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# The figure of Ramon Llull (*Raimundus Lullus*) and the significance of the recent companion volume to his Latin works in the *Corpus Christianorum* series

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## Abstract

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The text offered here seeks to present the recent work, Fidora, A.–Rubio, J. E. (eds.), *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction to his Life, Works and Thought*, CCCM 214, Turnhout: Brepols 2008, within the dual contexts of Lullian historiography and the history of Lullism, and by locating it therein aims to assess the volume's contribution to and revision of an ongoing enterprise while providing a detailed description of the work's contents.

**Keywords:** Ramon Llull (*Lullus*); Lullism; Historiography; *Corpus Christianorum*; Ars; Scientia.

**Resumen.** *La figura de Ramon Llull (Raimundus Lullus) y el significado del reciente volumen sobre sus trabajos en latín dentro de la serie Corpus Christianorum*

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Este artículo presenta la obra de Fidora, A.–Rubio, J. E. (eds.), *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction to his Life, Works and Thought*, CCCM 214, Turnhout: Brepols 2008, en el doble contexto de la historiografía luliana y de la historia del lulismo. Con eso, se pretende determinar la contribución del volumen al discurso luliano, así como a una posible revisión del mismo, mientras que se ofrece una descripción detallada de sus contenidos.

**Palabras clave:** Ramon Llull (*Lullus*); historiografía; *Corpus Christianorum*; Ars; Scientia.

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The casual reader may well ask him or herself: «What more is there to be learnt about the life of Ramon Llull — or Raimundus Lullus in Latin — almost eight centuries after his birth and very nearly seven since his death?» What documents remain to be uncovered or new sources to be revealed? What fresh signs are we to expect of his influence on subsequent writers; what confirmation shall we find that certain works attributed to him are spurious and others undoubtedly genuine? What new manuscripts are ever likely to appear? This reader, if even more sceptical, might ask: what advances in scholarship can be obtained by new critical editions over their august predecessors in print or otherwise? Or, indeed: what more can be said — and to what better effect? — about Ramon Llull's writings, his thought and the milieu from which these emerged, than has already been set down in countless volumes throughout the ages?

These volumes, to name but a few, span the various and self-consciously «Lullian» compendia assembled under the direction of Ramon Llull's early-fourteenth-century disciple Thomas Le Myésier;<sup>1</sup> the very different records left by the unrelenting medieval Inquisitor and opponent of Lullism, Nicolau Eimerich;<sup>2</sup> the unflattering appraisal of Llull's method put forward by René Descartes, the pansophistic proposals of whose Czech contemporary Jan Amos Komenský (known to the West as Comenius), in his later writings, echoed to an extent certain features of Ramon Llull's own *Ars generalis*;<sup>3</sup> the exuberant endorsement of the Lullian system, at least in its combinatorial aspects, by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz within his first book (published in 1666), the *Dissertatio de arte combinatoria*; and, more recently — and again in a Czech context — the sentimental and mythopoeic Romantic vision brought into relief by the writer Julius Zeyer in his poem *Ramondo Lullo*;<sup>4</sup> not to mention, the less than sympathetic and, frankly, misconceived assessment of Martin Gardner, the historian of mathematics, in his *Logic Machines and Diagrams*?<sup>5</sup>

These are by no means all of the authors across the centuries who have picked up Llull's trail in their quest for a method to emulate or a perceived form of madness to deride; indeed, the ways in which Ramon Llull and his entire venture have been characterised, not only in the more distant past but also in the last hundred

1. See, for instance, LOHR, CH. *et al.* (eds.) (1990). *Breviculum seu electorium parvum Thomae Migerii (Le Myésier)*. ROL. Supplementum Lullianum, I. CCCM 77. Turnhout: Brepols.
2. See, for instance, DE PUIG, J. (ed.) (2000). *El «Dialogus contra lullistas», de Nicolau Eimeric, O.P. Edició i estudi. Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 19, p. 141-234.
3. DESCARTES, R. (1637). *Discours sur la méthode (Discourse on the Method)*. COTTINGHAM, J. *et al.* (eds.) (1985). *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. Vol. I. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 119, where Descartes writes, in Part Two: «I observed with regard to logic that syllogisms and most of its other techniques are of less use for learning things than for explaining to others the things one already knows or even, as in the art of Lully, for speaking without judgement about matters of which one is ignorant.» Emphasis added. COMENIUS, J. A. (1633-1638). *Didactica magna*. KEATINGE, M. W. (1896; 1967). *The Great Didactic*. English translation. Reprint of the 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition of 1910. New York: Russell & Russell; COMENIUS, J. A. (1650-1651). *Schola pansophica*. ŠKARKA, A. *et al.* (1969-). *J. A. Comenii opera omnia*, vol. 15/III (1992). Prague: Academia; COMENIUS, J. A. (1657). *Opera didactica omnia*. CHLUP, O. (ed.) (1957). *Opera didactica omnia*. 3 vols. Facsimile reprint. Prague: Sumptibus Academiae Scientiarum Bohemoslovenicae.
4. ZEYER, J. (1941). *Spisy. IX. Poesie*. Prague: Nákladem České Grafické Unie A.S., p. 3-42.
5. GARDNER, M. (1982). *Logic Machines and Diagrams*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Sussex: Harvester Press, p. 1-19.

years, are manifold: some suggest reactions of reverent emulation and the desire to propagate Ramon Llull's writings, while others involve an indignant rejection and the levelling of charges of heresy at his writings and his later adherents; some give voice to a disingenuously broad dismissal of Lullian method as a means of discoursing upon any discipline or topic without the slightest knowledge thereof,<sup>6</sup> while yet others either involve a specific pedagogical application of Ramon Llull's principles, answering to a more strictly defined and differently motivated imperative or display an open-armed though not uncritical embrace of formal aspects of his combinatorics. Still further reactions range from a wistful reflection on Llull as a figure of legend to the misrepresentations put forward by an historian of science unwilling to analyse Lullian contributions to this field according to their own terms but preferring to draw sharp distinctions between the arena of science and that which he considers to be pseudo-scientific.

As we can see from these few examples, the spectrum of responses generated by Llull's writings — and the judgements these responses imply — has been extremely broad. In fact, this latter case — that of Martin Gardner — raises interesting questions, though ones whose full answers lie beyond the scope of this presentation. For, beside the fact that the example presented by a scientific colossus such as Isaac Newton — whose possession of Lullian works is well documented and whose near obsession with Biblical dating, not to mention the alchemical arts, has left millions of words of still unpublished text to posterity — would seem to render the use of such sharp distinctions problematic, to say the least, Gardner's efforts to separate science from pseudo-science seem to depend upon notions of a *corpus* of *texts* and a cumulative *canon* of similarly divided *authors* with an hierarchy therein, notions, that is, more suited to the realms of literary appreciation, and, what's more, ones whose conservatism is hardly compatible with any post-Kuhnian conception as regards scientific innovation.<sup>7</sup>

Gardner, in fact, states, to quote one example of the charges he lays against Llull, that «[n]one of Llull's scientific writings, least of all his medical works, added to the scientific knowledge of his time».<sup>8</sup> However, recent scholarship suggests that Llull's *modus operandi* was specifically one that was *additive* as regards earlier knowledge, preferring wherever possible to incorporate elements from other areas of thought, however seemingly incompatible, while recycling them and recasting them in the mould of his *Ars generalis*, rather than simply to reject them.<sup>9</sup> This is but one example of the way in which earlier judgements upon the thought of Ramon Llull require considerable revision if not outright rebuttal, even more so where such judgements are relatively recent. It is precisely in this respect that the new companion volume to Ramon Llull's Latin works in the *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis* series comes into its own.

6. COTTINGHAM, J. *et al.* (eds.) (1985). *Philosophical Writings...*, *loc. cit.*

7. KUHN, TH. S. (1962;1996). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.

8. GARDNER, M. (1982). *Logic Machines...*, p. 15.

9. BONNER, A. (2007). *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull: A User's Guide*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, p. 206, n. 52 and corresponding text; p. 296-297, n. 110 and corresponding text.

Indeed, in Chapter III of *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction to his Life, Works and Thought*, Josep E. Rubio examines this very point when examining the contribution made by the Lullian model of astronomy to the medieval understanding of that science, conceding that while Ramon Llull may have shown little concern for «its empirical, technical or mathematical dimensions...»,<sup>10</sup> there is strong evidence (which directly contradicts certain of Gardner's other comments)<sup>11</sup> to suggest that Llull himself was strongly «opposed to prediction by means of horoscopes».<sup>12</sup> More specifically, as I have suggested, Rubio demonstrates that Llull, instead of trying to develop any kind of explanatory model, is seeking to adapt the existing science of astronomy to the conditions of his Great Art in order to provide it with more rational foundations.<sup>13</sup>

But secondly, and more generally, perhaps Gardner was seeking to be analytical in his judgement — or caricature, rather — of Llull's system of thought where it might have been advisable to assess that very system in terms of the practical purposes it set itself, that is to say, in terms of the uses to which its author hoped it might be put, whether as an *Ars universalis et scientia generalis* essential for the posing and 'solving' of questions on any subject matter whatsoever or, more narrowly, though no less importantly, as a means of converting those who did not believe in Christianity to that very faith while, secondarily, seeking the reform of Christianity itself. It is from the recognition and respect it shows towards these latter, principal aims of Ramon Llull's Great Art that this volume draws its strength and is, in turn, able to explicate the strengths — as well as the weaknesses — of that Art itself. What is perhaps even more damaging to Gardner's assessment of Llull, is the fact, recently identified by Anthony Bonner, that this historian of science did not even consult any of Llull's own writings, nor the more recent secondary literature, relying instead greatly upon views of Ramon Llull (and Romantic ones at that) long since superseded.<sup>14</sup>

A further problem arises for a translator such as myself, who has a background in the history of science, when he meets references to 'science' and 'scientific', such as those of Gardner, in a description of the technical or mechanical concerns of the High Middle Ages. Here one has to acknowledge that, in general, the word 'science' does not always adequately serve to translate what is in fact customarily a reference to scholastic-Aristotelian *scientia* (ἐπιστήμη in Greek).<sup>15</sup> Llull's view of *scientia*, on the other hand, differed even from this; aspiring rather to a universal form of knowledge that was inventive, while also being both demonstrative and general — a combination impossible in scholastic-Aristotelian epistemology —

10. FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction to his Life, Works and Thought*, ROL. Supplementum Lullianum, II. CCCM 214. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 347.

11. GARDNER, M. (1982). *Logic Machines...*, loc. cit.

12. FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 347.

13. *Ibid*, p. 348-349, n. 63 and text.

14. BONNER, A. (2007). *Art and Logic...*, p. 303-305.

15. FRENCH, R.; CUNNINGHAM, A. (1996). *Before Science: The Invention of the Friars' Natural Philosophy*. Aldershot: Scholar Press, p. 3-4 and n. 2.

and thereby solving problems within that epistemology as regards the foundations for the particular ‘sciences’.<sup>16</sup>

References by contemporary authors to medieval physics, astronomy, ‘optics’ (or *perspectiva* as the Franciscans called it)<sup>17</sup> and medicine, often fail to recognise that such fields in the High Middle Ages formed part of what was known as ‘natural philosophy’ or *philosophia naturalis* and was governed by the ends which it served: namely, although each in different ways, the support of the doctrines and diffusion of the Christian faith.<sup>18</sup> The ‘scientific’ aspects of Ramon Llull’s projects — whether meta-systematic or related to the application of the Art to particular fields or even to the possibility that this Art evolved to an extent from certain features of contemporary natural philosophical (that is to say, ‘elemental’) theories — are all examined in the light of such considerations by Josep Enric Rubio in Chapter III, when dealing with the evolution of Llull’s *Ars generalis* from the pre-Art stages of the *Llibre de contemplació* (1271-1273), its structural components and the developments to which these themselves were subject, as well as its natural philosophical basis (at least in its earlier formulations).<sup>19</sup>

However, while one might not expect the aforementioned ‘casual reader’ to be fully aware of the nature, identity and purposes of earlier generations of Llull’s readers, nor to realise that, historically, many of those influenced by the Lullian system have sought to conceal the very debt they owed towards its author, one might justifiably hope that he or she appreciated the fact that no earlier generation would have read Llull’s works in a manner which might be construed as ‘casual’. Overzealous? Possibly. Misguided? Often. Disingenuous? Probably. Visionary? Without doubt.

In fact, the whole notion that either in this day and age or in any other a person can approach or could have approached the reading of the literary, philosophical or theological output of Ramon Llull in a manner that is or was casual, does not stand up to scrutiny, not least for the reason that, historically speaking and before more generalised standards of literacy came into existence, the reader of a Lullian text would have been a person of some education, all the more so if he or she were reading the Latin rather than the Catalan version of one of his texts.

The principal meanings of casual to which I am appealing, and which may render my point somewhat equivocal though no less pertinent, are, of course: cursory, occasional, by chance, negligent, and disorganised, which make their antonyms, i.e. the thorough, consistent, deliberate, attentive and methodical reading of Llull’s works seem something more than a vocation. But perhaps one remaining sense of the word helps us to see a possible convergence of the notional historical and

16. RUBIO, J.E. (2008). FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 247, nn. 5 and 6 and text.

17. FRENCH, R.; CUNNINGHAM, A. (1996). *Before Science...*, p. 231.

18. *Ibid.*, French and Cunningham note the «highly religious nature of thirteenth-century natural philosophy [...] [F]or its practitioners, such as [the] friars, natural philosophy was concerned with studying nature as created by God [...]», [authors’ emphasis] p. 4; see also p. 231 and *passim*.

19. RUBIO, J.E. «Chapter III. Thought: The Art and Chapter III.A: The Natural Realm». FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 243-297 and 311-362.

modern-day readers as well as the resolution of these conflicting terms: which is that of 'tranquil' or 'full of repose'. Such supplementary meanings find echoes in the writings of Ramon Llull, not least as far as concerns his stipulation that, ideally speaking, all inter-religious dialogue should take place in a *locus amoenus*, literally a «pleasant place» where the opposing parties might find comfort and safety, though also as regards the notions of peace and repose, so suggestive of and important to Franciscan and Christian neo-Platonic thought, indicating as they do the fulfilment of one's purpose as a created being, the attainment, that is — to use an Aristotelian term — of one's 'final cause' or, as Ramon Llull expresses it, one's 'first intention'.

It is clear, therefore, that not only is the notion of a casual reader of Ramon Llull's oeuvre a myth, at least in the qualified sense I have just outlined, but also that every generation or couple of generations have read the works of Ramon Llull in a different way and, in contemporary terms, it is even possible for there to exist greater disparity between the assessments of one individual scholar and another than may have ever existed previously between successive generations of readers. This is not to say that consensus is an ideal, however, though it is remarkable that such a coherent volume as this has been produced, considering the range of scholars involved in its production.

Here we can mention the editors of this volume themselves, Drs Alexander Fidora and Josep Enric Rubio, both noted Llull scholars, the latter of whom has contributed lengthy sections covering the structural features and evolution of Llull's 'Great Art' as well as the natural philosophical background to it and the way this is recycled by the Catalan author, included within Chapter III of this book;<sup>20</sup> and the other contributors, Drs Fernando Domínguez Reboiras, the former long-serving Director of the critical edition of Ramon Llull's Latin works at the Raimundus-Lullus-Institut in Freiburg, and Jordi Gayà, Rector of the Maioricensis Schola Lullistica, who present the reader with a detailed account of Ramon Llull's life and the socio-cultural context within which he worked. They base their account, in the first chapter of the book, to a large extent on the dictated autobiography given by Llull in 1311, though shed significant new light upon the level of competence possessed by the scribe responsible for this project and the degree to which he may have contributed to its style and hagiographical tone as well as the rhetorical characteristics evident in its rhythmic quality.<sup>21</sup>

Their focus is concentrated similarly upon the strategies adopted by Ramon Llull in this his memoir, the *Vita coetanea*,<sup>22</sup> as also in other of his writings, and thereby reveals how Llull's skills as an author contributed to the drafting of his life story. These skills were developed over years of textual composition in which he had devised the various formulations of his Great Art and applied this to all acknowledged disciplines (the Art itself deriving at least in part from his own

20. FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, *ibid.*

21. DOMÍNGUEZ, F.; GAYÀ, J. «Chapter I. Life». FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J. E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 3-124, particularly p. 5-8.

22. LULLUS, R. (1311). «*Vita coetanea*». HARADA, H. (ed.) (1980). ROL VIII. CCCM 34. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 259-309.

mystical and contemplative pursuits) and adapted models of dialectical practice, among others, for use in inter-religious dispute during his extensive travels and many missionary endeavours, not to mention applying his arsenal of intellectual weaponry for the purpose of Christian reform, in petitions to Church authorities and secular rulers, the composition of broadly apologetic or pedagogical works, and the writing of sermons.

In fact, perhaps one of the most striking contributions of these authors in this chapter is their insistence on the way in which these skills shape the *Vita* itself, and how this late piece of writing is completely continuous with his other texts, being in effect the apotheosis of what we might call a ‘Lullian text’.<sup>23</sup>

The authors of this chapter, however, do not rely exclusively on this memoir for their information on Ramon Llull’s life or the circumstances affecting the composition and gestation of his works, often pointing instead to further documentary sources and highlighting known facts not reported by the *Vita*.<sup>24</sup> They are also able to draw inferences from the very lacunae and omissions within this text, and are careful to map out in considerable detail the prevailing geopolitical context affecting the south-western Mediterranean area, before as well as during Llull’s lifetime and particularly his younger years, spent as these were on the island of Majorca.<sup>25</sup>

They dwell in particular upon the co-existence on the island of communities of Christians, alongside the subordinated ones of Jews and Muslims, revealing how such ethnic and religious differences, not to mention tensions, would have contributed to the Catalan author’s understanding of the world, and his apologetic task as mediated by a dialectical awareness of the viewpoints of potential or actual opponents. They provide also a comprehensive history of the island’s conquest and a full portrayal of the subsequent conditions under which the subject populations of Muslims and Jews were allowed to live, engage in commerce and practise their faiths.<sup>26</sup>

The writers of this chapter focus likewise on the extent to which Llull would have participated in the social and economic life around him, while also providing a broad outline of the kind of education he would have received, and the circumstances of his religious ‘conversion’ despite a youth spent, by his own admission, even though exaggerated for rhetorical effect, in dissolute activities.<sup>27</sup> In general terms, they are similarly keen to deny, through argument and evidence, many of the events, characteristics or even occupations often attributed to Ramon Llull as part of what we might call the ‘legendary aspects’ that have built up around his life.<sup>28</sup>

In this respect and many others, they provide a useful corrective to earlier biographical accounts. They are partly aided by the nature of their material, in that they consider Ramon Llull’s life — and its textual basis in the *Vita coetanea* (among other sources) — in relation to the texts he produced between 1271 and

23. FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 8.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 13-36.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 13-22.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 20-45.

28. *Passim*.

1315 (the account offered by the *Vita* ending in 1311), while also bearing in mind the status of the *Vita* itself as a piece of ‘life writing’, a form not without its own complexities. In doing so, Lull’s life and works are not seen as mere adjuncts to one another, but rather as communicating vessels.

Indeed, the entire second chapter, again by Domínguez Reboiras, offers a comprehensive *catalogue raisonné*, as it were, of all of Lull’s works, including those lost or only referred to in other extant texts.<sup>29</sup> This is preceded by a detailed introduction examining issues as varied as Lull’s writing style, the complex question of the languages in which his works were written and the priority of these (there being no extant manuscripts in Arabic), the history of manuscript transmission as well as of the various historical catalogues of Ramon Lull’s works, dating from the inventory left by the author himself in his autobiography.<sup>30</sup> The catalogue presented by Domínguez reproduces for the first time in print the entire Lullian corpus as present in and defined by the Raimundus-Lullus-Institut’s list of works in the *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina* (ROL) series, complete with bibliographical details concerning dates and locations of composition, the coexistence of Catalan and Latin versions of the same text where these exist, as well as details of the principal printed editions and translations of Lull’s texts, not to mention the identification of those which remain unedited as well as the few inauthentic works in the catalogue’s listings.<sup>31</sup>

To draw a perhaps imprecise mathematical analogy, without trying to suggest the existence of any attempt on Ramon Lull’s part to connect his pseudo-algebraic notation with Euclidean geometry, there is perhaps some value in trying to view Lull’s system in spatial terms: that is to say, by using Cartesian coordinates in three dimensions to visualise what we might call ‘Lullian space’. Of course, the fourth dimension could also come into play in order to map changes to his system over time.

The reason I am appealing to this analogy is in order to suggest that the authors and editors of this Introduction have, in fact, succeeded in picturing Lull in this way. Not only on a literal level are we presented with the three dimensions of Lull’s life, work, and thought, but also, on a more trivial level, we are given an insight into the length, that is to say, the duration, of Lull’s writing career, not to mention the length of many of his extensive works, as well as the very length or extension of his entire corpus. Similarly, this Introduction gives a very strong impression of the breadth, that is to say, the range of topics and disciplines, covered in this Catalan philosopher’s oeuvre, together with a view of the height his project attains, which is to say, not only of the stature he has achieved himself as an author but the very precise ontological stature attaching to any of the beings up and down the *scala naturae* or Great Chain of Being, from the lowest elements to the Sovereign Good or *Summum bonum*, all of which are included within this author’s world-view.

29. DOMÍNGUEZ, F. «Chapter II. Works». FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J. E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 125-242.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 125-133.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 134-242.



This three-dimensional model, which if expressed differently, could see the Lullian Principles or *Dignitates* along an horizontal axis, the fields or *scientiae* to which these can be applied on an oblique axis, while the vertical axis would be occupied by the Lullian ‘Subjects’, that is to say, the components of the Porphyrian Tree, is something which, if only in the loosest terms, those responsible for this Introduction may have had in mind when deciding upon the broad epistemological and ontological areas their book should cover. In this way, beyond its specific and detailed focus upon the Great Art in terms of its structures and its temporal evolution as well as its aims and *modus operandi*, this volume defines ‘Lullian space’ by its three constant coordinates or dimensions: that is to say, in generally ascending order, nature, man, and God.

Nature, that is to say, the created world, of which man forms part, acts in the service of man himself who, as an individual, works for the society of men in order to establish a form of *Civitas Dei* within the realms of Christendom as well as a *pax christiana* between nations and between sects, in other words, religious creeds. Man, in turn, if he is to serve his created purpose — again both on the individual and collective levels — serves or, in Llull’s more specifically neo-Augustinian terms, remembers, understands and loves, God. In the process of this *reditus ad Deum*, man, even more so than the angels, on account of the fact that he is part of material creation, and in particular Christ, the God-man, bring about the return of all levels of creation to God their creator along with the perfection or *deification* of man.

This drama of Christian neo-Platonism as played out in the works of Ramon Llull, is examined in this Introduction by the authors of Chapter III (Josep Enric Rubio, Marta M. Romano, Óscar de la Cruz and Jordi Gayà) in its relations to the natural and the human — that is to say, individual as well as social — realms as well as the divine, the latter ultimately being viewed in terms of its two most important doctrines as far as medieval inter-religious dialogue was concerned: namely, the Trinity and the Incarnation. However, in this latter respect, attention is given first by Jordi Gayà to the more fundamental notions, at least in terms of Ramon Llull’s method, of the Lullian *Dignitates* or divine attributes by means of which God is defined, and the ways Llull alters traditional definitions of theology in order to accommodate this *scientia* within his Great Art.<sup>32</sup>

The central focus of any account of Ramon Llull is bound to consist of an examination of his *Ars generalis* itself. Any attempt to provide such an account must satisfy two objectives: first, that it be diachronic, and thereby offer a ‘vertical cross-section’, in order to detect and elaborate upon the various changes this Art underwent and to comment on the underlying reasons for such changes, which, in a qualified sense at least, corresponded to efforts on Llull’s part to simplify his system; and second, that

32. These last two paragraphs attempt to summarise in a necessarily highly condensed form the contents of Chapter III and the Lullian world-view expressed therein. For a view of Lullian anthropology in an ontological, sociological and historical perspective, see in particular ROMANO, M.M.M.; DE LA CRUZ, Ó. «Chapter III.B: The Human Realm». FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction...*, p. 363-459.

it be synchronic, and thereby provide an ‘horizontal cross-section’ — a ‘lateral slice’, as it were, to complement the ‘vertical slice’ taken by a chronological view — of the components of the Art at any of the principal stages in its evolution. Rubio, in his examination of the Art in its various phases, does precisely this.<sup>33</sup>

Rubio both outlines the characteristics of and traces the changes between the first two formulations of Lull’s Art: namely, the *Ars compendiosa inueniendi ueritatem* (c. 1274) and the *Ars demonstratiua* (c. 1283), showing how the latter reveals greater signs of systematisation with regard to the former.<sup>34</sup> He then goes on to detail the changes Lull’s system undergoes during the ‘transitional phase’ between 1283 and 1289, prior to the Art’s reformulation in the *Ars inuentiua ueritatis* of 1290. At the risk of introducing a number of Lullian technicalities, the principal changes involved are the following: that is to say, the disappearance of the «species» of Figure S (the figure incorporating the combined acts of the intellectual soul) in post-1290 versions of the Art; the Dignities (or divine attributes) of Figure A becoming universal principles having correlative action as ‘agent’, ‘patient’ and ‘act’; the reduction in the number of figures (from 12 to 4); the introduction of definitions for the principles of Figure A; the attainment of full status as principles by the concepts from Figure T (with the exception of ‘Contrariety’ and ‘Minority’, these not being applicable to God); the change from a quaternary to a ternary system; and the attribution of multiple referents to the letters forming the Lullian ‘Alphabet’, among other changes.<sup>35</sup>

Two further and fundamental alterations to Lull’s method during this period are also highlighted. These are the fact that, after 1290, the 18 principles of the Art (from Figures A and T) are held to provide the founding principles of all the subordinate sciences, where such founding principles, according to an Aristotelian view, would have been specific to each of these sciences, sciences which would have been incapable of demonstrating their own foundations. The ability to overcome such an epistemological deficiency is precisely what Ramon Lull attributes to his *Ars generalis*. Secondly, during the Ternary Phase, when Lull’s system is based around multiples of three, his demonstrations are no longer formed on an analogical basis, that is to say with the assistance of his elemental theory, but rather on that of the definitions of the Principles themselves, here serving as axioms which have to remain intact or *illaesae*. As a result of this, his demonstrations are lent greater universality.<sup>36</sup>

As Jordi Gayà points out in his section of this book, in the mature stages of Lull’s production, the Principles (or Dignities when referring to God; general principles when referring to finite beings) have a dual aspect: as abstract and universal principles within the explanatory context of the Art itself and, secondly, as what we might call ‘contracted’ principles when referring to the field of their application.<sup>37</sup>

33. *Ibid.*, p. 243-297.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 253-272.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 273.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 273-276.

37. GAYÀ, J. «Chapter III.C. The Divine Realm». FIDORA, A.; RUBIO, J.E. (2008). *Raimundus Lullus: An Introduction*..., p. 461-515. Here p. 469-60.

Gayà portrays the evolution of Llull's Art, in its theological and metaphysical dimensions, as an 'emptying out' or κένωσις of the ontological components within the Principles of the Art, the result being a more purely formal system. While the central focus of the Art during its early stages had consisted of God as defined by his Dignities, in later stages the Art appears to become more self-referential, being constituted and defined, in fact, by the operation of its general and universal principles, the figure of God Himself coming to form one of the fields of the application for Ramon Llull's Art: that is to say, one of the nine Lullian 'Subjects', sitting on top of Llull's version of the Porphyrian Tree. As Gayà in fact states, when referring to this dual aspect in its relation to God as 'Subject' of the Art: «God is an object of study insofar as He is one of the Nine Subjects and also insofar as He provides the subject matter for the science of theology.»<sup>38</sup>

My initial rhetorical questions in this presentation were designed to point to the fact that this new Introduction to the life, works and thought of Ramon Llull needs to be considered within the framework both of the history of Lullism (that is to say, of historical works written by genuinely Lullist authors: Nicholas of Cusa, Charles de Bovelles, Nicholas de Pax, Bernard de Lavinheta, and to a certain extent, Giordano Bruno, for instance) and the historiography concerning Llull and his system, celebrated examples of such writings being those of Antonio Raymundo Pasqual, and Ivo Salzinger, editor of the Mainz edition of Ramon Llull's works, in the eighteenth century, and more recently — and quite apart from the authors of this volume — that of the Carreras y Artau brothers, of Frances Yates, Robert Pring-Mill and Friedrich Stegmüller, and more recently still, of Anthony Bonner, Jocelyn Hillgarth, Dominique Urvoy, Lola Badia, Josep Maria Ruiz Simon, Joan Santanach and Albert Soler. There remains a subtle distinction here, even if there is at times some overlap between the two categories.

This framework, although of enormous significance, is not one which the Introduction under discussion consciously brings into the foreground; it is more of an implication and possibly the anticipation of a volume for the future. This framework of the history of Lullism is one which has been beyond the scope of the volume to include, and though it seems aware of its own position within Lullian historiography, the book I translated is content to focus upon the more immediate geopolitical and social context from which Llull and his thought emerged, though not without recognising certain continuities with Judaic and Islamic thought therein, nor acknowledging certain features within Llull's *Ars generalis* as direct and specific responses to certain problematic areas of contemporary medieval thought.

The other, more particular and narrower, context in which this work should be seen is that of the *Corpus Christianorum* series itself, first conceived at the Benedictine abbey of St Peter in Steenbrugge, Belgium, by Dom Egidius Dekkers, immediately after the second world war, as a form of re-edition and revision (intended to reflect twentieth- and now, twenty-first-century, standards of editorship) of Migne's great nineteenth-century compilation of Latin authors, the *Patrologia*

38. *Ibid.*, p. 471.

*Latina*.<sup>39</sup> Dekkers' original project, drawn up and implemented in the early 1950s in collaboration with Brepols Publishers, was to include every Christian author who had ever written in Latin, from the time of Tertullian to that of Bede, in a *Series Latina*. This was later expanded to include a *Series Graeca*, not to mention, along with other external projects incorporated into the Brepols lists, the *Continuatio mediaevalis*, of which this volume forms part, as *Supplementum Lullianum II* of the *Raimundi Lulli Opera Omnia* subseries.<sup>40</sup>

Historiography often seems torn between adherence to notions that we are like «nanos gigantum humeris insidentes», that is to say «dwarves standing on the shoulders of giants» — a phrase attributed by John of Salisbury to Bernard of Chartres in the mid-twelfth century — and lending support to variants of the Oedipal myth, consciously or otherwise. But are these two stances so completely unreconcilable? Are our attempts to view the past condemned to fail on account of the fact that we are bound to choose between these attitudes? Does this choice represent the Scylla and Charybdis of historiography?

As we have seen, with particular reference to Descartes' dismissal of Ramon Llull, it is sometimes possible to «stand on the shoulders of giants» without acknowledging that one has done so. If such is the case, one is also «killing one's father, the King», however loudly one may protest one's innocence. The authors and editors of this book have no need to commit regicide, knowing as they do the inevitability of their dependence on past historiography and the equally inevitable efforts they have made and will continue to make to improve upon Llull scholarship even where it is outstanding and to rectify it should amendment be required.

I hope to have shown that novel approaches and new material are certainly on display in this volume and that, while the writings of Ramon Llull may never be quite suitable for what I have characterised as the 'casual reader', this new book contributes greatly towards an opening up of Llull's vast productivity within the *Corpus Christianorum* series, while also hopefully reassuring its prospective audience that their future readings of this author may be carried out with greater ease and greater peace of mind.

39. MIGNE, J.-P. (ed.) (1844-1855; 1862-1865). *PATROLOGIAE CURSUS COMPLETUS, SERIES LATINA*. Paris, 221 vols. including 4 index vols.

40. LEEMANS, J. (2003). «Fifty Years of *Corpus Christianorum* (1953-2003). From Limited Edition Project to Multi-located Scholarly Enterprise». LEEMENS, J.; JOCQUÉ, L. (eds.) (2003). *Corpus Christianorum. Xenicum Natalicium. Fifty Years of Scholarly Editing*. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 9-55.