

Ramón Llull

(1232–35[?], Mallorca–1316, Mallorca or Tunis[?])

1. Person

- also spelled Lull; Raymundus Lullus; *Doctor illuminatus* [Enlightened Teacher]
- Catalan poet, philosopher, theologian, missionary and mystic
- Until his conversion in 1263 (as a result of a vision of the crucified Christ experienced while writing a *cantilena* for a beloved woman) he played a prominent role in courtly life.
- An enthusiastic proponent of the ideals of courtly love, his erotic love embraced more women than his own wife, with whom he had two children.
- Taking St. Francis of Assisi as his model, he decided to relinquish his worldly life, destroying exemplarily the love songs he had composed, selling his possessions as well as undertaking pilgrimages, he devoted the remainder of his life entirely to the missionizing of Jews and, above all, Moslems.
- To prepare himself he first studied theology, philosophy and Arabic for 18 years.
- Although other attempts to win popes for his missionary plans were not successful, he did succeed in founding the first Franciscan monastery (on Mallorca) where Arabic was taught as part of the training of missionaries to the Moslems.
- Between 1283 and 1313 he did some teaching in Paris and Montpellier as well as in other cities.

- In 1291 he went to Tunis, but was soon expelled, returning nonetheless in 1306 and 1314.
- Probably in 1295 he joined the Third Order of the Franciscans.
- Other places to which his incessant travels brought him were Rome, Anagni, Barcelona, Cyprus, Sicily, Genua, Pisa, Lyon, Avignon.
- He succeeded in convincing the Council of Vienna to establish language courses in Hebrew, Arabic, Greek and Chaldean.
- Presumably he died as a martyr in North Africa approximately at the age of 83.

2. Works

- a mystic with many facets, including visions and auditions
- While meditating on Mount Randa in his homeland, he was inspired with the idea of a "Great Art", in which the whole body of human knowledge was to be systematically categorized in an exhaustive system consisting of table of principles and rules for their combinations
 - considered a forerunner of the modern computer
 - first presented in the *Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem* (1274)
 - next in the *Ars demonstrativa* (1283–89)
 - then in the *Tree of Knowledge*
 - and finally in the *Ars brevis* and the *Ars generalis ultima* (1309–16)
 - influenced Leibniz
- Rejecting the crusades (after having supported a crusade at an earlier time), he endeavored to prove the truths of Christian faith with irrefutable arguments (*causae necessariae*) of reason, demanding the assent of all men.

- This method climaxed in a mystical union (*Ars mystica theologiae et philosophiae*), in which the loving human was inseparably joined to the beloved God (*Arbre de filosofia d'amor*).
- In spite of adamant rejections of Lullism, especially on the part of ecclesiastical authority, prominent thinkers were influenced by him, notably G. Pico della Mirandola, G. Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa, who wrote out, in notes still extant, excerpts pertaining, among others, to his idea that there exist three necessary innate principles ("correlatives") in all substances (*Liber correlativorum innatorum*), *bonitas*, for example, being thus determined by the three correlatives *bonificativum*, *bonificabile* and *bonificare*.
- wrote over 300 works in Latin, Catalan, Spanish and Arabic

3. The Mystic

- His most striking mystical work was the poetic "The Book of the Lover and the Beloved."
 - a colloquy between God and his beloved human friend.
- His method was to lead to a mystical union of the loving human being with the beloved God.

4. Missionary

- to the Jews but especially to the Moslems
- called himself a *christianus arabicus*.
- He wanted to convince the Moslems with irrefutable arguments (*causae necessariae*).
- He wanted to convince Islamic rulers to send scholars to Christian countries to study for a longer period of time to exchange thoughts with Christian theologians.

- He defended the idea of a universal religion, which he identified with Christianity.

5. The Raimundus-Lullus-Institute

- at the theology department of the University of Freiburg
- the only complete collection of Lull items on microfilm
- critical edition of the Latin works
- <http://www.theol.uni-freiburg.de/ab/qut.htm>