

THE FIRST LITERARY MANIFESTATIONS  
IN THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION  
OF A NATIONAL IDENTITY:  
THE CASE OF RAMON LLULL<sup>1</sup>

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This article is a revision of a paper originally written to be presented at the conference of the *Deutsche Katalanische Gesellschaft* [German-Catalan Society<sup>2</sup>] held in Cologne in 2003 on the topic of *Normes i identitats* [Norms and Identities]. Especially in relation to my contribution, this was a somewhat accident-prone conference and for reasons that need not concern us here, this text went largely unnoticed as result of organisational logistics, and did not figure in the conference proceedings. It eventually saw the light in a special issue of the electronic journal, *Mirabilia*, which was not, however, concerned with the specific issue of the construction of identities. Whilst it might not have been the most appropriate forum for my text, I am very grateful to the editors for their willingness to include it. Upon receiving an invitation to participate in this conference, I felt the time was ripe to salvage and revise that article; and, this time, submit it to an appropriate forum.

The subject at hand might be construed as controversial; at the very least, it concerns matters that may be provocative for those who are readily offended. Whenever collective identities — or the myths that ground that identity — are tackled, there is an instinctive tendency to become defensive as we enter a realm that pertains more to belief and faith than to reason. David Lowenthal, referring to what he terms *Fabricating Heritage*, frames the issues as follows:

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1. This article forms part of a research project *Medieval and modern cultural history: Philological edition and study of written and printed sources (V)*, sponsored by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad of the Government of Spain (FFI2013-45931\_P). Josep E. Rubio is lecturer at the Universitat de València.

2. Please note that all translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

Like religious causes, heritage fosters exhilarating fealties. For no other commitment do peoples so readily take up arms [...]. The religious analogy extends to modes of belief: heritage relies on revealed faith rather than rational proof. We elect and exalt our legacy not by weighing its claims to truth, but in feeling that it must be right. The mainstay is not mental effort but moral zeal.<sup>3</sup>

The ‘fabricated’ heritage (or the ‘invented tradition’) is the foundation on which to ‘build the imagined identity’ (the title of the conference from which this publication arose).<sup>4</sup> An analysis of the construction of identity through the fabrication of myths should not, however, be seen as constituting an attack on the identity in question.

All communities create their own myths and construct their own identity; there is nothing abnormal about it. Nevertheless, it is equally acceptable, and indeed desirable, from a historical and scientific perspective, to analyse such processes. As I will later return to, these — the analysis and the construction — are two entirely different phenomena. This article will showcase a paradigmatic example of how myths are wielded in the process of identity construction; this is a literary myth that comes from the foundational medieval times: Ramon Llull. This is myth employed in the construction of the Catalan identity with its origins in the Catalan *Renaixença* but whose influence has been long-lasting and not restricted to one historical period.

It is widely accepted that the Middle Ages is a vital repository from which to extract materials concerning the construction of collective identities across Europe. The Italian historian, Giuseppe Sergi, for example, cautioned us about what he construed as the instrumentalization of history for unrelated aims:

*Dobbiamo fare attenzione: il medioevo si è rivelato, attraverso gli anni, il contenitori ideale dei ‘mythomoteur’, anche se ben di rado risulta averli contenuti davvero come realtà storicamente accertabili [...]. Non è accettabile che il medioevo europeo sia trattato come sponda in cui pescare —con discorsi di comodo spesso disinformati— le legittime origini di grandi formazioni nazionali ottocentesche o le sconosciute radici di rivendicazioni regionalistiche a vocazione neonazionalistica [...]. Può andare tutto bene —o quasi— ma non si disturbi la storia.<sup>5</sup>*

3. David LOWENTHAL, “Fabricating Heritage”, *History and Memory*, 10/1 (1998). Available at <<http://search.proquest.com/docview/195114671?accountid=14777>> [Retrieved: 21st June 2012].

4. The term ‘invention of tradition’ appears in the title of the well-known book Eric HOBBSBAWM, Terence RANGER (ed.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983.

5. [We must take heed: the Middle Ages has shown itself over the years to be the ideal container of ‘mythomoteur’, even though it seldom turns out to have genuinely contained them as verifiable historic

I quote the words of Sergi as an example of an historical approach that rejects the use of history for political purposes and, in particular, for the legitimisation of an identitary discourse in need of myths, tradition, and heritage. But that 'invention of tradition' inevitable requires an *ad hoc* reading of the past, a hermeneutics that interprets it in relation to the present-day. But does this 'infringe' upon history itself?

If 'history', akin to 'historical reality' (a term whose scope also warrants discussion), is understood as a repository of actual events that occurred in the past, then the answer might perhaps be affirmative. If 'History' is to be understood as a discourse about the past, as a science, as a discipline of knowledge, then, I do not believe that it should be affected by such procedures. The historian can establish the performative nature of tradition, examining this creation as simply *one more historical phenomenon*.<sup>6</sup>

In medieval literature, we can also find this mythic power, these 'mythomoteurs' identified by Sergi. In relation to the construction of Catalan identity, Ramon Llull is himself one of the most outstanding reference points. It is no mere quirk of fate that he has been given the title 'Father of the Catalan language' and 'Initiator of literature'; if Cervantes is the quintessential Spanish cultural reference for purposes of collective identity (hence the name Instituto Cervantes) — as is Dante in Italy, Camões in Portugal, Goethe in Germany etc., — when the Catalan government came to create an institution charged with the global dissemination of their language and culture, the *Institut Ramon Llull* was an obvious and even uncontested choice.

The deification of Llull as Father of Catalan culture has a clearly identifiable historical origin: the Renaixença. Horst Hina explored this in an article entitled: *La construcció d'una tradició cultural: Ramon Llull i la Renaixença*.<sup>7</sup> His line of argument is predicated upon an observation

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realities. [...] The Middle Ages cannot be shown to have been a riverside on which to fish — with a discourse that is frequently somewhat uninformed — for the legitimate origin of the great formations of the nineteenth-century or the unrecognized roots of regionalist demands that have a neo-nationalistic vocation [...]. It could work fine — or almost — but do not infringe upon the history]. Giuseppe SERGI, *L'idea di medioevo. Tra senso comune e pratica storica*, Donzelli Editore, Rome, 1998, p. 41-42.

6. Hence, for example historians such as Pau Viciano in the Valencian Community have been sensitive to the political usage, since the Renaixença, of mythical figures from the medieval past such as King Jaume I the Conqueror or el Cid Campeador: Pau VICIANO, *La temptació de la memòria*, Edicions 3 i 4, València, 1995.

7. [*The Construction of a Cultural Tradition: Ramon Llull and the Renaixença*]. Horst Hina, "La construcció d'una tradició cultural: Ramon Llull i la Renaixença", *Actes de l'Onzè Col·loqui Internacional de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes I (Palma de Mallorca, 8-12 de setembre de 1997)*, Joan MAS, Joan MIRALLES, Pere ROSSELLÓ (ed.), Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona, 1989, p. 143-155.

made by Joan Lluís Marfany who states that the *catalanisme del Noucents* [the Catalanism of the *Noucents*] ‘invent a traditions’<sup>8</sup>. He studies Llull in relation to his symbolic weight, as forged through the writings not only of Menéndez Pelayo or Torras i Bages but also, of Eugeni d’Ors, already present in the *Noucentisme*. It is clear that the figure of Llull, as constructed and construed by these authors, does not correspond to historical reality; Llull lived at the end of the thirteenth century within a very specific historical and cultural milieu. It is, for example, revealing that they make no contribution whatsoever to the discovery and publication of the author’s work. Hina, however, goes some distance in attempting to justify the labour of these ‘inventors’ of tradition in the final conclusions to his study:

*Com a conclusió, cal admetre primerament que la Renaixença no va produir una nova edició de Llull i tampoc no va representar un veritable renaixement dels estudis filològics i filosòfics sobre Llull que potser es podien esperar d’ella. Però malgrat això, no tot va ésser mistificació, com es podria pensar després de la lectura del llibre de Marfany sobre el catalanisme que vam citar al començament. Insistent amb tanta vehemència en la fonamental catalanitat de Llull (lingüística, psicològica, històrica, de caràcter), la Renaixença s’adona de l’essencial importància que Llull tenia per a la reconstrucció de la cultura catalana —la seva obra filosòfica i no menys la poètica, i més que res la seva obra catalana. Només calia treure les conclusions i posar mans a la feina.*<sup>9</sup>

I have my reservations about Horst Hina’s idea that work carried out during the *Renaixença* served to inspire the scientific study of Llull’s project. Thus, I shall attempt to explain and justify my reservations here based on the materials on which I have worked, which encompasses the post-*Renaixença* study of Llull right up to the 1940s.

I shall also attempt to demonstrate that the appropriation of Llull as a means by which to justify the invention of tradition continued for decades; this course runs a distinct albeit parallel course to another line of

8. [‘invents traditions’]. Joan-Lluís MARFANY, *La cultura del catalanisme. El nacionalisme català en els seus inicis*, Empúries, Barcelona, 1995.

9. [In conclusion, one should firstly admit that the *Renaixença* did not produce a single new edition of Llull. Neither did it supply the genuine revival in philological and philosophical studies on Llull that one might have expected. However, in spite of this, there was more than just the mystification that one might expect after reading Marfany’s book on Catalan nationalism mentioned at the outset. Insisting so vehemently on Llull’s fundamental *catalanitat* (linguistic, psychological, historical, and personality) the *Renaixença* takes cognisance of the crucial importance Llull had for the reconstruction of Catalan culture — his poetic as much as his philosophical works — and, above all, his oeuvre in Catalan. What was needed was to take heed on these contributions, and convert these theoretical conclusions into action.] HORST HINA, “La construcció d’una tradició...”, p. 155.

inquiry: the scientific study of the historical Lull through the edition of his complete works. It is not my belief that the former had a significant influence on the latter; on the contrary, as will later become evident, it has sometimes posed an obstacle for the recognition of the authentic historical value of Lull's work. Even today, some specialists feel obliged to insist on the fact that, strictly speaking, from a historical point of view, Lull is *ni "fundador de la literatura catalana" ni "creador de la llengua literària"*<sup>10</sup>. The embedding of the Lullian project within the socio-cultural context of the Crown of Aragon during the thirteenth century is at the root of this somewhat controversial negation which removed a well-established common-place in Lullian studies. I shall not assess the extent of this rethinking of Lull's role in the creation of language and literature, since that is not my goal. Instead, I shall provide different data to that presented by Hina, in order to show how the identity myth surrounding Lull has been constructed.

Before addressing the task at hand, it is incumbent upon me to supply a terminological precision: up to now, I have addressed a number of important terms as if they were roughly synonymous. However, adopted the philologist perspective, words are not neutral — the choice of one as opposed to another is decisive. In this case, I am referring to those nouns which, in the titles of several articles, books or seminar series, try to designate the phenomenon under consideration. Hobsbawm and Ranger speak about 'the invention of tradition'. Hina, in the aforementioned article, perhaps consciously and with the intent of softening the controversy provoked by the term 'invention' applied to the field of Catalan tradition — as a consequence of the book written by Marfany — replaces it with "construction", and speaks of *la construcció d'una tradició cultural* ("the construction of a cultural tradition"). Obviously, construction does not mean invention. The connotations of the latter term are more negative, since it sounds like fiction, deception and mystification. To construct, in turn, means to enrich, to contribute, and to create. And Lowenthal, also in the aforementioned article, refers to a different term: "fabricating heritage". What is the difference between "to construct" and "to fabricate"? Lowenthal gives two meanings for the latter term:

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10. [neither a founder of Catalan literature nor a creator of the literary language]. Lola BADIA, Joan SANTANACH, Albert SOLER, "La llengua i la literatura de Ramon LLULL: llocs comuns, malentesos i propostes", *Els Marges*, 87 (Barcelona, winter 2009), p. 73-90 (p. 73-77).

Fabrication has two common meanings. One is to construct with divine artifice, like James Howell's 'Almighty fabricator of the universe' of 1645. This positive usage, now rare save in archaeology and bookbinding goes back to Caxton in the fifteenth century. Only in the eighteenth century does fabricate appear in what the Oxford English Dictionary calls a 'bad sense' — forging, falsifying, making up.<sup>11</sup>

'Fabricating heritage' would be a form of construction with forged materials; a misleading construction, like a Baroque façade made of plaster that does not conceal any building behind. But Lowenthal does not consider the fabrication of heritage a vice, but a virtue, a necessary act. Besides, as I shall explain later on, he describes it as an act with its own realm, distinct and different from history.

'To construct' is also the term used to refer to the theme of the conference that first brought the authors of this special issue together: "To construct imagined identities". The connotation of 'invention' is present in any case. But the term 'to construct' has an undeniable semantic power: its architectural significance is linked to the task of creating an identity because identity needs tangible benchmarks on which to rest. That is why, above all, this is manifested in the construction of monuments, statues with pedestals, buildings. Hobsbawm, in the final chapter of *The Invention of Tradition*, refers to the 'Mass-Producing Traditions' in Europe between 1870 and 1914.<sup>12</sup> He describes the fact that — during the examined period — there is a mass production of public monuments created to promote an identity image that provides cohesion within society. But, besides the physical monuments (building statues, and statues that look like buildings, such as the Vittorio Emanuele II Monument in Rome), monuments also remain in a metaphorical sense. Josep Torras i Bages already referred to Lull's work in these terms in 1892; he asks himself the following rhetorical question in reference to Ramon Lull's *The Book of Contemplation on God*:

*No valdria més que en lloch de eregir tants monuments dedicats a personatges antics y moderns, se fes la impressió d'aquest monument del pensament catalá, verdadera pedra de finíssims y colorejats marbres ahont se podria provehir de richs materials y d'originals formes, lo jovent estudiós de Catalunya?*<sup>13</sup>

11. David LOWENTHAL, "Fabricating...".

12. Eric HOBBSAWM, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", *The invention of Tradition...*, p. 263-308.

13. [Would it not be better, instead of erecting so many monuments dedicated to figures from past and present times, that we offered an impression of this monument of Catalan thought, a genuine

*The Book of Contemplation* is also a monument, comprised of gems. Even in the current day, references to this ‘inaugural literary monument’ remain an introductory trope at the beginnings of narratives on Catalan literature. And any monument, let us not forget, acts as a ‘memento’; that is the reason why it serves as a guide for future generations.

Let us see now how certain discourses on identity are constructed (or fabricated) around the figure of Ramon Llull. What I am about to offer is a series of examples taken from the vast bibliography written prior to 1945, from which I have only consulted a significant, but by no means exhaustive, sample. Many of the materials which I will discuss are not readily available in print, and any interested readers will have to visit archives in order to consult the relevant published books and newspaper articles which, especially in the early post-war period, employed the figure of Ramon Llull to support political speeches often of very different political persuasions. In 2003, Salvador Trias Mercant, published *Petita addenda a la Bibliographia Lulliana de Rudolf Brummer* (SL 44, pp. 123–126) —there are four pages which include highly interesting materials such as José Artero’s article published in 1948 in issue number 351 of the journal *Ecclesia: El beato Lulio y el peligro de la URSS* (*The Blessed Lull and the Danger of the URSS*); or Puigdollers’ article published in 1941 in the *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid* titled *La paz, como dimensión espiritual de nuestro Imperio (Séneca, Llull, Vives)* (*Peace, as the Spiritual Dimension of our Empire [Seneca, Llull, Vives]*). That is to say, as I shall later suggest, Llull is not only a reference point in relation to the construction of a national Catalan identity.<sup>14</sup>

There have been many Lulls over the course of the centuries. At an early date, in the fourteenth century, an alchemist Llull is born; followed by the martyr Llull, the saint Llull, the mad/insane Llull, etc. Each of them arouses different interests depending on the time, place and scholar. It could be stated, however, that in the Catalan realm, the revindication of Llull in a nationalist sense does not take place until the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, there are few attempts to find an ‘authentic Llull’, but these attempts can already be found in the eighteenth century. The most interesting case is that of Father Pasqual, a Majorcan monk who wrote *Vindiciae lullianae*, a defence in response to the attacks levelled against

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cornerstone of fine and coloured marbles that could provide Catalonia’s educated youth with rich materials and original forms.]. Josep TORRAS I BAGES, *La tradició catalana*, Editorial Ibérica, Barcelona, 1913, p. 227–228.

14. Salvador TRIAS, “Petita addenda a la Bibliographia Lulliana de Rudolf Brummer”, *Studia Lulliana*, 44 (Palma de Mallorca, 2004), p. 123–126.

Llull's work and figure by Father Feijoo. In fact, Feijoo attacked a very specific Llull: the sixteenth-century Llull, the magician and alchemist, as opposed to the rational and enlightened spirit being forged at the time of the attack. Pasqual's defence is, though, a demystification of the false Llull, and the first serious attempt to study the true figure of the Majorcan polygraph. The *Vindiciae lullianae* would thus provide an example and precedent for the rediscovery of Llull in the following century.

But the controversy surrounding Feijoo-Pasqual, which lends itself to a 'national' interpretation from Renaixença ideology (a Majorcan defending the principal symbol of Catalan culture in the face of the incomprehension it inspires in the Spanish spirit) did not have precisely that meaning at the time. The reader will not, for example, find a special insistence on the 'Catalan' or 'Majorcan' character of Llull in the *Vindiciae lullianae*. This would come in later centuries and, in large measure, in the work of ecclesiastical authors. Let us first consider the text that deified the figure of Llull in a more explicit sense as a representative of genuine Catalan thought: I am here referring to *La filosofia nacional de Catalunya* [*The National Philosophy of Catalonia*] a delivered by Monsignor Salvador Bové and published in Barcelona in 1902. The assumption upon which he is working are clear from the outset: *la nació es la ànima [...], la nació es un principi espiritual*<sup>15</sup> ["the nation is the soul [...], the nation is a spiritual principle"]. And, as such, it has its own idiosyncrasies, which are manifest through some of the arts, legal principles and an autochthonous philosophy. In relation to the Catalan example, Bové asks himself what is the national Catalan philosophy, the one born *de les metexes entranyes del pensament de la Nació catalana* ["from bowels of the Catalan Nation's thought"]. The answer: *La Filosofia nacional de Catalunya es la filosofia lulliana* [*The national Philosophy of Catalonia is the Lullian philosophy*]. And it is likewise because, according to Bové, it responds, to the innermost essence of the spirit and character of the Catalan people.<sup>16</sup>

Bové's conference is an example of an exalted nationalist discourse, in which the existence of a Catalan Nation (always capitalized) with its own soul is reiterated. Other distinguished examples of this reading of Llull which develop concrete details more fully followed this. A book by Monsignor Joan Avinyó *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Llull*, [*The Franciscan Tertiary Blessed Ramón Llull*], for example, is a very representative

15. Salvador Bové, *La filosofia nacional de Catalunya*, Estampa de Fidel Giró, Barcelona, 1902, p. 9.

16. Salvador Bové, *La filosofia nacional...*, p. 35.



text as regards the image of Lull as an identitary symbol. The book was published in 1912, but it was written at least five years previously.<sup>17</sup> The dedicatory is a veritable mission statement: *A ma estimada Catalunya, patria del Beat Ramon Llull y del autor* (“To my beloved Catalonia, birthplace to the Blessed Ramon Llull and to the author of these words”). This is also the case as regards the quotation from Sallust that follows the dedicatory: *Gloria maiorum posteris lumen* (“The glory of the eldest is the guiding light for those who follow in their wake”). We have the Lull monument, an example for the Catalans of the moment, precisely because it gathers together the most inherently Catalan essences at an early, primitive and uncontaminated stage — in other words, a foundational golden age that must be recovered.

This is a common-place of a certain strand of criticism from the time: the vision of Lull as an identitary model proffered by this criticism is inseparable from a certain view of the period in which he lived; it entails a particular vision of the medieval past. Lull is not only a saint, but a medieval and Catalan saint — it is for this reason that he provides an example for twentieth-century Catalan people. Avinyó states that the saint is not only by nature an exemplum of virtues, but of concrete virtues embodied in one person:

*Recordemnos que la santedat, que les virtuts totes en llur grau mes heroic, no son pas abstraccions quan están encarnades en un home, y que aquest no és tampoc independent de sa época, de sa patria, de sa rassa, de sa familia, de la educació que ha rebuda.*<sup>18</sup>

The author’s intention is thereby to draw a portrait of Lull which contains all these dimensions; especially, that of the age. References to medieval times and to Lull’s historical background invariably, however, converge in relation to the matter at hand: the sketching of a model for the modern-day individual. It is for this reason that Avinyó argues that: *per mes que visqué en plena edat mitja, [Lull] sembla tallat per patró de la generació present.*<sup>19</sup> It is only in this manner that he stands as a current and contemporary model. Lull even *se troba en el cas de satisfer als mes*

17. Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari franciscà beat Ramon Llull, Doctor Arcangèlic i martre de Crist*, Establiment tipogràfic de Nicolau Poncell, Igualada, 1912.

18. [Let us remember that sanctity, and all virtues in their most heroic guise, are not mere abstractions when embodied in a man who is inseparable from his time, homeland, race, family and education.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari franciscà beat Ramon Llull...*, p. 14.

19. [“although he lived in the midst of the Middle Ages, [Lull] seems to have been cut along the same lines as the present generation”]. Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari franciscà beat Ramon Llull...*, p. 15.

*exigents intellectuals d'última hora, qui demanen per llur utopic "Super-home" un cervell com el de Spinoza y un cor com el del Místic de la Umbria*<sup>20</sup>. Llull synthesises qualities of the intellect and of the heart. And this is crucial to bear in mind, because the discourse will clearly progress in this direction, and we can already envision where to: if Llull is not only reason and wisdom, but also ardent love and madness, then we have already found the perfect compendium of the Catalan identity rendered in a single figure; that is if we envisage the defining signature of the Catalan character to be a combination of common-sense and foolish recklessness.

Chapter thirty of Monsignor Avinyó's ambitious work is titled: *Son caràcter, temperament, idiosincracia: En Llull personifica la rassa catalana* ("His personality, temper, and idiosyncrasy: Llull personifies the Catalan race"). It is important to take note of Llull's physique and physical constitution, for both are considered to be important in gaining a proper understanding of his personality and specificity. The importance of theories concerning the influence or even the physical and physiological determinism in the constitution of the individual or national character, are behind the claims of Avinyó's and other authors, as we shall see later on:

*La freqüència en sos moviments respiratoris, la rapidesa circulatoria per son sistema venós, son rostre moreno y begut de galtes, sos ulls brillants y encesos, son indicis d'aquella sa activitat infadigable que sempre demostrá. Y un home d'aquesta naturalesa y d'aquell temps, ¿se'l pot presentar per tipo de la rassa catalana? Cal remarcar la constitució ètnica, fisiològica y sociològica del poble de Catalunya.*<sup>21</sup>

The importance of these pithy remarks cannot be over-stated. Firstly, they state that the orography of the Catalan domain explains the political history of the nation according to the theories of the time. In the face of the geographical homogeneity of the central plains of France and Castile which yielded a Latin political uniformity, it was thought that the topographical heterogeneity of Catalonia was logically replicated in a broad spectrum of political governance. The mountain range that divides the Catalan region into two also divides men's character: those from the west are tall and dark-hair, make the sound of the letter 'e' more clear,

20. ["finds himself in a position to satisfy the most forward-looking and demanding of intellectuals, who ask for their utopian 'Superman' a brain like that of Spinoza, and a heart like the Mystic of Umbria"]. JOAN AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramon Llull...*, p. 363-364.

21. [The frequency in his respiratory movements, the fast circulation of his venous system, his dark and thin face, and his bright and burning eyes are indications of the healthy and untiring activity that he will always reveal. And can a man of this kind and time be shown to embody the Catalan race? It is incumbent to highlight the ethnic, physiologic and sociologic constitution of the Catalan people]. JOAN AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramon Llull...*, p. 365.

are more open/extrovert, expansive, and have a communist character; whilst those who belong to other regions such as Pla de Bages or Pla de Vic are more introverted, individualistic, short, and make the sound of the letter 'e' less clear. The Catalan race, in sum, is a compendium of different virtues which are explained, among other reasons, through orography; these factors are amalgamated and propelled into action thanks to some historic catalysts such as Christianity, *que fou l'ànima de l'edat mitja* ["which was the soul of the Middle Ages"]. It is in this manner that Catalonia is born, from the prime materials supplied by the dominant temperament, civilised by Christianity, in a process that takes place during the Middle Ages. The outcome is that:

*Nostra nacionalitat afermada sobre les generacions barbres, nascuda entre'l trasbals y agitació d'una lluita religiosa forsa intensa, quedá vivificada [...] per la fé catòlica, que fou l'ànima de la edat mitjana. A n'axó debém afegirhi l'amor a la veritat y a la justícia que la rassa catalana ha realisat constantment en tots els ordres de la vida social, que, junt ab la independència i llibertat de que sempre ha volgut fruhir, l'han fet un dels pobles mascles y dignes de la terra.*<sup>22</sup>

In Catalonia, according to Avinyó, 'people's social power' oppressed the feudal tyranny and established a contractual monarchy. The Catalan mediaeval political system responded to the 'right milieu of governance': we do not want authoritarian tyranny nor popular anarchy — we want to be democratic and Christian. Hence, in the Middle Ages, *mentre nosaltres gosavem d'una ampla llibertat democrática, els demés païssos vivían en l'estret cercol del cessarisme autocràtic* ["whilst we enjoyed wide democratic freedoms, other countries dwelled within the narrow circle of the autocratic Caesarism"]. Catalonia is forged in the Middle Ages; thus, it is built as an established democracy based on Christian but also bourgeois foundations, since *les classes mercantils y industrials pel llur treball y activitat alcansaren riqueses y una regularitat de costums poc comuna entre'ls nobles y cavallers; d'aquí que aquells s'imposaren a n'aquestos.*<sup>23</sup>

22. [Our nationality strengthened through the Barbarian generations, born amongst the disturbances and turmoil of intense religious struggle, was enlivened [...] by the Catholic faith, which was at the core of the Middle Ages. To this, we must add the love of truth and justice that the Catalan race has constantly revealed in all aspects of social life. Together with the independence and freedom that it has always wanted to enjoy, this has made it one of the most virile and dignified peoples on the planet.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 366.

23. ["the commercial and industrial classes attained wealth and the habit of manners, rare among nobles and knights, due to their work and activities and, as a result, the former were able to take charge over the latter."] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 365.

A bourgeois and Christian democracy that builds a state (the anachronism of the term is quite evident) that, in sum, is nothing other than the projection of political desires according to this author's idea of modern Catalonia: *Era l'estat catalá considerat com un organisme que comensava la acció social, no en el individu considerat element simple, sino en la familia entitat orgánica*<sup>24</sup>. One of the important consequences of the ostensible 'democratic' character of Catalonia from its origins is the reputed tolerance towards non-Christian religions; and, take heed, because this idea continues to be repeated by some present-day writers:

*Informades les nostres constitucions del esperit católic, s'inspiravan en alts principis de tolerancia; cal saber que'n el sigle XI, els Usatges castigan al qui's burli o fassi menyspreu de la religió dels jueus [...]. Hi havia conferencies públiques de religió católica, a les que s'hi convidava als d'altres religions, pero may podía obligarse a ningú a entrar a la nostra, baix pena de cástic; en una paraula, el carácter de les conquestes y dominacions de Catalunya era'l d'una ampla tolerancia en les idees y de respecte dels bens dels vensuts.*<sup>25</sup>

The Catalan idiosyncrasy is lastly defined as:

*La grandesa que mostra el terror de Catalunya, aont lo ferreny, lo aspre y lo cantellut es amorosit per les rialleres i gemades afraus estotxadades en alteroses serralades, retrata'l nostre esperit ferm y decidit, aspre y franc, enèrgic y práctic,*

24. ["The Catalan state was considered an organism that produced social action not through the individual, considered a simple element, but through the family as an organic entity"]. Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescá beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 369.

25. [Our constitutions, having been informed by the Catholic spirit, were accordingly inspired by the high principles of tolerance; it is important to know that Catalan law from the eleventh century punished those who mocked the Jewish religion [...] There were public speeches on Catholic religion, in which people from other religions were invited, but nobody could oblige anybody to attend under threat of punishment; in one word, the way in which Catalonia dominated others was highly tolerant towards their ideas and respectful towards the properties of those defeated.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescá beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 368. The stereotype of Catalan tolerance as regards the Jewish and Muslim religion is still present in some authors. A more historically accurate vision of the tolerance and its significance for Medieval Spain is provided by Fernando Domínguez: "*la tolerancia, aun siendo real, no se fundaba en las premisas del concepto moderno de tolerancia. La tolerancia religiosa tiene hoy en día su fundamento, o bien en la indiferencia religiosa, o bien en el respeto a la dignidad y libertad de la persona humana, conceptos ambos que no caben dentro de una visión medieval del mundo. En la España medieval funcionó una tolerancia política que nunca estuvo dictada por una reverencia a las demás religiones o por respeto a la libertad de los otros creyentes, sino, simplemente, por la necesidad de integrar dentro del sistema político una existente realidad social*" (tolerance, though real, was not based on the premises of the modern concept of tolerance. Religious tolerance has its foundation at present, either in religious indifference, either in the respect for the dignity and freedom of the human being; neither are concepts that adhere to the medieval vision of the world. In Medieval Spain, a political tolerance was in operation which was never dictated by a reverence to other religious or by respecting the freedom of other believers, but simply by the necessity to integrate an existing social reality into the political system). Fernando Domínguez, "La España medieval, frontera de la cristiandad", *Cristianismo y Europa ante el tercer milenio*, Angel GALINDO, Issac VÁZQUEZ (ed.), Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, Salamanca, 1998, p. 75-88 (p. 78).

*esbategant per entre aquests relleus de virilitat: expansió y generositat, tendresa y sensillesa, germanor y humanisme. Com a conseqüència lògica, la rassa catalana s'ha anat desenrotllant individualista, feréstega y crua, pero feconda y simpática [...]. Abdos elements, climatològic y étnic, ens donan la catalana serietat, aquesta melangia similar al 'spleen' de les regions del nort, segell semblant a la gebrada. Per ell riem, diu un autor, estant seriosos, y si tenim una expansió d'alegría, al moment es frenada per forsa misteriosa: el primer impuls cáustic del temperament llatí es soptadament regulat pel tremp ceremoniós del escandinau.<sup>26</sup>*

But what about Llull? What does he have to do with all this? The last paragraph of this chapter shows us how he embodies and surmises the essential traits of the original Catalan specificities:

*En el Beat Ramon Llull podém comprobar la rectitut de sos propòsits, la tenacitat de ses resolucions, sa fidelitat al deber fins a la mort, tot armonisat per una mentalitat sintética; retret perque concentra y reflexiona, y l'idealisme y metafísica que li falta ho supleix per la educació que dona la religió catòlica; qualitats intellectuals y morals que integran l'individualisme catalá.<sup>27</sup>*

If I have dwelled somewhat incessantly on Monsignor Avinyó's text, it is because I consider it to be a clear manifestation of a discourse that, with minimal variations, can be found in other contemporary Catalan authors. A discourse that turns its gaze onto the Middle Ages as a golden age during which the foundational period of the Catalan identity is located; an identity that is constructed in advance from a series of positive features (tolerance; democracy; the fertile individualism of the race; reflection connected to the capacity for action etc.). The medieval period is considered the fertile cradle of Catalonia versus the not-so-idyllic ancient pagan times, dominated by slavery. Above all, however, it is Christianity that imbues the positive and creative character of the

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26. [The greatness that the region of Catalonia shows — where the robust, rough and jagged is softened by the giggling and green gorges of high mountain ranges — depicts our firm and resolute spirit, rough and honest, energetic and practical, flapping around these reliefs of virility: expansion and generosity, kindness and simplicity, brotherhood and humanism. As a logical consequence, the Catalan race has become individualistic, intractable and fierce, but at the same kind fertile and kind [...]. Both elements, climatic and ethnic, give us the Catalan seriousness, this melancholy similar to the 'spleen' of the northern regions, similar to the frost. For it, we laugh, an author says, when we are not smiling, and if we feel an expansion of joy, it is suddenly ceased by a mysterious force: the first cutting impulse of the Latin temperament is suddenly regulated by the ceremonious Scandinavian spirit.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 369.

27. [In the Blessed Ramon Llull we can see the rectitude of his intentions, the tenacity of his resolutions, his loyalty to duty until death, all harmonized within a synthetic mentality; he concentrates and reflects on any approach, and the absent idealism and metaphysics is supplied by the education provided by the Catholic religion; these are the intellectual and moral qualities that comprise Catalan individualism.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Llull...*, p. 369.

medieval world in opposition to the previous paganism. And Lull, certainly, has to be a conspicuous representative of the Christian spirit of the medieval times in the Catalan context.

Avinyó portrays an idyllic image of the Middle Ages when talking about Lull's times (let us not forget that the time and/or the historical context is, for these authors, a determining factor in relation to character and the specificity of the individual.) Feudalism is presented as a liberating force for the enslaved proletariat of the Roman world; liberating because it establishes a contract between the old slaves and the new masters. In its Catalan variation, in fact, feudalism will lead *la naxenta nació catalana pel camí del progrés fins la complerta organisió social*.<sup>28</sup>

The predominant image that underlies most descriptions of medieval times is that of a strong, vigorous, creative period, of an unleashed impetus controlled and oriented by the civilizing actions of the Church. Hence, the proliferation of metaphors of youth, of adolescent vigour to represent the early stages of the emergent nation; this is the nation as an organic entity. Let us see, for instance, what Sureda Blanes discusses in *El Beato Ramon Lull* (1934) [*The Blessed Ramon Lull*]:

*El Medioevo es nuestra propia juventud con todas sus ilusiones, sus vicios y sus virtudes, su ardimiento y sus esperanzas, porque cuanto de duradero y de fecundo tiene hoy el mundo, emerge de las raíces de los primeros años del cristianismo. Largo y secular laborio que deshizo, anillo tras anillo, la vieja y mohosa cadena de los siglos de paganía, comenzando por controvertir las mismas bases sociales y aboliendo la esclavitud. Cuando los pueblos lleguen a ser verdaderamente democráticos y la sinceridad fraternal disipe los contubernios intensamente aristocráticos y aún absolutistas de los partidos políticos hoy en boga, aún los envueltos nefastamente en la clámide proletaria, e inspire los códigos nacionales e internacionales, entonces el ideal cristiano habrá llegado, mal que pese a los que lo dificultan, a su completo éxito social y humano.*<sup>29</sup>

28. ["the emerging Catalan nation in the path of progress towards its ultimate social organization"]. Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Lull...*, p. 33.

29. [The Middle Ages represents our own youth with all its hopes and illusions, its virtues and vices, its ardour and hopes, because whatever is enduring and fruitful in the present-day emerges from the roots of the early years of Christianity. This was a drawn-out and secular task that undid, ring after ring, the old and rusty chain of centuries of paganism, starting from contravening the same social bases and abolishing slavery. On the day when people became truly democratic and the fraternal sincerity dispels the intensely aristocratic and absolutists conspiracies of the political parties that continue to be in fashion—even of those nefariously disguised amongst the proletariat chlamys—and inspire both national and international codes of conduct, then the Christian ideal will attain, even if it pains those who oppose it, absolute social and human success.] FRANCISCO SUREDA, *El beato Ramón Lull (Raimundo Lulio). Su época. Su vida. Sus obras*, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1934, p. 27.

This text provides enough material to take us to the crux of issues relation to political and Christian utopia alongside their roots in a specific vision of the Middle Ages; but, for my current purposes, it is incumbent upon me to return to Llull ('the Hero of our blood', in the words of Sureda). Let us retain our focus on the central idea of strength, and force attributed to the Middle Ages as a mythical foundational age. In this regard, Llull perfectly encapsulates the spirit of the time and the race. Lorenzo Ribes, in *Raimundo Lulio* (1935), reproduces the common-place of the Middle Ages as a juvenile and dynamic people, also appropriating the organic metaphor in relation to the Catalan language — the idea of language, in other words, as a living entity:

*Quando un cuerpo es sano y fuerte, la sangre lleva su torrente rojo y vital convenientemente a cada uno de sus miembros. Así como, según el mito etrusco, Rómulo y Remo, ahitos de leche, desprendíanse de las ubres de la loba romana, asimismo de los pechos de la madre latina, [...] una tras otra iban desprendiéndose las lenguas romances. Una de las más madrugadoras fué la lengua catalana. Con la adolescencia de Ramón coincidió la adolescencia de la lengua catalana.*<sup>30</sup>

The impetus and strength of the new nation are embodied in Llull's ardour. Here, the myth of a young and impulsive Llull takes over, the Llull that — according to the legend — followed his indomitable instinct and enters Majorca's Church of Santa Eulalia riding a horse in pursuit of his lady. *Imaginaos un potro ardiente abandonado a sí mismo y al ímpetu de su bella sangre libertina* ["Imagine a colt burning and overrun with passion, given over to the impulses of his libertarian and beautifully-flowing blood"] is suggested by Ribes, in order to contextualize the Lullian impulse, a product of its time and also to imbue the emerging Catalan nation with an overwhelming power.<sup>31</sup> From a purportedly more scientific perspective, Mauricio de Iriarte carries out a 'study of character' in his *Genio y figura del iluminado Maestro Beato Ramon Llull* (1945) [*Countenance and Wit of the Enlightened Master Blessed Ramon Llull* (1945)] on the temperament or the 'spiritual physiognomy' of the Majorcan

30. [When a body is healthy and strong, its blood carries its red and vital torrent appropriately to every single member. Just as, according to the Etruscan myth, Romulus and Remus, sated with milk, broke away from the udders of the Roman wolf, equally from the breasts of the Latin mother, [...] one after the other the Romance languages were breaking away. Amongst the earliest or risers was the Catalan language. Ramón's adolescence coincided with that of the Catalan language]. Lorenzo RIBES, *Raimundo Lulio (Ramon Llull)*, Editorial Labor, Barcelona, 1935, p. 15.

31. Lorenzo RIBES, *Raimundo Lulio...*, p. 16.

writer to arrive at a similar conclusion: the image of a strong, impetuous verging on the savage, personality.<sup>32</sup>

Naturally, this Lullian idiosyncrasy explains one of the characteristics of the ‘Catalan race’, but it does not manage to represent the entire Catalan being. The intellect and the impulsiveness must be counter-balanced by common-sense. And Lull also represents this through his own conversion. The legend of the convert Lull who changes his existence radically from the moment the crucified Christ appeared; according to the *Vita Coaetanea*, it enables us to establish a division between the irrational Lull, his own personality, and common-sense as an appropriated characteristic that controls unleashed impulses as a result of the benevolent influence of Christianity, of faith... and of Ramon de Penyafort, representative of Catalan common sense, who recommends that Lull becomes a recluse in Majorca, to study and educate himself. Returning to Monsignor Avinyó, he describes — or, perhaps more accurately, he invents — how the meeting between Lull and Ramon de Penyafort (only mentioned in one line in the *Vita Coaetanea*) would be:

*Sant Ramón de Penyafort recordá'l servidor lleal y dissipat de la casa del rey, s'alegrá de sa conversió admirable, y prevegé un futur apóstol de Crist; no obstant, mesurat com era, tingué ab ell diferents assentades, empeltantli en aquestes la discreció y'l just medi en totes ses obres, li ensenyá la forma de resoldre ab equitat els conflictes de la vida y que'l sentiment no es pas guia segura pels tenebrosos camins d'aquest mon, si no va unit ab la llum de la raó y de la fe.*<sup>33</sup>

From what has been said thus far, it is fairly obvious that Lull's vision —in terms of its role as an identity model as derived from these texts— is dominated by a predominantly Christian discourse, the discourse of faith and fatherland, the Renaixença's heir. The vast majority of scholars who follow this hermeneutic line are canons or monks. But these discourses, so weak in rational terms, are pernicious due precisely to their simplicity which can be wielded against their advocates. In an analogous

32. MAURICIO DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro B. Ramon Lull*, Arbor, Madrid, 1945.

33. [Saint Ramón de Penyafort remembered the loyal and dissipated servant of the king's house, he was glad to hear of his admirable conversion, and foresaw a future apostle of Christ; nevertheless, being as righteous as he was, he talked with him on various occasions, inculcating the need for discretion and equity in all his actions; he taught him how to resolve life's conflicts fairly, and also that one's personal feelings hardly provide safe guidance for the dark paths of this world if they are not accompanied by the light of common sense and faith]. Joan Avinyó, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Lull...*, p. 99. Lull's autobiographic text *Vita coaetanea* simply says that Ramon had in mind going to Paris to study, and that Ramon de Penyafort, together with some Lull's relatives and friends, persuaded him to remain in Majorca. RAMON LLULL, “Vita coaetanea”, *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina*, Tomus VIII, Hermogenes HARADA (ed.), Brepols, Turnhout, 1980, p. 278.



fashion, the same presuppositions can be used to prove almost anything: the discourse of identity which interprets history for its own purposes is highly malleable. Hence, for example, 'faith and fatherland' could, in a specific socio-historical context, be read as 'National Catholicism'; in such a scenario, Lull could almost be considered as... a proto-falangist! Let us return to the aforementioned text by Mauricio de Iriarte, S. J. It was published in 1945 by the publishing house *Arbor* based in Madrid. The date reveals everything: not anything was published that year when all publications had to pass through a censorship process which was no longer exclusively ecclesiastic. No references to Catalonia are to found but there are multiple references to things such as the following:

*Aquella isla mayor balear era entonces como una avanzada hispánica hacia tres de los centros político-culturales más importantes de su siglo: África, Roma y Oriente [...]. Por otra parte, la angostura del territorio y la amplitud de horizontes marinos era un aguijón estimulante del expansionismo. Ramón Lull es un producto genuino de aquel clima geopolítico.*<sup>34</sup>

Again, we have the geophysical determinism acting on Lull, which has resulted, in this case, in a conqueror Lull, defender of the crusade, and profoundly Spanish; as in the quote above, in the following citation, the 'Hispanic' character of the Balearic culture at the time of Lull is highlighted:

*Del espíritu hispánico que informa la nueva sociedad mallorquina recibe el sentido cristiano, no sólo como forma de vida religiosa, sino como concepción social de la cristiandad. De aquí la actitud de su ánimo hacia tareas de cruzada, con el doble intento de liberar la propia tierra del dominio o adherencias islámicas, y de reconquistar la Tierra Santa, solar de la universal familia cristiana.*<sup>35</sup>

Hence, *late en Lull y alborea espléndido el 'espíritu misional' que informó la vida nacional española en su edad culminante.*<sup>36</sup> And later, he adds: *¡Qué actitud ésta luliana, la primera digna de imitar, reproduciendo su antiguo*

34. [That large Balearic island was, at that time, an advanced Hispanic outpost heading in the direction of three of the most important political and cultural centres of its century: Africa, Rome and the Orient [...]. Moreover, the narrowness of the territory and the extent of the marine horizons were a stimulating sting of expansionism. Ramón Lull is a genuine product of that geopolitical atmosphere.] Mauricio DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro...*, p. 15-16.

35. [From the Hispanic spirit that informs the new Majorcan society he receives the Christian sense, not only as a form of religious life, but also in the social sense. Hence his approach towards the Crusades, with the double aim of freeing their own land from Islamic control or Islamic adhesions, and re-conquering the Holy Land, the pillar of the universal Christian family.] Mauricio DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro...*, p. 16.

36. ["the missionary spirit, which informed the national Spanish life in its culminating age, beats in Lull and constitutes its splendid dawn"]. Mauricio DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro...*, p. 63.

'sentido expansivo y misional', y no ser, como ahora, en tantos órdenes, objeto de proselitismo extraño y de la descarga de extrañas culturas, en vez de ser sujeto activo de la propia, irradiándola.<sup>37</sup> We are here faced with a Spanish Llull, an expansive conqueror; and an imperial Llull who is an example for the Spanish youth of the new Spain emerged from the Francoist 'crusade'. *En suma, lo que a la juventud española le servirá de generoso estímulo: caballero, dentro de lo español, balear, es decir, hondero de la cultura y del apostolado, ágil, movido y elástico.*<sup>38</sup>

But the ecclesiastic interpretation of the figure of Llull holds yet another surprise in store for us delivering, as it does, a neo-cosmopolitan Llull — a Catholic Llull that it is, therefore, 'universal'. We can find this in the *El beato Ramon Llull (The Blessed Ramon Llull)* by Francisco Sureda (1934), cited earlier:

*Precisa estudiar a Ramón Llull en su ambiente; es decir: en el siglo de oro mal llamado Medieval, en plena grandeza de la nación catalana y a través del mundo y en cada encrucijada del mundo medieval. Porque Ramón representa y es la negación de todo mezquino localismo [...]. No escribe para una raza o una lengua solas; su apostolado abarca todas las razas y todas las lenguas, buscando las bases razonables y por ende humanísimas, universales e ineludibles, que puedan asentar la filosofía perenne con que puedan defenderse e imbuirse las verdades de la fe. Y así Ramón Llull anduvo por el mundo y en todos los países halló a su patria.*<sup>39</sup>

The author insists on the value of Llull for global history transcending parochial interpretations; this is a predominantly Catholic value in the etymological sense of the term: the Lullian impulse rendered here is a 'universal vocation'. From the very Christian Catholic discourse, one can dismantle the idea of Llull as a specifically Catalan identity model without, thereby, disavowing the perennial clichés: a strong and irratio-

37. ["What an attitude this of Llull's, the most worthy of imitation, reproducing its former expansive and missionary sense, and not, as is the case now amongst so many orders, the object of strange proselytes and the discharge of strange cultures, as opposed to being an active subject of one's own culture, radiating its own worth!"]. Mauricio DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro...*, p. 65.

38. ["In sum, what will serve as a generous stimulus to the Spanish youth: a knight, who from amidst the Spanish nation, is Balearic; that is to say a worthy archer of culture and of the apostolate, agile, moved and elastic"]. Mauricio DE IRIARTE, *Genio y figura del Iluminado maestro...*, p. 65.

39. [It is necessary that we study Ramón Llull in his environment; that is to say in the golden age, erroneously described as Medieval, the moment of the Catalan nation's maximum grandeur at the local and global level, in every crossing of the medieval world. Because Ramón represents and is the negation of all petty localism [...]. He does not write for a single race or a single language; his apostolate includes all races and all languages, seeking the rational and by implication humanistic — both universal and ineludible — basis upon which to predicate a lifelong philosophy through which the truths of faith can be defended and imparted. In this manner, Ramón Llull wandered the world at large and found himself at home in every land]. FRANCISCO SUREDA, *El beato Ramón Llull...*, p. 12-13.

nal Lull, a reflection of his time. After all, a devotional Lull arises, but it is a Lull that represents the purest essence of the universal Catholic identity embodied in the missionary Hispanic spirit. Nevertheless, at least Sureda's book succeeds in putting into question genuine absurdities (echoed in Avinyò, and for which he was seriously criticised by Sureda) freely stated in texts of the time such, for example, as the alleged genealogy of Lull back to no less than Otger Cataló, a legendary warrior appointed by Víctor Català as *El Pelayo de la reconquesta catalana* ("The Catalan Reconquest's very own Pelayo") and one of the reputed 'nine barons of fame'. Avinyò, however, goes beyond that point in his attempt to present a quintessentially Catalan Lull; it is worth reproducing the line of argument advanced by Monsignor Avinyó, if only for its contribution to the history of philological absurdities marshalled in support of an ostensible identity:

*Fins ara semblava cosa provada y indiscutible que la llengua catalana provenia del llatí; mes avuy, al costat d'aquella vella tendencia tradicional, mossén Marián Grandia, després de llargues hores d'estudi y de profonds conexements filològics, ens ha revelat y sosté ab forts rahonaments, que'l catalá és fill de les llengües semites, en especial del hebreu<sup>40</sup>.*

This idea, no matter how ridiculous it may appear, was not in fact new at all. If the Catalan language or any other language does not derive from Latin, then it means that it is not pagan but Christian since the onset of time, as Christian as Adam, who must have spoken Hebrew or something similar (for the case at hand, similar to Catalan). Let us now further explicate this hypothesis now in specific reference to Lull's name:

*Consultada, doncs, la significació y etimologia del nom Ramón Lull, a la autorisada opinió del entés filólec catalá mossén Marián Grandia, me contestá en carta particular que, ni Ramon ni Lull foren jamay mots llatins: "Ramon sembla indígena de Catalunya, y opino que es tret de la topografia. Un home's diria Ramón perque vivia en un 'ramón' o 'puig'. 'Ramón' es ben catalá, format del sufix 'on' o 'o' de 'ó-genus' de 'ó' inf. y 'gigno', de l'hebreu 'ganáh', fer, produir, y l'arrel hebrea 'rum', ser alt. Axí en hebreu y castellá, voldria dir 'altura gran'; y en catalá 'altura petita', per la diferencia del valor aumentatiu de l' 'on' en aquestes llengües. Lull, y avants naturalment Lul, será de l'hebreu 'lul', que significa rutllar,*

40. [Up until now, it appeared to be a widely known and undisputed point that the Catalan language derived from Latin; but, these days, far from the traditional belief system, Monsignor Marián Grandia —as a result of detailed scholarly attention and exemplary philological knowledge— has shown and defended with conviction the argument that the Catalan language derives from Semitic languages, especially Hebrew.] Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescá beat Ramón Lull...*, p. 55.

*tombar, y aplicat a cosa que gira o tomba, significa 'escala de cargol'. Ara, sumant 'Ramón Lull', pot ser Altura o turó rodó*"<sup>41</sup>.

It is impossible to find a closer identification between Lull and Catalonia: his name derives from the local orography, just like the 'living word' derives from the mountain ranges. All of these examples prove that some critics have used the name of Lull (in the latter case, literally his own name) in order to construct a figure that could satisfy the requirements for the formation of a discourse through which to establish Catalan identity. It goes without saying that, at the same time that these authors were writing, other scholars dedicated themselves to the serious study of Lull and his work from an academic perspective independent of the Church. Most specifically, what is available to modern-day Lullists as model and precursor of contemporary Lullian studies is the work of such figures as Jordi Rubió i Balaguer or the Carreras i Artau brothers; and beyond the Spanish Peninsular, that of Glorieux in France, Frances Yates, Edgar Allison Peers, and Robert Pring-Mill in the United Kingdom, Erhard Platzeck in Germany, etc. At the same time that canons were eulogising the Majorcan martyr and father to Catalonia in song, these scholars were searching for Lull's manuscripts in European libraries and subsequently preparing them for publication grappling with the stimulating complexities of Lull's work. As a result of their labours, the understandable reaction against the un-scientific cases reported here did not move on to a rejection of the genuine Lull who laid hidden beneath hundred of published pages dedicated to his deification as an identity symbol. Asín Palacios —the father of the Spanish Arabic school— for example, openly criticised what he termed 'exaggerated Lullianism' by refusing to posit Lull as the 'father of twentieth-century Catalan thought' because, in his opinion, Lull was nothing other than an 'eccentric thirteenth-century mystic' who, furthermore, took his philosophy from the Muslims —a philosophy which is, thereby, hardly Christian.

41. [After having undertaken research on the meaning and etymology of the name Ramón Lull, the expert Catalan Philologist Monsignor Marián Grandía communicated to me via private letter that neither Ramon nor Lull were ever Latin words: "Ramon sounds native to Catalonia, and I believe that it derives from the topography. A man would be called *Ramón* because he lived in a *ramón* or *Puig* [hill or mountain]. *Ramón* is absolutely Catalan, and it derives from the suffix *on* or *o* from *ó-genus* from *ó* inf. and *gigno*, from Hebrew "ganáh", to do, to make, and the Hebrew root 'rum', to be tall. Therefore, in Hebrew and Spanish, it would mean *great height*; and in Catalan *small height*, due to the difference in the use of adjectival properties of 'on' in the respective languages. Lull and, prior to that, clearly Lul derives from the Hebrew 'lul', which means to roll and tumble; and, when applied to things that roll and tumble, it means *spiral staircase*. Thus, the conjunction '*Ramón Lull*' could mean either height or round hill"]. Joan AVINYÓ, *El terciari francescà beat Ramón Lull...*, p. 56.

Between one extreme and the other, authors such as Peers —one of the leading lights in the European revival of twentieth-century Lullian study— are obliged to adopt an unbiased position. As Peer himself states:

An Englishman may perhaps be a suitable person to hold the balance between the *exagerado apasionamiento* of Ruiz, Bové, and others which Sr. Asín attacks, and the latter's own exaggerated reactions against this when he refuses to consider Lull, a *místico anormal del siglo XIII* [eccentric thirteenth-century mystic], as *padre del pensamiento catalán del siglo XX*.<sup>42</sup>

In order to conclude, let us come full circle and return to where we begun. The doubts I expressed towards the positive role that the architects of the cultural Catalan tradition could have as indirect stimulators of the real Lull's knowledge are justified when one looks at some reactions such as that of Asín Palacios. On the contrary, the scholarly trend towards the revindication and recovery of Lull's work runs parallel, somewhat submerged, and irrespective of those texts we have just been reading. In none one of them, as can clearly be show, is a single line from Lull's work cited. Let us recall how Hina expresses in the *Renaixença's* favour that it *s'adona de l'essencial importància que Lull tenia per a la reconstrucció de la cultura catalana —la seva obra filosòfica i no menys poètica, i més que res la seva obra catalana*<sup>43</sup>. But these authors are not interested in Lull's work. We are therefore faced with two difference ways of understanding Lull: one which construes him as philosopher and the author of works in need of (re-)discovery; and the other which posits him as the father, the myth, the monument. Hina's attempt to rehabilitate the task of the 'architects of cultural tradition' is unnecessary from the moment in which it ceased to be construed as a negative task, but rather one circumscribed to its own field and thereby completely distinct from the other, the philological and historical labour. Now is an opportune moment to return to Lowenthal. In 'Fabricating heritage', the author states that fabrication may be a virtue as opposed to a vice for a variety of different reasons; the first is that 'heritage' is not equivalent to 'history':

Heritage should not be confused with history. History seeks to convince by truth, and succumbs to falsehood. Heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error

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42. [exaggerated passion] [father of twentieth-century Catalan thought]. Edgar Allison PEERS, *Ramon Lull. A Biography*, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1929, p. 410.

43. ["takes cognisance of the paramount importance Lull held for the reconstruction of Catalan culture —as much his poetic as his philosophical work and, above all, his Catalan work"]. HORST HINA, "La construcció d'una tradició...", p. 155.

[...]. Heritage uses historical traces and tells historical tales. But these tales and traces are stitched into fables closed to critical scrutiny. Heritage is immune to criticism because it is not erudition but catechism — not checkable fact but credulous allegiance. Heritage is not a testable or even plausible version of our past; it is a declaration of faith in that past [...]. Hence it is futile to vilify heritage as biased. Prejudiced pride in the past is not the sorry upshot of heritage but its essential aim. Heritage attests our identity and affirms our worth [...]. Heritage diverges from history not in being biased but in its view of bias. Historians aim to reduce bias; heritage sanctions and strengthens it.<sup>44</sup>

The labours of the fabricators of Catalan heritage that have sought to mythologize the figure of Lull cannot thereby have a positive influence on the heritage of those historians who study Lull as a historical figure. That influence should not have a negative influence nor should it ‘intrude upon history’, as highlighted by Giuseppe Sergi. They should simply remain as two discrete fields.

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44. David LOWENTHAL, “Fabricating Heritage...”.