



THE ART OF CONTEMPLATION OF RAMON LLULL
THROUGH THE METAPHOR OF THE LOVER
AND THE BELOVED

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ABSTRACT

The metaphor of the lover and the beloved is a literary device extensively cultivated in Ramon Llull's oeuvre, a fundamental aspect to understand his spiritual project. Moreover, it works as an example to convey to the reader an art of contemplation that brings about inner transformation, based on the Lullian Art. This article describes the basis and mechanism of the art of contemplation through an analysis of the corpus about the lover and the beloved in Llull's oeuvre.

KEYWORDS: Ramon Llull, mysticism, metaphor, the lover and the beloved, art of contemplation, Catalan

1. THE METAPHOR OF THE LOVER AND THE BELOVED, A FICTION
AT THE SERVICE OF CONTEMPLATION

Ramon Llull (1232–1316) has been defined as a lay intellectual who developed professional consciousness and authority as a vernacular writer outside of the university. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during the development of vernacular spirituality and lay culture, he initiated his own spiritual program founded in the Art, an ambitious intellectual system he claimed to have conceived through revelation. Llull applied the Art to science, philosophy and theology and produced an extensive oeuvre—according to the audience, written and distributed in Latin, Romance languages, or Arabic—that reformulated the knowledge of his age. A highlight of this varied corpus is a collection of literary works that distance themselves from contemporary Romanic traditions and recycle them with the purpose of spreading the Art and promoting Llull's evangelizing project. This literature

is presented as an exemplary and communicative resource in which Llull displays great originality to the extent that he creates an *alternative* or a *new literature* whose unique source and authority is the Art.¹

One of the most paradigmatic images of this literature is the metaphor of the lover and the beloved. Inspired by biblical and romance traditions, Llull creates an original fiction that traverses all his literary and philosophical production: from the *Book of Contemplation* (1273–1274; abbr. *BC*), the *Book of the Lover and the Beloved* (1283; abbr. *BLB*), to *Art amativa* (1290; abbr. *AA*) and *Tree of the Philosophy of Love* (1298; abbr. *TPL*). In addition, the metaphor features in twenty other works over three decades, gaining complexity and semantic fields to become a literary theme. Through this literary fiction in books such as *BLB* or *TPL* Llull also presents a pedagogical program linked to his spiritual project, which is to reform the world with the Christian faith. This program is founded on an art of contemplation, a practical spiritual method presented systematically in several of these texts, which is symbolized by the theme of the lover and the beloved.

This paper attempts to explain the art of contemplation through this corpus.² First, it summarizes the evolution of the image and the literary theme through the Lullian oeuvre, especially its development as a plot describing the adventure of the lover as a literary character. On this basis, the article presents the Lullian Art and its specialization as a method of contemplation, revealed through this fiction and through the lover as a symbol. Its main contribution is to describe the functioning of the method, analyzing some essential amative works, and thus contributing to the definition of Llull's mystical proposal as a sample of vernacular spirituality in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

1.1 *The Diachronic Evolution of the Image*

The following lines summarize the origin, development, and full definition of the metaphor in Llull's oeuvre, through which it becomes a tool of spiritual transmission.³ Its first appearance is in the *BC*.⁴ It arises from a transposition of meaning: love between humankind must follow the example of the love of God. It is also present in the *Liber demonstrationum*, where, for the first time, the image provides a narrative framework. The lover becomes a fictional character on a quest to find the beloved.

In the *BLB* and *Blaquerna*, the metaphor acquires a fictional quality.⁵ It leads to the construction of a *story*, a basic plotline featuring the lover and the beloved that sets off the themes, imagery, and tone that will reoccur

throughout the entire corpus. The image becomes a literary theme, taking on the structure of a vernacular novel, *Blaquerna*, which tells the story of a Lullian hero who travels through the layers of medieval society to reform humanity thanks to the principles of art. The *BLB* is presented as a book written by himself as a result of his mystical experience at the end of his life's journey. The *BLB* lays the foundation for a prototypical piece of fiction about the lover with an account of microscenes within a broader underlying story.⁶ Here the image has developed two facets: a thematic element (with literary qualities and a plot) and an artistic element (the method of contemplation, exposed in "Art of Contemplation," the final chapter of the novel).

The third stage, focused on the *AA*, is the definitive systematization of the method of contemplation. It is here referred to as *amància*;⁷ and that is why we call all these works *amative* works. Whereas in the second stage the Art was latent in the literature, the story is now latent in the Art. The *AA* is the work that develops the theme of the lover most thoroughly. However, rather than a story, it is a philosophical treatise, albeit one that is steeped in literature, where the image serves the purpose of offering an *example*. Here, the story provides a narrative context for a didactic presentation of the method of contemplation. The lover moves away from the story and becomes the model for the *artist* in the treatise. Instead of the main character in a piece of literary fiction, he is now the protagonist of a philosophical treatise. Here, the texts about the lover, which describe short scenes in the story, are presented as exercises for teaching oneself the method of contemplation. They are offered as examples to explain the process of *amància*, in which the narrative refers to the inner world of the lover. The lover becomes a psychological space where the principles of the Art and the powers of the soul act as allegorical characters who practice the exercises of *amància*. The fictional account explains what happens in the lover's conscience during the practice of contemplation. Therefore, the *AA* is both an art of loving and a literary product.

In the *TPL*, the two types of writing discussed above come together: the exemplary story and the didactic explanation of *amància*. In a culmination of this creative process, the method is consolidated within the story, and the story within the method. The result is both a literary and a pedagogical product, its various fictional levels setting a pedagogical path using the metaphor of the tree (the process of *amificació*, the path of contemplation). In addition, it provides the first sequential account of the main episodes in the lover's adventure: illness, resistance, imprisonment and trial, judgment, and death. Within the corpus, it is the work with the greatest unity because it offers a pedagogical itinerary with the story constituting an example.

1.2 *The Literary Fiction about the Lover and the Beloved*

In this evolution, the metaphor becomes increasingly meaningful and complex: after the generation of the *literary metaphor* (the friendship between the lover—a *devout* and *contemplative* man—and the beloved, God), new semantic fields are gradually added (a variety of contexts and characters revolving around the lover and the beloved), leading to the emergence of a literary *theme*, in other words, a story, the account of a spiritual adventure. I will now describe the key thematic aspects of this fiction.

The lover and the beloved are the protagonists of a spiritual friendship in which the lover seeks fulfillment of his love. Therefore, the metaphor first explains how human beings should relate to God, which according to the Lullian doctrine of two intentions is the main purpose of existence (knowing, loving, and remembering God). The metaphor also explains how to direct the faculty of love or will (one of the three faculties of the soul, the higher cognitive faculties after the senses and imagination, according to Augustinian doctrine). These are the main components of the metaphor of the lover and the beloved.

To explain this, Lull created a story: the adventure of a devout man, a literary character who embodies the Lullian spiritual project, who seeks God. As in any adventure, the protagonist sets out on a journey that will transform him into a hero. According to this framework, the process of change is the most relevant and didactic aspect, not the result. Hence, the story narrates the spiritual vicissitudes of a devout man (the lover) until he reaches the end of his journey (the fulfillment of his love for the beloved). It describes his adventures along the way (an external fiction), but its main concern is to complete the process of the lover's inner fulfillment (an internal or psychological fiction).

On this journey through the world, the lover first verifies that humanity is perverted by its vices and therefore has abandoned the purpose of existence, as reflected by the first intention. The potential hero must follow this dangerous route and overcome its difficulties. In the inner process, the lover verifies that corruption can also be found within himself.⁸ This is his main predicament, for which the amative works roll out their dramatic resources. The lover finds himself in a paradoxical situation: the main obstacle to the fulfillment of his love is himself, despite having the noblest of intentions and knowing the truth of his goal as a created being.

Confronted with this situation, which also concerns the reader, Lull provides a tool, a mechanism to order human love correctly and defeat the

disorder of the world, which arises from each being.⁹ This tool is the art of contemplation, through which the lover will experience a transformative psychological evolution. It will lead him from a starting point, where he is corrupted, to the point of arrival, where he will have reordered his inner world and become a hero. What we can see in the amative corpus is this: the lover's adventure in performing the art of contemplation and its effects.

These effects form the bulk of the literary fiction about the lover and the beloved. They explain two kinds of reactions in the lover: one that pushes him to allow love to work within him, obtaining *satisfaction* and fulfillment, and the other that resists love, because part of him is undergoing this transformation. The tension brings him to a breaking point, which is especially relevant in the lover's experience: it is the collapse of the part of himself that is afraid and is resisting the love-induced transformation of his inner self. This resistance reveals the disarray in the lover's conscience: the rebellious part does not want to surrender to the beloved because of an instinct of self-preservation, an egoistic reaction that has perverted the first intention. However, the art of contemplation restores his existence in that direction. The lover's suffering (expressed by metaphors such as "love sickness") is the natural result of this psychic battle.¹⁰ In summary, this is the key to the lover's spiritual work until the fight against corruption in himself and the world has been won.

This is the lover's symbolic death, the result of his sickness and healing by the Art. It is the death of the part of himself that was resisting love, of everything that involved limitation and corruption, and that rejected devotion to the beloved. The lover's death brings about a necessary reconfiguration in his inner world and leads him to a new psychological space where he experiences an integration of the maximum capacities of the soul, released from the dominance of the ego and dedicated to the first intention.

2. LULLIAN ART FOR THE WILL

The lover's spiritual work is based on the practice of an art of contemplation, which forms part of the Lullian Art. The way the contemplation works will be explained after a general description of the structure and functioning of the Art.

The Art was devised as an intellectual tool to fulfill a missionary goal. Additionally, due to its universal ontology, it can be used to explain reality. It offers abstract constructs representing the structure of all spheres

of creation—sensitive, intelligible, and even what is of the highest and most complex transcendence, God. In that way, the Art provides a system to understand the essence of reality—an epistemology—and to describe what reality is—an ontology. For Llull, creation is a theophany that proportionally manifests the Creator's perfections. Thus, Lullian metaphysics is exemplary and descending,¹¹ and those principles link the Creator with His creation and can be attributed to God and the world in different degrees.¹² Consequently, the Art is an ontotheology that takes on this complexity as well as a tool to investigate it.¹³

The different versions of the Art are aimed at developing intellectual knowledge. They train the intellect, whose quality is knowledge, and the other two faculties are based on it. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the ternary phase, Llull equates the Art with the will, whose quality is goodness. Thus, the Art is applied both to the intellect, in *Ars inventiva veritatis*, and to the will, in AA, which was written immediately afterwards. AA introduces the concept of *amància*, a discipline whose purpose is to ensure that the will can recognize the goodness in reality, with God at the zenith. Therefore, if science is the object of *Ars inventiva veritatis* and a product of the intellect, *amància* is the object of AA and a product of the will.

The amative works necessarily bind the intellect and will together. AA—and TPL, which is a didactic application of AA—systematically sets forth the methodology and principles of *amància*, with the certainty that the intellect needs the will, which is related to faith, to reach where it cannot arrive by itself. In that way, the system teaches that the correct function of the faculties relies on reciprocity and interdependence: the intellect can understand properly because the will is devoted to goodness and because memory updates this pattern. These powers will direct their actions toward truth and goodness according to the first intention, leading them to God. If not, their dynamism becomes perverted and idle.

The first intention exalts the purpose of creation, which is to manifest God's principles productively. This demands a symbiotic and coherent alignment of the subject within the hierarchy of creation. When not serving the first intention, the second intention exalts the ego, the individualistic selfishness. This centripetal movement isolates the individual from the world and perverts his existence. The art of contemplation is a tool to rebuild the conscience against this. Thus, if the Art offers an intellectual structure to understand reality,¹⁴ *amància* allows a constructive rearrangement of the dynamic hierarchy of principles in human beings. With *amància*, the Art becomes not only a tool to obtain knowledge but a means of

contemplation. Indeed, it organizes this reordering through love, and thus it is *contemplativa* or *amativa* as well. It is an art of loving with a meditative aspect.¹⁵

Lullian contemplation is presented as a prayer. The amative works offer themselves as textual supports for this practice: they serve as a sensitive platform that favors a cognitive jump from the intellect to access spiritual knowledge. Contemplation is both sensitive and intellectual because it involves both types of human nature. Lull explains this in chapter 315 of *BC*, where he describes three forms of prayer.¹⁶ The first is sensitive and concerns word and gesture. The second is intellective and is related to contemplation as an action of the soul's faculties. The third is composed of both, where the powers act together virtuously. That is the missionary nature of Lullian theology, whose ultimate goal is to achieve a change in the world.¹⁷

3. THE ART OF CONTEMPLATION

The amative texts present contemplation as work carried out consciously by the subject using these essential qualities of creation, which includes human beings. The qualities are manifested perfectly in God—the beloved—who, for that very reason, is the maximum model and object of contemplation. These are the divine principles, expressed by Figure A in the quaternary Art, and by the first series of nine principles in the ternary Art.¹⁸ The lover, who is the artist applying the Art, can renew the perfection of these qualities in himself, thanks to God's mercy, and in a proportion in accordance with his nature as a created being. Otherwise, the qualities could remain idle and become perverted. He can achieve this because these qualities are part of his nature, and he can enhance them by observing their perfection in God. Let us see how this works.

This inner work requires the correct use of the powers of the soul—Figure S in the quaternary Art—supported by the sensitive faculties—the senses and imagination.¹⁹ It is regulated by a series of universal rules and conditions detailed in the Art—especially in the inner operations of Figures A, S, and T in the quaternary phase (see figures 1, 2, 3),²⁰ and the relationship between principles in the ternary phase.²¹

Therefore, the powers act as a guide toward recognition of the reality principles—from the simplest to the highest principles of the beloved.²² They are renewed and intensified in the subject while maintaining a correct

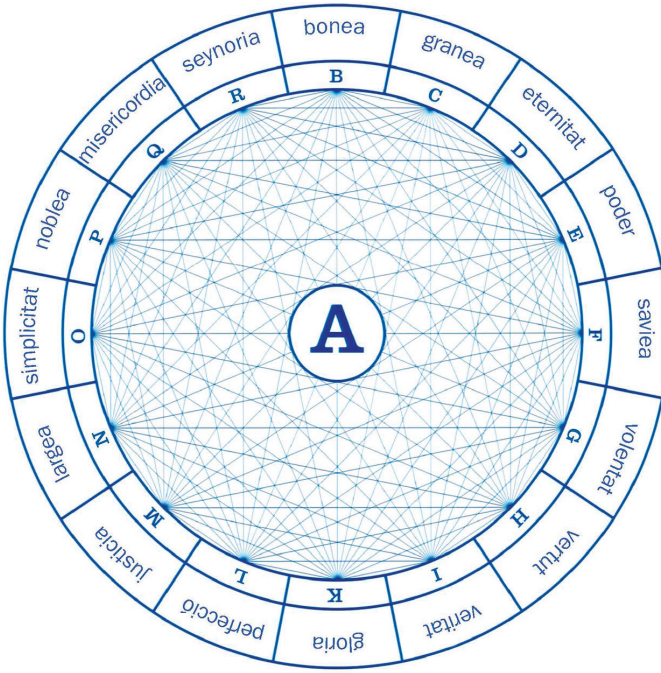


FIG. 1 Figure A in *Ars demonstrativa*. ©Centre de Documentació Ramon Llull

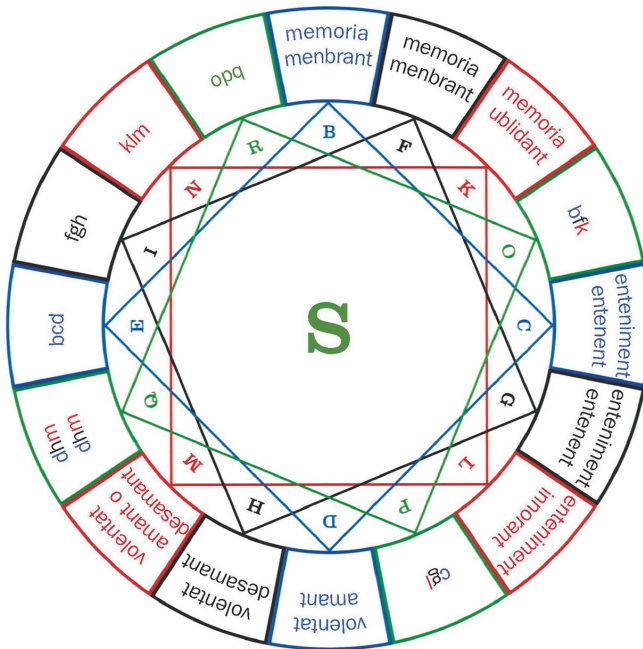


FIG. 2 Figure S in *Ars demonstrativa*. ©Centre de Documentació Ramon Llull

adventure, in which he comes to understand the purpose of existence: to participate in the nature of the beloved.

3.1 *The Operations of the Powers of the Soul in the “Art of Contemplation” of Blaqueria*

The art of contemplation therefore deals with two aspects: the hierarchy of the powers of the soul and the fulfillment of the principles in the being. The first is emphasized during the second stage of the metaphor (around *Blaqueria*), and the other during the third and fourth stages (around AA and TPL).²⁷ Let us see how it is explained in the “Art of Contemplation.”

The fifth book of *Blaqueria*, “On the Eremitic Life,” has two parts: the *BLB* and the “Art of Contemplation” (hereafter, abbr. AC). The latter is presented as a short treatise about contemplation. It complements the *BLB*, which is dedicated to narrating Blaqueria’s experience with the Art. The AC is therefore a didactic resource to clarify the mechanism of the method for the reader: it is described as a process of devotion to elevate the intellect and the will toward the ascent of the rational soul (*Blaqueria*, 489: 101, §1).²⁸

In chapters 101–14, the treatise includes a prologue and thirteen sections, which are dedicated to the principles, the essence of God, unity, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Passion and *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, the commandments, the psalm *Miserere mei Deus secundum magnam misericordiam tuam*, the seven sacraments, and the septenaries of virtues, vices and mortal sins—all involve the principles and allow their contemplation.²⁹ Through them, Lull establishes the conditions for contemplation (*Blaqueria*, 492: 101, §5), which are exemplified by Blaqueria’s experience: what should be kept in mind to avoid the interference of corporeality, the optimal external and physical circumstances, an appropriate environment, and the correct hierarchy of the first and second intentions, among others. The role of the powers is highlighted, as are the efforts of the contemplator to order them correctly. Therefore, the AC becomes a reflection of the practice and conditions of the contemplator, who makes progress by Blaqueria’s trial-and-error approach.³⁰ Based on his doubts, the system is corrected and readapted.

Before starting to pray,³¹ it is necessary to empty the mind of any thought that is not the object of contemplation (*Blaqueria*, 491: 102, §1).³² The method requires an exercise of attention and recognition of the divine principles (*Blaqueria*, 489–90: 101, §3), involving the full power of the faculties of the soul. This is described as a cognitive exercise that leaves behind the imagination.

Thus, the exercise consists of intellectually considering an object of contemplation that reveals the principles of the beloved in an exemplary way. It is established by the power of the will, which is still suspended over the object,³³ before finally being recorded and adopted by the memory. The contemplator considers any aspect of reality up to the highest. He will correct any inertia that could cause him to approach from the imagination, which starts with sensory perception, a counterproductive and unsuitable way to ascend (*Blaquerna*, 512–13: 107, §5).³⁴ The constant correction of attention to the principles involves accepting their conditions: they are perfect, equal, and correspond to each other. The aim is to make the intellect understand what the will already loves, and the memory remembers.

This reflexive imbrication of the powers of the soul with the principles of the beloved enhances their quality in the lover and brings him to a state of enraptured understanding—that is, devotion.³⁵ This forms the basis on which the contemplator can reflect the principles and gradually exalt them (*Blaquerna*, 496: 103, §5).³⁶ even though in creation and beings they are incidental or subjected to difference and limitation (*Blaquerna*, 500: 104, §3).

This devotion cannot be totally reflected by oral or written language (*Blaquerna*, 502–4: 104, §12; and *Blaquerna*, 518: 108, §11).³⁷ Thus, as reading the *BLB* is not enough, the *AC* provides a systematization of the practice with the lover's experience as a pedagogical resource, and what is more, it serves to interpret the *BLB*.³⁸

In fact, the *AC* clarifies the role that literature might play in contemplation. In chapter III, the objects of contemplation are the words of the prophets: it is explained that psalms may support meditative reading because they manifest the principles and the first intention. As a result, the *Art* can also serve as a hermeneutic system to interpret spiritual literature, always to exalt the powers of the soul: "In using this art, one can reveal the secrets and obscurities with which the prophets invested their words" (*Blaquerna*, 527: III, §7).³⁹ This authorizes a type of literature as a source of contemplation and truth, among which the Lullian literature itself should be included, especially the amative works. Moreover, chapter II2, "On the Seven Sacraments of the Holy Church," solves the problem of sensualities and imagination in contemplation. Until now, the *AC* warned that the senses could produce inertia that would divert from contemplation. But, as in the case of sacred literature, they can serve to perceive signs that recall the principles.⁴⁰ The sacraments reveal them in sensitive forms, such as the altar or the cross, or the Eucharist, a corporal way of understanding the Incarnation. The senses then facilitate the correct action of memory. Thus,

the art of contemplation has a hierarchy in which the senses take advantage of the perception of symbols.⁴¹

3.2 *The Relationship between the Lover and the Beloved in the Light of Figure T*

In the art of contemplation, there is a third component involved, besides the powers and the principles of Figure A. It is a set concepts, originating from Figure T, that regulate the relationships between the principles and are explained above all in *AA* and *TPL*.

Figure T comprises five different coloured triangles: green (composed of the concepts *difference*, *concordance*, and *contrariety*), yellow (*equality*, *majority*, and *minority*), red (*beginning*, *middle*, and *end*), blue (*creature*, *God*, and *operation*), and black (*affirmation*, *doubt*, and *negation*). In the quaternary Art, this figure, referred to as “instrumental,” explains the functioning of auxiliary concepts that govern the relationships among the principles.

In the ternary Art, they evolve, are reduced in number and change their state. Subsequently, they are among the eighteen general principles.⁴² They are now applied not only to different objects but also to the same being, as can be seen in *AA* and *TPL*. In these works, these concepts are presented as the rules through which the lover can find and verify the correct functioning, hierarchy, and proportion of the principles in himself and the beloved, and their relationship.⁴³

Between the lover and the beloved, there is a *difference*, a *concordance*—a dual relationship between two identities who love each other reciprocally—and an absence of *contrariety*—which would be the psychological resistance shown by the lover in the fiction.⁴⁴ In addition, there is a hierarchy that regulates the degree of *equality*, *majority*, and *minority*⁴⁵ in the principles of the beloved (who manifests them essentially, perfectly, etc.), the principles of the lover (which predicate the absolute principles), in whom they are manifested proportionally and can therefore be idle, as well as the principles in their relationship.⁴⁶ Added to these series are the concepts of the red triangle—*beginning*, *middle*, and *end*⁴⁷—to express the causes, ways, and purposes of the amative relationship. All together, they regulate the *conditions* of the relationship and the propositions of *amànica*. They are especially visible in the series of maxims and technical argumentation of *AA* and *TPL*. In fact, they govern the relationships of the absolute principles and denote if these are given in a reciprocal, equal, and coherent way, or an unfit, disproportional, and perverse way.

AA exhibits considerable interest in explaining the coherence of the relationship between the lover and the beloved in terms of *concordance*,

equality, *difference*, and *majority*, in which neither *minority* nor *contrariety* can exist. The greater the *difference*, the greater the *concordance* there can be between them, and the *concordance* undoes all the *contrariety* in their relationship. This necessary difference joins and brings them closer (ORL XVII, 176; §213),⁴⁸ but without *contrariety* (ORL XVII, 177; §224) and with *equality* (ORL XVII, 177; §228). The forces of *contrariety* and *minority* are the enemy of the correct order of the principles working in the lover. The lover's suffering, and the possibility that he will fail to achieve reciprocal love, stems precisely from this difference, because, as a created being, he has a weak and fallible dimension. His mistakes and effort in the path of fulfillment arise from his freedom, which at the same time, if properly directed, would flow into a virtuous love. That is why the lover needs the intervention and grace of the beloved to elevate the principles and surpass the obstacles of *minority*, which induces *contrariety* with the beloved. These actions, governed by the concepts of Figure T, organize all the amative work and form the structure upon which the fiction of the lover and the beloved is built, as presented in AA.

It can be affirmed that the amative relationship is outlined as a relationship of friendship or love in terms of equality, difference, and reciprocity between the lovers, without any alteration of the ontological space that the lover occupies in creation.⁴⁹ Despite this, in that space the lover has the opportunity to excel and transform his inner being to live according to the meaning of his existence. Therefore, we must talk about the lover's participation in the divine principles as a consequence of his transformation through contemplation,⁵⁰ and not about the fusion of his individual space with the divine; about the *semblança* of the lover with the *semblances* of the beloved—in the sense that he, as an aspect of creation, predicates the absolute qualities of the beloved—and about these similarities being an expression of completeness and fulfillment of the creation in the lover. Thus, the friendship between the lover and the beloved is based on a difference, but also on a similarity.⁵¹ This is the principle of *equality*, which is also expressed, for example, in the Incarnation. In the same way, the perfect friendship is one of divine essence (the Trinity), which is a similarity in which the lover can mirror his love. And consequently, he has a model in Jesus Christ.⁵² Jesus Christ is the origin of this equality,⁵³ and the union between the lover and the beloved will therefore be expressed as a communion of the will of being with the will of God, in terms of a correct alignment of the principles, but not the unity of being. In his ascensional process there is no loss of the lover's human quality.

3.3 *Habituarió of the Art of Contemplation*

There is one last element to consider in *amància*: the necessary internalization of its practice. It is well explained in the *TPL*, a treatise that didactically applies the *AA* and at the same time develops the exemplary fiction of the lover and the beloved like any other amative work. It also teaches the art of contemplation: the reader may follow the path of the text, which is a theoretical exposition of the method as well as an exemplary fiction. At the end of the treatise, Lull explains the need to *habituat* or learn this art. According to Lull, *habituació* should be done by “consirant i membrant” [thinking about and remembering] the contents of the book (ORL XVIII, 225, §1).⁵⁴ Those who know how to use it can achieve a good and great love—and all the principles. That is, they can multiply their love artificially—by the Art—and counteract temptations and sins, “fer e soure” [ask and solve] questions about love and preach the good words of the beloved (ORL XVIII, 225, §2). As a result, the potential lover will acquire *amància*, the science of understanding the beloved with the will (ORL XVIII, 226, §3).

Regarding the concept *habituació* (and *hàbit*, see the *CDAIA*), Bonner explains that it is the “artistic substitute for ‘learning,’” in the sense that the Art is not about acquiring knowledge, but its internalization or assimilation as a mental language.⁵⁵ By assimilating the mechanisms of the Art, one can use it with true autonomy, resolve questions by oneself, and become a master artist.⁵⁶

3.4 *The Amificació or Fulfillment of the Lover*

After the itinerary of *amància*, the lover undergoes the last effects of contemplation: he assimilates the principles of the beloved, inasmuch as this is possible for a human being, through the grace and intervention of the beloved. In this new psychological space, which the lover has penetrated after his symbolic death, he becomes a specific, selfless, and glorious expression of God, and fulfills his nature as an element of creation. This is the fulfillment of a process that Lull calls *amificació* (or *hominificació*)—that is, a process in which the individual realizes the maximum of his human potential and obtains salvation. And this is an experience that the critical literature has identified as Lull’s understanding of mystic experience.

In this state of *amificació* the lover is presented in an entirely new way: he has won the internal fight with himself and the world. He is now established in a psychological state of coherence and efficiency, intellectual perpicacity, and lucidity; he applies the Art with integrity, fulfillment, and

dispassion. It is a state of self-realization and intellectual and loving wholeness.⁵⁷ He has transformed himself and become a hero. This is the culminating moment of his spiritual adventure, and now he has truly fulfilled the first intention: communion with the beloved, through which he can know and love Him and rest in Him as the reason for his existence.

Lastly, he must obey an essential precept of Lullian spirituality, always based on action. The last stage of his adventure is the beginning of a new one, the undertaking of a mission to guide and instruct a new community of lovers, about to embark on their own inner adventure, and thus reorder the whole world.⁵⁸ The tool for this collective transformation is the method of contemplation included in the Art. The lover becomes a master of this community, which is why the Lullian project sets out a missionary theology.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In the context of the development of vernacular spirituality in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Ramon Llull projected a spiritual program of great ambition and originality. He based it on the Art, an intellectual system with a missionary purpose, which he claimed to have received through revelation. This project is exemplarily expressed through the metaphor of the lover and the beloved, which runs through twenty Lullian literary texts between 1274 and 1308. The story of the lover offers the reader an example for individual and collective spiritual transformation, and it has a didactic quality as it teaches an art of contemplation, based on the Art. This is the central factor of the metaphor and the literary theme in the amative works.

This paper has presented a new interpretation of this metaphor as a tool of the Art, a literary device to accomplish a spiritual transformation. We have explained the origin and development of this image and the characteristics of this fiction, and from there we have described the mechanisms of the method. The Art is presented as a science to know God and reality, which reveals its principles, and at the same time as an *amància* to love God. This is the purpose of the human being's existence (the first intention), and the art of contemplation is a practice to achieve it: it teaches to observe the divine principles and perfect them in the human being thanks to the powers of the soul (Figure S), following the model of the Creator (Figure A) and guided by the rules of the Art (Figure T). Contemplation thus reorganizes human beings' interiority, a process that Llull calls *amificació* or *hominificació*. In other words, it allows him to become Christlike:

to realize his human potential by becoming a constructive expression of God's virtues, and to attain salvation. The art of contemplation is therefore an individual tool for achieving the Lullian project of reordering the world.

The art of contemplation is quite original, due not only to the singularity of the Art, but also to its transmission within a literary framework. The lover's story does not emphasize the author's personal experience with the Art; its exemplarity serves the reader to find his own fulfillment. The lover is therefore a symbol of the Lullian project, a particular Lullian form of the hero archetype who is transformed by a spiritual adventure. It is outstanding that Lull presents the practice of contemplation through literature, and that the amative works constitute not only treatises on contemplation but textual supports for its practice, through which the reader may become a lover himself. Indeed, it is an emblematic example of how Lullian literature works; it is provided as an intellectual exercise for spiritual transformation.

NOTES

1. Lola Badia, Joan Santanach, and Albert Soler, *Ramon Llull as a Vernacular Writer: Communicating a New Kind of Knowledge* (Tamesis, 2016).

2. It consists of more than three thousand passages, which can be consulted in the *Corpus Digital d'Amic i Amat* (CDAIA), curated by Arnau Vives-Piñas, in Ramon Llull Database, Centre de Documentació Ramon Llull, Universitat de Barcelona, <https://www.ub.edu/llulldb>. In order to access the services of the Ramon Llull Database, where our gateway is located, the user can create a free account. Mostly, these passages are maxims, prose extracts, and verses. Therefore, the fiction is dispersed, disordered, and fragmentary. Each sentence represents a scene of this spiritual relationship, and this relationship can be interpreted from the whole set of sentences. For more information, see Arnau Vives-Piñas, "El *Corpus Digital d'Amic i Amat* (CDAIA) i la diacronia de la metàfora lul·liana de l'amic i l'amat," *Studia Lulliana* 62 (2022): 5–42.

3. For more information, see Arnau Vives-Piñas, "Una nova interpretació de la imatge lul·liana de l'amic i l'amat a partir de la seva diacronia: Metàfora, tema i símbol," *Magnificat CLM* 9 (2022): 91–128; and Arnau Vives-Piñas, "La metàfora de l'amic i l'amat: Amància i literatura en l'obra de Ramon Llull" (PhD diss., Universitat de Barcelona, 2021).

4. For more information, see Arnau Vives-Piñas, "Orígens i definició de la metàfora lul·liana de l'amic i l'amat," *Caplletra*, no. 74 (2024): 25–30.

5. Arnau Vives-Piñas, "Una nova lectura del *Llibre d'amic e amat* com a relat literari per a la contemplació," *Els Marges*, no. 128 (2022): 12–29.

6. "[306] The Lover went in search of his Beloved along the paths of vegetation, sensation, imagination, intellect and will. And along such paths the Lover met with dangers and languor for the sake of his Beloved, so that he might raise his intellect and his will up to his Beloved, who desires His lovers to understand and love Him in an exalted manner." Ramon Llull, *Romance of Evast and Blaquerua*, trans. Robert D. Hughes (Barcino-Tamesis, 2016), 479.

7. I translate the Lullian terms and works following Anthony Bonner, *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull: A User's Guide* (Brill, 2007), or I keep the term in Catalan and give its meaning if there is no tradition or a direct translation.

8. "[157] Love and Hate met in a garden where the Lover and the Beloved were talking in private. And Love asked Hate with what aim it had come to that place. So Hate replied that it had come to deprive the Lover of his love and to dishonour the Beloved. The Beloved and the Lover were greatly displeased by what Hate had said, so they fostered Love in order that it might defeat and destroy Hate." Llull, *Blaquerua*, 449.

9. Marta M. M. Romano explains that the world's disorder reveals that humanity is guilty of corrupting the creator's project. However, the redemption and forgiveness arising from Christ's incarnation have given humankind another chance of fulfilling it. Ramon Llull, *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina, Tomus XXIX, 46–48, Ars amativa boni et Quaestiones quas quaesivit quidam frater minor*, ed. Marta M. M. Romano (Brepols, 2004), 78.

10. “[162] The Lover was held captive in the prison of love. Thoughts, desires and memories guarded and shackled him to prevent him escaping from his Beloved. Languor tormented him; patience and hope consoled him. The Lover would have died, but the Beloved revealed His condition to him and, so, the Lover revived.” Llull, *Blaquerna*, 450.

11. Eusebi Colomer describes Lullian thought as a descendant metaphysics, in which God explains the whole universe from beginning to end. At the same time, it is a realistic gnoseology, where logic and ontology coincide. Few medieval systems have approached the Platonic and Hegelian ideal of logic, which was also an ontology, as much as Llull's. It is because the order of being and the order of thinking are both in God, in whose infinite thought reality is contained in the idea. This ontology is essentially a theology, and the Art acquires an ontotheological structure. Eusebi Colomer, *De la Edad Media al Renacimiento: Ramón Llull—Nicolás de Cusa—Juan Pico della Mirandola* (Herder, 1975). Similarly, Anthony Bonner defines it as an ontotheological instrument of navigation. Bonner, *Supplement to “The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull”* (Centre de Documentació Ramon Llull, 2022).

12. The uncreated principles are perfect archetypes, and created things participate in them in a finite, gradual, and hierarchical manner. The Platonic vision lies behind this thought (from patrology), according to which the sentient world comes from the world of ideas. Jean-Henri Probst, *La mystique de Ramon Llull et l'Art de contemplació* (Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1914), 41–43.

13. “Developing a full-fledged general ontology of the world would be like recreating the map of the world in the short story by Borges: if it were to be complete, it would have to be as big as the world itself. That is why Llull invented—or, rather, had the revelation of—a navigational instrument that he could use as a guide to reach every last corner of this world: the conceptual profile organized by the graphic apparatus of the Art, that goes from the summit of Figure A, of God and his dignities, to the material level of the Elemental Figure, and including the ethics of Figure V with the virtues and vices. These figures represent the foundations of an interactive ontology insofar as they contain components that one can manipulate in order to make it work; for example, Figure T, which offers the tools for comparing two things (whether one is greater or lesser than the other, whether two things are concordant or contrary, etc.), and Figure S, which determines the relationship between the components of the system and the rational soul (whether the results obtained are memorable, intelligible and lovable or not). This means that the series of small collections of labels written specifically for each chapter of the BC have evolved into a system of diagrams which offers a veritable *repraesentatio mundi*.” Bonner, *Supplement*, 21–22.

14. Four characteristics define it: it is (1) *inventiva* (to research); (2) *demonstrativa* (to find conclusions, or *necessary reasons*, to rationally prove propositions); (3) *compendiosa* (a limited amount of principles provides an unlimited number of arguments); and (4) *general* (it is applicable to any subject; its principles are for all the spheres of reality, including being). Josep Maria Ruiz Simon, “‘Quomodo est haec ars inventiva?’ (l'Art de Llull i la dialèctica escolàstica),” *Studia Lulliana* 33 (1993): 77–98, at 77–79.

15. Colomer argues that the *demonstratio per aequiparantiam* of principles (the operation of Figure A) is a logical and dialectic process and a method of contemplation at the same time, in such a way that the Lullian metaphysics culminates in the mystical. The Art is also an art of conversion and demonstration and an art of contemplation. Eusebi Colomer, *El pensament als països catalans durant l'Edat Mitjana i el Renaixement* (IEC, PAM, 1997), 27. The amative works take on this facet of the Art, describing a method to pray and contemplate on the principles by which the meditator considers them in their reciprocal circularity.

16. The prayer has a dialogic aspect, external and internal. Once the devoted being ascends to God's presence (especially through the intellect and will), a dialogue is established with Him through the soul. Rubio identifies various elements in this operation, revealing the implication of all human nature, both sensitive and intellectual: preparation of the senses, the use of words (a sensitive element to arrive at knowledge; *affatus* (“speaking” is the sense that integrates the sensitive below the intellectual nature); use of the powers of the soul; the intellectual part of being; *cogitació* (the intellectual part of contemplation); and gesture (a physical element that shows elevation; the body as a reflection of *cogitació*). Josep Enric Rubio,

“Oració i contemplació en la mística de Ramon Llull,” in *Actes del congrés d’obertura de l’Any Llull: “En el setè centenari de Ramon Llull: El projecte missional i la pervivència de la devoció,”* ed. Lola Badia, Alexander Fidora, and Maribel Ripoll (Edicions UB, 2017), 275–86.

17. Contemplation is a continuous virtuous action, and it is the ideal way of existence for humans because it is the result of ordering the powers of the soul and body, in accordance with the fulfillment of the first intention. Mechthild Dreyer, “Raimundus Lullus, quid sit contemplatio,” in *Gottes Schau und Weltbetrachtung: Interpretationen zum “Liber contemplationis” des Raimundus Lullus*, ed. Fernando Domínguez Reboiras, Viola Tenge-Wolf, and Peter Walter (Brepols, 2011), 417–38.

18. In the ternary Art, the essence of the principles is defined by their operation (good is what good can do). Creation is a conditioned and accidental manifestation of the *amat’s* attributes.

19. Which have a role in the sensitive dimension of the process. Sensitivity is also a suitable tool for contemplation. The internal sense—the imagination—and the five bodily senses—to which the sense *affatus* must be added—create a path toward God in the contemplation of the highest and loveliest truth. Imagination is the only internal sense accepted by Llull. It is the noblest and least material power within the sphere of sensitivity. Marta M. M. Romano, “Le facultà dello spirito e della sensibilità nell’arte di contemplare di Raimondo Lullo,” in *La contemplazione cristiana: Esperienza e dottrina*, ed. Laurent Touze (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), 375–90, at 382.

20. The reader will be able to see the colour images in the online version of the article.

21. *Goodness, greatness, eternity, power, wisdom, will, virtue, truth, glory*, which are regulated by the principles *difference, concordance, contrariety, beginning, middle, end, majority, equality, and minority*, the two series of nine principles of the ternary Art.

22. Llull distinguishes between three spheres of reality where principles are manifested: the sensitive-imaginable, the spiritual-intelligible, and the divine-transcendent. In God the principles are in their maximum expression; in terms of equality, due to their absolute perfection, they include each other and are the object of mutual permutation or circular conversion. Colomer, *El pensament als països catalans*, 26–27.

23. As Anna Fernández-Clot explains, regarding the contemplation rule in AA (ORL XVII, 62–66), contemplation is presented as a gradual ascent of the rational faculties through different stages. The process begins by contemplating created things and creatures; then, by the participation and mutual aid of the will, intellect, and memory (the rational faculties may rise higher), God is beheld in created things first, and finally in oneself, by each virtue, through the similitudes that each virtue represents in the soul, until the rational faculties reach the highest degree of contemplation. Anna Fernández-Clot, “L’oració contemplativa i el rapte místic a la *Medicina de pecat* de Ramon Llull,” *Comprendre: Revista catalana de filosofia* 21, no. 2 (2019): 75–93.

24. In this ascent the Lullian theory of transcendent points comes into play, in which the intellect reaches understanding through two different ways. In the first, intellectual capacity overtakes the senses and imagination in the understanding of intelligible objects. In the second, superior realities, such as God and his principles, are understood through faith and grace. For Llull, the senses and imagination are not useful, a priori, to gain philosophical and theological knowledge, because they are not able to overtake the sensitive and the imaginable. Hence, intelligence is limited by them—and God, above all, is insensitive and unimaginable. To illustrate this, Llull uses a ladder as an image of faith, which the intellect climbs. Colomer, *Edad Media al Renacimiento*, 65. Chapters 8–9 of “D’oració,” of *Medicina de pecat*, deal with this ascent of sensitivities toward the elevated space of intellectualities. The contemplation presented there is the culmination of the spiritual healing process of the treatise. The senses and the imagination are predisposed to participate at the beginning of the process, but they fall behind in the maximum level of contemplation and ecstasy, where the soul remains suspended. Fernández-Clot, “L’oració contemplativa,” 75–93. The corporal dimension is left behind by the ascent, in which the transcendent points correspond to the ultimate level of knowledge available to human beings, the infused contemplation. Marta M. M. Romano, “Le facultà dello spirito,” 380.

25. The alternation between ascent and descent has its finest formulation in *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus*, where Llull explains the ladder by which the intellect climbs from the sensitive to the intelligible and back again. Contemplation is also completed by a descent from the universal to the specific. Amador Vega, *Ramon Llull y el secreto de la vida* (Madrid: Siruela, 2002). Furthermore, in the works *De raptu* and *Medicina de pecat*, Llull explains that on the

highest rung of this ascent, the contemplator experiences a *rapté* or ecstasy. Fernández-Clot, “L’oració contemplativa.”

26. This participation leads to a state of *fruïció* (joy), the glory achieved by the lover, often represented by physical death and final access to the realm of God. Paragraph 27 of *Vita coetanea* explains this concept: “It will also be manifest, if it pleases you, by this same Art—and in the most rational manner—that in the incarnation of the Son of God through participation (or union) between the Creator and the creature in the sole person of Christ, the first and highest cause agrees and accords with its effect in the most rational manner, and that this is manifestly clear to the highest and noblest degree in the Passion of the Son of God, [Jesus] Christ, which he deigned himself to endure willingly and mercifully from the point of view of the humanity that He himself had embraced for the redemption of us, that are sinners, to save us from the sin and corruption of our first father and to bring us at last to that state of glory and holy rejoicing on account of which and for which [our] Blessed Lord created us.” Ramon Llull, *Vita coetanea / A Contemporary Life / Vida coetànea / Vida coetània*, ed. Antonio Cortijo Ocaña (John Benjamins, 2017), 125. Jesus Christ represents the maximum participation of the creation with the Creator. The same meaning is applicable to the lover, considering that he creates himself following the model of Christ.

27. For Josep Torné the Augustinian doctrine of the powers of the soul and the principles are the tools par excellence for the ascent toward God through love and intellect. The spiritual senses (*cogitació*, *apercebiment*, *consciència*, *subtilitat*, and *fervor*) also take part in the process. Josep Torné, “Pensament i mística en Ramon Llull,” *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 40, no. 2 (2015): 619–38, at 626–27.

28. References to *Blaquerna* will hereafter be cited by page number, referring to the Hughes translation, followed by chapter and section.

29. See the comment of Probst, *La mystique de Ramon Llull*, 30–40.

30. For a detailed description, see Joan Santanach, “L’Art de contemplació’ del *Blaquerna*, entre la narració i la teoria,” in *Actes del Congrés de Clausura de l’Any Llull: “Ramon Llull, pensador i escriptor”*—Barcelona, 17–18 de novembre de 2016, ed. Lola Badia, Joan Santanach, and Albert Soler (Edicions UB, 2018), 177–97.

31. The contemplation takes the form of a prayer (*Blaquerna*, 503: 104, §12), which is oral and mental (*Blaquerna*, 508–9: 106, §5). Chapter 108 is a treatise on prayer par excellence and offers a contemplative recreation of Our Father.

32. Also needed is the grace and blessing of the beloved, that God embraces the lover’s soul in contemplation (*Blaquerna*, 491: 102, §2).

33. “From such a lack we gain knowledge of Your great and infinite greatness, to which I raise and hold aloft all the greatness of my will by worshipping, contemplating and serving Your Glorious Essence” (*Blaquerna*, 500: 104, §3; see as well *Blaquerna*, 516: 108, §7). Faith, which is not opposed to intelligence, allows him to move toward love (*Blaquerna*, 508–9: 106, §5). Nevertheless, the intellect often has a preeminent position over faith (*Blaquerna*, 509: 106, §7). In the ternary Art, this position is reassessed, and the will acquires a new value. *Blaquerna*, 522–24: 110, §3–8, explains the hierarchy of the action of the powers, where the will is relevant regarding the commandment of love. Probst reflects on the human psychology in AC, related to Saint Augustin, Saint Anselm, and the Franciscans—for example, the hierarchy of power, which reflects the Trinity. Probst, *La mystique de Ramon Llull*, 49–57. He considers that the will is the primary faculty of the soul. The human being is the only creature capable of establishing contact with God because he is gifted with a rational soul, which specifically has the spiritual faculty, according to the ladder of being, as well as the accidental faculties. His spiritual actions are subjected to the factor of his free will.

34. In spite of this, he uses the sensitive faculties to start the process of contemplation (*Blaquerna*, 489–90: 101, §3). He utters words with his mouth—that is, he prays, using his voice and body, and cogitates these words through his powers. Llull’s description reveals an anthropology of interiority: kneeling, placing his hands together, and concentrating his thoughts on God. The body is ready to participate with the powers.

35. *Blaquerna*, 492: 102, §5, expresses the physical effects of pleasure or the state of welfare of contemplation.

36. One may perceive the divine principles through oneself, but not through the senses (*Blaquerna*, 516–17: 108, §8).

37. But the word allows recognition of what it expresses (*Blaquerna*, 491: 102, §2, where *Blaquerna* dialogues with the principles). In *Blaquerna*, 513–14: 107, §7, *Blaquerna*’s principles talk to each other at the climax of his contemplation, as if this could create a state of awareness

where this dialogue was dramatized as a scene. The memory appears first and allows the intellect to understand. Then, the will may love. This sequence might vary, but it always consists of the contemplative reflection of the three powers while considering the principles. Blaqueria tests and interrogates them as a system of self-inquiry (*Blaqueria*, 493–94: 102, §9). In the AC, the work of the powers is narrated as an allegorical dramatization, as a story with another context besides their actions. This literary scheme extensively prefigures what happens in *AA* and *TPL*.

38. This difference between the literary expression of the mystical experiences in *BLB* and the theoretical exposition of the method in *AC* may be due to its addition in the novel at the last moment. In *AA* and *TPL* these two aspects are more intertwined. Santanach, “L’Art de contemplació’ del *Blaqueria*”, 196.

39. Similarly, the epilogue of *AA* (ORL XVII, 377–87) dramatizes an allegorical trial of the principles, in which their arguments work as a hermeneutic interpretation of the treatise. In this way, the fiction of the metaphor serves as a platform to expose and practice contemplation.

40. The human senses, which can lead man to sin, can be used correctly if they are directed to devotion and praise of God, trusting in his forgiveness. Simone Sari and Albert Soler, “Les Hores de Ramon Llull, pregària d’ahir i d’avui,” in *Franciscans i sultans: XXIX Jornades d’Estudis Franciscans* (Facultat de Teologia de Catalunya, Ateneu Universitari Sant Pacià, 2020), 49–75, at 54. Robert D. F. Pring-Mill explains the *carreres* (ways) the lover uses to look for his beloved (“vegetation, sensation, imagination.” cf. *BLB* [306]), which refer to three of the four steps of the material world. Robert Pring-Mill, *Estudis sobre Ramon Llull (1956–1978)* (Curial, PAM, 1991), 284–89. They are necessary for the ascent through the ladder of creatures. In this verse, the lover is searching for the beloved using the intellect and the will, aided by the senses and the imagination, which serves to mix and recombine all the impressions collected by the senses and preserved by memory. The lover finds the creator reflected at each successive rung of creation by which he is ascending. Thus, he can contemplate Him in these forms or “semblances.”

41. As mentioned, metaphors (or “semblances”) are a sensitive instrument to access spiritual knowledge. In chapter 352 of the *BC*, dedicated to the use of allegory in prayer and contemplation, Llull points out that whoever wants to raise his intellect to the highest form of love (the love of God) must start from the mixed (allegorical) prayer, composed of sensuality and intellectuality. Josep Maria Ruiz Simon, “Les ‘metafores morals’ de l’ermità Blaqueria: A propòsit de la manera i la matèria del *Llibre d’amic e amat*,” *eHumanista/IVITRA* 8 (2015): 68–85, at 74.

42. In the ternary Art, the concepts from Figure T are archetypal forms with an ontological category identical to the concepts of Figure A. Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 130–34.

43. “[258] The Lover beheld the secrets of his Beloved by means of difference and concordance, which revealed to him plurality and unity within his Beloved by virtue of the greatest concordance of essence without contrariety” (*Blaqueria*, 469). See more examples for each concept in *CDAIA* at <https://www.ub.edu/llulldb/caia/taula/9>.

44. “Difference is that by reason of which goodness, etc., are clearly distinguishable from one another,” “Concordance is that by reason of which goodness, etc., accord in one or in several things,” “Contrariety is the mutual opposition of certain things as a result of different goals.” Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 135. These and the following definitions come from *Ars generalis ultima* and *Art breu*.

45. “Majority is the image of the immensity of goodness, greatness, etc.,” “Equality is the subject in which the end of concordance, goodness, etc., comes to rest,” “Minority is the thing close to nothingness.” Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 150. In general, *majority* is the way in which the principles find their maximum expression in the beloved, *minority* is the way they often fail in the lover, and *equality* is the reciprocity to which the principles aspire.

46. To understand this difference in which at the same time there is a *semblança*, see the comment of Xavier Melloni about the identification of the human being with Christ: filiation indicates participation in the same lineage, the same identity that is maintained in distinction. The distinction is not distance, but differentiation of the outline of each being. There is a way of living the specificity that perpetuates duality: $1 + 1 = 2$. Here each identity is shielded and only juxtaposition is possible. Nor is it about the fusional union that leads to confusion: $1 = 1$. We are talking about a difference in identity and an identity in difference that maintains and makes fecund the unity: $1 \times 1 = 1$. Seeing God as He is means that when we see Him we see ourselves and that when He looks at us, He sees Himself, without separation or dissolution. We are beyond the duality that separates us and the monism that confuses us. What we will

see is the totality of the Real of which we are a part in an ecstasy of similitude. Xavier Melloni, *El Crist interior* (Herder, 2010), 134–35.

47. “Beginning is that which is found in everything where there is any question of priority,” “Middle is the subject through which end influences beginning, and beginning reinfluences end, and thus it participates in the nature of both,” “End is that in which beginning comes to rest.” Bonner, *Art and Logic*, 150.

48. Ramon Llull, *Obres de Ramon Llull. Art amativa. Arbre de filosofia desiderat*, ORL XVII (Palma de Mallorca, 1933).

49. This ontological distance has been well explained by Lluís Sala-Molins, who emphasizes the dynamic, dialogical, and apologetic character of the Art, as opposed to the traditional nuptial mysticism, and any spiritual proposal based on fusion. Lluís Sala Molins, “Le refus de l’identification dans la mystique lullienne,” *Studia Lulliana* 9, no. 25 (1965): 39–53, 181–92. An important part of the previous bibliography coincides with him, such as Marta M. M. Romano, *Ars amative boni*, 85—who affirms that Lullian love is not conjugal, but one of friendship, because it is based on the value of individuality.

50. From the moment when the principles of the beloved can be predicated of God and the product of his creation, their attribution to creation assumes a certain participation between the divine and the human, but to very different degrees. This participation has been explained as a resemblance based on a model or as a cause-effect relationship, but it must avoid bringing God too close to his creatures or reducing Him to human categories. Eugènia Gisbert, “*Metaforice loquendo*: De l’analogia a la metàfora en els *Començaments de medicina* de Ramon Llull,” *Studia Lulliana* 44 (2004): 17–52, at 34–35.

51. Llull expresses it with his own terminology: the *proprietat* of each one (his independence) and the *comunitat* in his union. Friendship is certainly an intersubjective communion (*comunitat*), but this union cannot be conceived without the irreducible identity of each of the lovers (*proprietat*). Vincent Serverat, “Autour de la notion d’amitié dans le ‘Libre d’amic e Amat,’” *Journal Studia Lulliana* 29 (1989): 125–45, at 131.

52. Thus, the *Llibre d’home* includes a unique sentence in the amative corpus that shows the relationship between Jesus Christ and the disciples at the Holy Supper as an expression of friendship, participation, and company of the lover and the beloved (see it in *CDAIA*: <https://www.ub.edu/llulldb/caia/sentencia/2957>). The metaphor of the lover, the beloved, and love is sometimes expressed according to the Lullian doctrine of correlatives, by which the Trinity is manifested.

53. Between God and man there is an imperfect equality where the ontological distance (*lunyedat*) and the proximity (*propinqüitat*) are combined. Serverat, “Autour de la notion d’amitié,” 143. With the doctrine of Incarnation, by which the divinity assumes the corrupt load of humanity, Llull elaborates a positive interpretation of human nature and invites the readers to transform their earthly existence in anticipation of celestial blessedness. Marta M. M. Romano, “‘Valde delectabilia fuerunt amico verba sui amati’. La mistica nell’*Ars amativa* di Raimondo Lullo,” *Studi Medievali* 45, no. 2 (2004): 751–70, at 769.

54. Ramon Llull, *Obres de Ramon Llull. Libre d’intenció. Arbre de filosofia d’amor. Oracions e contemplacions del enteniment. Flors d’amors e flors d’intelligència. Oracions de Ramon*, ORL XVIII (Palma de Mallorca, 1935).

55. Anthony Bonner, “A qui volia adreçar-se Ramon Llull?,” in “*Qui fruit ne sap collir*”: *Homenatge a Lola Badia*, ed. Anna Alberni, Lluís Cifuentes, Joan Santanach, and Albert Soler (Edicions UB, 2021), 101–16, at 106–7.

56. Albert Soler explains that the reader will have become as mentally autonomous and free in the search and discovery of the truth as Llull himself was. Autonomous because their rational powers will always be able to think and act according to the first intention. Free because they will not be subjected to any kind of intellectual routine or those imposed by textual authorities. These subjects, who live for the first intention, are the true actors of the reorganization that the world needs, the missionary collaborators who Llull wanted. Albert Soler, “Ramon Llull: Escripura, lectura i reordenació del món,” in *Actes del congrés d’obertura de l’Any Llull: “En el setè centenari de Ramon Llull: El projecte missional i la pervivència de la devoció,”* ed. Lola Badia, Alexander Fidora, and Maribel Ripoll (Edicions UB, 2017), 317–37, at 334–35.

57. This state can be seen in chapters about *fruits* of the *TPL*.

58. “[129] The Beloved begged His Lover not to forget Him. The Lover said that he could not forget Him, since he could not ignore Him. The Beloved said that He should be praised and championed in those places where to do so is most greatly feared. The Lover asked Him

to grant him sufficient love. The Beloved replied that, because of His love for him, He had been made incarnate and had been hung up to die” (*Blaquerna*, 444). Llull deploys a theology centered in the truths of the faith and based on *necessary reasons*, which must be validated through argumentative and persuasive procedures, a tool for evangelization and reconversion. This would be the communal vocation of the Art: “Hames has suggested that the Art sought to offer a new, universal language, capable of breaking barriers between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, a vehicle for conversion, ‘to make the unwilling willing’ (and, at the same time, incline Christians toward the true Christian life). Llull wanted to create a new ‘textual community’ in which religious disputation (and Christian persuasion) was held in a common language that allowed all participants to begin from a neutral point and use the same conceptual tools. That the central text for this community was the Art, during Llull’s lifetime and over the two following centuries, is an obvious fact if we bear in mind the dominant position it has in the manuscript tradition.” Bonner, *Supplement*, 34.