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Catalan Review, Vol. IV, number 1-2 (1990), p. 179-200

THE JOGLAR A LO DIVÍ IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF RAMON LLULL

JUAN COROMINAS, C.M.F.

The life and literary work of Blessed Ramon Llull is a rich quarry of materials for the study of the literary and social phenomenon of *joglaria* or minstrelsy. In the present work we are going to limit ourselves to taking an overall glance at the joglaresque dimension in the life of Llull and in the style of his works. We are not going to study the concept of the *joglar* as he presents it in his narrative work, concretely in *Blanquerna*. Concerning that work Martí de Riquer writes:

Ramon lo foll, the *joglar* and the *emperor* are three disquieting figures in *Blanquerna*. They appear fleetingly, only to reappear pages later. One might at first blush believe them to be purely episodic characters, merely three more members of the cast of extras in the work. Yet their unexpected and momentary appearances throughout the novel, above all in the epilogue, invest them with a special significance.¹

Ramón Menéndez Pidal, in his *Poesía juglaresca y juglares*,² deals exhaustively with the subject of *joglaria* in the Iberian Peninsula. The effort that this sage investigator has put into bring-

[The reader will note that throughout the English version of the present study, the Catalan forms *trobador* and *joglar* have been used, and that the adjective «joglaresque» has been coined in order to avoid lengthy paraphrases.]

¹ «Ramon 'lo foll', el joglar de Valor i l'emperador són tres figures inquietants del *Blanquerna*. Hi apareixen fugaçment, per reaparèixer pàgines endavant, podríem creure que eren merament episòdiques o tres elements més de la comparsa de l'obra. Llurs inesperades i ràpides aparicions a la novel·la, sobretot al seu epíleg, els atorguen una eficàcia especial». Martí de Riquer, *Història de la Literatura Catalana*, I (Barcelona, Ariel, 1980), p. 291.

² Ramón Menéndez Pidal: *Poesía juglaresca y juglares*, 5th ed. (Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1962).

ing this whole *intrahistorical* phenomenon of popular medieval poetry to light is truly admirable. In the work we have just cited, all his data and awesome erudition revolve around two authors: King Alfonso X of Castile and the Archpriest of Hita. The core of the King Alfonso material is largely historico-theoretical, while that of the Archpriest focuses on *El Libro del Buen Amor*. As regards Alfonso X, he analyzes the *Declaratió del Senher Rey N'Amfos de Castela*,³ dated 1275. This *Declaratió* is the outcome of the king's conversations with the *joglar* Giraldo Riquier of Narbonne. Corresponding to this *Declaratió*, is the *Suplicatió al Rey de Castela per lo nom dels joglars*.⁴ Concerning the Archpriest, he says: «We should therefore considerer the [Libro del] *Buen Amor* as the greatest monument that joglaresque — not epic — poetry produced in the Middle Ages».⁵

Notwithstanding the fact that Menéndez Pidal had a broad knowledge of Provençal troubadour poetry as well as Catalan poetry, and often cites the *Ordenanzas Palatinas* of Jaume II of Majorca, it seems strange that he took such little advantage of the person and works of Ramon Llull. The latter, both in his life and work, is a unique source for reconstructing the phenomenon of *joglaria*. The life of the *Doctor Illuminatus* was one of minstrelsy taken in all seriousness, and his work, or at least a great part of it, is marked by joglaresque characters. Menéndez Pidal cites him at least twice, most importantly in the following:

Recall how, according to Ramon Llull in his *Blanquerna*, the minstrel, who takes such a large part in the action of the work, arrives at the cardinal's table, sings a song to the Virgin and informs his host of various news items current in the world.⁶

³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17. See also Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo: *Obras Completas*, ed. E. S. Reyes, vol. I, *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España* (Santander, Aldus, 1946), p. 457.

⁵ Menéndez Pidal, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Before his conversion, when he was seneschal of Prince Jaume (who later became Jaume II of Majorca), Ramon Llull was already an accomplished *trobador* in the provençal style. Once converted, using many of the troubadouresque elements he had mastered, he became a *joglar a lo diví* — a minstrel in the godly style. This ethical-literary phenomenon, with its corresponding passage from *trobador* to *joglar*, can be seen very clearly in *Blanquerna* in the person of the emperor, the perfect troubadour, in the person of the *joglar de valor* and in *Ramon lo Foll*, a replica of Ramon Llull as a *joglar a lo diví*. As for joglaresque subjectmatter, there is plenty of it in his work, especially in his poetry. Manuel de Montoliu has discovered a great number of troubadouresque traits in the *Llibre d'Amic e Amat*.⁷

Leaving aside for some other occasion a study of the *joglar* in *Blanquerna*, we would like to focus in the present study on the joglaresque personality of Ramon Llull and on the joglaresque character of some of his works.

THE JOGLARESQUE PERSONALITY OF RAMON LLULL

At that moment in history when Llull appears upon the scene as a writer with his work, *Llibre del gentil*, the days of splendor of the Provençal troubadours were already past. With the defeat at Muret, the feudal aristocracy of Midi, who had been the patrons of troubadour poetry, died. Some of these troubadours took refuge in the kingdom of Aragon. It was during this period of the decadence of Provençal that Catalan troubadours such as Cerverí de Girona and Pere Selvatge flourished. Manuel de Montoliu notes that troubadour poetry became increasingly religious

⁷ Manuel de Montoliu: «*Ramon Llull, trobador*», in *Estudis Universitaris Catalans*, 21 (1932), 363-98.

in its period of decline.⁸ The Court of Majorca, whose sway extended into the south of France, could hardly avoid direct contact with troubadour poetry, since it took pride in being the protector and promoter of *lo gay saber*. In this kingdom, under the rule of Jaume II, the *Ordenanzas Palatinas* were published in 1337. These *Ordinances* contain a warm commendation of *joglaría*, noting its positive moral influence. And it was precisely in this court that Ramon Llull spent his youth and became a *trobador*. Llull spent the period from his twenty-fifth to his thirty-second year at court, where he was seneschal to the heir-apparent, Jaume II, a married man with a family (although he had various extramarital affairs) and a practitioner of troubadour poetry.⁹ For though most troubadours were professionals in the art of *lo gay saber*, there was not lack of princes, kings and feudal lords who were dedicated to this *mester*. Besides William of Aquitaine, various feudal lords in Catalonia were *trobadors*, such as Guerau de Cabrera, Guillem de Berguedà, Ponç de la Guardia, and Huguet de Mataplana, to mention but a few. In Llull's *Vita coetania* we read:

Racontà primerament e ans de totes coses que, estant ell senescal e majordom del superil·lustre senyor rey de Mallorques, com fos en la plenitud de sua joventut, e es fos donat en l'art de trobar e compondre cançons e dictats de les follies d'aquest món... (First of all, he tells how, being seneschal and majordomo to the Most Illustrious Lord King of Majorca and being likewise in the full tide of his youth, he was given to the art of inventing and composing songs and tales of the follies of this world...).¹⁰

⁸ «La vida de Ramon Llull, que s'estén aproximadament en el període 1235-1315, coincideix en absolut amb el que presència aquesta transformació de la poesia provençal de profana en religiosa.» *Ibid.*, 364-65.

⁹ Riquer, p. 207.

¹⁰ Ramón Llull: *Obras Literarias*, vol. 2, *Vita coetania* (Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1948).

As we can see from this text and also from what he himself writes in the *Llibre de contemplació*, he had put his minstrelsy at the service of his passions and adulterous affairs, thus going beyond the pale of the norms of troubadour poetry. As can be seen, his literary productions were more in the nature of lyrics to be sung than heroic poems to be recited, as in the *chansons de geste*. In the *Llibre de contemplació* he says of himself, referring to his days as a *trobador*, that he dishonored many ladies and even falsely ruined the reputation of many men. In another passage in the same book, he says that he sometimes loved certain ladies so passionately that he spent whole days and nights thinking on nothing but them.¹¹ In this book, Llull always speaks to us of the *joglar*, not the *trobador*.

In Llull's time, above all in the Court of Aragon and in the south of France, the concepts of troubadour and jongleur were beginning to be confused and interchanged. For the fact was that the poetry of courtly love was ceasing to be a genre exclusively used by the feudal aristocracy, but was passing into the service of the townsfolk and the bourgeoisie. Besides, troubadour poetry was itself a highly artificial phenomenon that had originally emerged from the humbler world of the *joglar*, to which it returned during its decadence. According to Riquier de Narbonne, the art of *joglaria* preceded that of the *trobador*.¹² And since *joglaria* was eminently popular, it provided such a gamut of nuances and degrees, that the *joglar* Giraldo de Riquier lamented that the name *joglar* was being applied to people who would never dare show their faces in a noble court — to monkey trainers and puppeteers, or to ignorant strummers who played and sang in the streets to the lower classes and then lured them to the nearest tavern to spend the little they had earned.¹³ This lamentation of Riquier's is somewhat similar to that of Llull in the *Llibre de*

¹¹ Ramón Llull: *Obras Esenciales* (Barcelona, Selecta, 1957, 1960), II, p. 383.

¹² Menéndez Pidal, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹³ *Ibid.*

contemplació, which bewails the degeneracy into which *joglares* have fallen, from an ethical and religious point of view:

We see [Lord] how minstrels have misused their art and made it a means of lying; for they praise those things that are worthy of contempt, and they condemn those are worthy of praise.¹⁴

Llull, like other moralists of his time, was little inclined to be indulgent toward the esthetic and playful values of the art of *joglaria*. According to Riquier, *joglaria* should not be a vehicle of buffoonery, scurrility or vulgarity, but must keep within the aims for which the learned and the wise had invented it, namely, to set good people on the road to happiness and honor. The *Palatine Ordinances* of Jaume II of Majorca grant the *joglar* a beneficent mission in government, since they sweeten the outlook of the king.¹⁵ For Riquier, the *trobador* is simply the *joglar* who is accomplished in the art of *joglaria* and knows how to construct verses whose solace and teaching remain even after the death of their author. In turn, Ramon Llull, in his *Llibre de contemplació*, says that the art of *joglaria* was invented in order to praise and bless God, and that musical instruments, notes, songs and new tunes were created so that we might rejoice in the Lord.¹⁶ It is very likely that when Llull wrote this he was thinking of the Bible, mainly the Book of Psalms, and of the liturgical practices of his day, above all in the monasteries. In his work the *Cent noms de Déu* (The Hundred Names of God), he notes that the book can be sung in the same manner and tone as the Psalms are

¹⁴ «Nós veem que los joglars han presa art e manera de mentir, car aquelles coses qui no són dignes d'ésser loades e qui deurien ésser avilades e menyspreades, aquelles dien que són bones e veres e nobles...» *Llibre de Contemplació*, OE, II, p. 356.

¹⁵ Menéndez Pidal, p. 17.

¹⁶ «L'art, Sènyer, de joglaria començà en cós a loar e en vós a beneir; e per açò foren atrobats estruments e voltes e lais sons nobells, ab què hom s'alegràs en vós». Ramón Llull: *Obras Esenciales, Llibre de Contemplació*, II, p. 355.

sung in Holy Church.¹⁷ In *Desconhort*, the hermit counsels Ramon as follows: «Otherwise, become a minstrel of court and sing the *Hundred Names of God*, which I wrote in verse that they might be sung».¹⁸ And in *Hores de Nostra Dona* (Hours of Our Lady), he prescribes: «e canten-se al so dels hymnes» (and let them be sung to hymn-tunes).¹⁹ There is no doubt that Ramon Llull had the highest regard and esteem for the art of *joglaria*; hence, he is so pained at its corruption and degeneration. In the same chapter in which he deals with *joglars* in the *Llibre de contemplació*, he states:

But as we ourselves see in our times, Lord, the whole art of *joglaria* has changed; for nowadays when people play instruments, dance and compose, they neither sing nor play nor make verses or songs, except about lust and about the vanities of this world.²⁰

Clearly, this text is most informative in what it has to say regarding the art of *joglaria*.

After his spiritual crisis, Ramon Llull moves from being a *trobador* to being a *joglar*, from an aristocratic to a democratic concept of poetry; he descends from the court to the level of the people and of the middle class, in keeping with the apostolic ideal of St. Francis. In his introduction to the *Literary Works* of Blessed Ramon, Salvador Galmés makes the following statement regarding Llull's conversion:

¹⁷ «Ahí estan los *Cent noms de Dieu* que se poden cantar segons aquells psalps se canten en la sancta esgleya». *Obres de Ramon Llull*, 19, p. 80.

¹⁸ Ramón Llull: *Obras Literarias*, p. 1139.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1032.

²⁰ «Mas segons que nosaltres veem ara, Sènyer, en nostre temps total l'art de joglaria s'és mudada, car los hòmens que s'entremeten de sonar estruments e de ballar e de trobar, no canten ni no sonen los estruments, ni fan verses ni cançons sinó de luxúria e de vanitats d'aquest món». Ramón Llull, *Obras esenciales*, II, p. 355.

This date, which could be set around the end of June 1261 —when Ramon had probably already turned thirty — divides his life into two unequal, radically distinct and totally hostile parts, both driven by the same passion of an intense love (the motive and final cause of his astounding activity), but directed to opposed objects: the first, entirely vowed to worldly love, is characterized by unbridled pleasure and by a lack of love or even by a contempt for God; the second, completely filled with godly love, is characterized by an implacable hatred for the flesh and an insatiable desire to make the Beloved known and loved.²¹

But when Ramon Llull was converted, he did not, like Fra Pacifico, let all his knowledge and skill in the art of invention fall away from him; rather, he placed it in the service of his apostolic ideals. In this connection, Nicolau d'Olwer remarks: «Ramon Llull bore in his heart a perennial spring of poetry; but he also (and I would to point this out) kept in his memory, if not the ideology, then at least the imagery of the troubadour».²² From a literary point of view, Ramon d'Alos-Moner admirably captures this change when he states that through his conversion, Ramon Llull passes from being a profane troubadour to being a minstrel of Jesus Christ: «Així és com Ramon Llull, que ha estat trobador profà, un cop convertit, transformat en jugar de Jesucrist, es val dels seus coneixements tècnics en poesia, de la seva facilitat en versificar».²³

RAMON LLULL, FRANCISCAN MINSTREL

In order to appreciate the art of Llull's minstrelsy within the Franciscan school, it is of the utmost importance that we keep in mind the repeated vision of Christ Crucified, reminiscent of the

²¹ *Obras literarias*, p. 5.

²² Nicolau d'Olwer: «En torn de Ramon Llull», *Paisatges de la nostra història* (Barcelona, 1925), p. 95.

²³ Ramon Llull: *Poesie*, ed. text, note i glossari de Ramon d'Alos-Moner, *Els Nostres Clàssics* (Barcelona, 1925), pp. 8, 19.

episode of Christ speaking to Francis in San Damiano. The words in which the *Vida coetània* relates this episode are significant:

Through these apparitions... and the pricking of his conscience, he was shown that Our Lord and God Jesus Christ wanted no other thing of him than that he leave the world and give himself totally to His service.²⁴

If both the literature and practice of courtly love were an application of the feudal practices of vassalage,²⁵ Llull's relationship with Christ was none other than these norms applied to his mystical experience and expression. But there is one notable aspect of this divinization of courtly love. By it, a sort of closed circle is achieved, owing to the fact that both the practices of feudal vassalage and the norms of chivalry were an application of religious commitment to Christ, as can be seen in the *Llibre del Orde de Cavalleria* by Llull himself.²⁶ Bearing this in mind, we can explain many things in the joglaresque life of Llull, such as his relationship with the Virgin and with Christ. In this case, Llull frees himself from one kind of servitude in order to subject himself to another, in keeping with the teaching of Paul.²⁷ In this passage of the *Vida coetània* in which his conversion is narrated, one can already note one of the characteristics of the philosophy and mysticism of Llull and of his joglaresque attitude, namely, the supremacy of love over truth and of will over understanding:

²⁴ «Per les quals aparicions... e lo estímulo de la consciència li dictava que nostro senyor Déu Jesucrist no volia otra cosa sinó que, lleixant lo món, totalment se donàs a la sua servitut». *Vida coetània*, 4.

²⁵ Martí de Riquer: *Història*, p. 34.

²⁶ «Hom ha notat com origen d'aquestes característiques la fusió dels conceptes feudals amb els elements amorosos d'Ovidi, interpretats per la retòrica medieval, i potser l'adaptació profana de l'amor de Déu exposat de manera cavalleresca en el *Tractat* de Sant Bernat de Claraval». Juan Ruiz Calonge: *Història de la literatura catalana* (Barcelona, Teide, 1954), p. 10.

²⁷ «When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness... But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification» (Rm 6, pp. 20, 22).

And as this proposal and deliberation had set him afire and aflame with love of Christ crucified, he was thinking what act or service he might do that would be acceptable and pleasing to the impassioned one.²⁸

In this connection, Bertini writes:

In the same philosophical tradition, Llull will give preeminence to affective ways over intellectual ways, aligning himself, through the Victorine School, with the thought of Saint Augustine.²⁹

Absolute commitment to the beloved, and flames and fire representing love, are two basic elements of the troubadouresque courtly love which Llull transferred to the evangelical sphere of the apostolate and to mysticism.

He entered the chapel of St. Francis, but without removing his laurel crown. He transformed himself from the profane troubadour that he was, into a Franciscan troubadour, which is the same as saying, into the juggler of Our Lord and of Our Lady Saint Mary.³⁰

The concepts of courtly love served him wonderfully well to express his mystical concepts and anagogical exclamations. To appreciate this, one need only read something from the *Llibre d'Amic e Amat*. His first poetic creation, the *Plant de Nostra Dona Santa Maria* (The Plaint of Our Lady Saint Mary), which

²⁸ «E, com ja per aquest propòsit e deliberació fos enflamat e encès en l'amor del Crucifix, cogità quin acte, quin servei poria el fer que fos acceptable e placent a l'apassionat». In the Latin version the ambiguous word «apassionat» is lacking: «Coepit ergo intra se cogitando tractare quod esset servitum maxime Deo placens». *Vida coetània*, 5.

²⁹ «En la mateixa tradició filosòfica, Llull donarà sempre la preeminència a les vies afectives sobre les intel·lectives, reconnectant-se, a través de l'escola dels Victorins, al pensament agustinianà». Giovanni Maria Bertini: «La poesia de Ramon Llull», in *La paraula cristiana*, XX (1934), p. 355.

³⁰ Llull: *Obras literarias*. Miguel Caldentey: «Introducción a la poesía de Ramón Llull», p. 1009, 5.

appeared in 1275, some ten years after his conversion, has all the air of a troubadour *planh*. The characteristic trait of this composition is the poet's projection of his *anima* on the Virgin Mary weeping over the sorrows of her Son, and at the same time, his identification of his own sinful past with the perfidy of Judas. He made the Virgin his *Midons*, his Mistress, who he calls in his songs: «Dona d'amor», «Dona de paradís», «La dona Verge», «La Dolça Verge», «La Dolça Dona de valors», «La Flor d'amor», «La Mayre de valor e d'amor» and «La Mayre e flor» — all of which are epithets used in the vocabulary of the troubadours. The very title of *Plant* corresponds to the troubadour genre of the *planh*, a funeral lament over the death of a person, usually a great lord protector of the troubadour, and above all over the death of his beloved mistress.

Even when he basically follows Provençal meters and forms, Llull, as a *joglar*, sacrifices the rigor of form in favor of content, in order to reach people more easily.³¹ In his poetic compositions he continues using Alexandrine dodecasyllables, adopted for the epic genre of Provençal poetry that Llull uses for his more solemn and dramatic works such as the *Plant* and the *Deconhort*, the latter of which corresponds to another poetic troubadour form, *l'enuig*, but conceived in the contrapuntal manner characteristic of the *tençó*.³² For his didactic compositions Llull has recourse to octosyllabic couplets or «*noves rimades*», a verse form frequently used in French and Provençal didactic poetry. But it is above all in concepts, rather than genres, where Llull

³¹ Manuel Milà i Fontanals: *De los trovadores en España* (Barcelona, 1881).

³² «Algunes de les composicions de Ramon Llull podrien classificar-se, sense gaire esforç, en alguns dels gèneres de la poesia trobadoresca. Així *Lo Concili* és substancialment un Cant de Croada, encara que d'estructura més complicada que els models de la poesia provençal. El *Desconhort* està concebut en la forma d'una tençó; els tençadors són allà Ramon i l'Ermità que disputen sobre el magne projecte d'apostolat del primer i, com en les tençons provençals, els dos interlocutors acaben remetent el judici o la sentència a un tercer, que en aquest cas és el Papa...» Montoliu, p. 2, note 1.

follows the troubadour tradition most faithfully. In this respect, Manuel de Montoliu remarks that rather than looking for the remnants of Llull's profane poetry in his poetic works, one should look for them in his prose. The same critic finds a great number of troubadouresque elements in the *Llibre d'Amic e Amat*.³³

When Llull went on from being a profane troubadour to become a religious jongleur, he found in the Franciscan school all the elements and spirit he needed in order to become a *joglar a lo diví*. The parallelism between the human and historical phenomenon of Saint Francis of Assisi and Blessed Ramon Llull, is as interesting as it is evident. Leaving aside the question of whether he was or was not a Franciscan in the canonical sense, he surely lived the Franciscan spirit faithfully and was closely united to the Order.³⁴ Menéndez Pelayo, Bertini and Caldentey have called attention to the great similarity between Jacopone da Todi and Ramon Llull. Despite the marked likeness between them, Llull is much sweeter, nobler, more balanced and circumspect than Jacopone. Besides, Llull had a far better philosophical and theological education. There have also been comparisons between Llull and Fra Pacifico (Guglielmo de Liciani); but although both were troubadours before their conversion, after his conversion Fra Pacifico, according to Caldentey,³⁵ completely abandoned the art of the *joglar*.

³³ Manuel de Montoliu: «*Ramón Llull, trobador*».

³⁴ In this connection, P. Miguel Caldentey writes: «Mas, aun suponiendo que el Beato Ramón no hubiera ceñido el cordón franciscano, al igual que como místico, como poeta, debe colocarse en la escuela franciscana. Junto a San Buenaventura, poeta en prosa, en verso y hasta filosofando; junto con Fra Pacifico, el trovador convertido, llamado en el siglo por su poesía galante, el 'Rey de los versos'; y más propiamente, junto a Fra Jacopone, o Jacobo el insensato, con su fantasía ardiente y su crudo realismo, con sus arrobamientos místicos y sus depresiones de alma, claridades y tinieblas...» *Obras literarias*, p. 1005.

³⁵ «No sabemos que en el claustro continuara rimando cosa alguna. Lo más que podemos otorgarle es que dividiera en estrofas el cántico de *Frate Sole* y que

Although there can be no doubt that Ramon Llull belonged to the Franciscan school, both as a mystic and as a *joglar*,³⁶ there is a difference between his spirit and that of the Franciscan school. The Franciscan reaction was above all a reforming one: it aimed at offering a Gospel vision of life to a bourgeois society that was daily becoming more worldly. Even the relationship between the Franciscans and the Arab world were more in the nature of a crusade in the traditional sense of conquest and pilgrimage to the Holy Land, than of a real conversion and *metanoia*. Blessed Ramon, on the contrary, was born and raised in a society where a rather numerous Arabic and Jewish population rejected the Gospel, so that the thought it necessary to preach conversion not by conquest, but by dialectic. Moreover, Llull felt that Arabic culture was superior to Christian culture. To this we must add that Ramon Llull had considerable contact with the Dominicans.³⁷ As the Dominicans fought Albigensian ideas with their own ideas, so Llull, in an even more dialectical manner, aimed at opposing his own ideas to those of Muslims and Jews. We need only recall the interest he took in learning the languages and culture of his

compusiera la música de algunos himnos piadosos que a coro entonaba los fieles». *Obras literarias*, p. 1009.

Menéndez Pidal thinks otherwise when he writes: «Fray Pacífico, cuando acababa de cantar, decía: 'Nosotros somos juglares del Señor, y os pedimos por soldada que os deis a verdadera penitencia'». *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

³⁶ On the Franciscanism of Llull, Menéndez Pelayo writes: «¿Y a quién extrañará que enfrente de toda esta literatura franciscana, cuyo más ilustre representante solía llorar 'porque no se ama al amor', pongamos, sin recelo de quedar vencidos, el nombre del peregrino mallorquín que compuso el libro 'Del Amigo y del Amado'?». *Crítica literaria*, II, p. 84, *Obras completas*, v. 7.

³⁷ «Quizá cuando comenzaba el *Blanquerna*, había asistido en la misma ciudad de Montpellier a un capítulo general de frailes predicadores, y ahora, que iban a celebrar otro en Bolonia, Ramón no pudo menos que asistir, lo mismo que a un tercero que celebraron en París por la Quincuagésima del siguiente año (1286), creyendo que de ellos podría sacar gran provecho para su fundación de colegios políglotas». R. Llull: *Obras literarias*, «Introducción biográfica» by Salvador Galmés, p. 17.

opponents. Llull's *joglaría* was eminently dialectical and even, so to say, more polemical in the sense of *tençó* or debate, as can be seen in his first work, *Llibre de gentil*. Llull did not, however, want to create an antagonism between the concept of a divine euhological *joglaría*, such as he defines it in the *Llibre de contemplació* — «L'art, Sènher, de joglaría començà en vós a loar e en vós a beneir» (Lord, the art of *joglaría* began in praising Thee and blessing Thee) — and the concept of apostolic *joglaría* in the manner of a «*cançó de creuada*» (crusaders' song). Llull was aware of the informative and even 'journalistic' power that the *joglar* possessed. As Menéndez Pidal remarks: «Only the *joglar* managed to spread a poem to the four winds, causing it to be repeated 'in each household' and that it should be 'an oft-told song', until everyone came to know it for a hundred leagues around». ³⁸

JOGLARESQUE CHARACTER OF THE WORK OF RAMON LLULL

Doubtless, Llull had an apostolic-joglaresque intention in rhyming some of his doctrinal works, such as *Los cent noms de Déu*, *Compendi de la lògica de Alcatzel*, *Medicina del pecat*, *Aplicació d'art general*, *Lo concili*, *Proverbis d'ensenyament* and others. He himself says so in his *Desconhort*. As the *joglar* spreads his ideas or poetic message by means of verse and song. So Llull wishes to spread the Gospel. He says so expressly in the *Cent noms de Déu*: «Aquests versos rimant en vulgar per ço que mills hom los puga saber de cor» (These verses rhyme in the vernacular, so that thousands might learn them by heart). ³⁹ As one can see, Llull expounded the art of metrification in a kind of mnemonic tables so that with the help of rhythm and music, the content of his verses might more readily stick in the minds of his hearers.

³⁸ Menéndez Pidal, p. 245.

³⁹ *Obres de Ramon Llull*, edició original (ORL), XIX, 81. And in the *Medicina de pecat*, he writes: «lo qual vull que sia rimat car mills pot ésser decorat» (ORL), XX, 3.

Another advantage that Llull saw for giving his apostolate a joglaresque dimension was the fact that for *joglaria* there were no frontiers, no limitations of homeland or culture.

In the Middle Ages, the journeys and great meetings of minstrels fulfilled the function of spreading music and literature to the most diverse countries, to some extent supplying the modern media that were ushered in with printing.⁴⁰

Even differences in languages and customs could to some extent be overcome by the *joglar* by means of modes, versification, rhythm, music, song and dance. In this connection we should recall Ramon lo Foll's manner of procedure in the presence of the whole College of Cardinals.⁴¹ Moreover, in this episode of the dog and the hawk we can see a remote image of the combined animal-trainer and juggler that Riquier criticised so sharply in his *Suplicació*.

In *Desconhort*, the Hermit counsels Ramon as follows: «Otherwise, become a minstrel of court and sing the *Hundred Names of God*, which I wrote in verse that they might be sung». And the *Desconhort* ends with this note: «*Aquest 'Desconhort' lo fet en la cort de Roma, e canta's en lo so de Berart* (This 'Complaint' was written in the Court of Rome, and it should be sung to the tune of Berart)». ⁴²

But Ramon Llull not only composed his rhymed work to put it at the service of *joglaria*, but also a good part of his prose output, above all his two great novels *Blaquerna* and *Félix*. These works are like one great parable made up of a mosaic of examples. Of *Félix de las meravelles*, even more justly than of *Desconhort*, it can be said that «in it he has manifested the order of the world». ⁴³ Of the same work, P. Batllori says: 'Speaking in

⁴⁰ Menéndez Pidal, p. 76.

⁴¹ *Blanquerna*, LXXIX, *Obras literarias*.

⁴² Llull: *Obras literarias*, pp. 1139 and 1146.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 1145.

Ignatian terms, the whole book is, then, like a very long 'contemplation to attain love'.⁴⁴ Hence, *Félix* is like a walking encyclopedia, spread in the joglaresque manner, recited in squares and castles, and its subject-matter is so ordered and structured that it might be narrated before the public.

Felix himself, the key personage of the novel, is a vagabond who travels throughout the world minstrel-style, striking up conversations with different classes of persons. The greater part of these persons are exotic, ideal characters who live in a utopian world, a world of magic. The seventh book for example, is little more than a prolonged and complicated apologue in the manner of the stories of the wolf and the fox in the *Roman de Renart*. The truths involved would be very hard to set forth in terms of reasonings or concepts. The basis of the argumentation is the example. In order to prove the existence of divine providence in the face of apparent injustices and absurdities, one must have recourse to the case of the shepherdess devoured by the wolf. And further reasoning is carried out by way of a dialogue between Felix and the Hermit. The Hermit's explanations and reasons are all supported by examples. In the fantastic narrative or account there are two constant structures: time and place. As for the *place*, it is always an agreeable one: a *locus amoenus*. Considerer, for example the place in the episode of the shepherdess: «After Felix had bade his father farewell, he entered a great woods, and as he walked through it he met a little shepherdess watching her flock...» After the episode in which the shepherdess is killed, Felix continues travelling the whole day amidst temptations and doubts. «He continued with this temptation... until he came to spend the night in an hermitage, where there was a holy man who has studied theology and philosophy for many years...» As for *time*, it is frequently detemporalized, as a way of introducing

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 599.

the reader into the fiction: «In a certain land there was a king...»; «You must know, my son, that there was a king...»; «Once it happened that a knight...», etc.⁴⁵ But the most convincing argument for the spirit and style of the *joglar* is the book's ending. When Felix dies, the abbot and the monks agree that one of their number must now go throughout the world, not simply marvelling as Felix had, but in order to

publish and multiply his book, according to the marvels and admirable things he might encounter... and the abbot, by further accord with the other religious of the house, ordered that one of the members should always be destined for that office, and that he should be called Felix.⁴⁶

For this same reason, surely, the work is made up of ten short books, if we except the book eight (dedicated to man), which is the longest. Moreover, each book is further divided into brief chapters which unfailingly begin either with an example or with a dialogue. Each chapter has a perfect unity in itself, which goes to show that the work was composed in the manner of an episodic novel or, as Littré defined it, a true *roman à tiroirs*.⁴⁷

If *Félix* is a novel of divine chivalry meant to be continued by a minstrel, *Blanquerna* is an apostolic saga, a hagiographical *geste*. Just as there were minstrels who went about narrating and singing the lives of the saints, especially their martyrdoms, in a kind of allegorical epic that derived from Prudentius, so *Blanquerna* is conceived and structured to be narrated. But the dis-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 607, 608, 611 and 613.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1000.

⁴⁷ «Es el *Félix*, como lo definió Littré, un verdadero *roman à tiroirs*, una novela episódica, un verdadero libro de caballerías a lo divino. Como Gui de Warwick o Tristán salían a recorrer el mundo en busca de aventuras o a la búsqueda del Santo Grial, Félix, a instigación de su padre, que se lamentaba de la muerte de la sabiduría y de la caridad en el mundo, va por montes y llanos, por yermos y ciudades, por castillos y ermitas...» *Ibid.*, p. 599. Introduction by P.M. Batllori.

inctive trait of Lull's great novel is that it is not presented as historical fact or legend, but as a true poetic fiction. Menéndez Pidal says that there were *joglars* who accompanied their lords on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, narrating as they went along the road the lives of the saints in a sort of Golden Legend, and he remarks that they sometimes they did this on their own account.⁴⁸ For this reason, *Blanquerna*, like *Félix*, is divided into books, each of which is devoted to a particular state of life. The doctrine or moral is never expounded directly, but rather indirectly, by means of dialogue and example. And, like *Félix*, it is an episodic novel, a perfect *roman à tiroirs*. The work is conceived and hence written not with a reading, but rather a listening public in mind. One need only notice how it begins: «In a city it happened that a certain bizarre youth, the son of an hidalgo...»⁴⁹ But the joglaresque character of the work is discovered above all at the end. In the last book, the *Art de contemplació*, in its last chapter, when *Blanquerna* imposes a penance on the repentant and converted *joglar*, she tells him:

For this reason, then, good friend, I give you as a counsel and a penance that you walk throughout the world, shouting and singing among the peoples, to all states of human beings and among one and another of them, telling them the intention for which the office of *joglaria* and other offices were invented in their beginnings. And carry with you this book of *Evast and Blanquerna*, in which are signified the reasons for which the aforesaid offices were ordained and invented in their beginnings.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ «Los juglares servían a sus señores durante la peregrinación o hacían esta por su cuenta propia, y en especial harían el devoto camino los juglares de gesta, únicos que, con los recitadores de vidas de santos, eran considerados como juglares honestos por los moralistas». Menéndez Pidal, p. 179.

⁴⁹ *Obras literarias*, p. 160.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 575.

The endings of both *Blanquerna* and *Félix* demonstrate the juglaresque aims of these works. Like the builders and decorators of the great medieval cathedrals, Ramon Llull was well aware that the people could not read. Instead of letters, they needed auditory or visual images. The visual image, in the case of the plastic arts, attracted and strongly impressed its viewers in this way transmitted a message to them. In this sense one should speak rather of iconology than of iconography. In a similar way, through a rather complex minstrel art — narration, poetry, song and possibly music — Ramon Llull aimed at indoctrinating the people. We have noted that most of the people were illiterate, but even for the few who were not, parchment and vellum were hard to come by. Given the great number of examples that Ramon Llull uses in his novels, if they were not structured within a frame-tale, these novels would appear to be collections of *exempla*, which were so popular in the Middle Ages. In the narrative works of Ramon Llull, it sometime happens that an example is included in a dialogue, while the persons in this example themselves state another example, and this goes on even to the third degree, in a sort of narrative *sorites*.

For Llull, the role of the *joglar* was not only that of praising God or instructing the people. From *Blanquerna*'s words to the *joglar*, we can infer that the author conceived of *joglaria* as a means of decently entertaining the people: «The office of *joglaria* was invented with a good intention, namely, to praise God and to recreate and console those who found themselves amid labors and torments because of their service to God». ⁵¹ Likewise, in the ordinances of the royal house of Majorca, under the title of *Palatine Laws*, dated 1337, we find these words on the *joglar*:

According to ancient custom, it is permissible to have *joglars* in the houses of princes, for the office of these persons is to spread joy, which kings should strive

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

after and cultivate honorably, so that by means of it they might cast off sadness and wrath, and be able to appear more pleasing before everyone.⁵²

Of itself, the latter was the same as what Llull had already said, although applied to princes and to all Christians who were sad or afflicted because of their service to the Lord.

The literary-joglaresque dimension of Ramon Llull has three main expressions: lyrical, didactic and narrative. The first two are always in rhyme and the last is always in prose, which is likewise eminently didactic. Among the lyrical works, for example, are the *Plant de Nostra Dona* and the *Desconhort*. We will set aside the *Llibre d'Amic e d'Amat* and the separate poetic compositions that appear in *Blanquerna*, because we intend to deal with them in a separate study. Among the rhymed didactic works we would have to include the *Lògica de Alcatzel*, the *Cent noms de Déu*, *Lo pecat d'Adam*, *Regles introductòries* and the *Medicina de Pecat*. In the *Hores de Nostre Dona Santa Maria*, he combines both lyrical and didactic characteristics. And above all *Lo concili* is not only joglaresque, but troubadouresque. According to Montoliu it is, at bottom, a crusaders' song, one of the troubadour genres, albeit in a more complicated structural form than the models we find in Provençal poetry.⁵³ And finally, there are his two great novels, which belong within the *joglaria de gesta*, with the distinctive feature of being *exemplarized* rather than rhymed. They represent, to my way of thinking, the point where the art of *joglaria* joins hands with that of sacred oratory.

The life of Ramon Llull took place during the time of the decadence of the troubadour poetry of Provence, when the troubadours abandoned the South of France and scattered throughout the North of Italy and throughout the Iberian Peninsula, mainly in Catalonia. During this period, the troubadour began to deal with religious and moral themes. As we noted above, the life of

⁵² Menéndez Pidal, p. 140.

⁵³ Montoliu, p. 364, note 1.

Ramon Llull is divided into two unequal parts by his conversion. Before it, he was an accomplished courtly troubadour devoted to composing «*cançons e dictats de les follies d'aquest món...*», in order to flatter and conquer his latest lady love, «*per una sua enamorada*». After his conversion, his interest is focused on conquering the people — mainly Muslims and Jews — in order to transform them. From this moment on, he was no longer driven by the fire of courtly love, but rather by the fire of godly love. From now on, his *Midons* will be the *Amat*, and he will be «*encès en l'amor del Crucifix*» — aflame with love of the Crucified. For this second stage of his life he found that the example of St. Francis of Assisi and his school marvelously served his purposes by allowing him to transfer to the sphere of the divine, many of the elements of troubadour poetry.

Although the concepts of *trobador* and *joglar* are used interchangeably at this time, even in Ramon Llull's own words, we can nevertheless discover a difference between the *trobador* and the *joglar*. For Llull, in every instance the word *trobador* denotes *trobar*, *poiein*, inventing or creating poetry, while for him the word *joglar* denotes divulgation or popularization, the man who goes throughout the world entertaining people great and small, carrying a borrowed, though always entertaining, message. The characteristic of the *trobador* is the pen with which he creates, while that of the *joglar* is the word with which he popularizes, a word that can be complemented by music, song, dance and mime.

One part of Llull's work is still troubadouresque, for example the *Plant*, the *Desconhort* and a few other separate compositions. Nevertheless, the greater part of his literary work is still joglaresque, popular poetry. Doubtless, even his novels, *Blanquerna* and *Félix*, are joglaresque. In them, *dianoia* is decked out in *mythos*. Although they are in prose, they are made to be recited in the palaces of the great and the plazas of the poor. Even Llull's life, his apostolic life, is that of a *joglar a lo diví* who wanders through courts, above all the papal court, with the same air an style as that

of a minstrel striving to transmit a message to the great: a *canço de crenada*. In his art of *joglaria*, Llull does not aim at imposing his beliefs by force, as in the case of the Crusades or in the war against the Albigensians, but rather at convincing. For this reason, some of his works have the form of a *tençó*, a dialectical and counterpointed argument.

There can be no doubt that, if one wants to throw the fullest light on the phenomenon of *joglaria* in the Iberian Peninsula, one must take into account the life and work of Ramon Llull, Ramon Lo Foll.

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