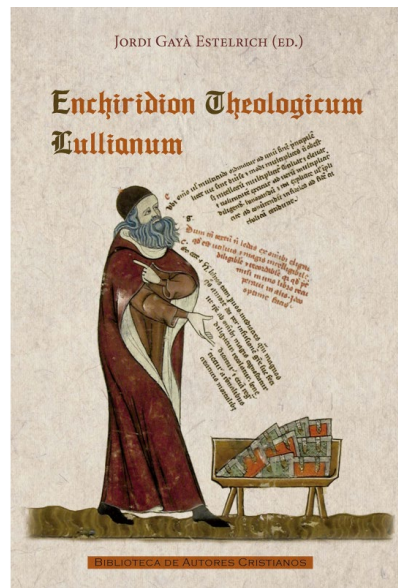


Vatican Presentation of Multilingual Translations of Jordi Gayà's (ed.) *Enchiridion Theologicum Lullianum*. Madrid: BAC, 2024. 1184 pp. ISBN: 9788422023388

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A few ideas will be helpful to specify the importance of this book, which collects Lull's principal work in a substantial sample of more than a thousand pages. The first reason for its utility, and even necessity, is that the Majorcan author—with a complex, prolific, and varied production—can present difficulties for the correct understanding of his thought. Here, however, it is expounded with clarity, explaining key concepts such as “necessary reasons” or “Lullian correlatives”; that is, turning the arduous into the simple through succinct introductions to the major sections. This compendium is completed by chapters of the greatest interest: a Chronology of Ramon Lull's life, a Catalog of his works, and an Index of biblical citations.

Furthermore, this book serves to provide access to the main Lullian bibliography, and to have it at hand, since consulting his books is often problematic in Spain due to the lack of dissemination of his figure for multiple historical causes. In contrast, his personality, in its philosophical and theological dimensions, is not only a universal value but is ideal for our times due to its modern profile. This book undoubtedly aids in this knowledge by providing a bilingual version of the texts, reproducing the original language (Latin or Catalan) alongside its translation into a modern language. These translations—into English, Italian, and Spanish—were presented at the event described below.

On March 18th, the presentation of these translations took place at the **Chiesa di Santa Maria in Traspontina**, on via della Conciliazione, the main street linking St. Peter's Square in the Vatican with the city of Rome. It is an ancient Carmelite sanctuary, although the audience was predominantly Franciscan, as the event was organized by the **Scuola Superiore di Studi Medievali e Franciscani della Pontificia Università Antonianum** along with the **Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis**, the **Escola Lul·lística de Mallorca**, and the **Ateneu Universitari Sant Pacià**. There were also lay attendees, among whom I recognized colleagues such as the Italian medievalist and Lullist professors Annamaria Annichiarico and Marta Romano; naturally, Catalan could also be heard. Additionally, at the beginning, tourists were

millling about the premises, as it is a place worthy of visiting, and toward 3:00 PM, the influx of visitors begins. The building apparently originated from a Roman tomb, once thought to be that of Romulus; the current church was built over an earlier one in the 16th century and boasts a splendid façade with marble columns and a relief of the Virgin and Child above the main door. If white dominates the exterior, the interior—shining under a richly carved vault—is dominated by golden ochre; five chapels in each of the two side naves and a magnificent dome complement the temple. This splendor is underscored by a Byzantine Virgin icon on the Baroque side altar by Carlo Fontana. As a historical counterpoint, I note that it is said that, given its proximity, the artillerymen of Castel di Sant’Angelo came there to pray in times of war. This church—now a parish—is historically linked to education and study, which befits the current event.

In this noble and solemn setting, members of the Curia sat in the front row, presided over by **Cardinal Marcello Semeraro**, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints; the Bishop of Mallorca, **Monsignor Sebastià Taltavull Anglada**; and **Monsignor Armand Puig i Tàrrrech**, president of AVEPRO (the Holy See’s Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties). I am told there was also diplomatic attendance; in any case, the interest that the *Doctor Illuminatus* sparks in Italy today is clearly evident.

Monsignor Armand Puig i Tàrrrech opened the event as moderator, stating that Llull has much to say to today’s theology. Professor Sara Muzzi specified that Lullian apologetics intent is based on what is common to the great religions, so it does not attempt imposition nor opposing different laws but rather contrasting their interpretation.

I will provide a summary of Cardinal Semeraro’s words, venturing to reproduce them with his own accent:

The Enchiridion we present today is not only an act of historical memory but a bridge for contemporary interreligious and academic dialogue. Llull teaches us that reason and faith are not enemies, but wings that allow us to contemplate Truth. I thank the coordinators for their tireless research work and for bringing this treasure of Catalan mysticism and logic to the heart of Christianity, here in Rome. This work will allow future generations of scholars to draw from a wisdom that still speaks to the heart of modern man, a seeker of peace and meaning.

The main idea centers on it being an exponent of a culture seeking a meeting point.

I will next refer to the addresses of professors **Simone Sari** and **Robert Hughes**, translators respectively into Italian and English. Sari recalled the importance of Llull’s stays in Rome and that this act at the Traspontina closed a historical circle. He explained that his work aims to convey the literary beauty of the original texts (in both Catalan and Latin) and how his translation sought to respect the “spiritual musicality” of the author. He also emphasized that the format of the *Enchiridion* (a handbook) is faithful to the spirit of Llull, who always wanted his works to be useful and flexible for mission and dialogue.

Robert Hughes, from the University of Toronto, highlighted the internationality of the work and Lullian technique. He emphasized universality because, thanks to this translation, Llull’s thought will not remain solely within the academic sphere but will become accessible to the Anglo-Saxon and European world. Regarding the Lullian Art (*Ars*) as a common language, he clarified that it was a system not just for theologians, but a tool that, as a “universal language”, aimed to convince the interlocutor without violence, based on reason.

This was followed by a speech from **Vincenzo Battaglia**: “Raimondo Lullo, maestro di teología: tra conoscenza, esperienza e contemplazione”, Professor Emeritus at the Antonianum, who focused especially on Marian piety and the “exercise of love,” following the masterful mystical contribution of the *Book of the Friend and the Beloved*.

The event was closed by the prelate of the Diocese of Mallorca, who sees in Lull a fertile source of inspiration due to his human and intellectual dimension, but above all, his Christian and spiritual one, “espressione di una fede profonda nel Dio che è amore.”

In an interview with “Vatican News” on Vatican Radio, Cardinal Semeraro later highlighted that Lull interests many fields (mysticism, linguistics, etc.) as a multifaceted author. His approach to the “other”, understood after the Second Vatican Council, is not based on imposition but deference; he cited a key work in this regard: the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*. He thus defines Lull as “the man of dialogue” and interreligious dialogue. As a personal peculiarity, he considers Lull’s conversion to Christianity to be a conversion to the truth. He also noted that, situated fully in a “time of confrontation” due to the disputes of his moment, Lull deeply believed in the Christian proposal based on respect, his attitude being characterized by openness and communication, corresponding to the open geographical setting of the Mediterranean. The program, in a report by Eugenio Murrari, was titled: “Raimundo Lullo, il teologo del dialogo e della gentilezza.”

For his part, Monsignor Puig i Tàrrach, also interviewed, places Lull among a group of four great thinkers of his era (13th and 14th centuries): St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, and Duns Scotus. He further stressed Lull’s peculiar missionary and apostolic character, understanding that Christianity must reach everyone because it contains the truth, but never in a coercive manner—notes that may have been jarring in previous eras but are ideal for our current global world.

The report by Eugenio Murrari, titled “Raimondo Lullo, il teologo del dialogo e della gentilezza”, is an ideal slogan for the image of our great international philosopher and theologian.

Below, I reproduce my own intervention as a recognition of those who collaborated in the creation of the book, as it also contained an informative synopsis of what is being done in our lands regarding the great Mallorcan philosopher, largely thanks to the Spanish language, which facilitates and expands his reach:

Regarding the Spanish translation of Jordi Gayà’s *Enchiridion Lullianum*, I will address two aspects. The first concerns its realization, which involves the translation team. In this case, I considered that, besides mastery of Latin and familiarity with Catalan, Spanish was required as a natural element. And that, beyond knowing the medieval world, sensitivity toward Lull was required, as his depth occasionally brings obscurity.

Accordingly, my five collaborators possessed high specific weight in Lull studies. Thus, the Hispanist and Latinist **Antonio Cortijo**—professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara—had brought together Spanish, Latin, and Catalan versions in his edition of *De homine*. And **Celia López Alcalde**, who published her thesis on the *Liber nouus de anima rationali* within the ‘Raimundi Opera Latina’ (the ROL), had translated it into Spanish in *El nuevo libro del alma racional*. She is responsible for the title *Los mundos de Ramón Lull en las lenguas de hoy* for an anthology in four languages, including Basque, which contains Marian poetry translated into Italian by Simone Sari.

In addition to being experienced translators, they were of proven efficiency, as is the case with **Matilde Conde**, a researcher at the CSIC, who was the primary

aid in the first Spanish version of the *Book of Contemplation on God* and a pioneer with the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* in the BAC (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos). She is currently translating the *Book of Santa Maria*.

With **José Higuera Rubio**—whose thesis focuses on the *Art* from a philosophical standpoint—the formulation of terminology was guaranteed. I should add that during the pandemic, he presented our *Book of Contemplation* online from the University of Porto with a contribution we published in the *Revista de Llenguas y Literatures Catalana, Gallega y Vasca* of my university, UNED; a journal with an occasional Lullian section.

For the mystical pages—few but very notable—I turned to the deeply Mallorcan poet **Jaume Galmés**, a translator of poetry with meticulous rigor between Spanish, French, and German.

However, I always prioritized that they be good connoisseurs of Lull. For this basic requirement, without intent of presumption, I venture to provide a personal detail: in the diocesan investigation for the Cause of Canonization of the Jesuit Francisco Butiñá, I was appointed official translator of the texts in the vernacular—in my view—not for having translated one of his works, but for my knowledge; he was the subject of my doctoral thesis as a historical personality of the *Renaixença* cultural movement, previously unknown as a literary author.

Thus, besides the tasks of revision and conjunction, given my experience of working for some 30 years on Lullian texts, I reserved the Catalan ones for myself, conscious—as a Romanist and medievalist—of the complexity of medieval Catalan. Having already translated some of the most emblematic medieval Catalan authors—besides Lull, Bernat Metge and James I (the latter also in the first modern version)—I can truly appreciate the emergence of Lull. Thanks to his enormous vitality, creative capacity, and flexibility, after his contribution, the Catalan language—which he already knew from the Chancery—deployed its articulating gears, becoming ductile.

On the other hand, I note the variety of my collaborators, perhaps typical of my academic institution, the UNED, which has allowed me to project Lull such that his Lullian verses appear in studies of Comparative Metrics with Spanish and Basque; or in the bilingual edition *Cuatro obras de Lull*, where **Francesca Chimento**, a PhD in Lull studies, worked with *Liber Natalis*, which thus appeared in Spanish for the first time. The *Phantasticus* was also a premiere, by **Carmen Teresa Pabón**, who is now translating the *Dispute between Faith and Understanding*.

Likewise, the numerous pages dedicated to Lull in the volume *Literatura catalana* regarding the Middle Ages are in Spanish; the latest edition was coordinated with my successor, **Josep Ysern**, who leads the European Master's program, which is unique in bringing together Iberian literatures. Following his postgraduate degree, **Dr. Ilias Oikonomopoulos**, a professor at the Kapodistrian University in Athens, dedicated a chapter to Lull in his recent book *Pluralidad y resonancias en la península Ibérica*.

Also through Spanish—without omitting Catalan—Lull has been introduced to the Americas in our day. In the United States, through the virtual space *eHumanista*, a high-audience academic journal founded by Antonio Cortijo, which since 2012 has branched into *eHumanista/IVITRA*, dedicated to the Crown of Aragon and co-directed by Vicent Martines and myself; spaces where Lull is the subject of monographs. In Brazil, **Ricardo da Costa** co-directs a

doctoral thesis on the *Book of Contemplation*, and they use the Spanish translation; Da Costa himself has, among other works, translated the *Book of Wonders* into Portuguese. He also gathers Lullian works in the virtual journal *Mirabilia Journal* and *Mirabilia Med/Trans*. Vicent Martines is responsible for the IVITRA collection at the Dutch publishing house **John Benjamins**, which includes multiple editions in Spanish, such as the *Contemporary Life* and the *Book of the Order of Chivalry* by **Antonio Cortijo Ocaña** (the latter, by the end of 2025, had 30 reviews and was registered in 1,329 university libraries).

To this sample of Lullian presence in the Spanish language, it should be added that an original *Book of Quotes* by *Ramon Llull* is currently in press by the international publisher **Peter Lang**, with contributions from 14 Lullists, indicating Sources and Keywords. Also pending is a selection of the most significant passages from the *Book of Contemplation*; given its size, we have reduced it to 5%, which in a bilingual edition amounts to about 200 pages.

I note that my focus on Spanish, in this projection as a platform for Lullian texts, confirms the language of use as a privileged vehicle of communication; a Lullian idea par excellence, anticipated by the *Book of the Gentile* and ratified by this event.

Now, after the allusion to its international impact, I move to the second point of my intervention: Lullian editions in Spanish. First, the publishing house of the Spanish Episcopal Conference has translated the longest narrative works: *Blanquerna*, which reproduces the 1948 translation by Lullist **Miquel Batllori**, and the *Book of Wonders*. For the latter, I counted on members of the “Félix” Research Group, such as **Alexander Fidora**, having **Fernando Domínguez Reboiras** as co-editor. This Lullist has translated the *Book of the Friend and the Beloved* into Galician and is the author of two fundamental books: *El mejor libro del mundo* and *Soy de libros trovador*.

Also from Madrid is the **Palas Atenea** publishing house, led by Latinist **Matilde Rovira**, with seven books by Llull, including the three volumes of the *Book of Contemplation*. This edition was sponsored by **ISIC-IVITRA** at the University of Alicante. These institutions published the *Book of the Order of Chivalry* with the **Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona**, facing the translation with the 1901 facsimile by Father Antoni Ramon Pascual.

In Madrid, we could also recall the Catalan Government’s cultural center, “**Blanquerna**,” which has hosted reading seminars—Llull among them. And the **Sindéresis** publishing house has several books. The most extensive, with over a thousand pages and 66 collaborations, is *Ramon Llull i els lul·listes* (its coordinator, **Rafael Ramis**, organized the last congress on Llull in Mallorca).

I will briefly cite the main collections in Catalan-speaking lands: **Obrador Edèndum** publishes his Latin texts rendered into Catalan, and the “**Nova Edició de les Obres de Ramon Llull**” (NEORL) offers editions of the highest solvency. Mention should also be made of the gigantic edition *Ramon Llull: vida i obres* by Lullist **Pere Villalba**.

To conclude, it is right to extend this vision to history, as Llull took root early in the Crown of Castile in medieval versions. His influence was present in the evangelization of the New Continent and caught on with a humanist like **Cisneros**. During the era of the Catholic Monarchs and Philip II, chairs of Lullism were instituted in Spain.

Finally, I will specify this reception by going back four centuries and citing a conqueror, **Alonso de Zepeda**, translator of the *Tree of Science*: “The Spaniard

Raimundo, in these centuries known by few but persecuted by many, not for the demerits of his life nor the errors of his doctrine, but for being ignored. (...) Nevertheless, the portentousness of his knowledge and virtues could, and can, instruct and teach.” (Brussels, 1663)

This reflection is fulfilled in the *Enchiridion*, making its modernity evident. It begins precisely with a passage from the *Phantasticus*, defending common interests over private ones, which is key to the nature of Europe. I also take up the concept of *homificar* (to “humanize”), essential today in our dehumanized society.

I add, finally, that these translations should be happily celebrated. And I hope they are disseminated in virtual fashion, as befits our era, to multiply their benefit; given that in the Americas, a renowned Lullist like **Esteve Jaulent** often complains that thick books rarely reach them.

In Rome, I concluded with my gratitude, and I can comment that the entire event fitted naturally within the title announced in the Italian program: “La circolarità plurilingüe della teologia di Raimundo Lullo.” A trait endorsed in a manner as solemn as it was intimate in the Vatican itself.