

The Crown of Aragon

A Singular Mediterranean Empire

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Language: From the Countryside to the Royal Court

Lola Badia and Isabel Grifoll

1 The Scholastic Culture: Organisation and Dissemination of Knowledge (Thirteenth–Fourteenth Centuries). The Jewish Culture

Literate Catalans in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries became users of the university culture and scholasticism.¹ The most active sector of the Church in the thirteenth century was the mendicant orders, who lived in the cities, and were dedicated to spreading the faith and fighting heresy. The Franciscans settled in the Crown of Aragon during the lifetime of Saint Francis of Assisi (1182–1226). Since Peter de Ribagorza, uncle to king Peter the Cerimonious joined the Franciscans in 1358, they were highly esteemed by the royal house, as they had been in the early fourteenth century by the Majorcan royal branch. The Catalan Franciscans were trained in the *studia generalia* the order had in Barcelona, Lleida, Valencia and the City of Majorca and also travelled to the leading European universities.²

The order underwent internal tensions between the spiritual and conventual tendencies; the controversial postures of the former were very popular among some lay sectors in Catalonia, like the Tertiary Franciscans and the Beguins.³ The Franciscans spread a very fervent piety, centred on the human figures of Christ and the Mother of God, that had many Catalan adepts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, especially when they distinguished themselves in the defence of the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

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- 1 Eusebi Colomer, *El pensament als Països Catalans durant l'Edat Mitjana i el Renaixement* (Barcelona, 1997), pp. 11–84. Essential documentary collections: Antoni Rubió i Lluch, *Documents per l'història de cultura catalana mig-aval*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1908–1921); Martí de Barcelona, “La cultura catalana durant el regnat de Jaume II,” *Estudios Franciscanos* 91 (1990), 213–95; Martí de Barcelona, “La cultura catalana durant el regnat de Jaume II,” *Estudios Franciscanos* 92 (1991), 127–245 and 384–492; Jocelyn N. Hillgarth, *Readers and Books in Majorca (1229–1550)*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1991).
 - 2 Jill Webster, *Els Menorets. The Franciscan Friars in the Realms of Aragon. From St. Francis to the Black Death* (Toronto, 1993); José Pou, *Visionarios, beguinos y fraticelos catalanes (siglos XIII–XIV)*, ed. Albert Hauf, 2nd ed. (Alicante, 1996).
 - 3 Joan Cuscó, *Els beguins: l'heretgia a la Catalunya medieval* (Barcelona, 2005); Josep Perarnau, “Beguins de Vilafranca del Penedès davant el tribunal d'Inquisició (1345–1346): de captaires a banquers?,” *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 28 (2009), 7–210.

Saint Dominic (1170–1221) founded a community consecrated to eradicating the Albigensian heresy in Languedoc that evolved into a powerful religious order led by the Catalan Saint Raymond of Pennafort (1185–1275). Pennafort, advisor to James I, compiled the *Decretals* of Pope Gregory IX and a *Summa poenitentialis*, which became a university textbook.⁴ The Dominicans specialised in intellectual militancy in favour of orthodoxy, through university teaching, preaching and also the court of the inquisition, designed to preserve the purity of the faith. Nicolau Eimeric (1320–1399), a Dominican from Girona, stood out in this task.⁵ In contrast, another Catalan Dominican, Ramon Martí (1230–1284), who studied in Paris with Saint Thomas and taught in the convent of Santa Caterina in Barcelona, studied Hebrew to be able to fight Judaism from a solid base of knowledge.⁶

All the cities and the most of the towns in the Crown of Aragon had Dominican convents from the 1220s, and these were centres of theological teaching, and sometimes for a secular public, in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Catalan cathedrals also had chairs of theology run by preaching friars. The Catalan kings and outstanding men of the fourteenth century surrounded themselves with Dominican intellectuals whose knowledge was useful beyond the spiritual terrain. Their willingness to fulfil the commissions they received was part of the tactics of the order to preserve orthodoxy. Thus, they were in demand as translators of prestigious Latin works and as historians: Antoni Canals translated Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Petrarch and Pere Marsili transformed the *Llibre dels fets* by James I into a Latin chronicle in the times of James II.⁷

The monarchy decided to officialise the culture of the universities in Catalonia. In 1300, James II (1291–1327) promoted the founding of a centre for higher studies in the city of Lleida. By the act founding the Catalan monarch showed that they wanted to avoid their subjects from having to seek knowledge abroad: the new faculties of arts, medicine, law and theology had to supply the country with a home-grown educated elite, comparable to those coming out of Paris, Oxford or Bologna. The University of Lleida took a long time to reach

4 Fernando Valls, *San Ramón de Penyafort* (Barcelona, 1979); Ramon de Penyafort, *Summa de penitència, cartes i documents*, ed. Llorenç Galmés, Jaume Fàbregas (Barcelona, 1999); Josep M. Mas, *Ramon de Penyafort* (Barcelona, 2000).

5 Jaume de Puig, "La 'Fascinatio Lullistarum' de Nicolau Eimeric. Edició i estudi," *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 3 (1984), 29–58; Jaume de Puig, "El 'Dialogus contra lullistas' de Nicolau Eimeric. Edició i estudi," *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 19 (2000), 7–296.

6 Colomer, *El pensament*, pp. 181–252.

7 See the entries corresponding to: Pilar Gudayol, Montserrat Bacardí, *Diccionari de la Traducció Catalana* (Vic, 2011), and *Translat. Traduccions al català medieval fins a 1500*, <<http://www.translatdb.narpan.net/>>.

full capacity and never managed to absorb all the Catalan-Aragonese students, who continued travelling abroad throughout the Middle Ages. The new foundation's scarcity of financial resources—especially at first, competition from the universities of Montpellier and Toulouse, the dynamism of the studies in the Franciscan and Dominican convents and the municipal initiatives, undermined the academic leadership of the University of Lleida. However, it continued to fulfil its role and adapted to the innovations of the fifteenth century with a chair of rhetoric, despite the appearance of other universities in Perpignan (1349), Huesca (1354), Girona (1446), Barcelona (1450), Saragossa (1474) and the City of Majorca (1483).⁸

Although the Muslim population of Majorca did not disappear after the Christian occupation, one cannot talk about an independent Islamic social life on the island. This was not the case in the Kingdom of Valencia, where the Muslim population remained in the rural areas under the new Christian owners from the mid-thirteenth century until their expulsion in 1609, and with a progressive increase in the pressure to assimilate. The Muslim kingdoms' own pre-Christian culture was not part of the Catalan political field; the exile of the educated minorities after James I seized Valencia left the rural population in the Kingdom of Valencia in a state of absolute poverty regarding knowledge and lettered culture, so that the only written evidence that has been passed down are formulae for prayers and elementary legal texts (*Llibre de la çuna e xara dels moros*).⁹

Prior to the anti-Jewish riots of 1391, the prelude to their expulsion in 1492, the majority of Catalan towns had a Jewish community (*call* as a neighbourhood belonging to a legal community or *aljama*). There is documentary evidence of an intense cultural life in Hebrew in the Catalan *aljamas* from the eleventh century.¹⁰ The linguistic hurdle explains both the isolation and value that establishing cultural bridges acquired through translation. In the twelfth century, there was a mass exile of educated Jews from Moorish Andalusia to

8 Cándido J. Ajo, *Historia de las Universidades Hispánicas*, 11 vols. (Madrid, 1957–1979); Josep Lladonosa, *L'Estudi General de Lleida de 1430 a 1524* (Barcelona, 1970); Jordi Rubió, Antonio de la Torre, *Documentos para la historia de la Universidad de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1971).

9 Carmen Barceló, ed., *Llibre de la çuna e xara dels moros* (Cordoba, 1989); Dolors Bramon, *De quan érem o no musulmans: textos del 713 al 1010: continuació de l'obra de J. M. Millàs i Vallicrosa* (Barcelona, 2000); Pere Balaña, *L'Islam i Catalunya, segles VIII–XII*, 2nd. ed. (Barcelona, 2002); Josep Giralt, Pere Balaña, eds., *Written jewels: arabic bibliographical sources of Catalonia* (Barcelona, 2002).

10 David Romano, "Les juifs de la Couronne d'Aragon avant 1391," *Révue des Études Juives* 141/1–2 (1982), 169–82; David Romano, *Judíos al servicio de Pedro el Grande de Aragón (1276–1285)* (Barcelona, 1983); Mariona Companys, ed., *La Catalunya judía* (Barcelona, 2002).

the north of the Peninsula. Those who settled in Toledo led the process of translating the scientific and medical works that transformed thirteenth-century European culture. Those who were taken in by the Catalan and Occitanian Jewish communities were the powerhouse behind the great cultural splendour of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹¹ The most accessible product of this outburst was the lyrics, written in Hebrew rhyming prose (*maqama*) and later, in Catalan, and that was kept alive until the fifteenth century. Some of the poets were Zerachiah ben Issac ha-Levi of Girona, from the mid-twelfth century, Moses ben Nahman (Bonastruc de Porta), born in Girona in 1194, Abraham ben Hasday, who lived in Barcelona between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Messulam ben Solomon de Piera, who lived in Girona towards the end of the 13th, Moses Natan, from Tarrega, 1290–1360; Solomon ben Messulam de Piera, who died in 1420 and Solomon Bonafed, Barcelona, 1370–1445.¹²

The so-called Cabalistic school of Girona consisted of a group of Hebrew writings that interpreted the Scripture from a symbolic system suggested by the teachings of the Occitanian Jew, Isaac the Blind. The Cabalists were opposed to rationalism, as applied to the biblical theology by Maimonides, and speculated from the allegorical value of the letters (*sefirot*). The founder of the thirteenth-century Girona group was Aser ben David, Isaac the Blind's nephew, followed by the poets from his city mentioned above: Moses ben Nahman was the most outstanding intellectual. Regarding the cultural life of the other *aljamas*, it should be borne in mind that, in Barcelona, besides Yehuda al-Harizi (d. 1225), who wrote in verse, Abraham bar Hiyya, active in the second third of the twelfth century, translated various Arab works into Hebrew and also collaborated with Plato Tiburtinus to produce Latin versions of the texts he dealt with. Abraham bar Hiyya took an interest in the mathematical and astronomical sciences and exegesis. In contrast, as well as writing verses, Abraham ben Hasday politicised in favour of Maimonides, some of whose works he translated from Arab to Hebrew. Hasday did *Ben ha-Melek we-ha-Nazir* (*El príncep i el monjo / The prince and the monk*), a beautiful Hebrew adaptation of the Hindustani legend of Barlaam and Josaphat, (sanctified by the Church), very close to the exemplary literature that Ramon Llull practiced in his *Blanquerna*. In this same line, Josef ben Meir ibn Sabara, who was related to Barcelonan circles in the second half of the twelfth century, had written the *Séfer shaahuim* (*Llibre d'ensenyaments delectables / Book of Delights*), a set of fifteen fables and

11 Carmen Caballero, "Las lenguas científicas de las comunidades judías catalanas en la baja Edad Media," in *El saber i les llengües vernacles a l'època de Lull i Eiximenis*, eds. Anna Alberni, Lola Badia, Lluís Cifuentes, Alexander Fidora (Barcelona, 2012), pp. 331–45.

12 Jaume Riera, *Cants de noces dels jueus catalans* (Barcelona, 1974); Eduard Feliu, *Poemes hebraics de jueus catalans (segles XI–XV)* (Barcelona, 1976).

tales from various origins and teaching purposes, linked by a shared narrative framework. This model closely followed that of the *Disciplina clericalis*, written in Latin by the Jew from Huesca, Petrus Alfonsi, after he converted to Christianity in 1106.¹³

The restrictive regulations imposed by the Christians derived into the ever-stricter directives of the Councils: the III Lateran, in 1179, prescribed separate neighbourhoods and the IV Lateran, in 1215, imposed the wearing of a badge on clothing. At the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Jewish communities, harassed and weakened, showed the first symptoms of cultural colonisation.¹⁴ The relations between Jews and Christians in the Crown of Aragon had been mainly economic. The Jews were esteemed and protected by the Catalan-Aragonese kings because they were useful as a source of loans, medicine and translation. The Jews were never citizens of any town, but rather “Jews of the king”, as they paid their taxes directly to the Crown. Until the later stages of the reign of Peter the Great (d. 1285), there were Jews working as high servants in the court. When this prerogative came to an end, it also signalled the end of the influence of the great Jewish families, like the Ravaya, Portella, Abinafia, Abenmenassé, Alcostantíní or La Cavalleria families. Without having to stop being Jewish, between 1291 and 1298, the Barcelonan Jafudà Bonsenyor, a member of a family linked to the crown, finished a compilation of moral maxims in Catalan for James II: the *Llibre de paraules e dits de savis e filòsofs*.¹⁵

From the mid-thirteenth century, the religious controversy spread, and towards the end of the fourteenth, there was a rise in baptisms, generally forced.

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- 13 Abraam bar Hiia, *Llibre revelador (Meguil-lat Hamegal-lè)*, eds. Juli Guttmann, Josep Millàs Vallicrosa, (Barcelona, 1929); Abraam bar Hiia, *Llibre de geometria (Hibbur hameix-ihà uehatixbòret)*, eds. Juli Guttmann, Josep Millàs Vallicrosa (Barcelona, 1931); Josep Ben Meir ibn Sabara, *Llibre densenyaments delectables Sèfer Xaaixuim*, ed. Ignasi González Llubera (Barcelona, 1931); Abraham ben Semuel ha-Levi ibn Hasday, *El Príncep i el Monjo*, ed. Tessa Calders (Sabadell, 1987); María Jesús Lacarra, ed., *Estudios sobre Pedro Alfonso de Huesca* (Huesca, 1996); Moshe Idel, *Estudios sobre la Cábala en Cataluña* (Barcelona, 2017).
- 14 Luis García Ballester, Lola Ferré, Eduard Feliu, “Jewish appreciation of fourteenth-century scholastic medicine,” *Osiris* 6/2 [Dossier “Renaissance medical learning: evolution of a tradition,” Michael R. McVaugh, Nancy G. Siraisi, eds.] (1990), 85–117; Vicent Ferrer, *Quaestio de unitate universalis—Ma’amar nikhbad ba-kolel*, eds. Alexander Fidora, Mauro Zonta (Santa Coloma de Queralt, 2012); Harvey Hames, “Com i perquè l’*Ars brevis* es va traduir a l’hebreu,” *Studia Lulliana* 51 (2011), 3–23.
- 15 Jafudà Bonsenyor, *Libro de las palabras y dichos de sabios i filósofos*, ed. José Ramon Magdalena Nom de Déu (Barcelona, 1990). In contrast, the translation of a medical work by Albucassis that the king commissioned from Jafuda has been lost. See: Lluís Cifuentes, *La ciència en català a l’Edat Mitjana i al Renaixement*, 2nd ed. (Barcelona, 2006), p. 127.

False conversions became a target of persecution with the introduction of the Castilian inquisition into Catalonia (1483). Two significant events in the religious debate in the medieval Crown of Aragon were the Disputations of Barcelona (1263) and Tortosa (1413–1414). In 1263, Moses ben Nahman, the Kabbalist from Girona, debated with the Dominican convert Pau Cristià before James I: the discussion ended in a draw. In contrast, the Disputation of Tortosa, called by Pope Benedict XIII, was aimed at discrediting the rabbis intellectually and reinforcing the anti-Jewish stereotypes that were stoking up aggression.¹⁶

2 Ramon Llull and Arnau de Vilanova

Ramon Llull (1232–1316) was the son of well-off Catalan settlers who moved to Majorca after the island was conquered by James I in 1229.¹⁷ At the age of thirty, he broke from life at court, the troubadour poetry and his wife and children to dedicate himself to contemplation and spreading the faith. Llull's apostolic and reforming project, his Art, sought the approval of the Church and required the support of the Catalan-Aragonese and French monarchies. His first success was the founding of a school of Franciscan missionaries at Miramar in 1276, financed by the King of Majorca. The desire to introduce the Art into the university led Ramon to Paris (1287–1289), where he was not understood by the professionals of the scholastics. Llull tirelessly worked on his intellectual and apostolic tasks in different places in Italy, the Crown of Aragon and North Africa, with the addition of a voyage to Cyprus. His work was approved by the Ecumenical Council of Vienne 1311. Despite that, he retired to Tunis, disappointed with the princes and wise Christians and dedicated himself to drafting his last writings. Llull died in his eighties and is buried on Majorca.

Ramon Llull practiced a pragmatic multi-lingualism, because he was a self-taught layman who wrote not only thinking in a university readership. The *Llibre de contemplació en Déu* (1271–1272), his enormous first work,

16 Jaume Riera, Eduard Feliu, eds., *Disputa de Barcelona de 1263 entre mestre Mossé de Girona i fra Pau Cristià* (Barcelona, 1985); Antonio Pacios, ed., *La Disputa de Tortosa*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1957); Jaume Riera, "Literatura antijueva en català," *Estudi General* 9 (1989), 215–36.

17 Alexander Fidora, Josep E. Rubio, ed. *Raimundus Lullus. An Introduction to His Life, Works and Thought* (Turnhout 2008); Anthony Bonner, ed., *Selected Works of Ramon Llull*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1985); website: <<http://quisestlullus.narpan.net/index.html>>; Lola Badia, Joan Santanach, Albert Soler, *Ramon Llull as a Vernacular Writer. Communicating a New Kind of Knowledge* (Woodbridge, 2016).

prior to the formulation of the Art, was originally written in Arab and then translated into Catalan and Latin.¹⁸ Besides Catalan, some of Llull's works have Occitanian, Italian, French and Castilian versions; most have Latin text, often with many manuscripts.¹⁹

Llull's Art revolves around the optimum formulation of a rational tool, able to show (in the sense of finding, discovering, revealing) the truth, in other words, the God of the Trinity and the Incarnation, who saves man and gives reason to the world.²⁰ The Arts of the first phase or quaternary (1274–1289) are the *Art abreujada d'atrobare veritat* (1274) and *Art demostrativa* (1283); the Arts of the second phase or ternary (1290–1308) culminate with the *Ars brevis* (1308) and the *Ars generalis ultima* (1305–1308). The Llullian system has a set of general principles (shown in figure A) and a set of relative principles (figure T), which are governed by rules of interrelation and action. Behind these elements, there is a network of correlative principles, which express the ternary deployment of the being (agent, patient, action). On the other hand, the Arts adapts to the powers of the human soul (understanding, will and memory); here this can be applied to the acquisition of knowledge, a love of God and retention by memory. The universal nature of the Art is based on the metaphysical dimension of all existing beings, which Llull learned from the Augustinism of the Franciscan school. However, the Art also reinterpreted and reworked the Aristotelian legacy in the field of logic and natural philosophy with results that did not always coincide with those of the Scholastic philosophy. A conventional science reformulated "artistically" became "new", so that Llull planned a personal reform for theology, philosophy, logic, medicine, astronomy, law, geometry and rhetoric.²¹

Notable among monographs for a lay public are the *Doctrina pueril*, for the teaching of children, the *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*, for knights, and the *Llibre de gentil i dels tres savis*, on religious controversy. Some books lead the reader to the Art through examples organised in novel form, like the *Romanç d'Evast e*

18 Ramon Llull wrote over two hundred and fifty works. Currently these books are organised in specific series: The *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina (ROL)* began with: *Estudios Lulianos*, 1–5 vols. (Palma of Majorca, 1957–1960); followed by: *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Medievals*, 6–32 vols. (Turnhout, 1975–), <http://www.corpuschristianorum.org/series/cccm_raitmundi_lulli.html>. The Catalan works are in the *Obres Originals de Ramon Llull (ORL)*, 21 vols. (Palma of Majorca, 1906–1950) and the *Nova Edició de les Obres de Ramon Llull (NEORL)*, 14 vols. (Palma of Majorca, 1990–).

19 See: *Base de Dades Ramon Llull (Llull DB)*, <<http://orbita.bib.ub.edu/llull/>>.

20 Anthony Bonner, *The Art and Logic of Ramon Llull. A User's Guide* (Leiden, 2007).

21 Lola Badia, "La ciència a l'obra de Ramon Llull," in *La ciència en la història dels Països Catalans*, eds. Ramon Parés, Joan Vernet, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 2005), 1: 403–42.

de Blaquerna (with the *Llibre d'amic e amat*) and his *Fèlix o Llibre de Meravelles* (with the *Llibre de les bèsties*). Others resort to the lyrical procedures, like the *Desconhort* or the *Cant de Ramon*. Llull also wrote collections of sentences, sermons and treatises on preaching and was the author of dialogues in Latin and Catalan.²² The *Arbre de ciència* is an encyclopaedic version of the Art, abridged with a collection of examples, the *Arbre exemplifical*. Most of Llull's production is only in Latin: the *Liber de significatione* (1304), an artistic semantics; the *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (1305), a presentation of the theory of knowledge; and the *Liber de fine* (1305), a treatise on the crusade. Llull exploited his literary self propagandistically creating his own character as appears in *Vida coetània*, an autobiography dictated in 1311.²³

The early followers of Llull were laymen close to the Franciscan spiritual movements, who were accused of heterodoxy. Soon apocryphal, alchemical, immaculist and Cabalistic writings appeared, inside and outside the Crown of Aragon.²⁴ In the fifteenth century, Lullian philosophical schools were founded on Majorca and in Barcelona, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Spanish crown supported the canonisation of Llull. There was a European philosophical Lullism during the Renaissance and the Baroque.²⁵ Since the nineteenth century, Llull's vernacular work has had an important place in the histories of Catalan language and literature. In the twentieth century, his Latin theological and philosophical production was published and studied and has become part of the medieval Christian cultural legacy.

Arnau de Vilanova (1240–1311) was a doctor to kings and popes and professor at the University of Montpellier.²⁶ He dedicated a medical work, the *Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum*, to James II of Aragon, and the *Medicationis parabolae* to Philip IV of France. He also had an extensive university production, like the *Speculum medicinae*.²⁷ Arnau's theological works, the *Introductio in*

22 Jordi Rubió i Balaguer, *Ramon Llull i el lul·lisme* (Barcelona, 1985); Lola Badia, *Teoria i pràctica de la literatura en Ramon Llull* (Barcelona, 1992); Roger Friedlein, *Der Dialog bei Ramon Llull. Literarische Gestaltung als apologetische Strategie* (Tübingen, 2004); Lola Badia, Joan Santanach, Albert Soler, "Ramon Llull," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (I)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2013), pp. 377–476.

23 Ramon Llull, *A Contemporary Life*, ed. Anthony Bonner (Barcelona, 2010).

24 Michela Pereira, *The Alchemical Corpus Attributed to Raymond Lull* (London, 1989) and the Llull DB: <<http://orbita.bib.ub.edu/llull/>>.

25 See the second volume of: Tomás Carreras, Joaquín Carreras, *Historia de la Filosofía Española. Filosofía cristiana de los siglos XIII al XV*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Barcelona, 2001).

26 Jaume Mensa, "Arnau de Vilanova," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (I)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2013), pp. 476–509.

27 Arnaldi de Villanova, *Opera Medica Omnia*, eds. Jon Arrizabalaga, Luis García-Ballester, J. A. Paniagua, Michael McVaugh (Barcelona, 1975–).

librum Ioachim de semine scripturarum, the *Allocutio super significatione nominis tetragrammaton* and the *Lectura super Apocalypsim*, dealt with controversial themes like the coming of the anti-Christ and evangelical poverty.²⁸ In the *Lliçó de Narbona*, the *Confessió de Barcelona* and the *Informació espiritual*, booklets written in the vernacular, he moved towards the spiritual positions of the Franciscan and the Beguins. Arnau de Vilanova's intellectual profile is that of a doctor-theologist between university science and the critical positions of the religious laymen.²⁹ Like Ramon Llull, Arnau de Vilanova believed that he had received a divine enlightenment that justified his militancy in favour of a revived Christianity and, in his case, in conflict with the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

3 The Catalan-Aragonese Monarchy and the Letters. Historiography. Poetry in the Court

The change of language (from Latin to Catalan) was the foundational act of late-medieval historiography.³⁰ The *Gesta comitum Barchinonensium* were translated into Catalan under the title *Gestes dels comtes de Barcelona i reis d'Aragó* (1268–1270).³¹ James I, probably responsible of the contents of the book, had copies distributed among the main organisms of administration and government, the royal Chancellery and the Council of Barcelona (*Consell de Cent*). Historiographic production moved out of the monastic settings and into the new centres of power.

There was a plethora of historiographic activity during the last third of the thirteenth century. The *Historia de rebus Hispaniae* or *Historia Gothica* (1246), by the archbishop of Toledo, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, had been translated into Aragonese (*Estoria de los godos*, 1252–1253) and Catalan (1266), in a version nowadays lost. A Latin epitome, the *Status Yspanie*, was also made, with elements of Catalan history, and it was translated into Catalan under the title of

28 Josep Perarnau, *L'Alia informatio beguinorum* d'Arnau de Vilanova (Barcelona, 1978); Josep Perarnau, "L'Ars catholicae philosophiae' d'Arnau de Vilanova. Edició i estudi del text," *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 10 (1991), 7–223. Josep Perarnau, "L'Apologia de versutiis' d'Arnau de Vilanova. Edició i estudi; i transcripció del *Tractatus quidam in quo respondetur objectionibus*," *Arxiu de textos Catalans Antics* 20 (2001), 7–348; Arnaldi de Villanova, *Opera Theologica Omnia*, ed. Josep Perarnau (Barcelona, 2004–).

29 Joseph Ziegler, *Medicine and Religion c.1300. The Case of Arnau de Vilanova* (Oxford, 1998).

30 An overview in: Stefano Maria Cingolani, *La memòria dels reis: Les quatre grans cròniques* (Barcelona, 2006); Jaume Aurell, *Authoring the Past: History, Autobiography, and Politics in Medieval Catalonia* (Chicago, 2012).

31 *Gestes dels comtes de Barcelona i reis d'Aragó*, ed. Stefano Maria Cingolani (Valencia, 2008).

Crònica d'Espanya (1277–1280).³² The conquests of Majorca and Valencia stoked interest for the idea of Hispania and how to connect this to the Carolingian past of Catalonia. The *Llibre dels reis* (1277–1278), the first universal chronicle was written, with legendary pieces of enormous later fortune (Trojan origins and founding of Barcelona by Hercules; Otger Cataló, the eponymous hero of Catalonia).³³ Other, fragmentary, texts featured Crown Prince Peter of Aragon, the *Llibre de l'infant en Pere* (1276–1286) and the *Crònica del rei Pere* (1285), attributed to Galceran de Tous. The *Gesta comitum Barchinone et regum Aragonie* were continued (1288–1291) in the reign of Peter the Great.³⁴

James I dictated the *Llibre dels fets* towards the end of his life (1270–1276),³⁵ which does not mean that he did not conceive the idea earlier. The work is the monarch's spiritual “will” and government. Act of gratitude to God (“faith”) and testimony that the royal function had been employed as an instrument of divine will (“works”). The king presents himself as a champion of the faith in the fight against the Muslims (conquests of Majorca, Valencia and Murcia) and exercising justice, guaranteeing peace and observance of the law among his subjects. The providentialism of the discourse, already seen in the episode of the miraculous birth of the king, is a manifestation of this theology and teleology of history.

The king relates his own life. Personal memories and historical discourse are shaped in unison in the first person (*Nós*). Despite the difficulties of his childhood and youth, James I had extended the legacy of his ancestors extraordinarily and earned notable international prestige. The awareness of this transcendental role in history and the particular character of the king (“self-made man”), who left nothing to chance,³⁶ explain his personal control of the project, rather than entrusting it to a team of clergymen or secretaries. James I was not interested in the continuity or values of the lineage, but rather placed himself centripetally in the new world he had forged.

James I “narrated” his military deeds and government action to a selected auditorium who listened, entered into dynamic of the narrative and served as prompters, which did not, however, exclude the use of documentation. Some

32 Pere Quer, *La 'Historia i Genealogies d'Espanya': Una adaptació catalana medieval de la història hispànica* (Barcelona, 2008).

33 *Llibre dels reis*, ed. Stefano Maria Cingolani (Valencia, 2008).

34 *Gestes dels comtes de Barcelona i reis d'Aragó. Gesta comitum Barchinone et regum Aragonie*, ed. Stefano M. Cingolani, trans. Robert Álvarez (Santa Coloma de Queralt, 2012).

35 *Llibre dels fets del rei En Jaume*, ed. Jordi Bruguera, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1991); *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon*, trans. Damian J. Smith, Helena Bufferey (Burlington, 2003).

36 Robert I. Burns, “The Spiritual Life of James the Conqueror, King of Aragon-Catalonia, 1208–1276: Portrait and Self-Portrait,” *Catholic Historical Review* 62 (1976), 1–35.

reporters noted down the working sessions to write the *llibre*.³⁷ We do not know the last stage, where the professional writers must have concluded the project. The materials were handed over to the royal archive, for the probable death of the king. James II ordered a Latin version, the *Liber gestorum regis Jacobi* or *Liber gestarum* (1313), from Dominican friar Pere Marsili. The oldest surviving Catalan version (1343) was commissioned by Peter the Ceremonious.

The *Llibre del rei En Pere i dels seus antecessors passats* (1286–1288), by Bernat Desclot (d. 1288), was a decisive turn in Catalan historiography.³⁸ The oral narration by James I gave way to the prose of the chancellery. The author, identified with Bernat Escrivà, was a member of the curia of Peter the Great (1276–1285), for who he filled several administrative posts (justice of the seaport of Valencia, clerk's office of Gandia, royal treasurer). Desclot was not a character in the events he narrated. He came to the events through the documentary sources and reports of eyewitnesses. He can be considered a professional historian.

The first part of the book (chap. 1–73) is aimed at Peter the Great's predecessors. It begins with a legendary introduction (chap. 1–10), which presents the origin of the lineage of the kings of Aragon in the house of Barcelona. Thus, it emphasises the noble and knightly (county) values over the functions or insignia of royalty. Ramon Berenguer IV, who opens and closes the story, is an emblem of this. The dynastic union with Aragon is evoked through the legendary figure of Guillem Ramon de Montcada, an exiled vasall, but loyal to the count. The miraculous engendering of James I erased any reticence about his legitimacy. The courage, bravery and military skill of Peter the Catholic was evident at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), a great victory over the Almohads, which covered up the defeat at Muret (1213). Finally, the good count of Barcelona (a mixture of Ramon Berenguer III and Ramon Berenguer IV) defended the empress of Germany, falsely accused of adultery, in legal combat. In compensation, he received the county of Provence (Peter the Great still claimed the rights to this).

Then it presents the deeds of James I (chap. 11–73). The conquests of Majorca and Valencia are selected, and especially the last stage of his reign, marked by

37 Josep M. Pujol, "The 'Llibre del rei En Jaume': A Matter of Style," in *Historical Literature in Medieval Iberia*, ed. Alan Deyermond (London, 1996), pp. 35–65.

38 Bernat Desclot, *Llibre del rei en Pere*, ed. Stefano Cingolani (Barcelona, 2010); *Chronicle of the reign of King Pedro III of Aragon*, trans. Frank Linley Critchlow (Princeton, 1928); Miquel Coll, *Historiografia* (Barcelona, 1991), pp. 171–270; Stefano Maria Cingolani, *Historiografia, propaganda i comunicació al segle XIII: Bernat Desclot i les dues redaccions de la seva 'Crònica'* (Barcelona, 2006).

the occupation of Murcia (1265–1266), the dissension with Castile and the insurrection of the Saracens of Valencia (1276), because they allow attention to be focussed on Prince Peter. Charles I of Anjou (1246–1285) stands out as the counterpart.

The second part (chap. 74–168) is a detailed report of the reign of Peter the Great, the main purpose of the book. It presents the beginning of his reign; the preparations and war to conquer Sicily (1282–1283); the challenge of Bordeaux with Charles I of Anjou (1283); the invasion of Catalonia by the troops of Philip III of France (1283–1285) and the Catalan victory. Outstanding in this last segment are the pro-French posture adopted by James II of Majorca, the siege of Girona and the war of attrition led by Peter the Great, as well as the naval victories of the fleet commanded by Roger of Lauria.

This historiographic design proposes a model image (*speculum principum*) of Peter the Great, rooted in the lineage of his ancestors, but justified mainly by the contemporary present. The king's heroic and chivalrous values (courage or compassion for the defeated enemy) are magnified, while his leadership and military skills are emphasised. The protagonists of the *roman en prose* (Lancelot or Tristan) lend elements for the literary recreation. The portrait of excellence, marked by chivalrous morality, is projected onto the monarchic institution (*primus inter pares*). The royal attributes (like magnanimity) find their correspondence in the virtues of the vassals (such as loyalty). We witness a legitimation of power based on a harmonious and pacted relation between the king and his subjects. The Courts of Barcelona in 1283 marked a change in the parliamentary system of the Crown of Aragon.

The outward narrative of the chronicler does not equate with objectivity or impartiality. The anti-French and anti-Angevin contents of the chronicle are notable. Charles I of Anjou is a tyrannical prince, who violates rights and commits all sorts of atrocities against the Sicilians. The silence about the actions of the Papacy is significant, as is the veiled criticism of the Catalan Church for its negligence during the French invasion. The chronicle is pro-Ghibelline propaganda for the Crown of Aragon.

Life and literature converged in the *Crònica* by Ramon Muntaner (Peralada, 1265-Ibiza, 1336).³⁹ The author had had an adventurous and busy life, but also, and especially, a fortunate one. Privy purse, soldier and diplomat, he had seen or served five kings of Aragon (from James I to Alfonso the Benign), had

39 Ramon Muntaner, "Crònica," *Les quatre grans Cròniques*. 3. *Crònica de Ramon Muntaner*, ed. Ferran Soldevila (Barcelona, 2011); *The Chronicle of Muntaner*, trans. Lady Goodenough (Nendeln, 1967); *The Catalan Expedition to the East (From the Chronicle of Ramon Muntaner)*, trans. Robert Hughes (Barcelona, 2006).

relations with three kings of Majorca and also Frederick II of Sicily. He participated in the conquest of Minorca (1287) with Alfonso the Liberal, the war in Sicily (1296–1302) under Frederick II of Sicily and against the Anjous in Naples (defence of Messina, c.1300). After the Peace of Caltabellotta (1302), he embarked with the Great Catalan Company (the Almogavars), led by Roger de Flor (c.1268–1305), and who he was procurator and *mestre de ració*, and prepared to fight the Turks in the pay of the Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1258–1332). In 1309, he left the Almogavars, in disagreement and infighting, took the side of Ferdinand of Majorca (c.1278–1316) and returned to Sicily. He took part in the pacification of the island of Djerba and the Kerkennah Islands, and was appointed captain and administrator of Djerba (1311–1313). His final years were spent in the service of James III of Majorca (1324–1349), who, as a child, he had rescued in Catania and taken to Perpignan.

The *Crònica* was written in Xirivella, near Valencia, between 1325 and 1328. Muntaner was aware of having lived a “historic” moment, personally and collectively, and that, he was getting old and was one of the few protagonists still alive, he had the duty to explain it all. The *Crònica* starts from this urgent need to leave a written record of the extraordinary events he had taken part in while serving the House of Aragon. Muntaner, an exceptional witness, in the first person, is the main thread of the discourse. The narrative becomes memoirs.

The *Crònica* covers the historical period from the conception of James I (1207) to the coronation of Alfonso the Benign (1328). The first part (chap. 1–192) narrates events from the reigns of James I and Peter the Great. It evokes his childhood memories of King James when he saw him in the family home in Peralada (1274). The snapshot determines the presentation of an already great king, whose later military campaigns are reported. For Prince Peter, it relates the occupation of Murcia and, then as king, the conquest of Sicily. Muntaner portrays a Sicilian population tyrannised by the Angevins, who are then saved by the messianic figure of Peter the Great. It emphasises the Catalan superiority in warfare, especially naval, and the military skills of the captains (Pere de Queralt, Ramon Marquet and, notably, Roger de Lauria). Despite that, the scheme of the just war, under God’s auspices, which ensured victory, was the plot of the events. God’s wrath fulminated Charles I of Anjou, for his pride and as a tyrant. The defeat of the French army in the invasion of Catalonia was a divine punishment for the misdeeds committed by the invader (arson, looting, massacre of civilians, profanation of places of worship). Divine wrath sent the pestilence that finished off the enemy troops. Muntaner omits everything that could disturb the Catalan-Aragonese harmony (dissension between Peter the Great and James II of Majorca, the discontentment of the Aragonese nobility, a foiled attempt at rebellion in the city of Barcelona).

The second part (chap. 193–270) relates the expedition to Greece and Constantinople. The *Crònica* is, in many cases, the only source of information we have available. The great captains (Berenguer d'Entença, Bernat de Rocafort and Roger de Flor), the Almogavars and Ramon Muntaner himself take turns with the kings of Aragon. The narrative becomes epic through the heroism that characterises those involved and because the machinery of the just and holy war is imposed. The suffering of the Greek population under Turkish despotism was unbearable for Christianity and justified the Catalan-Aragonese attempts to free them. There is total silence about the barbarity of the Almogavars that other historians, like Nicephorus Gregoras (1296–1360) or George Pachymeres (1242–1310), deal with. The murder of Roger de Flor in Adrianople, schemed up by Michael Palaiologos, led to the outbreak of the so-called Catalan Revenge and the consequent infighting for the leadership of the Company. The chronicler abandoned the Almogavars. This section closes with a report about the conquest of the Duchy of Athens.⁴⁰

The last chapters (chap. 271–298) affect James II (1291–1327) and Prince Alfonso. Muntaner inserted the *Sermó* (chap. 272), written in Occitanised verse, in which he gives advice to the king and prince about preparing the expedition to Sardinia.⁴¹ He narrates the Sardinian campaigns (1323–1326), where he seems to have had access to documentary sources (Battle of Lucocisterna), and the entry of the royal standard into Cagliari. The *Crònica* ends with the coronation of Alfonso the Benign and the celebrations for this.

Muntaner, like James I, was a talented narrator. The writing is done from personal records. Memory is recreation (invention). It also has a literary baggage: troubadour poetry, *chansons de geste* (the *Sermó* has to be sung to the tune of *Guy de Nanteuil*) and narrative (*Jaufre*, *Lancelot* in prose). This use helps to transfer the record into writing.

The active presence of Muntaner's "I" claimed proximity to the readers. They had to be made contributors to the story, instructing and teaching them. There is abundant military and political advice in the text. It is the didacticism of experience at the service of the monarchs of Aragon, the main targets of the *Crònica*. Muntaner silenced their disagreements and rivalries, and exhorted them towards the harmony and union of the different branches (example of the bunch of reeds). Writing in favour of an ideology can also correct the historical reality or transform it.

40 Josep Antoni Aguilar, "Les expedicions a Orient i la *Crònica* de Muntaner," *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 49 (2003–2004), 13–76.

41 Maurizio Perugi, *Il 'Sermo' di Ramon Muntaner: La versificazione romanza dalle origini* (Florence, 1975).

Military and commercial expansion across the Mediterranean spread Catalan far beyond the geographic limits of its origins. The family languages of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchs were Aragonese and Catalan. Together with Latin, both were languages of documentary expression, especially from the reign of James II.⁴² The fact that the conquests were undertaken from the interests and with the support of the mercantile sectors, particularly from Barcelona, led the monarchy to favour Catalan as a language of the crown. In the thirteenth century, Catalan spread to the Balearic Islands and the Kingdom of Valencia. In the former territory, the Muslim population was, to a large extent, annihilated, which led to the disappearance of Arab tongues. In the Kingdom of Valencia, the extermination gave way to a policy of pacts and fiscal pressure. The demographic density, deficient technical-military power of the Christian knights and the migratory movement towards the recently occupied lands, made this unworkable. The Arab-speaking nuclei remained for longer, until the expulsion of the so-called Moriscos (1609–1610), although leaving little cultural legacy. On the other hand, the interior of the Kingdom of Valencia was mainly repopulated by the Aragonese nobility, who also brought their own language (nowadays Castilian speaking). Catalan later spread to Sicily. It was the language of the documentation in the chancelleries in Palermo and Messina, and influenced the Southern-Italian dialects. The presence of the language was more notable on Sardinia. A good part of the legal terminology of official Sardinian documentation was Catalan. The community of Alghero still conserves the language nowadays. The Catalan documentation from the Greek duchies was also notable.⁴³ That is why Muntaner could identify any territory of the Catalan-Aragonese crown stating that they spoke the best Catalan language of the world (“*el pus bell catalanesc del món*”).

James I did not promote troubadour patronage. First the French and papal pressures, and years later, the political shift toward the Mediterranean, must have influenced in the king's lack of interest in the poetry of the troubadours. However, Tomier and Palaizi, Bernart Sicart de Maruèjols or Gausbert de Poicibot addressed compositions to him, despite being in full crusade, in which they encouraged him to involve himself in Occitanian affairs. The hopes placed on the young king gave way to disillusionment and bitter criticism of his apathy from Sordel, Bonifaci de Castellana or Bernart de Rovenac. Only the proposed crusade in the East (1269) revived the praise of the troubadours

42 Heinrich Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1908–1922); Stéphane Péquignot, *Au nom du roi: Pratique diplomatique et pouvoir durant le règne de Jacques II d'Aragon (1291–1327)* (Madrid, 2009).

43 Antoni Rubió i Lluch, *Diplomatari de l'Orient català (1301–1409)* (Barcelona, 1947).

(Olivier lo Templier, Guilhem de Mur or Cerverí de Girona). Matieu de Caersi and Cerverí de Girona each composed *planhs* on the king's death (1276).

The situation was very different in the county of Provence, still under the domain of the House of Barcelona with Ramon Berenguer V (1209–1245).⁴⁴ Wandering troubadours like Sordel, Falquet de Romans or Aimeric de Belenoi spent time there. Others, like Bertran de Lamanon, a knight of Catalan origin, became fully integrated into the court in Aix and remained there under the rule of Charles I of Anjou. They contributed to establishing the Capetian administration there, but they also composed *sirventes* against the Angevins (Bonifaci de Castellana, Raimon de Tors).

The most splendid Occitanian courts had disappeared with the crusade. Only those who had remained aside from the war still had poetic activity (Rodez, Narbonne, Foix, Astarac or Comminges). The troubadours were pushed into exile (*faiditz*). Some found refuge in Montpellier, domain of James I, while others, like Paulet de Marselha, moved close to Prince Peter of Aragon.

The court of Peter the Great was an important reference for the troubadours. The king protected them and they (Guilhem Anelier, Guiraut Riquier, At de Mons or Paolo Lanfranchi da Pistoia) dedicated compositions to him, in which the king was invested with courtly values. The troubadours deployed the monarch's anti-Angevin and pro-Ghibelline propaganda, both in Provence and Sicily (Paulet de Marselha, Folquet de Lunel, Cerverí de Girona). Peter the Great participated in an exchange of *coblas* with various troubadours, on the occasion of the French invasion of Catalonia (1285).

Cerverí de Girona (c.1259–c.1285), born in Catalonia, was the most important troubadour of the time.⁴⁵ A professional troubadour, he was linked to Ramon Folc V, Viscount of Cardona (c.1220–1276) at the start of his career, before moving into the service of Peter the Great. His extensive songbook is characterised by its thematic diversity, of genres (*canso*, *alba*, political *sirventes*, moral *vers*), the formal variety (strophic and rhyme schemes) and especially by its experimentalism. With a good knowledge of the contemporary French and Galician-Portuguese poetry, he assimilated particular aspects of these, which he merged with his own tradition, providing a wide range of innovations (*gelo-sesca*, *espingadura*, *viadeira*, *peguesca*). He reflected on the role of the poet and the function of poetry. He was interested in political or courtly pedagogy. He also composed narrative poetry and a book of proverbs in verse (*Verses*

44 Martin Aurell, *La vielle et l'épée: Troubadours et politique en Provence au XIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1989).

45 Martín de Riquer, ed., *Obras completas del trovador Cerverí de Girona* (Barcelona, 1947).

proverbials). For the research between tradition and innovation, Cerverí de Girona would be a reference point for the later Catalan lyrics.⁴⁶

The literary relations between Occitania and Catalonia continued throughout the fourteenth century. However, this was a continuous discontinuity, with slowdowns, changes of scenario, varied interests and new proposals.

Poetry competitions made the links closer. In 1323, the Consistory of Toulouse, a municipal enterprise of university inspiration, was founded with the aim of promoting poetry. Catalan poets took part. The Occitanians Raimon de Cornet (c.1300–1341) or Joan de Castellnou (c.1341–1355) were present in Catalonia. Both were linked to James II's son, Peter of Aragon (1305–1381), Count of Ribagorza and Empuries. The former dedicated the *Doctrinal de trobar* to the prince and the latter, the *Glosari*, treatises on poetics.

There was little poetic activity in the courts of James II and Alfonso the Benign, or in the collateral branches of the lineage (Sicily, Urgell), given the surviving evidence. James II was the author of an allegorical poem about the Church, in the form of a *dansa*, which was glossed in Latin by Arnau de Vilanova. The king commissioned the *Regles de trobar* from Jofre de Foixà (c.1291). Amanieu de Sescas dedicated the *Ensenhamen de la donzela* to him.

The *Cançoneret de Ripoll* (1324–1358) is a collection of eighteen compositions, partly as a reference for the two treatises on poetics copied into the manuscript.⁴⁷ Moral and doctrinal themes dominate, and the *dansa* form, with a complex metre, follows the patterns of Guiraut d'Españha, a troubadour who was active in Angevin Provence. The priest of Bolquera is the most significant voice, Cerverí de Girona the most notable influence. A similar poetic compilation has survived from Castello d'Empuries.⁴⁸ Clerical circles seem to have been a redoubt for preserving the lyrical tradition.

A characteristic of the fourteenth century was the compilation of *chansonniers*. The move from the troubadours to the written register laid the foundations for their conservation, and enabled the tradition, already then considered "historical", to be read and reworked in a critical way. The blooming of poetry in narrative verse (*noves rimades*) was the other distinctive phenomenon. Cultivated in the shared Occitanian-Catalan setting of the previous century (Ramon Vidal de Besalú, Jaufre, *Flamenca*), then, through the use of narrative material or the allegorical form, it was orientated towards the explanation and glossing of themes and motifs of the *canço* (and related genera) of the

46 Miriam Cabré, *Cerverí de Girona and his Poetic Traditions* (London, 1999).

47 Lola Badia, ed., *Poesia catalana del s. XIV: Estudi i edició del 'Cançoneret de Ripoll'* (Barcelona, 1983).

48 Miquel Pujol, ed., *Poesia occitanocatalana de Castelló d'Empúries* (Figueres, 2001).

troubadours. There was no lack of *noves* on the Arthurian theme, like *La faula* by Guillem de Torroella.

These phenomena marked the court literature during the latter decades of Peter the Ceremonious' reign (1336–1387). Jaume and Pere March, Ausiàs March's uncle and father, composed lyrical poetry and *noves rimades*, with a predominance of the allegoric form, the use of citations from troubadours songs and the tendency towards didacticism.

The lyrical poetry underwent a renewal during the reigns of John I (1387–1396) and Martin I (1396–1410). John I's interest in poetry and music, that dated from before he was crowned, encouraged the change. His marriage to Violant of Bar (1380), whose tastes he shared, favoured the arrival of poets, instrumentists and *chansonniers* (Guillaume de Machaut, Oton de Grandson) from the courts in France (Paris, Berry) to the Crown of Aragon. The papal court in Avignon, centre for the spread of religious and profane music, was the other nucleus of expansion. The pontificate of the Aragonese Benedict XIII, who John I and Martin I swore allegiance to, benefited the fluidity of contacts. The court in Foix, with Gaston Phoebus, was a way of introducing the *ars subtilior*.

French influence, so important in music and the poetic genres (*virelai, rondeux, ballade, lai*), and in the subject matter (*tristesse, Fortune*), cannot be separated from the Italian contribution, favoured by years of political and commercial contacts between the Crown of Aragon and the Italian republics. Dante Alighieri's works (*rime petrose, Vita nuova, Commedia*) and the poets of the *stil nuovo* arrived. The new modes also provoked a renewed interest in the troubadours, now accessible through the written register. The rereading of the troubadours in the light of the expressive novelties and contents laid the foundations of the Catalan own lyrical tradition, that was felt to be linked to the troubadouresque origins, but also distanced and overcome, as shown by the *Cançoner Vega-Aguiló*, a compilation of the poets active at the time, that left little margin for copying the "old ones". The swing between tradition and innovation explains both the conservation of traditional genres (*dansa, escondit*) and the novelties (*balada, lai*), particularly the hybrid forms, the combinatorics and experimentalism. The language of the poetry continued to be linked to troubadouresque Occitan. It was a language that had to be learnt, one that felt extemporaneous to the spoken linguistic reality. It was an archaism, an ingredient of rhetoric and sign of the poet's virtuosity. The uninterrupted production of grammars applied to poetry, from the *Razos de trobar* by Raimon Vidal de Bezaudun (Ramon Vidal de Besalú) to the *Torsimany* by Luys d'Averçó, endorses this. Catalan language interfered with it. The result: an artificial *ad hoc* language for poetry.

The list of poets is extraordinary. All the social estates were represented in it: the nobility (Gilabert de Próixita, Pere de Queralt or Guerau de Maçanet),

honoured citizens (Ramon Savall), jurists and notaries (Gabriel Ferruç), royal officials (Andreu Febrer) or clergy (*fra* Joan Basset). The poetic activity was a gallant label, a courtly form of education, and in this sense, it was an instrument for social promotion. In 1393, John I founded the Consistory of Barcelona and institutionalised the poetic events. Poetry opened to the urban setting.

Two poets deserve special attention. The Valencian Gilibert de Próixita (d. 1405), with an exclusively amorous corpus.⁴⁹ Traditional motifs (vassalage of love, cruelty of the lady, death of love) were redirected towards the analysis of subjective moods. The wounded pride of the knight recalled the finest moments of Guido Cavalcanti, and the motif of the *donna-scherma* revealed Dante's influence.

As a young man, Andreu Febrer (1357/80–1444) from Vic entered the service of John I, was scribe to Martin I and bailiff to Alfonso the Magnanimous. He was involved in Catalan-Aragonese politics in Italy. Notable in his poetical corpus (from before 1400)⁵⁰ are two crusade songs about Martin I's expedition against Barbary (1398), and courtly praises, the one dedicated to Mary, Queen of Sicily is on an astrological theme influenced by Dante. His love songs show the influence of the finest troubadours (Jaufré Rudel, Raimbaut d'Aurenga, Arnaut Daniel, Cerverí de Girona), from whom he takes a precious diction (*rims cars, stramps*). It mixed the classic *canso* with genres (*lai, balada*) and themes (distance, absence, sadness) from French poetry (Guillaume de Machaut). He also knew Dante's work well, especially the *rime petrose* and the *Vita nuova*, from where he extracted resources to analyse the amorous sentiment of the times (some poems have internal narrative links). He finished his Catalan translation of Dante's *Commedia* in 1429.

4 Peter the Ceremonious and the Chancellery. Cultural Policies. Historiography. Translations and Translators

The organisation of the royal Chancellery under Peter the Ceremonious (1336–1386) required a high level of training among the civil servants and this meant good levels of writing in Latin and Catalan and Aragonese, the official languages of the Crown of Aragon. A new concern with style when writing documents and letters is usually dated from around 1380. The scribes and secretaries

49 Martí de Riquer, ed., *Poesies de Gilibert de Próixita* (Barcelona, 1954).

50 Andreu Febrer, *Poesies*, ed. Martí de Riquer (Barcelona, 1951).

applied the *artes dictaminis*.⁵¹ This meant selecting the lexis, looking for sound cadences, working the syntax and resorting to elegant quotations. The fact that the papal curia resided in Avignon, and the affinities John I and Martin I had with it, facilitated the aesthetic emulation of the secretaries and notaries of the Aragonese chancellery, who were soon abreast of the new cult of Cicero, Livy and Virgil introduced by Petrarch (1304–1374), the initiator of the *studia humanitatis*. The application of stylistic renewal to the Romance texts implied a necessary Latinisation: import of cultisms, complex syntax (with gerunds in the function of the participle and verbs placed at the end of the period) and a tendency to elaborate the prosodic resources to the maximum. The Catalan art prose, also known as “Valencian prose”, became a generalised trend from the latter years of the fourteenth century and throughout the 15th for translators, civil servants and writers both secular (from Bernat Metge to Joanot Martorell) and clerical (from Felip de Malla to Joan Roís de Corella).⁵²

King Peter the Ceremonious acted as a patron of the arts (architecture, painting) and sciences (astronomical tables, treatises on astronomy, astrolabes, armillary spheres) and the letters: he commissioned translations and historical compilations and cultivated the troubadoursque tradition. The copying and production of books converted King Peter into a bibliophile, who donated his library to the Cistercian monastery of Poblet (1380). Law was one of the preferred themes: the king had the *Leges palatinae* by James III of Majorca (*Ordinacions de la Casa i Cort*) and the *Siete partidas* by Alfonso X of Castile translated into Catalan. He also promoted history books: the *Crònica dels reis d’Aragó e comtes de Barcelona*, known as of San Juan de la Peña, has survived in Latin, Aragonese and Catalan. The *Compendi historial*, commissioned from a Dominican friar Jaume Domènec, is a universal chronicle that reaches the seventh century. The personal *Crònica* of Peter the Ceremonious was dictated to the secretaries Arnau de Torrelles, Bernat Dezcoll and checked by the monarch to justify the reasons for his political decisions. However, Catalan was not the only language of the fourteenth-century historical compilations, because Juan Fernández de Heredia (1310/15–1396), master of the Order of Saint John, founded a workshop in Avignon that produced Aragonese versions of the most

51 Rubió, *Documents per l’historia*; Marçal Olivari, “Notes entorn la influència de *l’ars dictandi* sobre la prosa catalana de cancelleria de finals del segle XIV,” *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 22 (1936), 61–84; Hillgarth, *Readers and Books*; Lola Badia, “Monarquia, llengua i literatura,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 105–16.

52 Lola Badia, “Volent escriure a vostra consolació e plaer’: Metge, Corella and other 14th and 15th century masters of Catalan prose,” *Catalan Historical Review* 3 (2010), 55–68.

important Western historiographic texts, and even imported unknown Greek texts by Plutarch and Thucydides.⁵³

The cultural policy of John I (1387–1396) added a passion for music, divinatory arts and hunting to the interests of Peter the Ceremonious. His wife, queen Violant of Bar, niece of Charles V of France, contributed to encouraging the import of books and music from north of the Pyrenees.⁵⁴ King John also became famous as a collector of books, an interest he shared with his brother and successor, Martin I, who was a reader of classical and exemplary stories and also devote texts. He owned a splendid illuminated breviary and commissioned translations of biblical and spiritual texts.⁵⁵

Prior to 1350, the translations into Catalan obeyed practical criteria: legal texts (the *Forum iudicum*; the *Usatges*), medical (the *Regiment de sanitat* by Arnau de Vilanova; the *Cirurgia* by Teodorico Borgognoni), encyclopaedic (the *Drumaticon philosophiae* by William of Conches; the *De Regimine Principum* by Giles of Rome) and also pious (the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Varagine; the *Dialogues* of Saint Gregory) and biblical (the Bible in verse from the Columbine Library of Seville). Peter the Ceremonious promoted especially translations on legal and historical themes.⁵⁶ In the years of John I and especially Martin I (1397–1410), there was a predominance of classical and pseudo-classical works. Jaume Conesa translated the *Històries troianes*, by Guido delle Colonne, a “best seller” in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Other notable titles included various versions of the *De consolatione philosophiae* by Boethius; the *Heroides* by Ovid, with glosses, part of the *Decades* by Livy; Cicero’s *De officiis*, the military treatises of Frontinus and Vegetius, Seneca’s *Tragedies*, and extracts of the *Epistolae* to Lucilius, the *Dits i fets memorables* by Valerius Maximus. Some of the translations came from French texts and some Catalan translations were transferred to Aragonese and Castilian. Some

53 Juan Manuel Cacho, *El gran mestre Juan Fernández de Heredia* (Saragossa, 1997).

54 Lluís Cabré, Montserrat Ferrer, “Els llibres de França i la cort de Joan d’Aragó i Violant de Bar,” in *El saber i les llengües vernacles a l’època de Lull i Eximenis*, eds. Anna Alberni, Lola Badia, Lluís Cifuentes, Alexander Fidora (Barcelona, 2012), pp. 217–30.

55 Jaume Massó Torrents, “Inventari dels béns mobles del rey Martí d’Aragó,” *Revue Hispanique* 12 (1905), 413–590.

56 Cifuentes, *La ciència en català*; Pilar Gudayol, Montserrat Bacardí, *Diccionari de la Traducció Catalana* (Vic, 2011); *Traduccions al català medieval fins a 1500*, <<http://www.translatdb.narpan.net>>; *Base de dades sobre les obres científiques i tècniques escrites en català o traduïdes al català (XIII–XVI)*, <<http://www.sciencia.cat/db/scienciadat-db.htm>>; Lluís Cifuentes, Josep Pujol, Montserrat Ferrer, “Traduccions i traductors,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 117–83.

translators adapted the originals creatively, like Antoni Canals in his *Escipió i Aníbal*, which was a fragment of the Petrarch's *Africa*, and especially Bernat Metge in the *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència* and *Lo somni*.

5 Francesc Eiximenis. Saint Vincent Ferrer

Francesc Eiximenis (1330–1409), of the Order of Saint Francis, was one of the Catalan writers with a most extensive oeuvre.⁵⁷ At the end of the fifteenth century, it was translated into Castilian, French, Flemish and Latin.⁵⁸ *Fra* Francesc, who had been trained in the leading centres of his order in Europe, up to a doctorate in theology, placed his knowledge in the service of a demand for theological information among the nobility and urban patricians of the latter decades of the fourteenth century. He also produced some technical works in Latin, notable among which was a treatise on preaching.⁵⁹

Eiximenis' most ambitious project was the encyclopaedia *Lo Crestià*, begun in Barcelona in the circles of Peter the Ceremonious.⁶⁰ Of the thirteen volumes planned, he only wrote four: the *Primer* (1379–1381) is an introduction to the principles of Christianity; the *Segon* (1382–1383) is a treatise on temptation; the *Terç* (1384) is a monumental study of sin and its effects. The exhaustive nature of this treatise on the vices of human conduct supplies information about all aspects of medieval private life: table and bed manners, sense of humour, gestures, clothing, manners, hygienic practices, etc.

The *Jurats*, as the local authorities of Valencia, where Eiximenis resided after 1383, urged him to write on political questions, the ones programmed for the *Dotzè* (1385–1386) book of the *Crestià*, an extensive *regimine principum*, which

57 Francesc Eiximenis, *An Anthology*, ed. Xavier Renedo, David Guixeras, trans. Robert D. Hughes (Barcelona, 2008); Albert Hauf, *D'Eiximenis a sor Isabel de Villena* (Valencia, 1990); Emili Grahit, ed., *Studia bibliographica* (Girona, 1991) [Estudis sobre Francesc Eiximenis, 1]; Jaume Riera, *Francesc Eiximenis i la Casa reial. Diplomataris 1373–1409* (Girona, 2010); Sadurní Martí, "Francesc Eiximenis," in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 21–59.

58 Jaume de Puig, Josep Perarnau, Gemma Avenoza, Lourdes Soriano, Carme Clausell, Pilar Gispert-Sauch, Eva Izquierdo, Sadurní Martí, Xavier Renedo, Raquel Rojas, *Catàleg dels manuscrits de Francesc Eiximenis*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 2012).

59 Francesc Eiximenis, *Art de predicació al poble*, ed. Xavier Renedo (Vic, 2009).

60 Francesc Eiximenis, *Lo Crestià*, ed. Albert Hauf (Barcelona, 1983); Francesc Eiximenis, *Libres, mestres i sermons*, ed. Xavier Renedo, David Guixeras (Barcelona, 2005); Xavier Renedo, "Lo Crestià: una introducció," in *Francesc Eiximenis (c. 1330–1409): el context i l'obra d'un gran pensador català medieval* (Barcelona, 2015), pp. 190–231.

contained the *Regiment de la cosa pública*, on the workings of cities and how to govern them. Eiximenis described the structural role played by urban centres in the country's economy.⁶¹ The *Dotzè* amalgamates material from various earlier political compendia (by John of Salisbury, John of Wales) with canon law and varied information of historical and literary nature.

His most notable works are three didactic and pious monographic works: the *Llibre del àngels* (1392) disseminating theological knowledge and proposing the worship of these messengers from God; the *Llibre de les dones* (1396) aimed at a female readership and programming the ideal behaviour of each social strata (maidens, wives, widows, nuns). It also contains many chapters on doctrine, some of which, extended, were offered to Queen Maria de Luna in a work named *Scala Dei*; the third one, *Vita Christi* (prior to 1403), is a biography of Jesus written in Catalan at the request of the patrician Pere d'Artés. This text combines canonical material with apocryphal contributions of great popular success with the aim of encouraging fervour and showing how to contemplate the mysteries of the faith. The presence of certain difficult doctrinal questions, such as predestination, that were widely debated in the Late Middle Ages, shows the interest of the secular minorities in the theological universe. The Catalan works of Eiximenis respond to the principle of the compilation of pre-existing texts, with a certain laxness when indicating their provenance, given the non-professional audience they were aimed at.

The preaching by mendicants in the vulgar language was the main channel for spreading religious and cultural information in a wide sense in the Late Middle Ages. The most famous preachers in the Crown of Aragon was *fra* Vicent Ferrer (1350–1419), who was canonised in 1455.⁶² After having become a prestigious theologian in the Order of Saint Dominic, in 1399, Ferrer underwent a conversion that led him to itinerant preaching to the masses. He participated in the negotiations to solve the Schism and took part in the

61 Francesc Eiximenis, *Dotzè del Crestià*, ed. Xavier Renedo, 1 vol. (Girona, 2006); Francesc Eiximenis, *Dotzè del Crestià*, ed. Curt Wittlin, 2 vols. (Girona, 1986–1987).

62 Josep Sanchis Sivera, ed., *La quaresma de sant Vicent Ferrer* (Barcelona, 1927); Sant Vicent Ferrer, *Sermons*, ed. Josep Sanchis Sivera, Gret Schib, 6 vols. (Barcelona, 1932–1988); Josep Perarnau, “La (darrera?) quaresma transmesa de sant Vicent Ferrer: Clermont-Ferrand, BMI, ms. 45,” *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 22 (2003), 344–550; San Vicente Ferrer, *Sermonario de Perugia*. (*Convento dei Dominicani mss. 477*), ed. Francisco Gimeno Blay, María Luz Mandingorra Llavata, trans. Daniel Gozalbo (Valencia, 2006); Xavier Renedo, “Vicent Ferrer,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 59–82.

Compromise of Caspe in favour of Ferdinand of Antequera (1412).⁶³ *Fra* Vicent preached to the masses in Catalonia, Valencia, Aragon, Castile, France, Italy and Flanders with the aim of extirpating heresy, converting the Jewish and Muslim minorities and promoting general repentance. The popular success of his campaigns surrounded him with a legendary halo and he was attributed, among other miracles, with the gift of tongues. However, his Latin treatises and his sermons in the vernacular showed him as an intellectual with a rigorous scholastic training, severe and adverse to the profane letters, contrary to other brothers from the same Order. Some three hundred Catalan sermons attributed to *fra* Vicent have survived with some others in Castilian and Latin versions. The popular preaching by Vincent Ferrer was spread orally; the move to writing was the work of the professional “reporters” who took notes of his performances. The resulting material only transmits part of the homilies and necessarily omits the theatrical elements most beloved by the public, such gestures and modulations of the voice.

6 Scepticism and Heterodoxy. Bernat Metge and Anselm Turmeda

In *Lo somni*, Bernat Metge pretends that, like the heretical followers of Epicurus, he is unaware that the soul is immortal.⁶⁴ Anselm Turmeda was a Franciscan apostate who wrote from Tunis for a Christian audience.

Bernat Metge (1346/1348–1413), son of a Barcelonan apothecary, was introduced into the royal chancellery by his mother’s second husband, the queen’s protonotary, Ferrer Saiol, known as a translator.⁶⁵ During the reign of John I, he was the king’s personal secretary. After his lord’s sudden death in 1396, a crisis of succession erupted between the followers of the dead king’s brother, Martin (crowned in 1399), and those who preferred another candidate. Bernat Metge, who belonged to the latter political group, fell into disgrace, but was rehabilitated and recovered the post of secretary to the new king.

His first works were in verse: the *Sermó* develops a sacrilegious theme through parody; the *Medicina* plays comically with pharmaceutical terminology; the

63 Pedro M. Cátedra, *Sermón, sociedad y Literatura en la Edad Media. San Vicente Ferrer en Castilla (1411–1412)* (Salamanca, 1994).

64 Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, 8.15.

65 Martín de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge* (Barcelona, 1959). Lluís Cabré, Alejandro Coroleu, Jill Krayer, eds., *Fourteenth-century Classicism: Petrarch and Bernat Metge* (London 2012); Lola Badia, Lluís Cabré, “Bernat Metge,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 192–238.

Llibre de Fortuna e Prudència (1381), in contrast, following the model of *La faula* by Guillem de Torroella, proposes a fabulous journey by Bernat to the island of Fortune. In a dialogue with Prudence, the protagonist recovers his trust in the moral values that the contemporary financial crisis had put in doubt.⁶⁶ Metge worked on it from Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae* and twelfth-century Latin literary texts, by Alain of Lille and Henry of Settimello.

Among Metge's works in prose, there is the translation of *De vetula*, a text that was attributed to Ovid in the Middle Ages. He also translated *Valter e Griselda* (1388), the last tale from the *Decameron* by Boccaccio, through the Latin version by Petrarch and the French one by Philippe de Mézières. In the accompanying epistle, Metge declared himself an admirer of Petrarch. Later, on a mission to Avignon in 1395, he had the chance to acquaint himself with some of the works of classical culture.⁶⁷

Lo somni (1399) is a dialogue inspired in Petrarch's *Secretum* and the *Tusculanae disputationes* by Cicero, which, in the early twentieth century, led to Bernat Metge appearing as a very knowledgeable about classical literature,⁶⁸ and thus, to his name being given to the collection of Latin and Greek texts translated into Catalan, founded in 1924. *Lo somni* reports a conversation between the author's alter ego, the ghost of King John I and the mythological figures of Orpheus and Tiresias, who appear before him in a vision. In book I, Bernat accepted, with some hesitation, that the soul is immortal in accordance with the consensus of the ancient philosophers of the Platonic school. The second attributes the solution to his personal problems during the crisis of succession to providence, and the last two show his fondness for the fictions of the ancient poets talking with Orpheus and refusing to accept the antifeminist diatribe of Tiresias, who he urges him to a life of penitence. The basic innovation of *Lo somni* is the elegant art prose that Metge achieves translating and recomposing fragments of, among others, Cicero, Macrobius, Ovid, Virgil, Seneca and, especially, Boccaccio, from whom he adapts long fragments of the misogynist work, *Il Corbaccio*. Skill in the choice of the sources and elegance in

66 Bernat Metge, *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència*, ed. Lluís Cabré (Barcelona 2010).

67 Jaume Torró, "Bernat Metge i Avinyó," in *Literatura i cultura a la Corona d'Aragó*, eds. Lola Badia, Miriam Cabré, Sadurní Martí (Barcelona, 2002), pp. 99–111.

68 Lola Badia, *De Bernat Metge a Joan Roís de Corella. Estudis sobre la cultura literària de la tardor medieval catalana* (Barcelona, 1988); Bernat Metge, *Lo somni*, ed. Stefano Maria Cingolani, 27 vol. (Barcelona, 2006); Bernat Metge, *The Dream*, ed. Richard Vernier (Aldershot, 2002); Barnett, David, Cabré, Lluís, "Creative Translation in Medieval Catalan: Bernat Metge," *Translation Review* 87 (2013), 6–17.

the translations were the keys to the success of *Lo somni*, a work that was cited as a model of prose in the fifteenth century.

The Majorcan friar Anselm Turmeda (1350–1423) emigrated to Tunis where, converted to Islam, he was the head of customs. His tomb is still venerated as that of a holy man, ‘Abd Allāh al-Tarḡumān. The Arab text that describes Turmeda’s conversion, the *Tuhfa* or *Autobiografia i atac als partidaris de la creu* (1420), has been the subject of several interpolations.⁶⁹ Turmeda wrote several prophecies in Catalan about the end of the Schism (1378–1422), the *Cobles de la divisió del regne de Mallorca* (1393), the *Llibre de bons amonestaments* (1398) and the *Disputa de l’ase* (1417).⁷⁰ The *Cobles* describes in verse the dialogue between friar Anselm, a wise connoisseur of the three laws (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) and the Island of Majorca, personified in a queen who weeps for the misfortunes of her subjects. An act of talismanic magic by old Muslim inhabitants is the cause of the urban conflicts on the island of his birth, and as he is convinced that if he returned, he would be burnt, friar Anselm bids farewell from afar with a letter of concord. The *Llibre de bons amonestaments* and the *Disputa de l’ase* are translations of popular didactic works that Turmeda adapted from Italian and Arab respectively. Thus, in the *Disputa*, friar Anselm, the author’s alter ego, argues with an ass about the comparative merits of men and beasts.⁷¹

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- 69 Mikel de Epalza, ed., *Fray Anselm Turmeda (‘Abdallah al-Taryuman) y su polémica islamo-cristiana. Edición, traducción y estudio de la “Tuhfa”* (Madrid, 1994); Julio Samsó, “Turmediana,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 34 (1971–1972), 51–85; Marco Pedretti, “Anselm Turmeda,” in *Història de la Literatura Catalana. Literatura Medieval (II)*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona, 2014), pp. 238–60.
- 70 Bernat Metge, Anselm Turmeda, *Obres Menors*, ed. Marçal Olivari, 10 vols. (Barcelona, 1927).
- 71 Anselm Turmeda, *La disputa de l’ase*, ed. Marçal Olivari, 18 vols. (Barcelona, 1928).