 244–6, 250, 252, 255–6, 258, 260
- Gnosis, gnosticism, 19, 37, 113, 115
- Gospel, preaching of, 205, 252–3, 257
- Gregory IX, Pope, 240
- Gregory of Nyssa, 119
- Gregory of Tours, 106
- H**
- Haas, Alois, 69, 105, 108–10, 113–14, 124, 127–8, 131
- Hallāj, Husayn ibn Mansur, 92
- Hames, Harvey, 81, 129, 131
- Harada, H., 105
- Hashmal*, 82
- Heidegger, Martin, 102, 105, 134
- Heiler, Friedrich, 111, 129
- Hermetic tradition, 15, 103, 110
- Hildegard von Bingen, 103
- Hillgarth, Jocelyn, 106–13, 261
- Holy Land, Holy Sepulcher, regaining of, 29, 210, 214, 222, 256
- Honorius IV, Pope, 21, 260
- Hösle, Vittorio, 73, 129
- I**
- Idel, Moshe, 81, 128, 130
- Ikhwan as-Safa. *See* Brothers of Purity
- Ilm-al-hurūf*, 81
- Imago mundi*, 56
- Imitatio Christi*, 5, 14
- Islam, 8, 15, 24, 26, 28–9, 39–40, 69, 76–7, 85, 108, 112; Islamic theology, 7, 9; I. mystics, 19, 81. *See also* Mohammed, Mohammedanism
- J**
- James II of Aragon, 28
- James II of Majorca, 18, 22, 259–60
- James, Saint, 239
- James, William, 101, 107
- Jauss, Hans Robert, 100, 134
- Jerusalem, 29, 44, 192, 260
- Jews, Judaism, 11, 14, 17, 36, 69, 77–8, 112, 227
- Jīvanmukta*, 131–2
- John of Acre, 23, 260
- John of the Cross, 84
- John Scotus Erigena, 10

John XXI, 111

Judaism, 69, 77, 112

Jung, C. G. 101, 134

Kâlam, 9

Kenotic experience, 11, 32, 66

Kircher, Athanasius, 128

Kitab al-Khazarî, 74

Knights Templar, 28, 222, 260–1

Koan, 104

Koran, 38, 78, 93, 111, 215

Ladder of ascent, 81; l. of beings, 44, 54, 60; l. of creation, 16; l. of meditation, 58

Lc Myésier, Thomas, 28, 107, 113, 257

Leibniz, G. W., 128

Letters, magic of, 81

Limassol, 252

Lingua universalis, 128

Llabrés Martorell, Pere-Joan, 106, 109

Lull, Ramon. Works of: *The Arabic Book of the Gentile*, 74, 159; *Arbre de ciència* (The Tree of Knowledge), 28, 45, 94, 98, 135, 195–207, 260; *Arbre de filosofia desirada* (The Tree of Desired Philosophy), 125; *Ars amativa boni* (The Art of Loving the Good), 32, 80, 126, 130; *Ars brevis* (*Art breu*), 29, 60, 82, 131–2, 135, 229–35, 260–1; *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (The Abbreviated Art of Discovering the Truth), 13–14, 19, 32, 56–7, 59, 66, 80, 88, 110, 113, 173, 259; *Ars demonstrativa* (The Demonstrative Art), 59, 113, 243; *Ars generalis ultima* (Final General Art), 12, 29, 60, 63, 131, 229, 241, 243, 256, 260; *Ars inventiva veritatis* (The Art of Discovering the Truth), 23, 60, 243–4; *Ars major*, 12, 241 (see *Ars generalis ultima*); *Art de contemplació* (The Art of Contemplation), 19, 31, 113; *Blanquerna*, 19–20, 73, 82–6, 106, 111–12, 131, 135, 174–9, 260; *The Book of Animals*, 96, 100, 134; *The Book of Passage*, 214; *The Book of Philosophy*, 109;

Cant de Ramon (Song of Ramon), 72, 135, 226–8; *Compendium logicae Algazelsi* (Compendium of the Logic of Algazel), 109, 259; *Compendium seu commentum artis demonstrativae* (Compendium or Consideration of the Demonstrative Art), 22, 60; *Contemplatio Raimundi* (The Contemplation of Ramon), 28, 113; *De locutione angelorum* (On the Discourse of Angels), 110; *Desconort* (Disconsolation), 26–7, 72–3, 106, 108, 208–25, 260; *Doctrina pueril* (Childish Doctrine), 61, 81, 113, 125; *Fèlix o Libre de meravelles* (Felix, or the Book of Wonders), 22, 37, 73, 94, 96, 98, 100, 105, 135, 191–4, 260; *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (The Book of the Intellect's Ascent and Descent), 29, 125; *Liber natalis*, 258; *Liber propositionum secundum Artem demonstrativam* (Book of Propositions according to the Demonstrative Art), 60; *Liber super quaestiones Magistri Thomae Attrebatensis* (The Book of Questions of Master Thomas of Arras), 113; *Llibre de amic i amat* (The Book of the Lover and the Beloved), 19, 33, 71, 81, 84–6, 88–9, 98, 131, 135, 178–90; *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* (The Book of Contemplation on God), 4–5, 7–8, 12–14, 19, 32–5, 43, 51, 55, 58–60, 66–67, 71–2, 76, 79–80, 82, 88, 105–6, 110, 113–14, 127, 137–58, 177, 259; *Llibre del gentil i dels tres savis* (The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men), 8, 17–19, 74, 78, 85, 88, 135, 159–73; *Llibre de oracions i contemplacions de Penteniment* (The Book of Prayers and Contemplations of Understanding), 113; *Logic of Algazel*, 7–8, 109; *Vita coetanea* (Contemporary Life, *Vita Beati Raimundi Lulli*), 2, 16, 18–19, 31, 71, 102–3, 105–6, 129, 236–58;

- Logic, 8–10, 12, 39, 41, 57–9, 61, 78, 86, 91, 96, 102, 109, 126, 134; l. of conversion, 57; l. of locus, 134; l. of *tertium datur*, 61, 91; logical language of the Art, 21, 128; syllogistic l., 10, 13, 57, 59, 151
- Lohr, Charles, 106, 108–9, 130
- Lubac, Henry de, 69
- Luhmann, Niklas 102, 134
- Luxumburg Gardens, 106, 261
- M**
- Macarius of Alexandria, 83
- Majorca, 2–3, 7–8, 12, 18, 26, 28–30, 72, 108, 110–11, 226, 240, 243, 250–51, 253, 258–61
- Mancini, Italo, 134
- Mandala, 14
- Mani, 17
- Marie de Rocamadour, Saint, 7, 238–9, 259
- Marseilles, 260
- Martí, Raimon, 17, 21, 110
- Martín Velasco, J., 111, 116, 128
- Mary, Virgin, 111, 197, 204, 206, 220, 226–7
- Massignon, Louis, 112, 132
- Maximus the Confessor, 119
- McGinn, Bernard, 33, 113–14, 128
- Meaning: annihilation of m., 81, 88; mystical m., 56; negative m., 115; mode of m., 10, 12–13, 74; two paths of, 96–7. *See also* Signification
- Mechtild von Magdeburg, 67
- Meditation, Lull's method of, 45, 81–3. *See also* Contemplation
- Meister Eckhart, 68, 105, 109, 115, 119
- Mesina, 261
- Metaphor, 85–8, 98
- Mimesis, 100
- Minstrels, 3, 23, 223. *See also* Troubadours
- Miramar, 18–19, 110–11, 222, 226, 260
- Miramar, Monastery of 226
- Misch, Georg, 71, 106, 128
- Modus significandi*. *See* Meaning
- Mohammed, 192, 215, 247, 254; Law of M., 25
- Mohammed, Mohammedanism, 17, 192, 215, 224, 247, 249, 254–5. *See also* Islam.
- Monotheism, 13–14, 31, 39, 56, 122
- Montepellier, 18, 23, 29, 110–11, 243–4, 259–61
- Mors mystica*, 82, 93, 113
- Muslim. *See* Islam.
- Mystics, mysticism, 4, 8, 19, 24, 32–3, 42, 67–70, 78, 81, 85, 92, 103, 107–9, 110–15, 124, 130; m. death, 82, 93; m. doctrines, 35; m. experience, 16, 21, 32, 40, 57, 69, 82, 87, 91, 103, 107, 113–4, 127–8, 130; m. experience of union, 21, 96; m. alienation, 67; m. contemplation, 56, 66, 131; m. insight, 20; m. intentions, 11, 98; m. knowledge, 51, 60; m. language, 26, 66, 69, 87–9, 135; m. literature, 4, 31, 68, 89, 93; m. of descent, 67; m. song, 88; m. texts, 69–70, 128; m. topology, 8, 57, 61, 91; m. vision, 113; natural mysticism, 96
- N**
- Names, divine, 19, 75, 78, 81, 129, 171–2; combination of the N., 31; contemplative model of the N., 112; mystical use of the N., 112; symbolic potentials of the N., 25
- Naples, 26, 250, 260
- Natana, 20, 112, 175
- Natural religion, 76
- Neoplatonism, 11, 14, 40, 42, 56, 74, 96
- Nestorians, 252
- Nicholas of Cusa, 125–8
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, 73
- Nishida Kitarō, 134
- Nishitani Keiji, 107, 132–3
- Not-being, 39
- Nothingness, 42, 235
- O**
- Otto, Rudolf, 115
- P**
- Paganism, 56
- Panikkar, Raimon, 116

- Papal Court, 26, 174, 176, 195, 211, 220, 223-5, 243-4, 250
- Paradox, 6, 22, 39, 42, 69, 71, 89, 103; p. of Christian revelation, 42; p. of mystical language, 89; paradoxical discourse, 31, 89; p. logic, 41
- Paris, 2-3, 7, 21-5, 28-29, 94, 107-8, 113, 136, 191, 236, 239, 242-4, 250, 252, 256, 258-61. *See also* University of Paris
- Passion of Christ, 14-5, 41, 45, 48, 244, 249; p. of ascent, 33
- Paul, Saint, 67, 102
- Pentecost, 109, 245
- Penyafort, St. Raimon de, 17, 110, 259
- Perceval, 34
- Persia, 100
- Personification of the divinity, 89
- Peter, Saint, 24, 197, 244
- Peter of Spain, 111
- Philip IV, 28
- Philosophy of conversion, 103; p. of redemption, 7; religious p., 11, 17-18, 66, 74, 79, 104, 134
- Picany, Blanca, 8, 107-8, 259
- Pico della Mirandola, 128
- Pisa, 29, 229, 255-6, 260-1
- Plato, Platonism, 31, 47, 56, 111
- Platzeck, Erhard Wolfram, 106, 110, 127
- Polytheism, 40
- Pring-Mill, Robert, 109, 114, 117, 119
- Pseudo-Llullianism, 103
- Qoheleth, 45
- Queen Joanna, 28
- Rahner, Karl, 122
- Randa, Mount: Enlightenment of R., 7-8, 12, 17, 32-3, 66, 108, 242, 259; revelation of R., 14-16, 36, 87
- Rapture, 27, 107, 113
- Richard of St. Victor, 67, 111
- Riedlinger, H., 113
- Riquer, M. de, 208
- Roman de Renart*, 100, 134
- Roselló, J., 106
- Rosenzweig, Franz, 74
- Rossi, Paolo, 124
- Rufini, thesis of, 106
- Rudel, Jaufré, 107
- Ruh, Kurt, 106, 127
- Śākyamuni, 20, 83
- Santi, Francesco, 125
- Santiago de Compostela, 7, 238-9, 259
- Saracens, 7, 35, 85, 160-1, 165, 179, 240-1, 244, 247, 249, 252-3
- Scala creaturarum*, 10, 99. *See also* Ladder
- Schimmel, Annemarie, 114, 131
- Schneider, Marius, 132
- Scholem, Gershom, 81, 130
- Secret, François, 128
- Sefirot, 78, 81-2
- Self-apperception, 150; s.-consciousness, 106; s.-justification, 73; s.-knowledge, 54; s.-negation, 23; s.-realization, 134; s.-reflection, 55, 70, 73; s.-sacrifice, 21; s.-understanding, 1, 6, 33, 69
- Senses. Five bodily s., 61; five intellectual s., 56; five spiritual s., 49, 82, 116; five spiritual-intellectual s., 66
- Seuse, Heinrich, 108
- Shepherd of Hermas*, 15, 110
- Signification, 74-7, 142-3, 145-7, 149, 151, 153, 172, 183, 196, 201, 229-30; grades of S., 10-11, 53-4, 58-60, 66, 109; S. of God, 9. *See also* Meaning
- Silence, 7, 15, 18, 21, 69-70, 84, 92-3, 96, 100, 103, 107, 128, 259-60; s. of contemplation, 70; s. of divine love, 84; s. of words, 93
- Šimiyá*, 81
- Söderblom, N. 111
- Sorbonne, 21, 29, 113. *See also* University of Paris
- Stock, Brian, 7, 114
- Sufis, Sufism, 81, 85, 179; S. mysticism, 78, 81; S. recitation techniques, 128
- Symbolism 10, 34, 36, 43, 48, 66, 70, 80, 97, 100, 114, 128-9, 133; s. of ascent, 66, 70; s. of blood, 45; s. of the

- center, 56; s. of the cross, 56, 91; s. of the lower senses, 50; s. of trees, 75-7, 129
- Syria, 28; King of S., 252
- T**
- Talmud, 111
- Tanabe Hajime, 134
- Tartars, 111, 216, 224, 227, 251; King of the, 28
- Témpier, Étienne, 28
- Temptation of Genoa, 27
- Teresa of Avila, 68, 84, 119, 131
- Theodicy, 47, 116
- Theology, 6-9, 11-12, 21, 39-41, 75, 93, 112, 116, 129, 190, 210, 240; Eastern Christian t., 119; grammar of t., 16, 57, 74; t. discourse, 96; theological polemics, 8, 61; t. rhetoric, 72; t. schools, 14; t. truth, 243;
- Theophany, 11, 15-16, 46, 74
- Theoretical-contemplative life, 79
- Theoria*, 31, 113
- Theosis, 45
- Thomas Aquinas, 17, 21, 110
- Transcendent points, 60, 66, 80, 125-7, 130
- Transcendental perception, 87
- Trinity, 25-6, 39-41, 137, 150-2, 155, 178, 188-9, 208, 214, 217, 226, 244, 248, 254, 258; inner life of the T., 41; personal experience of the T., 40
- Troubadours, 4, 38, 107, 115, 228. *See also* Minstrels
- Troyes, Chrétien de, 34
- Tunis, 23, 26, 30, 246-9, 255, 260-1
- U**
- Ueda Shizuteru, 131, 134
- Unio mystica*, 87, 93, 114
- University of Paris, 29, 136, 261
- Urvoy, Dominique, 108
- Utopia, 98, 100, 111-12
- V**
- Valente, José Ángel, 131-2
- van Ess, Josef, 110
- Vauvert, Abbey of, 2-3, 30, 106, 258, 261
- Vega, Amador, 109, 129-31, 137, 195, 226
- Via affirmativa*, 21, 103
- Via illuminativa*, 83
- Via negativa*, 21, 47, 96, 103
- Via predicativa*, 83
- Via purgativa*, 83
- Via unitiva*, 83
- Visio corporalis, imaginialis, intellectualis*, 109-10
- Vísperas sicilianas*, 260
- von Balthasar, Hans Urs, 116, 122
- W**
- Weinrich, W., 108
- Weintraub, K., 106
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 86, 127, 129
- Wolfson, H. A., 122
- Y**
- Yates, Frances, 109, 117, 124
- Yehudá ha-Levi, 74
- Z**
- Zambon, Francesco, 134
- Zen, 86; Rinzei Z., 104
- Zolla, Ellemire, 133

