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**RAMON LLULL, LOGICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER OF INTERRELIGIOUS
DIALOGUE**

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TITLE OF THE THESIS

by

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(Italy)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

Chair, Examination Committee

Thesis Supervisor

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Abstract

In this thesis I examine Ramon Llull's concept of interreligious dialogue. In order to do this, in the first chapter I will focus on the apologetic work of the Catalan philosopher (especially the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*). In the second chapter I will concentrate on Llull's logic in relation to God's essence. By checking the philosophical consistency and the relationship between logical arguments and theology, I will try to answer the question whether (or to what extent) Llull's project is a valuable contribution to the current debate on interreligious dialogue or only a disguised form of indoctrination.

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Introduction

Ramon Llull (1232-1316) is an exceptional figure in the history of philosophy. Philosopher, theologian, and missionary, he was born in Majorca, a crossroads of cultures where Jews, Muslims, and Christians had been living together for many years. Even if King James I of Aragon conquered the island in 1231, Ramon spent his youth in a religiously pluralistic environment. He was a bourgeois (he was also a troubadour), was married to Blanca Picany and had two children by 1263, the year of his conversion. After Christ appeared to him five times he decided to devote his life to Christ, left his family and became a Franciscan tertiary.¹ He spent the rest of his life converting the infidels to Christianity. For this purpose, he invented a logical system based on a universal language and a combinatory method, the so-called *Ars*. Moreover, Llull always put the emphasis on the necessity of learning the languages of the infidels and proposed to both popes and secular authorities to found monasteries in which those languages could be taught.

Neglected during his lifetime and misunderstood as a rationalist,² in the following centuries Llull influenced many important philosophers such as Nicholas of Cusa, Giordano Bruno and Leibniz. In the 20th century, since the pioneering work of Efrem Longpré (who wrote an article on Llull in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* in 1926) and the brothers Tomás and Jordi Carreras y Artau (who wrote a *Historia de la filosofía Española: Filosofía Cristiana de los siglos XIII al XIV* in 1939-1943),³ scholars (for example, Charles Lohr) showed a growing interest in the philosophy of Llull. Moreover, in 1957 the scholarly journal *Estudios Lulianos* (now *Studia Lulliana*) appeared, and we can say that in the last sixty years we have had many valuable contributions to the understanding of

¹ As for information on Llull's life, see the 'autobiography' known as *Vita coetanea* or 'Contemporary Life', in *Selected Works of Ramon Llull* (1232-1316). Edited and translated by Anthony Bonner, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) (henceforth SW I). It is the book an anonymous Carthusian monk of Vauvert, in Paris, put into writing after Llull told him his life story.

² See Bartomeu M. Xiberta, "El presumpte racionalisme de Ramon Llull," in *Estudios Lulianos* 7 (1963): 153-165.

³ Jordi Gayà Estelrich, *Raimondo Lullo. Una teologia per la missione* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2002), 14.

the Catalan philosopher (for example, his biography and his relation with Islam).⁴ However, some aspects of his philosophy are still controversial for scholars.

In the last decades, interreligious dialogue has become a focus of increasing attention in philosophical discussions and many scholars have drawn attention to the Lullian apologetic in relation to modern interfaith dialogue. Alexander Fidora,⁵ for example, claims that there are three possible ways of dealing with the interreligious dialogue: exclusivism, inclusivism, and a pluralistic view. According to exclusivism, *salus extra ecclesiam non est*, there is no salvation outside the Church. According to inclusivism, instead, members of other religions also have the possibility of salvation, because in their religions there are not only errors and falsehood, but also the vestige of truth. However, since inclusivism accepts the truth of others only in relation to the Christian truth, the supporters of a pluralistic theology of religions claim that we have to accept the relative truth of each religion and forget about the absolute superiority of one religion, if we want a real dialogue between religions.⁶

Since the interpretation of Llull's contribution to interreligious dialogue is particularly controversial, if we want to provide an answer to the question whether Llull was an inclusivist, as several scholars claim,⁷ or this definition is inadequate, we have to place the Catalan philosopher into his historical context.

In the first decades of the 13th century the fight against heresy was particularly bitter. As the Cistercian Cesarius of Heisterbach writes in his *Dialogus miraculorum*,⁸ when the soldiers arrived in the town

⁴ See *ibid.*, 16-17.

⁵ See Alexander Fidora, "Ramon Llull frente a la crítica actual al diálogo interreligioso: el arte luliano como propuesta para una «filosofía de las religiones»," in *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval* 10 (2003): 227-243.

⁶ See John Hick, "The Latest Vatican Statement on Christianity and Other Religions," in *Dialogues in the Philosophy of Religions* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 168: "[...] one cannot logically affirm the unique superiority of the Christian faith without 'considering other religions in advance as imperfect and inferior'. It is impossible to reconcile the traditional claim to the unique superiority of Christianity with the outlook required for genuine interreligious dialogue." Cit. in Fidora, "Ramon Llull frente a la crítica," 230 (note 12).

⁷ See, for example, Sara Muzzi, "Raimondo Lullo e la base reale del confronto interreligioso," in Coppola, Fernicola, Pappalardo (edd.), *Dialogus* (Roma: Città Nuova 2014): 395-413 (here 397), and Annemarie C. Mayer, *Drei Religionen – Ein Gott? Ramon Llulls interreligiöse Diskussion der Eigenschaften Gottes* (Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 2008), 399.

⁸ See Cesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, dist. V, 21, ed. J. Strange, 2 vol., Köln - Bonn - Bruxelles 1851 (Köln 1933), 302: "Venientes ad civitatem magnam, quae Biders vocatur, in qua plus quam centum milia hominum fuisse dicebantur, obsederunt illam. [...] Cognoscentes ex confessionibus illorum catholicos cum haereticis esse permixtos, dixerunt Abbati: 'Quid faciemus, Domine? Non possumus discernere inter bonos et malos'. Timens tam Abbas quam

of Béziers, they asked their leader, the Cistercian abbot Arnaud Almaric how to distinguish the Cathar heretics from the Catholics in order to kill the former and spare the life of the latter. Almaric answered that they had to ‘slay them all because God knows his own’ (*Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius*). Now, even if we cannot check the veracity of this story, it is in line with the same conception of moral and religious justification of violence we find in other texts. The Cistercian Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), for example, in his *De laude novae militiae*,⁹ claims that the soldiers of Christ are not sinner when they kill their enemies and that killing or dying in the name of Christ is never a crime. However, during the Middle Ages we find not only exploitation and manipulation of apologetic arguments. Indeed, as a leading intellectual at the Carolingian court, Alcuin of York (735-804) claimed that one can be forced to baptism, not to accept the Christian faith.¹⁰ Therefore, his advice to Charlemagne was to send teachers instead of soldiers to convince the Germanic peoples he had conquered to convert to Christianity. Following in this tradition, we find Llull’s missionary project.

From the concrete perspective of Llull’s time we can try to answer the question whether (or to what extent) his project is a valuable contribution to the current debate on interreligious dialogue or only a disguised form of indoctrination. Before drawing our conclusions about this question, we have to take into account Llull’s logic and metaphysics as the foundation of his dialogue with the infidels. Indeed,

reliqui, ne tantum timore mortis se catholicos simulant, et post ipsorum abcessum iterum ad perfidiam redirent, fertur dixisse: ‘Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius’. Sicque innumerabiles occisi sunt in civitate illa.” Cit. in Giulio d’Onofrio, “Introduzione. Pensiero medievale e dialogo tra le religioni,” in *Dialogus*: 11-57 (here 34).

⁹ See Bernard of Clairvaux, *De laude novae militiae*, 3, 4, PL 182, 924AB, ed. J. Leclercq – H.M. Rochais, Roma 1963, III, p. 217, 2-16: “At vero Christi milites securi praeliantur praelia Domini sui, nequaquam metuentes aut de hostium caede peccatum, aut de sua nece periculum, quandoquidem mors pro Christo vel ferenda, vel inferenda, et nihil habeat criminis, et plurimum gloriae mereatur. [...] Miles, inquam, Christi secures interimit, interit securior. Sibi praestat cum interit, Christo cum interimit. [...] Mors ergo quam irrogat, Christi est lucrum: quam excipit, suum.” Cit. in d’Onofrio, “Introduzione,” 35.

¹⁰ See Alcuin of York, “Epistola ad Arnorem,” in *Epistulae*, ed. E. Dümmler, in MGH, Ep. 4 (Kar. Aev., 2) 113, p. 164, 27-34: “Sed et hoc sciendum est, quod fides [...] ex voluntate fit, non ex necessitate. Quomodo potest homo cogi, ut credit quod non credit? Inpelli potest homo ad baptismum, sed non ad fidem. [...] Docendus est itaque homo rationalem habens intelligentiam et multimoda praedicatione adtrahendus, ut sacrae fidei veritatem agnoscat.” Cit. in d’Onofrio, “Introduzione,” 36.

it is important to show how the Art, albeit sometimes presented in a disguised form as in the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, plays a role in his whole work.

As for methodology, it is necessary to analyze Llull's texts¹¹ (I will provide the English translations of passages which have not been translated into English so far), in order to check their philosophical consistency, with a focus on the reference of logical arguments to theology.

After this introduction, there are two main chapters. In the first, I will focus on the relevant sections of the Lullian texts related to the question of dialogue (the first section is about the *Book of Contemplation of God* while the second section is about the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*). In the second chapter I will focus on Llull's logic and metaphysics by taking into account, in the first section, the last version of the Art, that is the triadic Art we find in the *Ars brevis*. The second section is about Divine attributes in Llull (but also in Islam and Judaism), which is of central importance in order to understand God's essence. The third section is about the theory of the correlatives and the triadic structure of the whole reality. The fourth section is about the *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*, or demonstration by equivalence, a form of demonstration developed by Llull which is based on the equivalence of its terms. The fifth and last section of the chapter goes back to the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* analyzed not from the point of view of its interreligious characteristics, but from the point of view of its relation with the Art. In the Conclusion I will try to provide answers about the character of Llull's contribution to interreligious dialogue and make three general criticisms to the founder of the Art.

¹¹ The relevant Latin and Catalan texts are indicated in the footnotes.

Llull's Philosophy of Interreligious Dialogue

Ipsi infidels sunt homines, sicut et nos, et sunt de nostra natura.¹²

Ramon Llull is one of the main characters in the tradition of interreligious dialogue. Since the Middle Ages we have had several attempts of dealing with other religions in the form of dialogue,¹³ and he is important for his clarification of the linguistic and conceptual categories, applied by interlocutors from different religious confessions, on whose basis the interreligious dialogue is possible.

Llull was born in Majorca in 1232 and the missionary vocation could only be the urge to convert Muslims, from whom the island had been recently taken, to Christianity. Moreover, the political situation in Spain in the thirteenth century created tension between Christians and Muslims and caused a new demand for apologetics. For in twenty-two years (1226-48) Muslim possessions were reduced from a third of the entire Iberian Peninsula to the area covered by the kingdom of Granada.

The aim of this chapter is to analyze Llull's approach to the issue of dialogue by taking into account two of his texts written before 1291.¹⁴ Llull wrote the *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* (*Book of Contemplation of God*) and the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis* (*Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*) after his unexpected and violent conversion and many years devoted to study and contemplation, initially in Arabic, then they were translated into Latin and Catalan, in order to give both Christians and Muslims a catechism of the Christian religion and a model for interreligious dialogue.

¹² Ramon Llull, *Lectura super Artem inventivam et Tabulam generalem*, Prologue, edited by Ivo Salzinger (Mainz: Häffner, 1729), 359-716 (here 360). Cit. in Annemarie C. Mayer, The Future of Interreligious Dialogue in the Light of Ramon Llull's Contribution to the Encounter of Religions," in *Past, Present, and Future of Theologies of Interreligious Dialogue*, edited by Terence Mirrigan and John Friday (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 47-63 (here 53).

¹³ Two of the most original interreligious dialogues from the twelfth and the fifteenth century are Peter Abelard's *Collationes* or *Dialogus inter philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum* (*Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian*) and Nicholas de Cusa's *De pace fidei* (*On Peace of Faith*), respectively, see Vittorio Hösle, "Interreligious Dialogue during the Middle Ages and Early Modernity," in *God as Reason: Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press 2013): 223-249.

¹⁴ The Siege of Acre (or Fall of Acre) took place in 1291 and is considered as one of the most important military events of the period, after which the Crusaders lost control on the city of Acre, the last remaining possession of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at the hands of the Mamluks. This event was echoed in the whole Christianity and at that point Llull began taking into account and even defending the idea of the Crusades.

The *Llibre de contemplació en Déu*

Llull wrote the *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* in 1275 in Arabic for a Muslim audience. A numeric symbolism characterizes the whole book: the unity of text represents the unity of God; the division in three volumes refers to the Trinity; the division in five books refers to the Five Holy Wounds Jesus Christ suffered during the crucifixion; the forty distinctions represent the forty days in the desert; there are 365 chapters, one for each day of the year, and an additional one; every chapter is divided into thirty paragraphs, corresponding to the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus; and each paragraph begins with a praise of the Lord, according to the Muslim method. In every chapter we find ten parts, corresponding to the Ten Commandments; each part has three paragraphs for devotion to the Holy Trinity. In this book reality is defined and described so that it can be connected to the contemplation of God, in order to convey the comprehension of the faith and to arrive at a virtuous life that pleases the Lord. Only through a profound reflection on reality and the necessary reasons (*rationes necessariae*) that come from contemplation and are the foundation of faith can the Christian convert to Christianity the Infidels.

Already in this work we can see how Llull rejects any form of violence. If the Christians, with their weapons, want to force the Infidels without “moving their intelligence,” this is a proof that their Christianity is not perfect.¹⁵ The conversion can be only an act of freedom. As we know from Chapter 346 of the *Book of Contemplation of God*, Llull wants “the motive force” of the Christians to act freely in order to move the free will of the Infidels to conversion to Christianity. If God wanted it, all non-Christians would convert to Christianity, but this would be a negation of human freedom; free will is for Llull essential to understand the relation between the Creator and the created.

From chapter 328 onwards the Majorcan replaces abstract or concrete notions with letters. In this work letters have no logical value, they are only abbreviations, conventional signs. In the second

¹⁵ See Ramon Llull, “Libre de contemplació en Déu,” 346, 21, in *Obras essencials*, edited by M. Batlori, J. Carreras i Artau, T. Carreras i Artau, J. Rubió i Balanguer, 2 voll. (Barcelona 1957-1960, II, 1960): 97-1269, here 1153.

paragraph of chapter 346 we find a list of the concepts of the Christian mission, expressed by letters. We have six letters (A, C, E, G, I, L), which represent objective realities (Jesus Christ; all the Christians; the world; power and knowledge of mankind; the motive force; completeness), and another six (B, D, F, H, K, M) which transmit the significations of the first ones. The letter N corresponds to human intelligence.

Following on in the Neoplatonic tradition, Llull says that we can understand reality starting from the whole. The human being can grasp, through his intellect, the relation between part and whole. Every reality is explained in reference to its relation to the whole. This is the Lullian conception of demonstration and this relation is what he calls “signification”. Signification shows the correspondence among all beings. Indeed, the correspondence between human beings and God is based on the fact that they were made in his own image. The correspondence between all beings and God is based on the similarity between the macrocosm, the exterior corporeal world, in which we see the signs of God, and the microcosm, the interior world of the soul, which keeps the image of God. Because of the similarity between God and humans and the signification among all beings, reality can be conceived as a set of *vestigia*, in which God let us know him. If we follow these *vestigia*, our intellect can go from the interpretation of sensorial data to the comprehension of spiritual reality. According to Llull, the Aristotelian concept of demonstration was too narrow, although there was a misunderstanding about Llull’s alleged rationalism.

In paragraph 4, Llull avers that the Christians will love God by remembering the passion of Christ. We perceive with our senses and understand with our reason that the signification of Jesus Christ (B) ‘demonstrates and signifies’ the intelligence (N) that Jesus Christ (A) sent his vicars, the Pope, cardinals, princes, to this world: mundane power is in relation with the Church’s mission. All the Christians (C) are moved by Jesus Christ (A) to keep the Christians in the truth and to transmit this truth to the Infidels. Otherwise, if the signification of Jesus Christ (B) does not signify this, the intellect (N) would understand that the signification (B) does not demonstrate anything about God,

because it would not show all that is expressed by the signification of Jesus Christ: the sense of his work and the role of the Church (organize the world for the praise and glory of Christ).

In paragraph 6, Llull describes how human power enters the Church and can give a contribution to converting the Infidels through the three kinds of schools he proposes. The first school is for missionaries as the one in the Monastery of Miramar, where minor friars were educated. The second school was interreligious: Saracen and Christian wise men should meet and explain to each other the reasons and the teachings of their religions. The third school was compulsory for Saracen and Jewish children under Christian rule, with the same purpose as the second school. From 1274 to 1315 Llull incessantly asks popes and kings of his time to create these schools. In paragraph 10, he states that the Pope and the cardinals have knowledge and power to ensure that future missionaries will learn the languages of the Infidels.¹⁶

In paragraph 17 of chapter 346¹⁷ we read what follows:

Glorious Lord! As the intellect (N) understands what the meaning of Jesus Christ (B) demonstrates to him about Jesus Christ (A), and memory remembers that the Holy Trinity and the Holy Incarnation, that the meaning of Jesus Christ (B) demonstrates about Jesus Christ (A), are not in what the Saracens and the Jews believe that we believe about Jesus Christ (A), so the intellect (N) understands that the contrast between us and them derives from the fact that they do not understand what we believe in; because they believe that we believe about Jesus Christ (A) what we do not believe and they do not know what we believe and know about Jesus Christ (A); for if they hear 'Trinity', they think that we believe in three Gods, that the Father is before the Son; and if they hear 'Incarnation', they think that we believe that the divinity can undergo alteration and can die; therefore, if this is the contrast, it is based on the predicate, as we say: 'God is one in the Trinity', and 'God is incarnate'. Therefore, if they understand the predicate in the same way as we do, there would be no contrast between us and them, just like there would be no contrast between two persons, with one of them saying 'It is legitimate to perform evil' and the other that it is not legitimate. But one intends to talk about evil inflicted as punishment for justice, and the other intends to refer to the evil following a crime; so that each of them thinks to be in contrast for something which they are not. Therefore, the Pope and the Princes should send missionaries to the infidels to let them understand the predicate that they do not understand, so that they agree with the Church (C) on subject and predicate.¹⁸

¹⁶ See *ibid.*, 346, 10, 1150-1151.

¹⁷ I follow Sara Muzzi, "Raimondo Lullo e la base reale del confronto interreligioso."

¹⁸ "Llibre de contemplació," 346, 17, 1152 (my translation): "Graciós Senyor, com la N entén ço que la B li demonstra de l'A, e la memòria remembra que la sancta trinitat e la sancta encarnació que la B demonstra de l'A no és ço que los sarraïns ni ls jueus se cuiden que nós cream en l'A, adoncs la N entén que'l contrast és de nós a ells per ço com ells no entenem ço que nós creem; car ells se cuiden que nós cream de l'A ço que no creem e no saben ço que de l'A creem e sabem; car en ço que ells oen trinitat, se cuiden que cream en tres déus, lo Pare que sia ans que'l Fill; e en ço que oen

In the next paragraph, we find what follows:

True Lord! Sensually we feel and intellectually we understand that the meaning of Jesus Christ (B) demonstrates to the intelligence (N) that Jesus Christ (A) has donated power to the totality of Christians (C) for obligating some Saracens who are captive and some Jews, and for showing them, compulsorily, our creed, how to understand subject and predicate, when they say: ‘God is one in the Trinity’ and ‘the Son became incarnate’; just like the child repeats the lesson for fear of the teacher, so the infidels will learn and understand for fear of the totality of Christians (C), it will be necessarily convenient that the motive force (I) moves them or some of them towards the totality of Christians (C), just like it moves the totality of Christians (C) to receive what the signification of Jesus Christ (B) demonstrates about Jesus Christ (A); so the infidels who will join the totality of Christians (C) will convert others. Therefore, while the intelligence (N), Lord, understands in this way, memory remembers that many Jews would convert if they had enough to live, and many Saracens, if they were not dishonored for the totality of Christians (C); for this reason, the intelligence (N) understands that the signification of Jesus Christ (B) demonstrates that Jesus Christ (A) has donated power to the totality of Christians (C) to donate life and honor the infidels who want to join the totality of Christians (C), from which the moving force (I) moves the will towards power and knowledge (G) so that it moves power and knowledge towards the totality of Christians (C).¹⁹

The clarification of the linguistic and conceptual categories of other faiths is necessary if we want to avoid misunderstandings but we have also to support the possibility of hearing what non-Christians believe in. Llull accepts the authority of the King as a means for the expansion of Christianity, but he does not accept violence. Even in the case of Saracen and Jewish children living in Christian lands, Llull accepts that they have to hear what the Christians believe in. But none of them should be baptized by force. In this sense, Llull is an anticipator of modern compulsory schooling.

The Church’s mission is to continue what Christ and the Apostles started: even if we follow the Church but we resort to violence, our mission will be no longer Christian. As we know, Llull considers

encarnació, se cuiden que cream que la deïtat s’alteràs e morís; on, per açò és lo contrast fet en lo predicat com qui diu: Déus és un en trinitat, e Déus és encarnat. On, si ells entenien lo predicat segons que nós l’entnem, ells e nós no contrastariem, així com no·s contrastarien aquells qui la un diu: ‘Legut és fer mal’, e l’autre diu que no és legut. La un ho entén a dir de mal de pena per fer justícia e l’autre ho entén a dir de mal de culpa; on, cascú cuida contrastar a l’autre en ço que no contrasta. On, com açò sia enaixí, doncs per açò lo papa e·ls prínceps deurien trametre missatge als infeels par donar a entendre del predicat ço que ells no entenden, per tal que ab la C en lo subject e predicat s’acordassen.”

¹⁹ Ibid., 346, 18, 1152 (my translation): “Vertader Senyor, sensualment sentim e entelektualment entenem que la B demonstra a la N que l’A ha donat poder a la C que destrenya alguns sarraïns qui són catius e alguns jueus, e per força lur faça mostrar la nostra creença en qual manera creu en lo subject e en lo predicat, com se diu: Un Déu en trinitat, e com se diu o Fill és encarnat; car si així com l’infantó qui per páor del mestre ha a retre la liçó, los infideels aprenien e entenien per páor de la C, convenia de necessitat que la I mogués ells o algun d’ells a la C, així com mou la C a reebre ço que la B demonstra de l’A; on, los infeels qui entrarien en la C ne convertirien d’altres. On, dementre que la N entén, Sènher, aquesta manera, la memòria remembra que molts jueus se convertirien si havien de què visquessen, e molts sarraïns, si no eren deshonorats per la C; on, per açò la N entén que la B demonstra que l’A ha donat poder a la C de donar vida e de tenir honorats los infeels qui volran entrar en la C, ab que la I mova lo voler en la G per tal que·s mova lo poder e· saber de la C.”

the possibility to resort to violence only in self-defense, when someone attacks Christians, their families and their cities. With the Fall of Acre the whole of Christendom feels obliged to take part in defending itself. The Church has knowledge, power and free will, on whose basis it should continue the work of Christ. The significations of Christ and all the Christians (B and D) show the Christians' drive for loving and acknowledging what they have received by Christ: knowledge, will, and power. However, according to Llull, the Pope does not do enough for making this drive real (for example, he is responsible for the fact that priests and missionaries are not educated enough).

In paragraph 14, we read that if the motive force (I) is not able to move the Pope, then it is necessary that everyone who is moved by it pray and do penance until Jesus Christ, by them, moves the Pope and the Church hierarchy (since only through hierarchy is the mission system set in motion).

Paragraph 21 is important for the problem of violence and how we actualize what potentially is. In Jesus Christ we find the fullness of human beings and he gives the Church free will, but the realization in the world of this will is problematic. For Llull, violence is legitimate if we have the following two conditions: the first condition is that the Church directs its intellectual drive toward the intellectual drive of the Infidels; the second condition is that the Infidels try to physically destroy the Christian community. If there is only doctrinal opposition between Christians and Infidels, there is no violence.

Llull writes what follows:

If the totality of Christians (C) moves the intellectual motive force towards the intellectual motive force of the Infidels, then it is legitimate that, with weapons and the sensuous force, the sensuous motive force of the totality of Christians is moved against the sensuous force of the Infidels who want to destroy the sensuous motive force of the totality of Christians (C).²⁰

This explains why Llull never talked of Crusades before 1291. The mission has nothing to do with violence: only self-defense is morally justified.

At the end of Paragraph 9, Llull avers that intelligence (N) has understood that the world can be directed toward a single faith and it tries to understand whether or not also in other religions there are

²⁰ Ibid., 346, 21, 1153 (my translation).

will, knowledge and power, which push people to do good, as in Christianity. In Paragraph 30, the last one of Chapter 346, Llull states that no one is any closer to the Christian religion than the Saracens are.

When intelligence understands all this – as we know from Paragraph 19 – memory remembers how many people in the world are still in error; for this reason, intelligence does not understand how Jesus Christ (A) can have completeness (L). But the signification of completeness (M) demonstrates that if Christ uses force on non-Christians and obliges them to enter the totality of Christians (C), then completeness and perfection would not be in him. Therefore, intelligence (N) understands how Christ is not and cannot be against the free will of both Christians and Infidels, because it is impossible that the Creator is against the free will of his creatures.

In conclusion, Llull's position in the *Book of Contemplation* is clear: respect of every person's freedom and rejection of violence. As he stresses in Paragraph 24, the signification of completeness shows how it is appropriate that the mission makes converts, by a free intellectual motion of their motive force rather than by a sensuous one.

In Chapter 187 of the *Llibre de contemplació*, the Majorcan describes the ideal conditions for a dialogue among interlocutors of different religions: a pleasant place, lovable words, and mutual forgiveness for the possible offenses. When we start a dispute it is appropriate that the participants have straight intentions, their eyes are turned to the truth, and they agree on some common points, on whose basis they can put forward arguments and ask questions. This is what Llull proposes in the Book of the *Gentile and the Three Wise Men*.

The *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis*

The *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*²¹ is Llull's most important apologetic work, which was conceived for use in Miramar, at Llull's missionary school,²² projected by Llull, supported by King James II of Majorca and established by Pope John XXI with the papal seal *Laudanda tuorum*, on October 17, 1276.²³ Also in this work the first step is to know and to understand what the others believe in, before trying to grasp the common truth. Llull's dialogue is about a Gentile who despairs out of fear of death and the idea that after death there is nothing meets three wise men, a Jew, a Christian and a Saracen. One of them – Llull does not write who – in the first part of the work convinces the Gentile that God exists and our soul is immortal. Then the Gentile feels great pleasure for this discovery, but he soon despairs again when the wise men ask him to convert to one of the three monotheistic religions. The situation is even more serious, since the Gentile has to make the right choice, otherwise he will be condemned to eternal damnation. So first the Jew, then the Christian, then finally the Muslim try to convince him of the value of their own religion by presenting their arguments. When the Gentile, at the end of the work, declares that he has made his choice the three wise men do not want to hear it and prefer to continue discussions until they finally understand which religion the true one is.

The Gentile does not belong to any monotheistic religion, but is learned in philosophy, and the wise men arrive to the same forest where the Gentile happens to be wandering.²⁴ Then

they come to a lovely meadow with a lovely spring watering five trees, the same five trees depicted at the beginning of this book.

²¹ Ramon Llull, *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis*, ed. Antoni Bonner (Palma de Mallorca: Patronat Ramon Llull 1993), English translation in *SW I*: 91-304.

²² According to Anthony Bonner (*Doctor Illuminatus*, ed. A. Bonner (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993), 80-81) Llull "wrote other works defending the Articles of Faith, all or in part, or producing counterarguments to the doctrines of the Jews, of the Muslims, or of dissident Christian sects, but none of these presented the three major religions altogether, allowing each to give its arguments in detail. For this reason we may suppose that this work was conceived for use in Llull's missionary school at Miramar. [...] If it was written as a text for Miramar, this would place its composition between 1274 and 1276."

²³ See Muzzi, "Raimondo Lullo e la base reale del confronto interreligioso," 397.

²⁴ Höfle, "Interreligious Dialogue," 232: "The place where the dialogue described by Llull is supposed to occur is characterized by absolute neutrality – it is a forest with all the properties of the traditional *locus amoenus* (familiar, with a different function, from both Plato's *Phaedrus* and Cicero's *De legibus*), but at the same time allegorically annobled by the presence of Lady Intelligence and five trees whose flowers stand for virtues, sins, and vices."

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.²⁵

So Lady Intelligence shows them this new form of disputation, based on the flowers of the five trees, and the system of the whole book, based on the seven divine attributes, the seven virtues and the seven vices, on the binary combinations of the flowers and on the conditions of each of the five trees. Whatever comes from combinations and conditions can be accepted by a monotheistic religion. They are not dogmas to impose on the interlocutors: they are neutral rules of the debate which consists in a comparison among concepts, through concordance and contrariety. Rather than referring to the *auctoritates* it is necessary to resort to the system of Lady Intelligence in order to grasp the *rationes necessariae*, necessary and demonstrative reasons. Llull writes the whole text of the *Book of the Gentile* without saying any word about who is right and who is wrong. He does not quote any *auctoritas*, does not build any argument on a doctrinal basis, that one of the three wise men could use against the others, but on a technique that can be accepted by each of them. This technique is the *Ars*, in respect of which the *Llibre del gentil* gives a milder version.²⁶ Even the open end of the dialogue is part of Llull's strategy: firstly, it contributes to the impression of impartiality without imposition of the one truth; secondly, "the three wise men do not even want to know how the gentile chose since this could endanger the reliance on reason alone of their discussion. What counts for them is not which religion the gentile chose, but which religion he ought to have chosen."²⁷

The first tree, with twenty-one flowers, represents God and his essential, uncreated virtues; in order to know this tree, we should comply with two conditions:

²⁵ SW I, 113-14 (italics in the original text).

²⁶ Bonner, *Doctor illuminatus*, 78: "the flowers of the trees are of course a pleasantly disguised version of the binary combinations – the cambres or "compartments" of this stage of the Art."

²⁷ Höfle, "Interreligious Dialogue," 241.

One is that one must always attribute to and recognize in God the greatest nobility in essence, virtues, and in action; the other condition is that the flowers not be contrary to one another, nor one be less than another.²⁸

The second tree has forty-nine flowers, by combination of the seven uncreated virtues of the first tree with the seven created virtue. Also this tree has two conditions:

The first is that the created virtues be greater and nobler where the most strongly symbolize and demonstrate the uncreated virtues; the second condition is that the uncreated and created virtues not be contrary to one another.²⁹

The third tree has forty-nine flowers, by combination of the seven uncreated virtues of the first tree with the seven (capital) vices. The two conditions are the following:

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.³⁰

It is interesting to note that in this case, by negation, we can say something about God; the negative character of our vices stresses the positive nature of God and the necessity to arrive at Him.

The fourth tree has twenty-one flowers and represents the seven created virtues. The two conditions are as follows:

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.³¹

The fifth and last tree has forty-nine flowers by combination of the seven uncreated virtues with the seven vices. The following are the 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.³²

²⁸ SW I, 114.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 114-15.

³¹ Ibid., 115.

³² Ibid.

So we have ten conditions which proceed according to two principles: firstly, they must be directed toward a single goal; secondly, they must not be contrary to this goal. The “goal is to love, know, fear and serve God.”³³

Once Lady Intelligence has spoken these words to the three wise men, she went away and “one of the wise men” began to sigh

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 or 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.

“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 these 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.”³⁴

At the end of the work the Gentile summarizes what each of the wise men has said and pronounces an ‘interreligious prayer’ on the divine virtues, on the created ones, and on the vices. The three wise men do not want to hear what his final decision is and propose discussions every day, following the method explained by Lady Intelligence in order to arrive to the same law and faith. And it is remarkable that they “ask – and grant – forgiveness from – and to – each other for any disrespectful word they might have used against the others’ religions.”³⁵

In the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis* we find a sort of handbook of the Lullian *demonstration per aequiparantiam*, a circular argumentation starting from the coessentiality of the Divine dignities, which we see on the flowers of the trees with the uncreated virtues. The flowers contain binary combinations of three sets of concepts: the seven uncreated virtues (or divine virtues), the seven

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 116.

³⁵ Hösle, “Interreligious Dialogue,” 232.

created virtues, and the seven vices. As Anthony Bonner states, “this mixture of the very abstract reasoning of the Art with the literary and psychological skills Llull could use so effectively is what gives this book its unusual flavor.”³⁶

Llull gives a specific order for each religion: eight articles for the Law of the Jews; fourteen articles for the Law of the Christians; twelve articles for the Law of the Saracens. The conceptual scheme common to the three religions consists of the Divine dignities: Goodness, Greatness, Eternity, Power, Wisdom, Love, and Perfection. Even if in the *Llibre del gentil* Llull does not write ‘Divine dignities’, he refers to them by writing ‘Divine virtues’ or ‘uncreated virtues’ (listed in the number of seven instead of nine, as for example in the *Ars brevis*, for combinatory reasons).

According to Llull, since the Divine dignities are the result of a comparison we can have a dialogue on a common argumentative basis, and no one could reject the foundation of his method. The structure of the text follows this hunch: the first book is about the beliefs common to the three monotheistic religions, the following books deal with the doctrinal differences, presented by Llull only as differences, not as oppositions or even conflicts. The differences among religions are not insurmountable: through constant dialogue based on reason Llull thinks we can grasp the one faith, the true religion as the one that best suits divine perfection. However, in order to understand Llull’s project, we have to take into account his logic and metaphysics, and the way he tries to demonstrate that the three monotheistic religions have a common basis.

³⁶ Bonner, *Doctor illuminatus*, 80.

Llull's Logic and Metaphysics

About logic let's speak briefly
Because we must speak about God.³⁷

In one of Llull's most famous works, *Blanquerna*, the first novel of Catalan literature, we find a passage in which the author tells us that a cardinal in Rome had heard of a Christian and a Jew arguing about their religions. Both the Christian and the Jew claim to possess the only possible truth, therefore each of them believes to be right and that the other is wrong. The advice of Llull to them, to "go to the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*,"³⁸ is to make reference to his *Ars*, a logical system based on a universal language and rigorous mathematical calculations by which we can acquire universal knowledge and settle disputes. In order to examine Llull's logic, I provide an account of the Art in the next section. In the next sections I look at Llull's understanding of the Divine attributes, his theory of the correlatives, and his demonstration by equivalence. Finally, I analyze the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* from the point of view of its relation with the Art.

The Lullian Art

To understand the Lullian Art we must start from the following scheme we get from the *Ars brevis*:³⁹

³⁷ "De la logica parlam tot breu / car a parlar avem de Deu" is what Ramon Llull says in the Catalan version of his *Logica Algazelis*. Cit. in Umberto Eco, "The *Ars Magna* by Ramon Llull," in *Contributions to Science* 12 (2016): 47-50, here 50.

³⁸ See Ramon Llull, *Llibre de Evast e Blanquerna*, ed. Salvador Galmés, 4 vol. (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1935-1954), 157-158: "Altra natura a l'enteniment a entendre, ço és a saber, que hom aferm possible cosa ésser aquella cosa que la volentat vol que·l enteniment entena; cor si, ans que·l enteniment la entena, aferma impossibilitat ésser en aquella cosa, l'enteniment no serà aparellat com pusca entendre la possibilitat o impossibilitat qui serà intel·ligible en aquella cosa. [...] e si tant és que per totes aquestes no pusca entendre, cové que hom recorra a la *Art breuyada d'atrobare veritat*." (cit. in Alexander Fidora, "Ramon Llull frente a la crítica actual al diálogo interreligioso: el arte luliano como propuesta para una «filosofía de las religiones»," in *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval* 10 (2003): 227-243. Here 233).

³⁹ As for the development of the Art, see Ernesto Priani, "Ramon Llull," SEP, ch. 5 (The *Ars*): "Its development is divided into two great phases. The first one is called the Quaternary Phase, for it is organized based on the model of the four elements which form the base of the majority of the analogies used by Llull. The Quaternary Phase comprises two main texts: the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*, written by Llull following the revelation of the Art at the Puig de Randa Mount in 1274, and the *Ars demonstrativa* in 1283, in addition to other texts that comment or explain the *Ars*. The second phase is known as Ternary Period, for it allows the structure of a trinity. It began with the criticism experienced in Paris with the *Ars inventiva veritatis* (1290), followed by the modification of the *Tabula generalis* (1293-4), and it concludes with the *Ars generalis ultima* (1305-8) and its abbreviated version, which incidentally had the most comments and

	Principia absoluta	Principia relativa	Quaestiones	Subiecta	Virtutes	Vitia
B	Bonitas	Differentia	Utrum?	Deus	Iustitia	Avaritia
C	Magnitudo	Concordantia	Quid?	Angelus	Prudentia	Gula
D	Aeternitas	Contrarietas	De quo?	Coelum	Fortitudo	Luxuria
E	Potestas	Principium	Quare?	Homo	Temperantia	Superbia
F	Sapientia	Medium	Quantum?	Imaginatio	Fides	Acidia
G	Voluntas	Finis	Quale?	Sensitiva	Spes	Invidia
H	Virtus	Maioritas	Quando?	Vegetativa	Charitas	Ira
I	Veritas	Aequalitas	Ubi?	Elementativa	Patientia	Mendacium
K	Gloria	Minoritas	Quomodo?/Cum quo?	Instrumentativa	Pietas	Inconstantia

Here we see a list of six meanings, each of them with nine items, that correspond to the contents of the nine letters of the Lullian alphabet. The principles in the first column are the absolute Principles or Divine dignities (in the *Ars brevis* Llull never uses the word “dignitas/dignitates” as in his previous works, but he talks about “principium/principia”), that are unprovable.⁴⁰ Such principles, as we are going to see, are the divine attributes to which Llull referred throughout his life. For the moment, suffice it to say, that they cannot be proven because they are the conditions of the possibility of being and knowing as *principia essendi* and *principia cognoscendi* of the world. Now, while the absolute Principles are indistinguishable in God, we have relative Principles reflecting the differences in the

discussions during the Renaissance, the *Ars brevis* of 1308.” See also Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1997), 53-72.

⁴⁰ As Fidora, “Ramon Llull frente a la crítica” 235 suggests, both the term *dignitas* and *principium* go back to the Aristotelian tradition of the *Analytica Posteriora*, where Aristotle says that each science starts from *per se nota* principles that cannot be proven as such, at least not in the same science. See also Paolo Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory. The Quest for a Universal Language* (London: Continuum, 2006), 33: “the ‘roots’ or real foundations of things, the principles of the art, and the ‘Divine dignities’ appear, in Lullian terminology, to be absolutely interchangeable terms.”

world, and the relations among the created beings. The rules of the Art are ten general questions to which every possible question can be reduced.⁴¹ The cosmos is subdivided into nine Subjects, that is nine levels according to the degree of their participation in the Divine dignities: God (the best, the greatest, that is the highest step of the ladder of beings); Angels, without a body because they are pure spirits; Heaven, with the celestial spheres; Man, as a rational, both spiritual and material being; Imaginative, with beings able to have imagination, that is the capacity to reproduce what they have perceived; Sensitive, with beings capable of perception; Vegetative, with beings which have a vegetative soul (nutrition, growth, and reproduction); Elementative, the degree of the four elements; Instrumentative, the degree of things composed of the four elements. Since human beings are characterized by moral actions, we find in the *Ars* a set of Virtues and Vices.

The First Figure⁴² of the Art, with letter A (representing the absolute unity of God) in the center, is formed by a circle of the nine absolute Principles and shows their predictability and convertibility in God. Llull draws all possible combinations of the letters that can form propositions of the kind ‘Bonitas est magna’, ‘Duratio est gloriosa’, etc. since the principles appear as names when they are subjects, and as adjectives when they are predicates, each line in Figure A can be read in two (opposite) directions, that is as ‘Bonitas est magna’ or as ‘Magnitudo est bona’ (this explains why we have 36 lines, but 72 propositions).

It is noteworthy that in the principles of this figure Llull finds everything that exists. Each principle is general, if taken by itself (Llull quotes *bonitas* and *magnitudo*). When it is applied to another, for example *bonitas magna*, it is defined as *subalternatum*, subordinate. Then, when a principle is applied to a singular term, it is *principium specialissimum*, it is completely particular, as *bonitas Petri est magna*. On this basis Llull refers to the Neoplatonic idea of a ladder of beings:

⁴¹ See Ramon Llull, *Ars brevis* IV: “Regulae huius Artis sunt decem quaestiones generales. Ad quas reducuntur omnes aliae quaestiones, quae fieri possunt.

⁴² As for the four figures and the Tabula generalis, see the Appendix.

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 the ladder.⁴³

As Ernesto Priani argues, “[t]he Second Figure, with letter T in the center, is formed by three concentric circles connected by three triangles. [...] In the edges of the triangles the terms of the second meaning of the alphabet are found, each one of them unfolded in three species. Thus, for example: the first triangle deals with difference, concordance, and contrariety (B, C, D). each one of these concepts has three species: sense and sense, sense and intellect, intellect and intellect.”⁴⁴ It is a mnemonic device that shows us the fixed relations between the Relative principles and does not refer directly to combinatorics.

In the Third and Fourth Figures the letters can refer to any of the six meanings presented in the scheme above. The Third Figure considers all possible binary combinations (36 couples of letters) inside each square Llull calls *camera*. When we have the combinations we do what Llull calls *evacuatio tertiae figurae* (*Ars brevis* VI), that is we assign one of the six possible meanings to each letter. This “system allows questions such as ‘if goodness were great’ or ‘what is great goodness?’ The Third Figure allows, at least in theory, 432 propositions and 864 questions.”⁴⁵

The Fourth Figure, the most successful and influential, shows three concentric circles and is a representation of ternary combinations. Its mechanism is mobile, as each circle “must be rotated to form the different combinations,”⁴⁶ depending on the alignment of the letters. Still, in *Ars brevis* V Llull introduces the so-called *Tabula generalis*, a table in which we find all the combinations from the Fourth Figure and the letter T has only a syntactic function (it changes the meaning of the letters found before or after it). “Nine elements in groups of three allow 84 possible combinations (of the

⁴³ SW I, 582-3. *Ars brevis* (II.1), ROL XII: “Et sic intellectus habet scalam ascendendi et descendendi, a principio omnino generali ad non omnino generale nec omnino speciale, et a non omnino generali nec omnino speciali ad omnino speciale. Et sic de ascensu istius scalae potest dici suo modo.”

⁴⁴ Priani, “Ramon Llull,” ch. 5.2.6.

⁴⁵ Umberto Eco, “The *Ars Magna* by Ramon Llull,” 49.

⁴⁶ Ibid., ch. 5.6.3

kind BCD, BCE, CDE). If in the *Ars brevis* and elsewhere Llull speaks of 252 combinations, it is because we can assign to each triplet the three questions designated by the letters that appear in the triplet. Each triplet generates a column of 20 combinations (84 columns!) because Llull transforms the triplets into quadruples by inserting the letter T. When a sequence such as BCTC is obtained, the letters preceding T should be read as absolute Principles, and those that follow it as relative Principles. Hence BCTC will be read as: ‘If B, the goodness, being C great, as it contains C in itself, then things are consistent.’ With this system, it is possible to obtain 1680 combinations.”⁴⁷

The question is whether we have to accept all combinations or not. Let us consider, for example, the question whether the world were eternal (*Utrum mundus sit aeternus*). We can say in advance that for Llull the world cannot be eternal, otherwise we lapse into Averroes’ heresy. Moreover, we do not find any direct reference to *mundus* in the above scheme, that is no letter refers to the world. Therefore, we have to start from the reference to eternity, that is from letter D. From the triangle of the Second Figure we know that D refers to contrariety between sensible and sensible, intellectual and sensible, and intellectual and intellectual. The triangle links D, B and C. Still, we find the question *utrum* in the *Quaestiones* corresponding to B. Therefore, we can answer our question starting from the letters B, C and D, that is from the first column in the *Tabula generalis*. Now, the first *camera* is BCDT. From it we deduce that if the world were eternal (we already know that the Absolute principles are convertible and goodness is so great that it is eternal), we should have infinite goodness (*aeternum bonum*), so that eternity should let it last forever, and there should be no evil in the world. But this is not what happens according to our experience: *Sed malum est in mundo, ut patet per experientiam*. *Concluditur ergo, quod mundus non est aeternus*.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Eco, “The *Ars Magna* by Ramon Llull,” 49-50.

⁴⁸ See Ramon Llull, *Ars generalis ultima* (V.I.I.), ROL XIV: “Et primo per primam cameram sic: De camera B C D | Quando quaeritur: Vtrum mundus sit aeternus, dicimus per B C D, quod non. Quoniam si esset aeternus, sua ratio esset aeterna et ab aeterno produciens aeternum bonum, et magnitudo magnificaret illam rationem bonam ab aeterno et in aeterno, ut patet per suam definitionem. Et aeternitas ab aeterno et in aeterno ipsam productionem durare faceret; et sic nullum malum esset in mundo, eo quia bonum et malum sunt contraria. Sed malum est in mundo, ut patet per experientiam. Concluditur ergo, quod mundus non est aeternus”

Llull says that we can give the same answer starting from several columns in the *Tabula generalis*,⁴⁹ and this is what Llull actually does in the *Ars generalis ultima* immediately after the quoted passage, but the point is that his demonstrations are not based on the logical form of what we find in the *camera* we are considering, but on our experience. In Llull we find a criticism of scholastic syllogism because of its “insufficiency [...] to find new truths” and because “demonstration by syllogisms only works through second intentions, that is, it describes relationships within logical propositions and not according to objects in reality, which are conceptualized as first intentions.”⁵⁰ Llull is for a logic of first intentions, concerned with how we understand and refer to objects, not to our concepts of objects.

For these reasons, it is important to stress the difference between Llull’s logic and formal logic. For the structure of the Art can lead the readers of Llull – and it actually led some scholars⁵¹ – to think that it is an anticipation of modern formal logic: “The breaking down of compound concepts into simple and irreducible notions, the use of letters and symbols to represent simple notions, the mechanization of conceptual combination by means of movable figures or diagrams, the idea of a perfect and artificial language (superior to common language and the technical languages of particular sciences) and the identification of the art with a kind of conceptual mechanism which, once structured, is absolutely independent of subject matter, have led intellectual historians, from Bäumker to Gilson, to compare the *combinatoria* (not without some justification) to modern formal logic.”⁵² The Art, however, deals with things, not only with their form or with language. It is a “logic” which is at the same time a “metaphysics”, for

[m]etaphysics considers entities external to the soul from the point of view of their being; on the contrary, logic considers entities according to the being they have in their soul [...] but this Art, supreme among all the sciences, considers the being indifferently according to the

⁴⁹ See Ramon Llull, *Ars generalis ultima* (V.I.): “VTRVM MVNDVS SIT AETERNVS? Solutio huius quaestionis patebit per primam columnam Tabulae. Et potest fieri per alias columnas, eo quia columnae sunt colligatae.”

⁵⁰ Priani, “Ramon Llull,” ch. 5.1.

⁵¹ See Joseph Bochenski, *A History of Formal Logic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), 272-3.

⁵² Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory*, 33.

metaphysical and the logical ways; so it is clear that they differ in the way of considering their subjects.⁵³

Logic and metaphysics are different in the way of considering their objects and in relation to their principles. The latter considers entities external to the soul from the point of view of their being; on the contrary, the former considers entities according to the being they have in their soul. The Art is supreme among all the sciences in general and logic and metaphysics in particular because it encompasses both at once. Now that we have clarified Llull's conception of logic we can move on to the next section on the Divine attributions.

The Divine Attributes in Llull

As we already know from the First Figure of the Art, we find in God a set of Divine dignities or attributes or Absolute principles, that are characteristic of the divinity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For Llull, such attributes play a very important role, because they are the common ground of the three monotheistic religions. Their relation to God, however, was a concern increasingly raised by theologians in the 13th century. Indeed, the problem is what the relation between God's essence and his attributes is. In other words, how can we reconcile God's absolute unity with the plurality of his attributes? Moreover, if we say that God's essence is absolutely simple, whereas the divine attributes are given only in human understanding and perception of the created world, then God's nature remains something ineffable and every discussion about it will be characterized as aporetic.⁵⁴

In Islamic theology, the so-called *kalām*, we find two schools: the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites. According to the Mu'tazilites, we cannot accept the presence of the divine attributes within God, because it would endanger the transcendent unity of the divinity. Still, they thought that every kind

⁵³ Ramon Llull, *Introductoria Artis demonstrativae*, MOG III, 55 (my translation): "Metaphysica enim considerat res, quae sunt extra animam, prout conveniunt in ratione entis; Logica autem considerat res secundum esse, quod habent in anima [...] sed haec *Ars* tanquam suprema omnium humanarum Scientiarum indifferenter respicit ens secundum istum modum et secundum illum; et sic patet ut in modo considerandi ex parte subiecti different."

⁵⁴ See Annemarie C. Mayer, "Llull and the divine attributes in 13th century context," in *Anuario filosófico* 49/1 (2016), 139-154. Here 148-149.

of divine plurality implies a form of polytheism. According to al-Ghazali, who influenced the Ash‘arites, we can accept a plurality of attributes in God (as attested also in the *Quran*), because they “are neither identical with, nor different from, God’s essence but are ‘rooted in’ it.”⁵⁵ Moreover, Sufi mysticism accepted a form of plurality in the *hadrāt*, that is “presences of God, as a form of self-manifestation of the divine in the world.”⁵⁶

In Jewish theology, Moses Maimonides claimed the impossibility of ascribing several attributes to God without violating his absolute simplicity. However, we can accept attributes of action in God, since they do not endanger his unity: “For Maimonides God’s actions are not part of God’s nature, but merely follow from it.”⁵⁷ Still, when we talk about God, we can do it only *per viam negationis*, by affirming what he is not instead of what he is. Moreover, we find also in the mystical current of Judaism, the Kabbalah, the possibility of ascribing plurality to God in term of the divine emanations, the so-called *sefirōt*.⁵⁸

Therefore, “in Jewish theology, only the mystic strand supposed the existence of something like attributes in God. In Muslim theology, this was true of Sufi mysticism as well as of the Ash‘arite strand of philosophical theology.”⁵⁹

Now, according to Llull, there are different attributes in God even if they do not call into question his unity. Indeed, the attributes of God are essential and perfect, whereas the attributes of man are accidental and imperfect. The divine attributes are convertible among themselves (*conversio* is proper

⁵⁵ Annemarie C. Mayer, “The Future of Interreligious Dialogue in the Light of Ramon Llull’s Contribution to the Encounter of Religions,” in *Past, Present, and Future of Theologies of Interreligious Dialogue*, edited by Terence Mirrigan and John Friday (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 47-63 (here 56).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Mayer, “Llull and the divine attributes,” 152.

⁵⁸ Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, 69 stressed the difference between the Art and the Kabbalah: “Much has been written about the analogy between Lull’s art and the kabbala. What distinguishes kabbalistic thought from Lull’s is that, in the kabbala, the combination of the letters of the Torah had created the universe rather than merely reflected it. The reality that the kabbalistic mystic sought behind these letters had not yet been revealed; it could be discovered only through whispering the syllables as the letters whirled. Lull’s *ars combinatoria*, by contrast, was a rhetorical instrument; it was designed to demonstrate what was already known, and lock it for ever in the steely cage of the system of trees.”

⁵⁹ Mayer, “The Future of Interreligious Dialogue,” 56.

only to God as distinct from the rest of the creation) and are one in God's essence: they are identical with this essence. Moreover, they are essentially active from eternity. This means that God and his attributes do not depend on the creation of the world, just as the three persons in the Trinity are eternally one and three, before the incarnation.⁶⁰

Llull adopts a Trinitarian exemplarism based on the similarity between real things and their exemplars in God's mind. However, this similarity is based not only on the Divine attributes (that are principles of being), but also on the triadic structure of these attributes. Their activity "does not cause any gap between God's being and acting. In God there is something which is 'good making', which is 'good makeable', and the 'act of good making',"⁶¹ as we are going to see in the next paragraph.

The Theory of Correlatives

The conversion of the Dignities or Divine attributes is possible because of the metaphysical and linguistic structure adopted by Llull: the theory of the correlatives. The *correlativa* allow us to understand the dynamism of beings not according to the Aristotelian couple potentiality/actuality, but according to a triadic structure: *bonum*, the good, is divided into *bonificativum* or *bonificans*, that express the active nature of the concept (what produces the good); *bonificabile* or *bonificatum*, that express the passive nature of the concept (what becomes good); and *bonificare*, the connective activity between the active and passive natures, which represent the possibility of the good to be in relation with the other Dignities. In other words, according to the theory of the correlatives, a *principium* needs both *principiatum* and *principiare*, that is the activity, the passivity, and the connectivity between them.

⁶⁰ That allows Llull to distinguish the intrinsic activity of a divine attribute, for example goodness, from its extrinsic activity as goodness perceptible in the world. For if both activities were one and the same, God's goodness should produce infinite goodness and there will be no evil. See Mayer, "The Future of Interreligious Dialogue," 57.

⁶¹ Mayer, "Llull and the divine attributes," 153.

Such correlatives give the ‘artistic’ process its typical form, according to which we can have a rational explanation of the Trinity. “Llull identifies the divine correlatives in their intrinsic action through the Trinity, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, while their extrinsic action, through the Dignities, will result in creation.”⁶²

In the *Ars brevis* we find an interesting definition of man:

Man is composed of soul and body, and is therefore derivable by means of the principles and rules in two ways, that is to say, in a spiritual and corporeal way. And he is defined thus: *man is a manifesting animal*. All the principles and rules exist twice in man, because of his double nature, that is, the spiritual and corporeal parts of which he is composed. And thus he is more general than any other created being, as a result of which one can say without doubt that man constitutes the largest portion of the world.⁶³

Man has a double nature, because he is composed of soul and body, and the Art must take into account this double nature. Indeed, he can have knowledge through the senses of his body, but he can go up and down the ladder of being: when he goes up, he understands the world through the principles; when he goes down, he understands the principles through the world.

In the definition of man, Llull refers to his theory of the correlatives: *Homo est animal homificans* or *Homo est ens, cui proprie competit homificare*, both definitions being better than *Homo est animal rationale mortale*.

“The reason for this is that manification is something only proper to man, whereas rationality and mortality are proper to many things.”⁶⁴

Man is the most important *subiectum* in the hierarchy of being. Indeed, even if angels are by their nature superior to human beings, they are actually less perfect, because they do not possess two human faculties: they are not consanguineous of Jesus Christ and cannot reproduce.⁶⁵ In the quoted passages

⁶² Priani, “Ramon Llull,” ch. 3.3.

⁶³ SW I, 608-9 (my italics), *Ars brevis* (IX.4), ROL XII: “Homo est compositus ex anima et corpore. Ratione cuius deductibilis est per principia et regulas duobus modis, uidelicet modo spirituali et modo corporali. Et definitur sic: Homo est animal homificans. In homine sunt omnia principia et regulae dupliciter propter duplicitatem naturae, scilicet spiritualis et corporalis, ex quibus est constitutus. Et ideo est magis generalis, quam aliud ens creatum. Ratione cuius potest dici procul dubio, quod homo est maior pars mundi.”

⁶⁴ SW I, 628, *Ars brevis* (XI.2), ROL XII: “Ratio huius est, quia homificatio soli homini competit, rationabilitas autem et mortalitas multis.”

⁶⁵ See *Ars compendiosa Dei* (dist. XXVIII, lines 28-46), ROL XIII: “Angelus uero est in comparatiuo gradu, respectu Dei et respectu hominis. Ipse simpliciter est per posterius, Deus autem per prius. Non autem simpliciter est per prius, et homo

we see how *homificare* and *homificans* are correlated, being *homificare* the connectivity between the active *homificans* and a passive – here not explicitly quoted – *homificatum*. In particular, the term *homificans* represents the three main activities of the human beings, namely “knowing, remembering, and loving, which correspond to the three superior faculties of the soul: understanding, memory, and will.”⁶⁶

The *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*

If we want to find an agreement, we should first of all agree on the means and validity of our argumentation. If we exclude the use of *auctoritates*, both as revealed books (the *Bible* and the *Qu’ran*) and as religious traditions, we should resort to the tools that correspond to the nature of the intellect. Llull wanted to demonstrate religious truths on the basis of his new explanation of the constitution of reality and of the process of knowledge. The most striking innovation in the logical tradition in relation to the idea of demonstration is the *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*.

In the Prologue of the *Ars demonstrativa*, after the introduction of the Alphabet, we find what follows:

There are three kinds of demonstration. The first is by equivalence, that is to say, when a demonstration is made by means of things equal to one another, as for instance when one demonstrates that God cannot sin because his power is of the same essence as his will, which in no way desires to sin, and this will is of the same essence as justice, which is completely opposed to sin, which accords with injustice. And since the divine dignities are all equal in essence and nature, one can clearly construct a demonstration by equivalence; and the same follows for the virtues, properties, and entities of creatures.

The second kind of demonstration is when an effect is proved by its cause, as in: when the sun is shining, it must be day. The third kind of demonstration is when the cause is proved by the effect, as: it is day, therefore the sun must be shining. It is with these three kinds of

per posterius, sed secundum quid est per prius, eo quia est immortalis et magis similis Deo, quam sit homo; et per multas alias rationes, quas habet maiores quam homo. Videlicet quod non indiget uiuere per ea, quae sunt inferiora; homo uero indiget potu et cibo, et indiget organis corporalibus, sine quibus uiuere non potest. Angelus uero non indiget talibus ad agendum, eo quia per suas species innatas agit. Et sic intensiue angelus est superior, sed extensiue non, eo quia homo est ex pluribus essentiis, quam sit angelus; cum quibus participat cum omnibus entibus creatis quoad genus. Quae essentiae sunt quinque, uidelicet elementatiua, uegetatiua, sensitiua, imaginatiua et rationatiua. Angelus uero non habet, nisi ratiocinatiuam tantum. Vltcrius: Homo est consanguineus Domini nostri Iesu Christi per naturam humanam, et multiplicat suam speciem; angelus uero non. Et sic per tales instantias simpliciter angelus non est super hominem.”

⁶⁶ Priani, “Ramon Llull,” ch. 4.

demonstration that this Art is constructed, and the first is stronger than the others, since it is based on the dignities of God; and the second is stronger than the last.⁶⁷

The demonstrations *quia* and *propter quid* are classical proofs of the Aristotelian tradition. Moreover, the examples quoted by Llull ('when the sun is shining, it must be day' and 'it is day, therefore the sun must be shining') could be rewritten according to Stoic logic in a formalized way. However, as Anthony Bonner argues, "Llull's formulation is a logic based on meaning not on form. 'When the sun is shining, it must be day' is valid because of our own observations about the causal relationship between sunshine and daytime. It has nothing to do with the form of its constituent clauses; to try to symbolize it as $x \rightarrow y$ would be meaningless."⁶⁸

The new kind of demonstration introduced by Llull is the *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*,⁶⁹ the only one we can resort to in dealing with God. In this case we do not go from the cause to the effect (*propter quid*), or from the effect to the cause (*quia*), but from an essential condition of the cause to another essential condition of it (*per aequiparantiam*). This demonstration is based on Llull's explanation of being from the principles and their correlative structure. Each being is composed of general principles, the Divine dignities. The demonstration shall consist of a process that gives a

⁶⁷ SW I, 317-318, *Ars demonstrativa*, ORL XVI: "Tres sunt demonstrationis species; quarum prima est de aequiparantia, hoc modo: uidelicet quando per aequalia fit demonstratio, sicut ostendere Deum non posse peccare, eo quod eius potestas est eadem essentia cum uoluntate sua, quae nullo modo peccare uult. Etiam ipsa uoluntas est eadem essentia cum iustitia, quae aduersatur penitus peccato cum iniuria concordanti. Et quoniam omnes diuinae dignitates sunt aequales in essentia et natura, ideo per | aequiparantiam potest demonstratio fieri manifeste; et hoc idem sequitur in uirtutibus, proprietatibus et entitatibus creaturarum.

Secunda uero demonstrationis species est quando per causam probatur effectus, ueluti si sol sit, dies est. Sed tertia demonstrationis species est quando per effectum causa ostenditur, ut si dies sit, oportet solem esse. Per has igitur tres demonstrationis species discurrit haec ars. Verumtamen prima species est fortiori duabus sequentibus, quando ex dignitatibus Dei est; secunda uero fortiori est tertia subsequenti."

⁶⁸ Anthony Bonner, *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull. A User's Guide* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007), 66.

⁶⁹ It appears with this name for the first time in the *Ars demonstrativa*. "The name might have been suggested by a passage from Peter of Spain [*Tractatus, called afterwards Summule logicales*, ed L.M. de Rijk (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972), 34-35] where it is used, albeit in a different context, but with some aspects remarkably analogous. There he gives three types of relatives, those that are *secundum aequiparantiam*, 'such as similar being similar to similar, equal being equal to equal, a neighbor being a neighbor of a neighbor. Then there are those that are superior, such as lord, double, triple; others are beneath something else, such as a serf, one-half, one-third, since some are below others and others above them.' These last two relations could be considered analogous to *propter quid* as causing (from above), and *quia* as the effect (below, on the receiving end)." (Bonner, *Art and Logic*, *ibid.*, Note 83).

conclusion relying either on the constitutive elements of being, that is the universal principles, or on the correlative structure of the world.⁷⁰

In the *Logica nova*, Llull introduces again the three kinds of demonstration already presented in the *Ars demonstrativa*. If we take into account only the *demonstration by equivalence*, we read as follows:

Demonstration by equivalence is of three kinds. The first is when several powers are demonstrated by the equality they have in existing; the second is when the demonstration is done by the equality between a power and its act; the third is when the demonstration is done by the equality between the acts of the powers.

The first kind is thus: Wherever there is infinite goodness and infinite intellect there is infinite equality; but in God there is infinite goodness and infinite intellect; therefore in God there is infinite equality.

The second kind is thus: Every infinite power has an infinite act; God has infinite power; therefore God has infinite empowering.

The third kind is thus: In every essence in which there is infinite goodness and infinite intellect, there is bonifying and understanding equally and infinitely; in God's essence there is infinite goodness and infinite understanding; therefore in God's essence there is bonifying and understanding in an equal and infinite manner.⁷¹

In this case, we have a more detailed description of the *demonstration by equivalence*, in which “the former simpler examples reminiscent of propositional logic of the Stoics has been replaced by the term logic of the Aristotelian syllogism, including the classic one of ‘Every animal is...’.”⁷² Still, in the quoted passage we have three possibilities. In the first case, the demonstration is based on the consideration of the Divine virtues from equality and identity between them. In the second case, the demonstration is based on the equality between potentiality and actuality in God. In the third and last case, the demonstration is based on equality between the acts of God's powers (in this passage,

⁷⁰ See Jordi Gayà Estelrich, *Raimondo Lullo. Una teologia per la missione* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2002) 68.

⁷¹ I quote the translation in Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 211-212. ROL XXIII, 102: “Demonstratio, quae fit per aequiparantiam, habet tres modos. Primus modus est, quando plures potentiae demonstrantur per aequalitatem, quam habent in existendo. Secundus modus est, quando fit demonstratio per aequalitatem potentiae et per suum effectum. Tertius modus est, quando fit demonstratio per aequalitatem actuum potentiarum.

Per primum modum sic: Vbicumque sit infinita bonitas et infinitus intellectus est infinita aequalitas. Sed in Deo est infinita bonitas et infinitus intellectus; ergo in Deo est infinita aequalitas.

Secundus modus est sic: Omnis potentia infinita habet actum infinitum. Deus est potentia infinita; ergo Deus habet possificare infinitum.

Tertius modus est sic: In omni essentia, in qua est infinita bonitas et infinitus intellectus, est aequaliter et infinite bonificare et intelligere. In essentia Dei est infinita bonitas et infinitus intellectus; ergo in essentia Dei est aequaliter et infinite bonificare et intelligere.”

⁷² Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 212.

bonificare and *intelligere*). It is important to note that the correlative scheme allows Lull to explain why the demonstration *per aequiparantiam* is more powerful than the demonstration *propter quid*: for the latter corresponds to the *propria passio* of the subject, to the term ending in *-bilis*, the passive term, while the former shows the *propria actio* of the subject, the term ending in *-tivus* or *-ans*, the active term,⁷³ as we know from the theory of the correlatives.

The *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* and the Art

In the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis* the three wise man start presenting their own religions after they have convinced their agnostic⁷⁴ interlocutor of the existence of God and the Resurrection of the body. As we know from the previous chapter, Lady Intelligence gives the Ggentile and the three wise men a method based on five trees and ten conditions. Now, the first task of the wise men is to demonstrate, according to this method, that there is one God and the Resurrection of the body. Even if we do not know who is giving the proof – they are actually talking about the common ground for the three monotheistic religions –,⁷⁵ they can prove

to the Gentile, by the flowers of the trees, God's existence and the existence in Him of goodness, greatness, eternity, power, wisdom, love, perfection, and [to make] the Resurrection evident to him.⁷⁶

After that, the Gentile realizes that the three wise men belong to different religions and asks which religion is better, which of them is true. Then, the wise men decide to organize a debate in front of

⁷³ See Gayà Estelrich, *Raimondo Lullo*, 68.

⁷⁴ The gentile is actually agnostic rather than atheist. See Walter Artus, "Actitud y respuestas de Lulio al ateísmo," in *Estudios Lulianos* 30 (1998): 31-41 (here 33): "Más que un ateo muy hostil, el gentil parece ser un agóstico o una persona sin conciencia alguna de la existencia de un ser divino, por la simple razón de que desde su niñez nunca ni siquiera había oído hablar de una divinidad."

⁷⁵ See, for example, the following passage SW I 127: "When the wise man had proved that God exists, that He has in Him the flowers of the first tree, and that the Resurrection must also exist, then the other wise man began to prove these same things by the second tree, and he chose some of its flowers to prove those same things the first wise man had proved by means of the first tree."

⁷⁶ SW I, 146.

the Gentile. After they have agreed on the method to use – still the method Lady Intelligence taught them – one of them proposes that

whoever can, according to his belief, make the articles in which he believes best accord with the flowers and with the conditions of the trees, will reveal and demonstrate that his belief is better than the others.⁷⁷

Before analyzing this point, however, we have to consider the way how the wise men prove God's existence. In the first book of the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis* there are 16 proofs,⁷⁸ the first six of which are of metaphysical nature: they point to the truth of God on the basis of the uncreated virtues we find on the leaves of the first tree. The other ten proofs are divided as follows: the first three are related to the second tree on the basis of the necessary concordance among the uncreated virtues; two are related to the third tree on the basis of the opposition between the uncreated virtues and the capital vices; the next two are related to the fourth tree on the basis of the concordance among the created virtues; the last three are related to the fifth tree on the basis of the opposition between the created virtues and the capital vices.

In what follows we will take into account the 'metaphysical proofs', which are the most interesting in their relation with the Art. However, since the Art in the *Book of the Gentile* appears in a disguised form, it is necessary to stress the importance of the uncreated virtues: they are analogous to the 'transcendental perfections'⁷⁹ we find in every being in an analogic way, and to the Absolute principles we have talked about in the first section (as we have already said, the virtues are 7 instead of 9 for combinatory reasons). As we can see, Llull uses a different terminology in different works and periods of his life, but there is a deep consistency in his way of thinking. As Amador Vega argues,

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.

⁷⁷ SW I, 149.

⁷⁸ I follow Artus, "Actitud y respuestas de Lulio al ateismo," 36.

⁷⁹ See *ibid.* (Artus talks of 'perfecciones transcendentales'.)

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.⁸⁰

Now we can discuss the first six proofs of God's existence in the first book of the *Llibre del gentil e dels tres savis*. The first proof is based on the first flower containing the binary combination of goodness and greatness (the flowers correspond to the *camerae* or 'compartments' of the Art).

It is clear to the human understanding that good and greatness accord; for the greater the good, the more it accords with essence, or with virtue, or with both together. And evil and smallness, which are contrary to good and greatness, accord with nonbeing; for the greater the evil, the more it accords with lesser than with greater being. And if this were not the case, and the contrary were true, it would follow that everybody would naturally prefer nonbeing to being, and evil to good; and they would prefer lesser to greater, and lesser being to greater being. but this is not true, as reason demonstrates to the human understanding, and as bodily vision shows us in the representation of visible things.⁸¹

As we see in this passage, the basis of the proof is the principle of the goodness and greatness of being, and the evidence to the human understanding of the concordance between perfection and being, on the one hand, and imperfection and nonbeing, on the other. This is the principle of convenience,⁸² is implicit in the *reductio ad absurdum* and the *demonstratio per aequiparantiam*, the two forms of demonstration Llull uses in the proofs of God's existence. The principle of convenience allows us to reject, by means of a reduction ad absurdum, a non-Trinitarian monotheism. This principle should not be confused with the concordance, because it is the transcendental condition of concordance between things that accord and opposition between things that differ.

The proof continues as follows:

"Sir," said the wise man to the Gentile, "you see that all the good which exists in plants, living things, and all other things of this world is limited and finite. Now, if God were naughty, it would follow that no good would be in accord with infinite being, and that all existing good would be in accord with finite and limited being, and infinite being and nonbeing would be in

⁸⁰ Amdor Vega, *Ramon Llull and the Secret of Life*, 74-75.

⁸¹ SW I, 119.

⁸² See Francisco Canals Vidal, "El principio de conveniencia en el núcleo de la metafísica de Ramón Llull," in *Estudios Lulianos* 22 (1978): 199-207.

accord with one another. Since, however, finite good accords with lesser being and infinite good with greater being (because infinity and greatness are in accord, as are finiteness and smallness); therefore it is revealed and demonstrated that if finite goodness, which is lesser and in accord with nonbeing, is in being, how much more fitting, without any comparison, that there should exist an infinite good and that it be in being. And this good is, my dear friend, our Lord God, who is the sovereign good of all goodness, without whose being there would follow all the above-mentioned inconsistencies.⁸³

As Bonner argues, “[t]his is the classic proof of the existence of God by means of the degrees of perfection or of being, with a long history from Plato to Aquinas, and often used by Llull.”⁸⁴ Indeed, from the equivalence of goodness, greatness, and perfection, Llull deduces the empirical existence of all things in our world, which have a lesser degree of perfection. From the concordance between infinity and greatness and finiteness and smallness, and from the fact that finite goodness is in being it follows that there must be an infinite good: God. This proof is based on the equivalence of the uncreated virtues in God and on the impossibility to accept the contrary of what the wise man is saying.

The second proof is based on the flower containing greatness and eternity. As we know, Llull was against the idea of an eternal world, therefore the proof goes like this:

If eternity were naught, then everything that exists would necessarily have a beginning, and if everything which exists had a beginning, it would follow that beginning was its own beginning.⁸⁵

But this is something contrary to reason, it is a contradiction, because what has a beginning must begin from something which has neither beginning nor end, that is God. What moves (the wise man gives the example of the sky) must be limited and finite in size and so is the world as opposed to something eternal.

Hence, just as the size of the world is in accord with limitedness, so it is in accord with beginning; and it would accord with end, that is to say with nonbeing, if it were not sustained by the eternal, infinite greatness which gave it beginning. This being the case, therefore, it is clear that eternity, which is more in accord with infinite than with finite greatness, is that God we are seeking.⁸⁶

⁸³ SW I, 119-120.

⁸⁴ SW I, 120 (Note 3).

⁸⁵ SW I, 120.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

The third proof is based on the flower containing eternity and power.

It is evident that eternity and power are in accord with being, for if that which is eternal did not have the power to be eternal, it would follow that, through lack of power, it would not be eternal. And if eternity did not, through its own power, have eternal existence, and were sustained in its existence by some power which was not eternal, it would follow that greater power would lie in those things which have a beginning rather than in those which were eternal, and that is impossible; by which impossibility is proved God's existence, which is eternal by His own power, from which power there issues forth influence and grace upon the souls of men and upon angels, that they may last eternally.⁸⁷

When the Gentile objects that an eternal world would be possible the wise man answers that it is because of its lack of power that the world cannot be eternal.

The fourth proof is based on the flower containing power and wisdom. From this proof we know that power and wisdom are in accord with being. If they were in accord with nonbeing, what has power and wisdom would want to have lack of power and wisdom, but this is false. However, if lack of power and wisdom are in being, then we can think that power and wisdom are in what has no lack of power and wisdom, God.⁸⁸

The fifth proof is based on the flower containing wisdom and love. They "are in accord with being, but disagree in being," that is only in God they are always in accord. If there were no God, wisdom and love would contrast in being.⁸⁹

The sixth proof is based on the flower containing love and perfection.

If there existed no being in which love and perfection would be in accord without nonbeing and defect, love would naturally love defect as much as perfection, since without defect it could not have being or fulfillment. But this is not true, and therefore it is not shown that there exists a God, in whom love and being and perfection are in accord without nonbeing and defect. And if love and perfection are in accord in a being which has privation, that is, nonbeing, and has defect, it is because of the influence, or rather, the abundance of God, which is in accord with being, perfection without any nonbeing or defect.⁹⁰

In other words, God is that being that has all perfections and does not need anything else. According to Annemarie C. Mayer, perfection "indicates that in analogy to Anselm's ontological argument God

⁸⁷ SW I, 121.

⁸⁸ See SW I, 121-22.

⁸⁹ See SW I, 122.

⁹⁰ SW I, 123.

for Llull is *id quo perfectius cogitari nequit*, that in comparison to which nothing more perfect can be found.”⁹¹

In a similar way, Llull shows the necessity of Resurrection on the basis of the flower containing goodness and eternity:

The goodness of God is eternal, and the eternity of God is the goodness of God. Now, since eternity is much greater good than something that is not eternal, if God has created man’s body to be everlasting, there is even greater goodness in the purpose (that is to say, the reason for which God created the human body) than would exist if the body had an end (that is to say, nonbeing), after which it did not exist. This being the case, if man’s body rises up again and lasts forever after the Resurrection, God’s goodness and eternity will be exhibited in greater nobility and in greater results. And since, according to the conditions of the trees, one should attribute greater nobility to God, therefore it necessarily follows, according to divine, eternal influence, that through that influence there come grace and blessing to the human body, by which it may achieve resurrection and be everlasting to the end of time.⁹²

As we see, Llull reaffirms that the Divine dignities form one essence in God and convert among themselves, whereas in the human beings this is not the case. However, the Resurrection of human bodies gives God even greater nobility than it did, if there were no Resurrection. From the next flower (showing greatness and power) we know that if God did not resuscitate human beings, “He would not demonstrate His power to be greater than that of nature.”⁹³ For this would be a limitation of God’s perfection, which is contrary to the uncreated virtues. Finally, from the next flower (eternity and wisdom) we know that God must “be eternally wise in matters of justice,” and

reward or punish that thing which is man; which thing would not be man if it had anything less than a human body, and justice would not be in accord with the flowers of this tree, and the flowers would be contrary to one another.⁹⁴

As for the Trinity, the Christian wise man introduces it in the third book, where he resorts once again to the demonstration by equivalence in relation to the Divine attributes. Still, as we already know from the section about the theory of the correlatives, every action has a triadic structure: there is an active element, a passive element, and their connection. This is also true of the Divine attributes: in

⁹¹ Mayer, “Llull and the divine attributes,” 152-53.

⁹² SW I, 124.

⁹³ SW I, 125.

⁹⁴ SW I, 125-26.

order to be perfect they need this triadic structure, which is exactly what we find in God. For Llull God is the active element, the Son is the passive element, and the Holy Spirit is their connection. As we see, the intrinsic activity of the Divine attributes or uncreated virtues or generally of a form of plurality, is what allows Llull to find a personal alterity within God, that is the mystery of the Trinity. Moreover, as Frances A. Yates argues, Llull's logic is modelled on the Trinity. The main source of what she calls "the Augustinian exemplarist geometry of the Trinity" is

St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* [...] in which [he] discusses man as the image of the Trinity, finding that image particularly in the three powers of the soul which are *intellectus*, *memoria*, *voluntas*.

This three-fold division of the soul as an image of the Trinity is one of the most deeply held and constantly recurring of Llull's convictions. In fact, the Art was planned as an image of it. For the Art in its full development was to have three sides; a side on which it worked through *intellectus* [...]; a side through which it trained *voluntas*, and to that the mystical works relate; and a side through which it trained *memoria* and became a kind of memory system.⁹⁵

In the end, Llull thinks that if we want to evaluate the other religions, we have to rely not only on Christian presuppositions, but also on common logical assumptions. However, for him general logic coincides with the Christian doctrine. As for the Divine attributes,⁹⁶ the Resurrection, the Trinity, and the general structure of reality, we can affirm that, for Llull, Christianity is the religion which makes its articles of faith "best accord with the flowers and the ten conditions of the trees."

⁹⁵ Yates, "The Art of Ramon Lull: An Approach to It through Lull's Theory of the Elements," in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 17 (1954): 115-173 (here 162).

⁹⁶ For example, Llull regards as inadequate the Islamic concept of the Divine attributes because the Saracens do not consider the intrinsic activity of God's essence as in the Trinity. See Llull, *Liber de acquisitione Terrae Sanctae*, in "Projet de Raymonde Lulle De acquisitione Terrae Sanctae. Introduction et edition critique du texte," edited by Eugène Kamar, *Studia Orientalia Cristiana Collectanea* 6 (1961): 103-31, 117: "Sarraceni sunt aliqui in philosophia bene literati et sunt homines bene rationales, sed de Essentia Dei et dignitatibus suis parum sciunt." (cit. in Mayer, "The Future of Interreligious Dialogue," 58.)

Conclusion

We have seen throughout this work how interlinked Llull's missionary project and his logic are.

Summarizing we find in Llull's methodology five steps:⁹⁷

- 1) Llull always argues from his concrete perspective and tries to clarify what his own point of view is.
- 2) He tries to understand other points of view and to be fair in dealing with them. This understanding is necessary and all Christians should try to understand other cultures (he actually promoted exchange programs with Islamic guest scholars).
- 3) He tries to reproduce reliably the other's points of view as a test to show himself and his interlocutor that he has really understood.
- 4) He assimilates positions of other cultures and religions in order to show the coincidence between them and his own point of view. This assimilation, however, "never implies the denial of his own position. Llull starts from a firm Christian perspective, to which he remains immovably faithful."⁹⁸
- 5) The last step is to make "the paradigms borrowed from their original representatives recognisable again. Llull uses a *modus loquendus arabicus* and he is a polyglot for strategic reasons; he also uses didactic stratagems: for instance, he represents his divine attributes in circles and figures that come from Arabic sources."⁹⁹

Therefore, we find in Llull a tentative apologetic way of converting Jews and Muslims to the Christian faith. We must stress that, given the social context of his time, his works are remarkably irenic and represent certainly an antecedent of modern-day interreligious dialogue. However, despite the efforts

⁹⁷ I follow Annemarie C. Mayer, "Ramon Llull and the Indispensable Dialogue," in *Quaderns de la Mediterrània* 14 (2010): 53-59.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 58.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

of the Majorcan for showing impartiality, his way of reasoning is tendentious. The neutrality of his approach is only apparent since the method proposed by Lady Intelligence is the *Ars*, Llull's combinatorial method. Then, we know from other works that the knowledge of the Catholic faith is true, and the beliefs of the Jews and the Saracens are false and wrong. Indeed, we know that from the ten conditions of the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*.¹⁰⁰ The fact that he wants to convert non-Christians to Christianity is undermined by the fact that he is not ready to convert to Islam or Judaism, if one of them is proved as more corresponding to the Divine dignities (what is impossible, according to Llull).¹⁰¹

As we have seen in the chapter on logic, the Art provides the foundation for converting people. To sum up, if God has all Divine principles, dignities, or attributes, that religion is the true one that ascribes to God them all, by showing how they are equivalent and how they convert among themselves. For this reason, after introducing the Art and explaining its combinatorial method, we have analyzed Llull's conception of the Divine attributes (also in relation with the Islamic and Jewish tradition); his theory of the correlatives, according to which a triadic structure can explain the whole reality; how the demonstration by equivalence is based not on the relationship between cause and effect as in the Aristotelian tradition, but on the equivalence of its terms; finally, the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* in relation to the Art, with a focus on the proofs of God's existence,

¹⁰⁰ See Ramon Llull, *Libre d'Amic e Amat*: "Digues, foll! ¿En què has conoxença que la fe cathòlica sia vera, e la creença dels jueus e dels serryans sien en falsetat e error? – Respòs: En les.x. condicions del *Libre del gentil e dels tres savis*." (Tell us, fool, how do you know that the Catholic faith is true and the beliefs of the Jews and Saracens are in falsehood and error? He answered: From the ten conditions of the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* [my translation].) Cit. in A. Bonner, "La situación del *Libre del gentil* dentro de la enseñanza luliana de Miramar," in *Studia Lulliana* 22 (1978): 49-55, here 53.

¹⁰¹ Even if Llull avers in several passages, for rhetoric and strategic reasons, that he would convert to Islam if the Muslims could present him better arguments than those of the Christians. See, for example, Ramon Llull, *A Contemporary Life*, Edited and translated by Anthony Bonner (Barcelona/Woodbridge: Barcino·Tamesis, 2010), 57: 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. (*Vita coetanea*, ROL VIII, 289: Raimundus ergo, convocatis paulatim de die in diem peritioribus in lege Machometi, inter alia dixit eis se bene scire rationes legis christianorum in omnibus suis articulis; et ad hoc se venisse, quod ipse, auditis rationibus legis eorum, scilicet Machometi, si inveniret illas, habita inter ipsos super his collatione, ualidiores, quam rationes christianorum, converteretur ad sectam eorum.)

of the Resurrection, and of the Trinity, in order to show how for Llull Christianity coincided with the religion of reason we find in this work.

Now, there are three main problems with Llull's approach. Firstly, as Umberto Eco argues, "despite his effort to assimilate ideas from non-Christian and non-European religions, Lull's desperate endeavour failed through its unconscious ethnocentrism. The content-plane, the universe which his art expounded, was the product of the western Christian tradition. It could not change even if Lull translated it into Arabic or Hebrew."¹⁰²

Secondly, as Vittorio Hösle states, the "conviction that the members of the other religions are damned if they do not convert to one's own is, as Llull shows, compatible with politeness, but poisons the openness of the exchange at last in the long run – Llull himself developed obsessive traits in his later life, even if his wrath was more direct against his indifferent fellow Christians than against the Muslims whom he pitied."¹⁰³

Thirdly, Llull clearly intends to say that if we know and understand the *vera religio*, we join it, if we know Christianity, we convert to it. As Annemarie Mayer rightly suggests, "put in a more impersonal way: 'what cannot be thought in any other way unites and leads to Christian faith.' Understanding the contents of Christian faith, however, does not automatically imply conversion. Understanding a culture or a religion does not necessarily mean making it one's own."¹⁰⁴

For these reasons, I do not think we can say that Llull was an inclusivist in the sense that he would accept that we can find even in other religions the vestiges of truth. Indeed, if we say that *omne verum, a quocumque dicatur, a Spiritu sancto est*,¹⁰⁵ that means that we are ready to accept only a truth that is in line with the Christian truth. In this way, however, I am not accepting the other as other but only as a mirror reflecting my own truth. In this sense, inclusivism is a disguised form of exclusivism.

¹⁰² Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, 69.

¹⁰³ Hösle, "Interreligious Dialogue," 246.

¹⁰⁴ Mayer, "Ramon Llull and the Indispensable Dialogue," 59.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Aquinas, ST Ia, IIae, q. 109, art. 1, ad primum.

Therefore, I do not think Llull gives a valuable contribution to the modern understanding of dialogue if we mean by dialogue an experience where we call into question our identity and our truth,¹⁰⁶ which does not imply the superiority of one point of view, that is the idea of someone who has the truth and tolerates others who are wrong. However, as I sought to show in this thesis, this would be a modern misunderstanding of Llull's philosophical project, while we should put it into his historical context.

What we can learn from Llull is that we should always try to reject violence, to create a favorable environment for discussion in peaceful circumstances, and to resort to reason beyond any religion, if we want to find a common ground. However, since this approach is based on reason, it cannot avoid conflict if the opponent does not accept its reliance on reason. Or, to put it in another way, I cannot force anyone to have a dialogue or to live in peace with me, if he does not want it. Tolerance understood as peaceful coexistence is something that comes from within, it "is internal, since it cannot be discovered, only declared."¹⁰⁷

This, to close, is Llull's contribution to interreligious dialogue: he helps us understand and develop the preconditions of each interreligious encounter. Whether this encounter will be a dialogue or not is something the doctor illuminatus cannot help us discover, because his idea of dialogue was different from that of interreligious dialogue nowadays.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Adriano Fabris, *La scelta del dialogo* (Padova: Edizioni Messaggero Padova, 2011).

¹⁰⁷ György Geréby, "Theistic Fallacies," in Péter Lasonczi and Géza Xeravits (edd.), *Reflecting Diversity. Historical and Thematical Perspectives in the Jewish and Christian Tradition* (Berlin-Münster-Wien-Zürich-London: LIT Verlag, 2007): 167-190 (here 189).

¹⁰⁸ See Herman L. Beck, "Ramon Llull's Approach to Islam: a Change from Dialogue to Refutation?" in *Für die Freiheit verantwortlich*, edited by Jan Jans, Studien zur theologischen Ethik 107, Festschrift Karl Wilhelm Merks (Freiburg i.Br. and Vienna: Herder, Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg, 2004), 135-147, especially 147.

Appendix

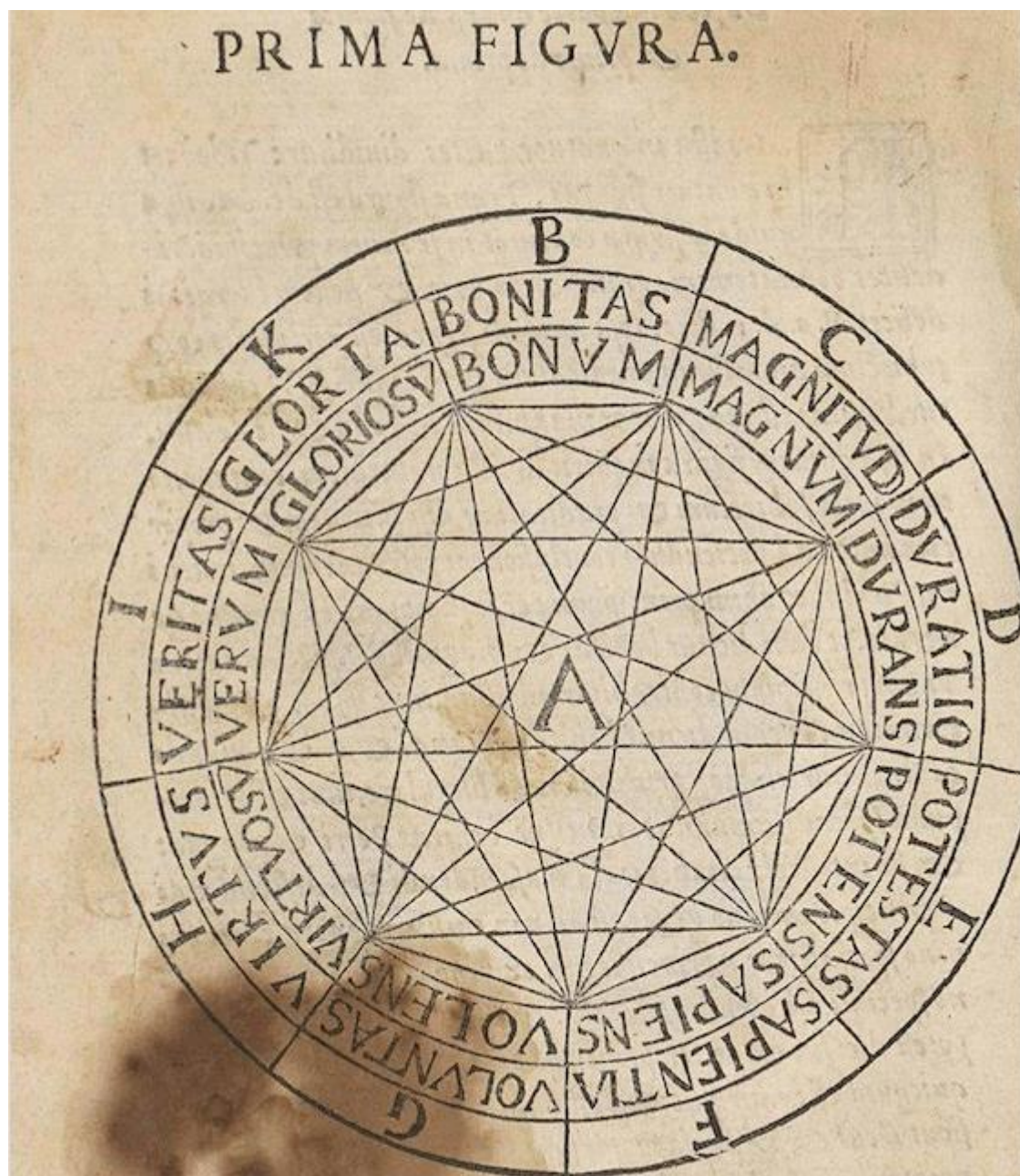
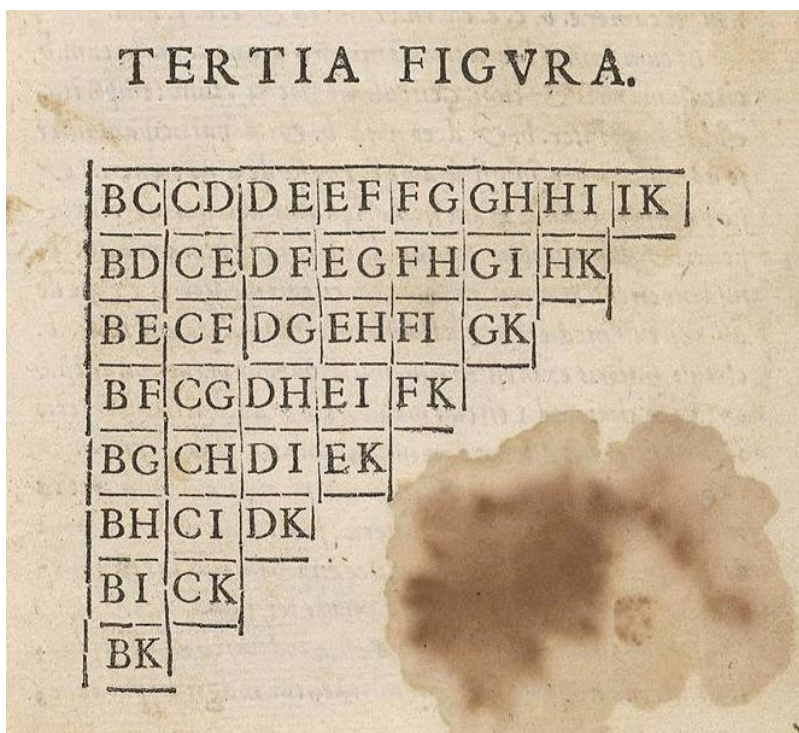
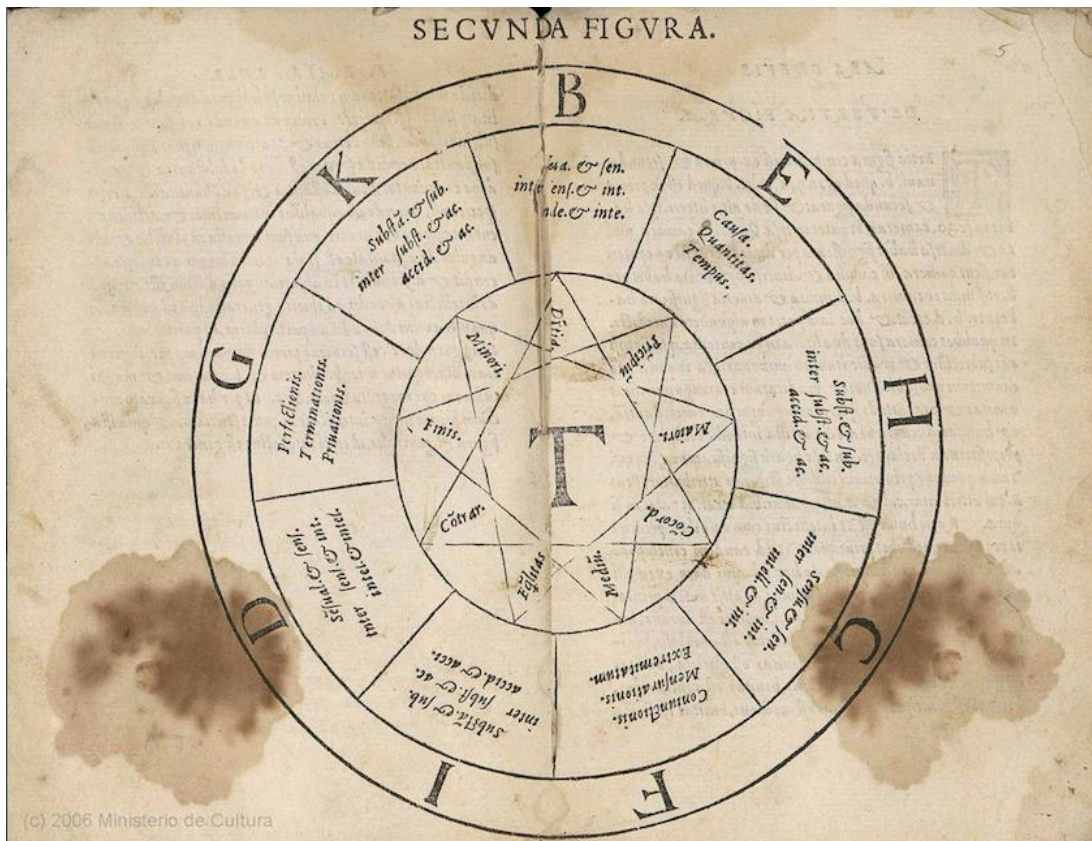


Figure 1. *Ars brevis* XVIII Century. Palma de Mallorca BP MS998. Digital version Biblioteca Virtual del Patrimonio Bibliográfico. Spain. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte



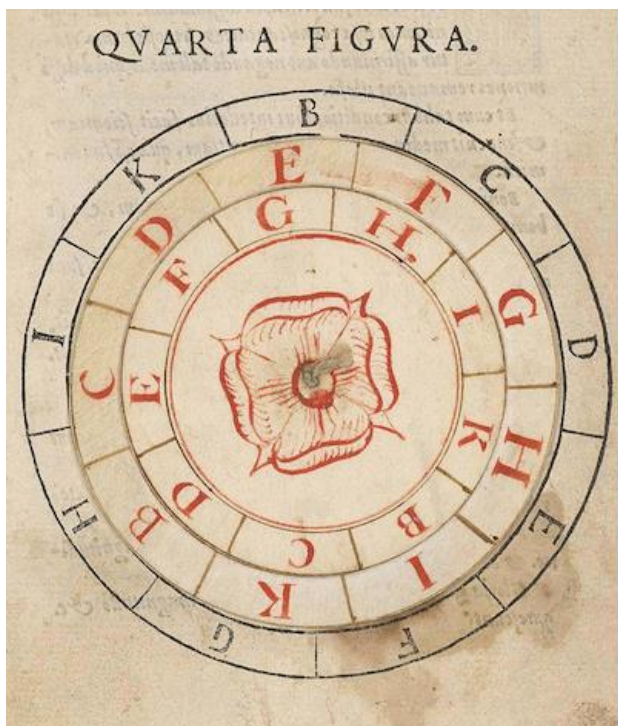


Figure 4. *Ars brevis* XVIII Century. Palma de Mallorca BP MS998. Digital version Biblioteca Virtual del Patrimonio Bibliográfico. Spain. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.

TABVLA GENE-
RALIS.

bcdt	cdet	defi	efgt	fght	ghit	hikt
bctb	cdtc	detr	efre	fgtf	ghtr	hith
bctc	cdtd	dete	eftr	fgtg	ghth	hiti
bctd	cdre	detr	eftr	fgth	ghti	hirk
bdib	cetc	dftd	egte	fhtr	gith	hktb
bdic	cetd	dftc	egtf	fhtr	gith	hkti
bdtd	cete	dftf	egtg	fhth	giti	hktk
btbc	ctcd	dtde	etef	ftfg	gtgh	htbi
btbd	ctce	dtde	etef	ftfg	gtgh	htbi
btcd	ctde	dtef	etfg	ftgh	gtbi	htik
cdtb	detc	eftd	fgte	ghtr	hith	ikti
cdtc	detr	eftr	fgtr	ghtr	hith	ikti
cdtd	dete	eftr	fgtg	ghth	hiti	ikt
ctbc	dtcd	etde	ftef	gtfg	htgh	itbi
ctbd	dtce	etde	ftef	gtfg	htgh	itbi
ctcd	dtde	etef	ftfg	gtgh	htbi	itik
dtbc	etcd	ftde	gtfg	htfg	itgh	ktbi
dtbd	etce	ftde	gtfg	htfg	itgh	ktbi
dtcd	etde	ftef	gtfg	htgh	itbi	ktik
tbcd	tcde	tacf	tefg	tfgh	tghi	thik

Figure 5. Tabula generalis of the Fourth Figure (fragment). *Ars brevis* XVIII Century. Palma de Mallorca BP MS998. Digital version Biblioteca Virtual del Patrimonio Bibliográfico. Spain. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.

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