

ESSE AND THE AUTHOR OF THE *LIBER CONTEMPLATIONIS IN DEUM*

In an effort to understand, to some degree at least, the difficulties modern man experiences in the search for some kind of convincing rational demonstrations concerning the existence of a suprasensible realm, specifically the reality of a Divine Being, Jacques Maritain attributes both the difficulties and the consequent failure to the absence from the consciousness of man today of a deep and true "sense of being." The absence of that sense and awareness of being seems to have infected in a very particular manner our knowledge of the physical world, or more accurately the knowledge gained in and by much of the physical sciences today.¹ In a striking contrast with modern physical thought, the scientific knowledge of the Ancients and the Mediaevals made it comparatively easy for them at least to begin to scale the heights of philosophical thought in that most important region of it known as Metaphysics. Their decided advantage in that respect was due in no small measure to that "sense of being which everywhere and always ruled their thought."²

The situation for Metaphysical inquiries was particularly beneficial during medieval times because, generally speaking, a philosopher during the Middle Ages did not experience or labor under the almost dire need in which many a thinker finds himself today, of having to be almost rudely aroused and "awakened to the reality of existence and of his own existence..."³ Almost in all cases on the other hand, we find that a Mediaeval philosopher was possessed of and by the "intuition of being and the implications it bears with it."⁴ Matters, for instance, briefly entered into in a book such as *On Being and Essence* by St. Thomas Aquinas would not have been a revelation to most of its readers. What was investigated on its pages was not deemed beyond the comprehension and understanding of the relatively young tyro who prepared the book, almost as a matter of course, in order to introduce the young students under his care to the mysterious realm, named 'First Philosophy' by Aristotle. The themes treated by Aquinas are basic and constitute in part the heart of philosophy. Yet the treatise itself was not then as urgent as it might have been many centuries later when thinkers seemed to have ceased to

inquire about its type of questions. This statement is not contradicted by the fact that we live today in a century in which, superficially at least, we have experienced a resurrection of metaphysical investigations as evidenced by what appears to be an almost plethora of writings that include in their titles the word 'being' or other terms intimately connected with it. We need only to mention the names of Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, Sartre, Maritain and Gilson to recall that some of the best minds in philosophy today have in some way engaged the question of being, as attested by the titles of some of their outstanding works.⁵

A simple way to demonstrate the importance for philosophy in general of analyses concerning being is to point to the fact that most philosophical schools and movements, as well as certain individual philosophers, are frequently characterized by designations which supposedly indicate their attitude and understanding of being, even if sometimes they choose to speak of it by means of another name or term. 'Idealism' for example ordinarily describes a system of thought that seems consistently to identify what is real with what is thought, what is with what is thought or in thought, being with being thought. The same or another system may be spoken of as 'monistic' if it again consistently reduces being to unity or to oneness, being to being one, in such a way that no meaningful place remains for the multiplicity of substances outside of and other than the One Being or the One. Today it is quite common to come across the thought of a thinker or of a whole school referred to as 'essentialist' or 'existentialist' according as it is presumed to reduce essence to existence or viceversa, or at least to assign such a decisive primacy to one or the other as to make the remaining one practically meaningless.⁶ As is well known, this last way of describing individuals and schools has become very widespread as a result of the writings of the principal representatives of what today ordinarily goes by the name of 'Existentialism'. It is also well known that within this movement, and due in some measure to the influence of one or another type of Idealism or Relativism, 'existence' describes the condition of human existence, to the exclusion almost of all else that herefore may have been thought to exist.

Man stands today in need of regaining a genuine intellectual appreciation of and feeling for the ontological roots and other basic aspects of the tremendous world of our experience. And if philosophy intends to remain true to its authentic character and to provide man with the human wisdom that it alone can yield, then it must come to realize again the fundamental importance for itself and for the human family of a sound understanding and response to what is most basic in all that is real, to what we capture and yet seem to conceal in the word 'being'. Unless it can be conclusively shown that men who preceded us have failed completely or have succeeded but little, it may not be pointless or

incorrect to recommend ourselves to a renewal of interest in the thought and in the writings of the most prominent of our mediaeval philosophical forbears. The philosopher-historian Etienne Gilson has never tired of insisting on what both he and others rightly consider the existential character of the philosophical wisdom and vision of the Angelic Doctor. Were we to agree with Gilson however, in his appraisal of many, if not most, of the other outstanding Schoolmen, they would have to be considered essentialist philosophers who spoke of being in terms that suggest a thorough reduction of it to only one of its constituent aspects, and that aspect not the most basic one, namely essence.⁷ Doubtless we cannot but agree with the view that recognizes that the genius of Aquinas led him, in his writings, for the first time (some would add for the last time until very recently) to bring out in clear unmistakable terms and to insist on the primacy that belongs to existence, to the act-of-existing or the act-of-being, to *esse* in any adequate and correct analysis of being or of what is.⁸ Not that Aquinas denied, nor should we for that matter deny, the legitimate and indispensable role that essence, as a second constitutive element, has within the inner structure or the heart of any finite being. Essence had to and must still be taken into account, rather than denied or ignored, in a truly metaphysical analysis. But this does not permit us to forget that it is *esse*, the act-of-to-be as "the act of all acts, the perfection of all perfections"⁹ that makes it possible for something actually to be or to exist, and therefore to deserve properly to be called 'being'. It is on its account that the same thing has being or is a being, for the simple reason that is is the act-of-being or existence which makes of something more than just a possibility. Something is a reality or a being, precisely because it shares in or possesses in its own distinctive way an *esse* or a to-be through which and by means of which it exists or is.¹⁰

Now, although it cannot be gainsaid that the writings of the Doctor of the Schools abound in statements and repeated allusions to the fundamental character of *esse* in things that are known as beings, in things that can rightly be said to be, it ought not to come as a total surprize to encounter other outstanding Mediaeval writers who had a striking feeling and admiration for, and vivid insights into that supreme value or perfection that is being, *esse*, or to-be. We may read in one of the writings of Aquinas that an object or a reality is denominates an '*ens*', that is a 'being', because of the fact that it enjoys, has or is in *esse*.¹¹ But this certainly would not prohibit or prevent others from being as keenly aware and appreciative of that perfection of all perfections, without which neither we nor other realities would have or be anything to speak about for the simple reason that neither we nor they would then be anything at all.

Besides Aquinas other Mediaeval thinkers and writers had well

learned the lesson taught by the Masters of Greek philosophy, Plato and Aristotle, that the summit of philosophy may be and is reached only when or after we arrive at Dialectics or First Philosophy. It is only then that a philosopher may truly say that he has come upon the knowledge of what truly is, of beings precisely as beings. How else would a Mediaeval metaphysician really go beyond a pure natural philosophy or a philosophy of nature, unless his intellectual vision was constantly directed towards the being of all that is, in order to come gradually and perseveringly to some grasp of the First Cause or Causes of what is most intimate to and basic in the constitution of anything that is, i.e., its being? Through its being already everything that is real, even if linked with a physical material nature, in a literal sense transcends the realm of nature, of what is purely physical, and may appropriately therefore, be looked upon as genuinely metaphysical, deep down in its roots. The metaphysical realm has always had a very particular meaning for those philosophers who with Aquinas, share in the heritage of Christian Wisdom. As Christian thinkers, our Mediaeval ancestors too had very early learned that theirs was a God Who Is, a God whose creative efficacy caused things to exist or to be from literally nothing and therefore, in an absolute fashion. Heretofore those things had been simply nothing for of and in themselves they had no being through which they might have existed.

It is not a difficult task to show that Ramon Lull ought to be counted amongst those thirteenth and fourteenth century writers who developed and carried on within the authentic metaphysical tradition proper to Christian philosophy. This statement may come as a total surprize only to those who have read and known about him exclusively as the inventor of a combinatory *Art* that feebly anticipated the logical schemes of Leibnitz' *Ars Combinatoria* and of an *Art* that had failed to make much of an impression on one of the great initiators of Modern Philosophy, the Frenchman René Descartes.¹² The surprize may be almost as great for other readers with a less superficial but still exclusive acquaintance with the erstwhile better known Lullian *Art*. But it should be minimal or non-existent at all in students and readers familiar with at least a few of the principal writings of Lull, outside of those related to his famous *Art*. Perhaps the quickest and easiest way to convince any one of Lull's impressive and contagious 'sense of being', such that we may rightly designate his thought as genuinely metaphysical in its most important and basic aspects, is to call his attention to the partially complete edition of the *Opera* of Ramon Lull prepared at the city of Mainz between the years 1721 and 1742.

Usually referred to as the Mainz edition, it is also described as the Ivo Salzinger edition in recognition of its industrious and learned editor.¹³

A cursory reading of particularly the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*:

one of the earliest and most magnificent literary productions to come forth from the prolific hands of the Mediaeval Mallorcan philosopher, suffices to establish beyond reasonable doubt the decisive place which 'to-be' or 'being' occupied in his searching and penetrating mind. As if intent on showing the author's keen interest regarding being, the scholars commissioned or entrusted with the preparation of the text of the treatises ultimately included in the edition frequently italicized the word 'esse', especially in instances when the context clearly indicated that it had been used existentially, that is, with the meaning of 'to exist'. This leads the reader immediately to being struck by the realization of how often, already at the very beginning of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*, as well as later on, that infinitive form of the verb 'to be' appears, over and over again. This, without including the perhaps expectedly numerous times when the same verb is used in a simply non-existential role either as an auxiliary or a copulative verb. Some one may point out that the Latin text is only a translation from an earlier original Catalan version that Lull himself prepared from an even earlier version in the Arabic Language.¹⁴ To that one can only say that, as is the case with most of the writings by the same author which have come down to our day in their Latin text—and they are by far the largest number—the Latin version was prepared by the author himself or by an associate under his direct and immediate supervision. At the very least the translation was examined by the author before it was allowed to be released under his name.¹⁵ Moreover it requires only a little attention to take notice of the faithfulness with which the meaning of the Catalan text of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* has been rendered and preserved in the Latin version. It will soon be noted too, that the Catalan 'esser', with or without an article before it, is regularly rendered by the Latin 'esse'.

As already suggested, one need not read far into the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* before he is made well aware of the author's keen and enthusiastic intellectual concern for and commitment to being. After an introductory chapter, the first three chapters of that theological encyclopaedic work have for their subject-matter of theme, clearly enunciated in their titles, the *esse* or the existence of the entities most likely to interest man, namely God, himself and other rational beings like him.¹⁶ And though no separate treatment is given to being itself until the fourth book in the 227th chapter, the all-pervasiveness and basic character of the perfection of *esse* looms large and clear at the beginning of the book. A proof of this lies in the admittedly large number of times that the word 'esse' appears in those few early chapters. Limiting the count to instances in which the word is used existentially, whether as the infinitive form of the verb 'to be' or as a noun or a substantive infinitive (in Catalan the distinction is often made easier by the presence of an article before

'*esser*') we find that it was used a total of seventeen times in the first chapter alone, forty-four times in the second chapter, and nineteen times in the third chapter. In other words in the relatively short space of three chapters the existential word '*esse*' appears eighty times, without including any other form or tense of the verb. All of this in a book that has been described as one that contains, when not already well formed, at least in a germ state ready for future development, most of the principal ideas that would later distinguish and unify the philosophical vision of the Illuminated Doctor.¹⁷

Students accustomed to speaking of being in terms of the familiar analysis of essence and existence may object of the apparent absence of that distinction in one of the earliest but major works of an author who insists on and stresses so clearly the perfection of being. To them it must be answered that the distinction was clearly known and accepted by him. In one of his other early writings we find these lines:

Secundum discursum ipsorum F. G. recolit B. in creaturis inter esse et essentiam differentiam esse; quia vero A. cum majori nobilitate et virtute concordat, quam creatura, oportet, quod inter divinam essentiam et divinum esse nulla differentia sit.¹⁸

What is read in many of his other works only reinforces the conviction that the author of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* possessed a deep awareness of the radical ontological worth of the perfection without which plainly nothing would be in existence. The reader soon comes to be certain that he is dealing with a thinker who has repeatedly and intensely experienced that intellectual vision or intuition that yields not only an authentic philosopher, but also one who is a metaphysician.¹⁹

The being Lull speaks of, which he had intellectually experienced and grasped, is none other than the being that renders actual those beings that, because of it, literally are, or exist, for themselves. Such beings exist extramentally, "*in re, extra vocem et etiam animam.*"²⁰ In other words, they exist for and in themselves, independently of whatever other mode of being they may be said to possess elsewhere, be it in a more noble way within and as part of the divine knowledge which is one and identical with the Creator's being, or in a less exalted one in the minds of other intellectual beings to whom they become present by and in their thought. Lull readily granted that objects and other entities may correctly be said to be when they are known or thought about. But this is very different from what occurs and from what we have when they possess an independent extramental being, independent not in origin and absolutely, save for the Divine Essence, but in that they are other than what is their idea or the thought about or of them. In the *Liber Miran-*

darum Demonstrationum he wrote:

Notum est, quod esse creaturarum sit in tribus modis: unus est, quod omnes creaturae sint in sapientia Dei; alter est, quod sint formaliter in anima, hoc est, in intellectu, qui illas intelligit; tertius est, quod sint in se ipsis.²¹

Of these three ways of being, the being clearly and vividly before the mind and soul of Lull was none other than the perfection of existence which alone permits us in the true sense of the word to designate something as real, or indeed as a real being. Such a being is real and exists extramentally because it is so fully constituted that it can and does exist by itself independently of, as other than, our thought. As stated before, that independence does not entail that the beings or realities in question do not receive their being originally and ultimately from the Supreme Existent, the Supernal *Esse* and Supreme Essence, who alone of all beings has the required nobility and perfection of being in order to be in *esse* eternally and infinitely through and because of Itself.²² It was not his own thought, or the thought of others in the Supreme Mind, or even the being of himself or of others as present in his or some one else's thought and knowledge that ordinarily occupied the mind and drew the admiration of the author of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*, wonderful as those thoughts and that being in thought may be. What he constantly contemplated and extolled was the being proper to each thing considered in itself, no matter how humble or exalted that particular thing may be. The *esse* could very well be that of the smallest inanimate object or it could be that of the Supreme *Bonitas*, one with the Supreme *Esse*, in whom an infinite to-be and a perfect to-be coincide and are perfectly one.²³ In either case it was the *esse* that allowed them to be in themselves, *in re, extra vocem et animam*.

Certainly the titles of the chapters mentioned above show clearly and plainly that the being that inspired the wonder and joyful amazement of the Mallorcan philosopher does not reside or live in a realm of pure abstractions. Because of his lively concern with beings that exist concretely in the realm of objective reality it may be said of him that he had no philosophy to teach other than the one he drew out of his own existence and that of others. Because of that, what Gilson has written of the Socrates of old could also be said of Lull, namely that "he had no philosophy, he was it."²⁴ What interested him passionately was not an abstract existence, one that was some kind of neutral or isolated quality or condition which might be found or conceived apart by itself, a separate or separable property from those existents who are and exist through it or are one with it. Rather it was the existence of concrete existents which owe their being and concreteness to that existence whereby they are.

If a writing deserves to be characterized as metaphysical because of

its rational and penetrating examination and appreciation of reality from the standpoint of its being, —this in accordance with the Greek Philosopher's definition of Primary or First Philosophy as the scientific knowledge of being as being,— then it is correct to describe the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* as a metaphysical work. We are not thereby excluded or prohibited from finding ample justification for the use of other descriptions, particularly when we are dealing with a book of an admittedly encyclopaedic scope and one that is also basically theological. Its encyclopaedic character should immediately be an indicator that the admiration for what is in existence and for existence itself present in the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* is not limited exclusively to the being of God and the existence of men. The being of other, sometimes less noble, realities is also extolled on its pages. No created being could be totally incapable of arousing interest within the heart of one to whom a great *Art* was possible

only if, all creatures being so many images of God, or at least his more or less remote imitations, their fundamental properties, and the mutual relations of these properties, enable us to know the nature and attributes of God.²⁵

As proof of this all-encompassing admiration one may recall to mind the wonderful pages of *Blanquerna* and of *Felix or The Book of Marvels*.²⁶

There is no need however, to go beyond the early written *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* to come across repeated chapters voicing admiration and gladness over the reality of all created beings, intellectual or corporeal, rational or non-rational, spiritual or material, knowing and without knowledge. All that is in existence, no matter how small or superficially insignificant, can and may be an occasion for a man to marvel at and to arouse in him a prayerful admiration for the wonderful gift all existents have received, the gift of being, and some even of life. Chapter after chapter sings of the magnificent generosity of a Creator who in his eternal Goodness and infinite Power has brought into being something that heretofore had been literally nothing.²⁷ Amongst the new created entities stand out first, those noble spiritual substances we know as the angels.²⁸ A little lower in excellence we find other created beings in possession of, at least in part, a material element or aspect. But even these creatures provide abundant reasons for us to marvel at their absolute reduction, directly or indirectly, from nothingness into a being. That reduction alone has enabled them to come into being at all. Occupying the lowest rung of the ladder or scale of being one may speak of a prime matter produced out of nothing, a matter that is not produced from some pre-existing elements or from the substance of the Uncreated Being.²⁹ When it was made, prime matter became at once the primordial, formless and characterless stuff out of which corporeal things were to be subse-

quently made.³⁰ First, it enters into the five elements which are then distributed into all the terrestrial and celestial bodies.³¹ Among the terrestrial beings one may well consider the many metals, of so great use and value in the lives of men,³² or one may mention the plants, those creatures endowed with a vegetative nature.³³ Higher than the mentioned terrestrial natures but a little less excellent than angels are the various types and forms of animals.³⁴ These with and in the species 'man' combine or bring together in the most intimate conjunction the *esse* of a spiritual or intellectual order and the *esse* of a corporeal condition.³⁵

Amongst the objects that human thought grasps or in some limited fashion apprehends being stands out in a peculiar and privileged position. This is brought out and made manifest by a striking linguistic fact. A number of languages, ancient and modern, encounter difficulties when giving expression to naming that which comes to our minds when we think or affirm being. This results in the apparent ambiguity enveloping the word. Could it be that the linguistic ambiguities and puzzles connected with the word 'being' arise as adumbrations of the fundamental, universal and transcendent character of that which being is, of that which makes a thing to exist extramentally from within itself and which we encounter in all that in some manner exists in its own right, *in re, et extra vocem et etiam animam*? There is of course, the more general incommensurability that obtains between the more material faculty of speech and the immaterial thought that language endeavors but often fails adequately to express or at least comes short of capturing sufficiently well.³⁶ And we know also that thought itself is not without its weaknesses for it also fails to comprehend fully within itself the complete and entire being of a single finite reality, including our own.³⁷

A rather obvious ambiguity that thinkers have noted in connection with the term 'being' is that in some languages one and the same word is used to describe 1) 'that which is' and 2) the wellnigh impossible-to-name quality or feature which yet we must affirm as the characteristic that makes 'what is' or 'that which is' simply to be or to exist. We know that in English the word 'being' may at times be given the role of a noun and, in that case, it may have either the meaning of 'that which is', 'something that is', or the second and distinct meaning of 'existence'. Also the same word can be declared to be the present participle or the gerund of the verb 'to be', the verb that, as it will be seen again, has as one of its principal meanings that of 'to exist'.³⁸ Another way of saying this is that 'being' may "mean either the subject that exists or the act that renders that subject existent."³⁹ In the English language the ambiguity of 'being' sometimes disappears when the word is preceded by an article. Both the definite and the indefinite articles, as well as the addition of the plural-designating 's' to the word 'being', are sufficient to make it clear

that we are dealing with a noun, and that it stands for the subject(s) that exist(s) or for the act-of-existence whereby entities are.⁴⁰

Like English, the French and Italian languages also utilize one word to express what we have been speaking of. '*Etre*' is the French word for 'being' and '*essere*' the Italian one. In both cases one can readily see that the preference has been now, not for the participial or gerund form of English usage, but for the equivalent of the infinitive 'to be'. In other words, French and Italian fall back upon the infinitive form of the verb 'to be' and use it as a noun, in addition to its verbal form.⁴¹ When we turn to the Castilian or Spanish language we find it in the identical situation as French and Italian, a not strange occurrence since all three languages have been derived from the tongue spoken by the Romans, the conquerors who for centuries ruled the Mediterranean world. Like the other two previously mentioned romance languages, Spanish utilizes the infinitive form of the verb 'to be', i.e., '*ser*' either as a noun, with nearly the same meaning and function that the English 'being' has or as the infinitive of the verb 'to be', with both the signification of 'to exist' and its nonexistential copulative role. The writings of Martin Heidegger indicate that a similar situation obtains in the German language, and '*sein*' invites a parallel discussion.

On the testimony of Ramon Lull himself, we know that his writings were prepared in at least one, sometimes two, and occasionally three, of these languages: Catalan, his native tongue, Latin, the language of the educated and of the schools, and Arabic spoken by many in thirteenth century Mallorca and other parts of Spain recently recovered from the Moors or still under their rule. Unfortunately due to understandable historical circumstances none of the Arabic writings or versions are known to be extant. But it is certain that at least five or six were prepared by Lull.⁴² Of the books written in both of the other two languages however, we are fortunate still to have a total of 242 books, —not all of equal length and value—. Of them only fifty-two are today known in their Catalan versions. Some of the same fifty-two books are also preserved in Latin, in addition to the other 148 which are known only by their Latin text.⁴³ Now if we pause to consider the two languages made use of by Lull in his extant writings, one of them, his native tongue Catalan, has a great similarity to the previously mentioned romance languages. Like them, it traces its beginnings back to Latin. It is also like them in that in Catalan the word '*esser*' functions and has the meanings of the Spanish '*ser*', the French '*être*' and the Italian '*essere*'. If we next turn to the Latin language itself, whence the romance languages were derived, not strangely we also discover in it that one and the same word '*ens*' manifests a similar ambiguity of meaning and of usage. It may be used as participial verb-form or as a noun, subject to declension cases. It

may also mean a subject with the act-of-existence or the perfection of being itself. And of course, it can function as a participle of the verb 'esse'.⁴⁴ To what has been said of 'ens', it needs to be added that, as a matter of fact, the same ambiguity applies to and has been noted in connection with the infinitive 'esse' in the writings of Mediaeval writers, including St. Tomas Aquinas.⁴⁵

An examination of the writings of Lull on this point of the language concerning being, shows that frequently he had recourse to the Latin 'esse' and to the Catalan 'esser' when he wished to name that which we in English designate as 'being'. And of course, as the infinitives of their respective verbs, they may also be translated as 'to be'. Less frequently, except for many *opuscula* written in his late years, did he utilize the Latin 'ens'. In most of the early writings when that word appears it conveys or translates the rather vague Catalan 'cosa' or the English 'thing'.⁴⁶ In the later writings, however, particularly in the *opuscula* of the Messina and Tunis periods, a little before his death at the end of 1315 or the early part of 1316, the words 'ens' and 'entia' signify more often than not the subject(s) that exist(s). Occasionally they stand for the property or perfection of being, expressed abstractly, as it were, in separation from the subjects that exist.⁴⁷ It may also be noted that occasionally Lull relied on the word 'essentia', as he tells us in the *Ars Brevis*,⁴⁸ to designate the perfection of being described in its purity as the entitative and dynamic quality through whose presence and possession only beings are or exist. In other words 'essentia' may name, abstractly as it were, (because the focus of our attention is fully and exclusively on it) what we signify concretely by means of the word 'being', i.e., 'esse'. Lull suggests that we may do something very similar when we speak of 'bonitas' and 'bonum',⁴⁹ provided we mean the words in the manner in which he intended them.

As already noted, the reading of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* shows almost immediately that, in addition to its role and function of an auxiliary verb, 'to be' is used regularly also with the existential meaning of 'to exist'. This usage is not limited for it extends to many other books by the same author. Likewise the infinitive forms 'esse' and 'esser' are also very frequently used as is they were nouns with the signification of 'the perfection-of-being'. That meaning is of course also intended by the verb itself when it is used existentially and with the various requirements of a verb. But it is rather exceptionally that the infinitive form, either in Catalan or in Latin, allows for a translation into 'a being' or 'beings'. In other words, it is only in rare instances that Lull relies on 'esse' or 'esser' to designate a concrete subject, one that has existence. There are two or three occasions however, in which it is clear that the infinitive form must be translated as 'a being'.

That the verb 'to be', including the case when its infinitive form is used substantively as a noun, was frequently intended by the author of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* to signify the possession and active exercise of the act-of-existence, as in the well-known "I think, therefore I am" of Rene Descartes, can be easily shown. For instance he writes thus: "Deus Pater, Domine universorum, quae sunt!"⁵⁰ Again: "O Domine Creator universorum, quae sunt!"⁵¹ Also: "...ut possimus probare, unum Deum esse, qui sine suis dignitatibus non posset esse: ut vero possimus probare, Deum esse..."⁵² One of the rules of the *Great Art* Lull designated as 'utrum' and he is clear that by it we should understand: "utrum hoc de quo quaeritur, sit, vel non sit."⁵³

Both in Catalan and Latin, the use of the verb 'to be' in the infinitive form and with the meaning of 'existential act' or 'existence' is made evident by certain phrases that Lull seemed to enjoy repeating. They are variations of "esse in esse" or "habere esse." Both of these basic expressions, particularly the first one, Lull preferred to simply saying: 'esse', 'to be' or 'to exist'. For example, in the first few chapters of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* he writes: "... est certe rationabile, quod nos, qui scimus, quod Tu sis in esse, laetemur in tuo esse, quia est in esse, et non in privatione..."⁵⁴ Again: "Nam homo debet laetari, quia ipse est in esse, et non est privatus ipso esse; igitur nos, qui sumus certi quod simus in esse, laetabimur; nam quinque sensus nobis demonstrant esse, in quo sumus..."⁵⁵ And: "...et nobis videtur, quod ipse non habuerit esse, nisi pro hoc mundo..."⁵⁶ A last example: "...quibus potest homo vere percipere et cognoscere, quod Tu sis in esse, hoc est, quod habeas esse; quia esse, in quo Tu es et tua Essentia, est idem; sed quia inquirimus, an Tu sis in esse..."⁵⁷

One may, almost at random, pick any passage of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* to demonstrate conclusively the existential meaning of the verb 'to be' for its author. With almost equal facility one could also show that 'esse' and 'esser' are used as nouns. This task is sometimes made easier when either word is accompanied by an adjective. And with the Catalan 'esser' the matter is simpler whenever the word is preceded by the definite article. We may give two or three examples: "Tibi, Domine, sit gloria... quod ei dederis esse humanum, quod est valde altum et nobile donum."⁵⁸ "Quando contingit, quod ego cogitem in eventum mei esse, et videam, quod esse hominis sit nobilius esse, quod Tu creasti..."⁵⁹ In the Catalan language, we have the beginning of a passage quoted before: "... atorgada cosa es que 1 esser de les creatures e en. iij. maneres..."⁶⁰

What, we may ask, can be said of the Latin word 'existentia' and of the corresponding verb 'existere'? In the early writings, these two Latin terms with all of their inflections were used rather sparingly, mostly with

a meaning that is not quite the one the words carry or connote today.⁶¹ Their not too definite existential meaning reminds one of something written by Etienne Gilson. Speaking of the usage of 'existere' during the century in which St. Thomas Aquinas lived, i.e., the thirteenth century, he tells us that the word had not yet clearly acquired the present meaning of 'actual existence' which it was to receive and have later on.⁶² Let us keep in mind that nearly three fourths of Lull's fruitful octogenarian life and two thirds of his writing years were concluded prior to the close of that bright century of Mediaeval Scholasticism. When we examine the later books and *opuscula*⁶³ we then find a further confirmation of Gilson's assertion for we come across an increased number of times in which Lull used the noun 'existentia' and the verb 'existere', and this with significations very close to those they have today. This occurs particularly in phrases that contrast doing and acting on the one hand, versus the underlying ontological structure of being from which action flows on the other. That ontological base or core would be inactive, inert and meaningless without its intrinsic dynamism that provided the crux of Lull's attempted rational trinitarian 'demonstrations'. And that inner dynamism became then the source that may overflow outwardly into what to others is a more tangible or visible action. From this it is clear in any case that, when Lull throughout his writing years, used the noun 'esse' and the verb 'esse', not intending it simply as an auxiliary or a copulative attributive verb, he gave to those words the meanings ordinarily associated with the noun 'existence' and the verb 'to exist'. Undoubtedly, the fact that the substantive noun 'esse' is actually the infinitive form of the verb 'esse' means that what was intended by the thirteenth century writer was, and is, ordinarily understood by the verb. We find analogous usages when Lull, for instance, sometimes speaks of 'agere' and of 'posse' instead of 'actio' and 'potentia'.⁶⁴ It only needs to be added that when in later writings, we find the words 'existentia' and 'to exist' we must remember that he then also had in mind what these words have since then ordinarily conveyed, without the corruptions to which existentialist philosophers have today exposed them when they arbitrarily corrupt their meaning and say that to exist is "to stand outside oneself."⁶⁵ What Maritain asserts of the verb 'to exist' in connection with the statement 'God exists' may also be applied to the meaning attached to 'to be' by the author of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*: "To say 'God is' and 'God exists' is to say exactly the same thing. One speaks the language of simple truth in speaking of the ways through which it is shown that God is, or that God exists."⁶⁶

We have seen above that Lull was clearly aware of the three ways wherein things may properly be said to be: 1) in the wisdom of God, 2) in the knowledge had of them by intellectual beings other than the Supre-

mely Perfect Being and 3) in themselves, i.e., *in re, extra vocem et etiam animam*. He could also be more detailed or specific for in other places he describes the various types of beings that we may choose to consider. Certainly one may speak of many of the branches of the tree of being which provide the subject matter of philosophy. And these are:

Ens, quod est Deus, ens, quod non est Deus. Ens, quod est reale, et ens, quod est phantasticum. Ens, quod est genus, et ens, quod est species. Ens, quod est movens, et ens, quod est mobile. Ens, quod est unitas, et ens, quod est pluralitas. Ens, quod est abstractum, et ens, quod est concretum. Ens, quod est intensum, et ens, quod est extensum. Ens, quod est similitudo, et ens, quod est dissimilitudo. Ens. Quod est generatio, et ens, quod est corruptio.⁶⁷

But even though he recognizes three principal ways of being with all their possible concrete applications, as indicated in the passage just quoted, Lull's thought is mainly directed to that being *in re, extra vocem et etiam animam* that we also call real being. This is the being which, as said before, enables and makes things to exist in themselves extramentally, with an independence that is of course, not absolute since they still receive their existence from an efficient cause outside themselves. But their independence is complete in the sense that they are not identical with a thought about them in the minds of either men or God. This is the kind of being that concerns the authentic metaphysician for "Metaphysica enim considerat res, quae sunt extra animam, prout conveniunt in ratione entis."⁶⁸

When one reads the opening chapters of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* one is soon struck by the joyful strain that pervades nearly every line. The author's blissful attitude responded clearly to his keen intellectual grasp of and feeling for the meaning and value of existence in whatever form or expression it might take. A renunciation of wealth and worldly honors in order to answer the higher call to work towards the advancement of Christendom in a way he sincerely believed would prove efficacious did not entail, as it had not done so for Francis of Assisi either, that Lull was therefore barred from taking pleasure and delight in the thought and contemplation of the existence of things beautiful and good. In his view, it is right and reasonable; and men do well when they delight at seeing the greenery of blossoming trees beautifully adorned with colorful flowers and fruits, watered by winding clear streams and planted in lovely meadows or shade-providing forests.⁶⁹ Why should their joy be lesser, the joy that men experience when they meditate upon the knowledge that they have "quod videant et sciant se esse in esse; nam qui laetatur de bonitate et pulchritudine, quae est extra se, multo magis

debet laetari, de ea, quae est intra se.”⁷⁰ Again, do we not see that beasts, according to their own kind, are blissful and go about running and skipping in a very playful mood? Do not the innumerable birds of the air do likewise as they fly and sing in the sky? Even the fishes of the sea appear gleefully to swim about in the waters of the dark ocean and blue lakes.⁷¹ If matters stand thus with animals and birds that do not think, it must be obvious that it is fittingly and totally in accord with reason that men who are conscious of their own existence rejoice exceedingly on its account since we have the knowledge that “multo melius esse in esse, quam eset, si non essemus in esse.”⁷² In fact we should conclude, not only that it is in perfect accord with reason but also that it is even a reverent duty and “homo debet multum laetari, quia ipse est in esse, et non est privatus ipso esse.”⁷³ The being and existence that we possess is not a matter of doubt for it is well attested. We know of it with both our intellect and senses “nam quinque sensus nobis demonstrant esse, in quo sumus, quia oculis videmus, et auribus audimus, et naribus odoramur et ore gustamus, et carne sentimus.”⁷⁴ Does it not follow logically that since “ego in veritate sciam, me esse in esse, et videam, meum esse nullo modo esse in privatione, debeo inde laetari in tantum, quod tristitia nullo modo sit in me”? The joy and happiness that man ought to have during the moments when he thinks of the immeasurably great good that is his simply through the fact that he is in existence, that he possesses being, should be so overpowering that he should appear as a man intoxicated or at least as one dreaming. He should be as the man who suddenly awakens from a distressing nightmare in which he has envisioned himself dead to find himself in the full vigor of life.⁷⁵

There is not the slightest doubt that this all-pervasive happiness over the simple and glorious fact that we are in being can only be had and shared by a person who, in at least a feeble fashion, begins to grasp the tremendous value of existence with something at least approaching the condition of a genuine appreciation of its decisive meaning and worth. Such a person will readily recognize that, with the possible exception of the man who dies unreconciled to his Maker, “esse in esse”, i.e., to have existence is by far a greater value than to be without that precious gift. Provided of course that a person lives in accordance with the requirements of being itself, to the question of ‘whether to be or not to be is preferable’ there is but only one possible response. For on the one hand we have what is, or being, and on the other, nothing. And how can one compare them, when nothing does not provide us with something to compare? A man with a sound mind will not hesitate therefore, concerning the proper attitude and response he should take whenever a doubt should creep into his mind. He will know well: “...quid mihi plus valeat, vel quod injurietur, illudari, et vilipendari, et sim in esse, vel quod

non illudar, et non sim in esse."⁷⁶ Certainly he will gladly choose to endure hunger and thirst, poverty and sufferings, great and small, if therein only lies the path to existence. And he will be able to see all things in their proper perspective because he will never forget that "mihi melius sit esse in esse, quam si non essem in esse."⁷⁷ As long as life will last for him, reason will demonstrate that "melius mihi sit, quod sim in esse sustinendo laborem, quam non habere esse."⁷⁸ Instead of growing sad and dejected over the trials and tribulations of life, the man convinced of the magnificense of the gift of being and existence, particularly of an existence as a human being —because "esse hominis sit nobilius esse, quod Tu creasti,—"⁷⁹ will scarcely be able to contain his happiness. As a matter of fact that happiness will extend to every part of his being, including every limb of his body. All of them, not only his heart and soul, have been endowed with existence and therefore, a man's joy should spread over to them also.⁸⁰

Of course, it is reasonable that each one of us rejoice because we are individually in existence. But it is also most reasonable that we acknowledge the obligation to experience joy over the being of one another, and this just like if the being of some one else were our own.⁸¹ The being of other human beings ought to occasion in us, or be a recognizable cause of, as much joy, if only of course, we are good men. To a man of virtue whatever is good, no matter where or how found, is an occasion for gladness. And, if we think but a little, we shall easily recall that the being of another man is in itself a great good. Should a man prove better than ourselves because of a life lived closer to the Creator, it is only logical and right that we concede that the occasion for rejoicing is greater than the reasons for rejoicing that we may have over our own being. At least we should not allow ourselves to be less happy or sad since, in the instance of the man better than myself, a greater good follows and flows from his existence than from mine.⁸² Every man should find this duty to rejoice, on account of the fact that others are in existence and have being, an easy duty to carry out. Indeed it almost seems an inclination given by nature, shared by all men and even non-rational animals, for each one to find pleasure and comfort in the company of his fellows. To be alone, without any friends or relatives, without at least the company of another single human being is something men have always found repugnant, for it saddens and terrifies most of them.⁸³ Have we not observed how men assist and help each other in their various tasks and in the labors each undertakes for the purpose of acquiring material goods needed for, or at least helpful towards, a good life? Is it not a cause for wonder that men should ever fail to rejoice in the good each one knows another man has by the simple and obvious fact that they are and that they are human beings?⁸⁴ Should it ever occur that we are unable to grow happy in the

good of the existence of others for their own sake, at least we ought to find many and ample reasons to rejoice over their being because of the good that comes into our way on their account. None may deny however, that in this case there is a serious question about the authenticity of my love and happiness since I would then experience them rather on my account than theirs.⁸⁵ The obligation to share in the happiness of others because they are existence will be satisfied only when we do not exclude a single human being. Our duty to be glad and happy extends not only to the existence of the good and just, but also to the existence of the evil and unjust. In the case of the latter it is useful to recall that the designs and justice of God are still fulfilled in the being of such men, and it is for that reason that we still have occasion to celebrate.⁸⁶

Now grave and great as it is "quod ego sim obligatus ad laetandum de meo esse, et de esse mei proximi, sed tota ista obligatio est quasi nihil respectu obligationis, in qua sum, laetandi de tuo esse."⁸⁷ Man is not only obligated to find pleasure and joy in the Being of God, but he soon discovers, that it is impossible to find valid and enduring reasons for rejoicing over his own existence except after he has first learnt to delight in the Being of God.⁸⁸ This is therefore, and indeed, a most pleasant, fitting and reasonable obligation, one that confers great benefits on each one of us. Shall we find a man who fails to experience joy if he makes the discovery of a precious stone, one of exceeding value or some other great treasure? Is there a man who will not grow happy when he at long last meets a brother or a son, unseen for many long years because of unavoidable trips to faraway distant lands? Certainly such men would have legitimate occasions to celebrate, even though fully aware that neither stone or treasure nor brother or son can bring any man to life, cure him of sickness, grant forgiveness of sins and lead into the everlasting life of heaven.⁸⁹ Certainly it should be granted that it is

certe rationabile, quod nos, qui scimus, quod Tu sis in esse, laetemur in tuo esse, quia est in esse, et non in privatione; nam qui laetatur de inventione rei finitae, est valde mirabile, si non laetatur de inventione rei infinitae.⁹⁰

A man who fits the description at the end of this passage would assuredly give evidence of the height of foolishness for he utterly fails when, within his own mind, he assigns a totally inadequate value to an Infinite Being, the Creator and Father who gives life and promises eternal joy.⁹¹ Let us think of men who decorate their homes and who see to it that they themselves, their children and their servants refrain from servile work on feast days and have the proper rest and leisure, fittingly to celebrate those happy occasions. Ought we not immediately to decide to begin an unbroken and unceasing celebration that, as far as it lies within our power, will be unending and everlasting in acknowledgement and blissful acceptance

of the Being of that Lord who has given us the grace to find him?⁹² To experience authentic joy and deeply felt gladness whenever we think of the Being of the Lord is a gift we must pray for and be thankful for. That gift and grace are, and will always be, more than our finite nature is able to deserve and to contain. For it is only with God's grace and favor that it can happen to a man that "*suum cor natet in gaudio et laetitia, sicut piscis natans per mare; quod gaudium et laetitia, Domine, illi tunc venit quando considerat, quod tuum esse sit in esse.*"⁹³

The exultation and joyful attitude towards being and existence in their many forms, repeatedly and clearly expressed in the writings of the Illuminated Doctor, stand out in stark and vivid contrast to the voices of anguish, anxiety, boredom and outright disgust that we sometimes read in and hear from our contemporary non-Christian Existentialist thinkers. Without the slightest doubt, underneath such striking differences lies the blissful confidence that the Mediaeval thinker had in the ultimate meaningfulness of existence. Reality is basically in accord with reason, if only we do not arbitrarily limit the understanding of the latter so as to exclude effectively the workings and designs of a Creative Intellect and Reason. Within the context of a Christian thought such as Lull's, whatever being has existence finds a justification and final explanation in the wise and just dealings of a Creator whose Being of course, is not itself an anomaly. It is rather something absolutely required by its own singular perfection and nobility. "*Nihil est in esse, Domine, quod habeat Dignitatem et proprietatem essendi Deus, nisi Tu tantum...*"⁹⁴ The God the Christian worships is a Lord who is just not only in his dealings but also in his own Being and with the being of all created things.⁹⁵ For "*...nisi justum esset quod nos essemus in esse, non essemus; et, nisi justum et rationale esset quod essemus in adeo nobili dispositione, non haberemus adeo nobile esse sicut habemus...*"⁹⁶

We have received existence from One who is the "*primum bonum mei esse, et prima causa, quae amat et dirigit meum esse*"⁹⁷ and guides it therefore, under His own, always giving being to our being. From His invisible hand we have originally received and continue at each moment to receive our being and existence simply because in His eternal wisdom and freedom He has willed to grant us being. Were it not that the gift is unceasingly renewed by Him who alone has the power to sustain us in and with the same being He gave us initially and so generously, we would be no longer, for immediately and instantly we would perish and return to that state of nothingness from which we sprang forth through His gift of being.⁹⁸ Finite as we are, and of ourselves not worthy or capable of possessing being as something strictly due to our nature on account of some ownership title or of an exclusive and intrinsic worth rooted in our being, we ought always to remember that "*sumus finiti intra mundum,*

sumus finiti in esse et in operibus intra magnitudinem tuae sanctae Essentiae."⁹⁹ In other words, our being, of itself near or close to the nothingness whence it came¹⁰⁰ (and is shown and attested by our transition from non-being into being), as well as all the qualities which belong to our being, are increased and magnified whenever and according as it pleases the Creator of all things.¹⁰¹

To a Christian thinker of the character and convictions of Ramon Lull, the gift of existence is most precious because it is the gift of something exceedingly good. To him, to be is good. For us to be and to exist is a good thing. Goodness is intrinsic to and inherent within being, so much so that goodness and being are convertible with each other. It is therefore, correct to say that the 'good' is but another name for being, because it names its inner and total character, as it were. God is, and He is good for He exists as goodness itself. In the plenitude and infinity of a superlative perfection, His existence is one and identical with His essence and with each and all of the Divine Names, or attributes, into which the human intellect is forced to differentiate the one and single infinite reality that God is. This we do in order to conceive Him in some way.¹⁰² One of the Divine names is Goodness. And because it is one with God's own Being, Goodness alone explains sufficiently why His will determined to bring forth finite beings into being, with a being other than His own Being, through a creative act that meant the outright gift of being to something which apart from it had been and was, until then, nothing. One who has such a vision of reality can only conclude that being is invaluable and good. That is why we often find that Lull's repeated attempts to explain and define the ontological foundations of all that is real or existent are, as a rule, preceded by either a brief or a long analysis and discussion concerning goodness and the many good things that man encounters in whatever direction he may turn. This he did without closing his eyes to the innumerable and formidable evils we face everyday. But he always endeavored to keep the gaze of his eyes upon what they ought to be searching for. Almost always as a result, those analyses begin with what clearly to the author was an obvious truth: "Bonitas est ens ratione cuius bonum est esse, et malum est non esse."¹⁰³

The trust and assurance of the fundamental worth, meaning and goodness of existence which are basic to the thought of the author of the *Liber Contemplationis in Deum* and which are reflected in the definition of goodness just quoted also found their expression in what, for all practical purposes, is a principle repeatedly found in many of his writings. That principle could very well be described as 'the principle of the perfection of being'. According to it we can assert that the worth and the perfection of any being are the measure, principle and rule against which the truth, force and validity of demonstrations that concern reality must be tested. The principle is not always worded in the same way in the

many different writings of Lull. But it always insists on the intimate bond between being on the one hand, and the good and perfection on the other. To be or to exist is to possess a genuinely distinct perfection and nobility. On the other hand, the perfection of anything is and must be gauged by its being. The degree and the mode of a thing's being are accurate indicators of its perfection and worth. And by the same token, the degree to which a reality or some one thing may, in its own way, approximate or share in non-being, that same degree marks the point at which imperfection, badness or evil enters into that reality as into its subject.¹⁰⁴ The non-being which is the source of imperfection can of course, be described by different names. One given to it by the Catalan-Mallorcan philosopher is 'privation', a word that he himself cautions may be understood either in an unqualified sense (and then it is equivalent to absolute nothingness or non-being), or in a limited sense (and then its meaning is the more usual one, of a lack of what is due or fitting). In a passage defining the meaning of privation Lull gives clear signs of his solid understanding of what is conceived as real. He writes:

Tu scis quod privatio dividatur in privationem generalem et privationem specialem: privatio generalis est nihil quia nulla res nec accidentalis nec substantialis potest esse in ea nec per eam, cum nulla res sit ei subjecta nec ipsa sit subjecta ulli rei; sed privatio specialis est unum de tribus principiis, sine quo materia...¹⁰⁵

With that opposition between being and non-being in mind we can well appreciate what was called above the principle of the perfection of being. Many are the passages one could select in which Lull conveys his principle. The following two are sufficiently clear to understand his meaning and are quoted without any further explanation:

...et hoc est impossibile, quia natura perfectionis non convenit cum privatione, et convenit cum esse, et natura defectus non convenit cum esse, et convenit cum privatione; et per hoc significatur, quod multo plus perfectionis sit in esse, quam in privatione, et multo plus defectus sit in privatione, quam in esse.¹⁰⁶

Again:

Intellectualiter certificatum et demonstratum et significatum est quod esse habeat concordantiam et propinquitatem cum perfectione, et non esse habeat concordantiam et propinquitatem cum defectu; quia, sicut non esse venit a defectu, ita esse venit a perfectione: igitur, cum hoc ita sit, esse et perfectio aequaliter se respiciunt secundum relationem ad non esse et defectum, et non esse et defectus aequaliter se respiciunt secundum relationem ad esse et perfectionem.¹⁰⁷

Clearly in the eyes of the Illuminated Doctor Existence, the perfection and act of being is fundamental to whatever is real. Without it, i.e., without being, there is no reality to speak of. All values and perfections presuppose being and we may say that, in a sense, they are being itself for without it they are nothing and have nothing. If it cannot at all be said of something that it has being or existence then it has no values, properties, conditions or qualities that permit us to compare it with something else that truly is. Even the most insignificant creature has some value and a degree of perfection. These are completely absent from that which is nothing because it has no existence. And the conviction with which that simple truth is held is based on evidence that is felt even with our sentient nature.

Sensualiter sentimus et intellectualiter intelligimus quod esse sit valde melius quam non esse, quia non esse non significat in se ullam virtutem, quoniam si eam significaret non esset non esse imo esset esse; sed, quia esse est in esse, significat in se virtutem quae non significatur in non esse; igitur, cum hoc ita sit per hoc significatur quod esse secundum respectum ad non esse sit res bona, et non esse secundum respectum ad esse non sit res bona nec habens ullam virtutem...¹⁰⁸

The metaphysical questions intimately connected with our understanding of being are many and wide-ranging. To go into them for their own sake would certainly de-per our knowledge of being further. And to do so with the thought of our thirteenth century Catalan philosopher and Christian missionary writer would prove most illuminating. His proofs for the existence of God for example, and the distinctive doctrine of the Divine Attributes which he liked to refer to as '*dignitates*' show, again and again, that, to be fully appreciative of them, one must previously understand and uphold the closest and most intimate bond obtaining to the point of identity, between perfection and being. Lull's genuinely Christian understanding of Creation likewise stands out in its stresses on the transcendence of the Infinite, Eternal and Uncreated One, without thereby destroying the worth of finite creatures. What is most admirable and stupendous about Creation is the marvellous transition from non-being to being effected and brought about by Him who alone has the dignity and perfection of Being *per se ipsum* eternally and infinitely. To do more than to allude to these and other important doctrines found in the writings of Lull would require a lengthier treatment than is possible in this article. It can only be hoped that what has been said is more than sufficient to bring out clearly how the Illuminated Doctor had a fine feeling for and keen appreciation of being. Consequently about him one may have to agree that indeed he must be counted amongst those who have had an

authentic grasp and intellectual vision of being. That vision of course, is none other than the privileged intuition of being that makes of a thinker not just a philosopher but a metaphysician, for, in the case of our Illuminated thinker, it was "the intuition of being in its pure and all-pervasive properties, in its typical and primordial intelligible density; the intuition of being *secundum quod est ens*."¹⁰⁹

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1. Jacques MARITAIN, *Approaches to God*, (tr. O. O'Reilly), Macmillan, New York 1954, p. 21.
2. *loc cit.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
4. *loc cit.*
5. e. g. *Sein und Zeit* by M. Heidegger; *L'Être et le Néant* by J. P. Sartre; *Being and Having* and *The Mystery of Being* by G. Marcel; *Court Traité de l'Existence et de l'Existant* by J. Maritain; *Being and Some Philosophers* by E. Gilson.
6. Etienne GILSON, *Being and Some Philosophers*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto 1952, *passim*.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-96.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-189; Also, Etienne GILSON, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Random House, New York 1966, pp. 29-45.
9. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Quaestio Disputata de Potentia*, q. 9, a. 2, ad 9 in *Quaestiones Disputatae*, Marietti (9th rev. ed.), 1953, Vol. 2, p. 192.
10. GILSON, *Being*, pp. 171-176.
11. "Et ideo hoc nomen ens, quod imponitur ab ipso esse," St. Thomas Aquinas, *In IV Metaphysicae Commentarium*, 2, n. 558, Marietti, 1948, p. 155.
12. See *The Discourse on Method*, C. Adam and P. Tannery, Paris, Vol. 6, p. 17.
13. The edition was never completed and as a result it contains only a very small number of the 280 writings that are considered authentic beyond a reasonable doubt. It contains only eight volumes numbered I through VI, and IX and X. A difficult edition to find in its original, except for libraries in Spain and a few other outstanding European libraries, it has been made available in a well-prepared photo-printed edition by the Minerva G. m. b. H. House, Frankfurt, Germany in 1965, (= MOG).
14. See RAMON LULL, *Liber Contemplationis in Deum*, ch. 336, v. 30; MOG X, p. 599.
15. On the question of Lull's mastery of Latin see Thomas y Joaquín, CARRERAS Y ARTAU, *Historia de la Filosofía Española - Filosofía Cristiana de los Siglos XIII al XV*, Vol. 1, p. 267; Salvador BOVE, "Ramon Lull y la Lengua Latina". Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras, Barcelona, Abril-Junio, 1915.
16. The three titles are: *Quomodo homo debeat laetari quia Deus est in esse. Quomodo ... quia ipse est in esse; Quomodo ... de esse sui proximi.*
17. CARRERAS Y ARTAU, *op. cit.*, pp. 356 and 548.
18. RAMON LULL, *Ars Universalis seu Lectura Artis Compendiosae Inveniendi Veritatem*, d. 1, De Prima Fig. A; MOG I, p. 491. In the passage quoted the letters FGBA should be understood as memory, intellect, memory, and God.
19. Jacques MARITAIN, *Existence and the Existent*, (tr. Lewis Galantiere and Gerald B. Phelan), Random House, New York 1966, p. 19; cf. also Jacques MARITAIN, *A Preface to Metaphysics*, New American Library, New York 1962, pp. 48-64.
20. RAMON LULL, *Liber de Multiplicatione, quae fit in essentia Dei per Divinam Trinitatem*, ed. J. STOHR, in *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina* (ROL), F. Stegmüller edition, Palma-Mallorca 1960, Vol. 2, p. 139.
21. Bk. I, ch. 12, MOG II, p. 182. The Catalan version in *Obres de Ramon Lull*, Palma de Mallorca 1930, reads: "Atorgada cosa es que l'esser de les creatures es en .iij. maneres:

la una sí es con totes creatures son en la saviea de Deu: l'altra es con son formalment en anima, so es en l'enteniment qui aquelles entén: tersa es con son en elles metexes." Vol. 15, p. 16. Whenever possible when both the Latin and the Catalan texts are available, the Latin will appear in the body of this article and the Catalan in the footnotes. The Catalan 1906-1950 edition shall be referred to as ORL.

22. LULL, *Liber Cont.*, ch. 6, v. 8; MOG IX, p. 13.

23. RAMON LULL, *Liber de Perversione Entis Removenda*, ed. H. RIEDLINGER, ROL V, p. 493.

24. GILSON, *Being*, p. 146.

25. Etienne GILSON, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Random House, New York 1954, p. 353.

26. For a summary of these two romances written in Catalan, Lull's native language, see Edgar Allison PEERS, *Ramon Lull - A Biography*, The Macmillan Co., New York 1929, pp. 159-191, 206-222.

27. "Quando cogito, quod creaturae sint creatae ex nihil, mea anima deficit ad intelligendum, quod hoc sit possibile...", LULL, *Liber Cont.*, ch. 30, v. 16; MOG IX, p. 64.

28. *Ibid.*, ch. 37; MOG IX, pp. 77-79.

29. "Tu non creasti creaturas de tua Essentia, sed creasti eas ex nihilo." *Ibid.*, ch. 30, v. 3; MOG IX, p. 63.

30. "...ex nihilo creasti primam materiam, quae est materia, ex qua fiunt omnes res corporales." *Ibid.*, ch. 31, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 66.

31. *Ibid.*, chs. 32-33; MOG IX pp. 67-71.

32. *Ibid.*, ch. 34; MOG IX, pp. 71-73

33. *Ibid.*, ch. 35; MOG IX, pp. 73-75

34. *Ibid.*, ch. 36; MOG IX, pp. 75-77

35. "Benedictus sis, Domine Deus, quia creasti corpus animalis in esse substantiae corporalis et laudatus sis, quia voluisti creare animam animalis in esse substantiae spiritualis." *Liber Cont.*, ch. 36, v. 2; MOG IX, p. 75

36. *Ibid.*, ch. 168, vv. 4-18; MOG IX, pp. 392-394.

37. *Ibid.*, ch. 4, v. 5; MOG IX a p. 390. See also Ramon Lull *Ars Inventiva Veritatis*, Prol.; MOG V, pp. 1-2.

38. GILSON, *Being*, pp. 2-3

39. Joseph OWENS, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, Bruce, Milwaukee 1963, p. 62.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

41. GILSON, *Philosophy of St. Thomas*, p. 29; OWENS, *op. cit.*, p. 62, n. 11.

42. Johannes STOHR, "Introductio Generalis," in ROL I, p. 24.

43. Sebastian GARCIA PALOU, "Preface" to ROL I, p. ix. For the language in which most of Lull's writings came from the author's pen, see CARRERAS Y ARTAU, *Historia*, Vol. 1, pp. 285-331. For those written during the years 1314 and 1315 see the *Prolegomena* by J. Stehr introducing each *opusculum* in ROL I-II.

44. GILSON, *Philosophy of St. Thomas*, p. 29; OWENS, *Op. cit.*, p. 62, n. 11.

45. OWENS, *loc. cit.*

46. In the *Tabula* at the end of *Ars Amativa boni* Lull explains briefly the ordinary meaning of 'ens': "ens est tota res, et tota res est ens," MOG VI p. 156. The same term is given as a Catalan term in the Catalan version of the *Art Amativa*: "ens es tota cosa, e tota cosa es ens," ORL XVII, p. 393. Compare the definitions of the principles of Lull's *Art* as given in some of both the Catalan and the Latin versions: e.g., *Arbre de Ciencia* in Ramon Lull, *Obres Essencials*, Barcelona, 1957, pp. 358-359; *Tabula General* in ORL XVI, p. 312ss; *Ars Brevis*, ed. F. Marzai, Palma, 1969, pp. 23-27; *Tabula Generalis*, in, MOG V p. 226.

47. RAMON LULL, *Ars Generalis Ultima*, Palma, 1645, pp. 186-187, 200-352; RAMON LULL, *De Ente Absoluto*, in ROL I, p. 153ss; cf. also many of the *Opuscula*

Messaniensia and *Tuniciana*, all contained in Vols. 1 and 2 of the ROL.

48. "Essentia est forma, ab esse abstracta et in eo sustentata", p. 1, ch. 2, *De Centum Formis*, ed. Marzal, Palma 1969, p. 120.

49. Keeping in mind the absolute simplicity and oneness of God indicative of the identity of His being and essence, Lull will not hesitate, when speaking of God's being, to make use of the apparently 'abstract' 'essentia' in order to name Him. See e.g. *Compendium seu Commentum Artis Demonstrativae*, d. 1, p. 2, *De Tertia Fig. Theol.*, MOG III, pp. 39-41; *Liber Cont.*, ch. 4, v. 4-5; MOG IX, p. 9; *De Essentia et Esse Dei*, d. 1, ROL I, pp. 262-264.

50. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 1; "Deus Pare, senyor de tot quant esi," ORL II, p. 3.

51. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, v. 10; MOG IX, p. 4; "Oh Senyor creador de tot quant esi," ORL II, p. 2.

52. RAMON LULL, *Liber de XIV Articulis Fidei*, d. 1, pars 1; MOG II, p. 424.

53. LULL, *Ars Generalis Ultima*, pars 4, ch. 1; ed. cit. p. 15.

54. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 3 "...ben seria raó que nos qui sabem que vos sots en esser, queus alegrassem en lo vostre esser, per so car es en esser e no es en privacio..." ORL II, p. 5.

55. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 5. "... car molt se deu alegrar l'ome per so com es en esser, e no es privat de esser. Doncs nos, qui som certificats que som en esser, alegrar nos em, car los .v. senys mostren l'esser en que som..." ORL I, p. 11.

56. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 17; MOG IX, p. 7 "...e a nos es vijares, que ell no aja aút esser si no per aquest mon.", ORL I, p. 17.

57. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 176, v. 2 "... ab les quals intellectuitats pot hom apercebre e conexer vertaderament que vos sots en esser, so es a saber, que avets esser; car l'esser en que vos sots e vostra essencia tot es un esser.", ORL V, p. 66.

58. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 79, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 173 "A vos, Senyer, sia gloria ... que li avets donat esser huma; lo qual do que ell ha reebut de vos, es molt alt do e molt noble," ORL III, p. 108.

59. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 10; MOG IX, p. 5. "Con sesdevé que jo cogit en l'esdeveniment de mon esser. e veg que esser hom es lo pus noble esser que vos avets creat..." ORL II, p. 12.

60. RAMON LULL, *Libre de Demostracions*, bk. I, ch. 12; ORL XV, p. 16. See previous footnot 21.

61. E. g. *Liber Proverbiorum*, pars 1, ch. 10; MOG VI, p. 289; *Libre de Demostracions*, bk. III, ch. 28; ORL XV, p. 326; *Ars Generalis Ultima*, pars 9, sect. 1, ch. 6, a. 1; ed. cit. p. 201.

62. GILSON, *Philosophy of St. Thomas*, ch. 2, n. 2, p. 445.

63. F. g. *Liber de Compendiosa Contemplatione*, d. 1; ROL I, pp. 75-78; *Liber de Divinis Dignitatibus Infinitis et Benedictis*, d. 1; ROL I, pp. 178-180; *Liber de Civitate Mundi*, d. 2; ROL II, pp. 183, 186, 192.

64. See e. g., *Liber de Medio Naturali*, pars 4; ROL I, p. 210; *Liber de Civitate Mundi*, d. 2; ROL II, pp. 183, 192.

65. MARITAIN, *Approches*, p. 25.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

67. RAMON LULL, *Arbor Philosophiae Desideratae*, d. 1, pars 1; MOG VI, p. 2 "Ens qui es Deus e ens qui no es Deus, ens reyal e ens fantastic, ens qui es genus ens qui es specia, ens movent ens movable, ens unitat ens pluralitat, ens abstractu ens concret, ens intens ens extens, ens qui es semblansa ens qui es dessemblansa, ens qui es generació ens qui es corrupció." ORL XVI, p. 404.

68. RAMON LULL, *Introductoria Artis Demonstrativae*, ch. 1, MOG III, p. 55.

69. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 4; MOG IX, p. 4; ORL II, p. 11.

70. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 4; MOG IX, p. 4; "...en so que s veen e saben que son en esser: car qui s alegra de la bellea e de la bonea que es fora si, bé s deu alegrar d'aquella qui dentre sí," ORL II, p. 11.

71. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 11; MOG IX, p. 6; ORL II, p. 12.

72. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 2; MOG IX, p. 5; "...molt mellor cosa esser en esser que no seria si no erem en esser..." ORL II, p. 11.

73. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 5; "...car molt se deu alegrar 1 ome per so com es en esser, e no es privat de esser..." ORL II, p. 11.

74. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 5; "... car los .v. senys mostren 1 esser en que som: car ab los ulls veem, e ab les orelles oym, e ab lo nas odoram, e ab la boca gustam, e ab la carn sentim..." ORL II, p. 11.

75. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, vv. 5-7; MOG IX, p. 5; ORL II, pp. 11-12.

76. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 19; MOG IX, p. 6; "...qual me val més: o que sia injuriat, aontat e menyspreat, e que sia en esser, o que no fos aontat e que no fos en esser..." ORL II, p. 13.

77. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 19; MOG IX, p. 6; "...que mellor m es esser que si no era en esser..." ORL II, p. 13.

78. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 20; MOG IX, p. 6; "...que mellor m es que sia en esser sufrent treball, que no freturar de esser..." ORL II, p. 13.

79. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, v. 10; MOG IX p. 10; "...esser hom es lo pus noble esser que vos avets creat..." ORL II, p. 12.

80. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, vv. 22-24; MOG IX, p. 6; ORL II, p. 14.

81. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 1; MOG IX p. 7; ORL II, p. 15.

82. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, vv. 4-6; MOG IX. p. 7; ORL II, p. 15.

83. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 7; MOG IX p. 7; ORL II, p. 15.

84. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 10; MOG IX p. 7; ORL II, p. 16.

85. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3 vv. 11-12; MOG IX. p. 7; ORL II, p. 16.

86. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 15; MOG IX p. 7; ORL II, p. 16.

87. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 3, v. 28; MOG IX, p. 8; "ver es que jo son obligat a esser alegre per raó de mon esser e per raó del esser de mon proxime: mas tota aquesta obligacio es quax vana, a esguart de la obligacio en que so que m deja alegrar del vostre esser..." ORL II, p. 18.

88. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 2, vv. 13-15; MOG IX, p. 6; ORL II, pp. 12-13.

89. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1 vv. 1-4; MOG IX, p. 3, ORL II, p. 7.

90. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, v. 1; MOG IX, p. 3; "...ben seria raó que nos qui sabem que vos sots en esser, que ns alegrassem en lo vostre esser, per so car es en esser e no es en privacio: car que s alegra del atrobament de les coses finides, gran maravella en si no s alegra del atrobament de la cosa infinida..." ORL II, p. 7.

91. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, vv. 2-4; MOG IX, p. 3; ORL II, p. 7.

92. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, vv. 7-9; MOG IX, p. 4; ORL II, p. 8.

93. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 1, v. 25; MOG IX, p. 5; "...son cor nada en gog e en alegre, axí com lo pex nadant per la mar; lo qual gog e alegre li ve, Senyer, adoncs com considera lo vostre esser en esser..." ORL II, p. 10.

94. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 8, v. 2; MOG IX, p. 16; "Car no es nulla cosa en esser qui aja dignitat ne propietat de esser Deu, Senyer, si no vos tan solament..." ORL II, p. 37.

95. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 6, v. 19; MOG IX, p. 13; ORL II, p. 30.

96. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 258, v. 22; MOG X, p. 114; ORL VI, p. 293.

97. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 6, v. 22; MOG IX. p. 22; "...lo primer de mon esser; e la primera cosa qui amá e endressá mon esser..." ORL II, p. 30.

98. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 67, vv. 1-2; MOG IX, p. 147; ORL III, p. 46.

99. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 5, v. 2; MOG IX, p. 10; "... con nosaltres siam dins lo mon fenits, som, Senyer fenits en esser e en obres, dints la granea de la vostra sancta essencia..." ORL II, p. 22.

100. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 6, vv. 7-8; MOG IX pp. 12-13; ORL II, p. 28.

101. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 5, v. 7 MOG IX, p. 10; ORL II, p. 23

102. "Velut enim visus corporeus differentiam splendoris solis facit, quae existit inter id, quod accipere et non accipere potest, sic etiam et multo fortius C (=intellectus), inter unam et aliam cameram ipsius A (=Dei) constituit differentiam, quod est, quia non sufficit ad intelligendum omnes cameras ipsius A in virtute earum..." LULL, *Ars Universalis seu Lectura*, d. 1, de Tertia Fig. A; MOG I, p. 493. The two words in parentheses do not appear in the text. They are the meanings assigned to the letter-symbols by Lull earlier in the book.

103. Ramon Lull, *Ars Compendiosa Inveniendi Veritatem*, De Delfin. Princ.; MOG I, p. 477.

104. Even moral evil is here explained through the non-being that enters into or is a part of a free action whenever a free and responsible agent inclines freely towards that which ought not to be. See *Liber Cont.*, ch. 46; MOG IX, pp. 98-101; ORL II, pp. 232-238.

105. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 229, n. 1; MOG X, p. 9; "Vos sabets, senyer, que privacio se deveex en .ij. parts, so es a saber, privacio general e privacio special. On privacio en general no es re; car nulla cosa accidental ni substancial no pot caer en ella ni pot esser per ella, e asso es, Senyer, per so car nulla cosa no li es subjecta ni ella no es a nulla cosa subject; la privacio especial es .j. dels .iiij. comensamens sens lo qual comensament materia...." ORL VI p. 24.

106. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 176, v. 10 MOG IXs, p. 417; "...e asso es impossibil, car no s cove natura d acabament ab privacio e fa ho ab esser, e natura de defalliment nos cové ab esser e fa ho ab privacio; e per asso es significat que molt més ha d acabament en esser que en privacio, e molt més ha en privacio de defalliment que en esser..." ORL V, p. 69.

107. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 227, v. 16; MOG X, p. 3; "...Entellectualment es certificat e demostrat d significat que esser ha concordansa e acostament ab acabament e no esser ab defalliment: car en axí, Senyer, com no esser vé de defalliment, axí esser ve d acabament. On, com asso sia en axí, dons esser e acabament an equal esguardament segons relacio de no esser e de falliment, e no esser e defalliment en equal esguardament segons relacio de esser e d acabament..." ORL V, pp. 8-9.

108. *Liber Cont.*, ch. 257, v. 25, MOG X, p. 111; "... Sensualment sentim e entellectualment entenem que esser es molt mellor cosa que no esser; car no esser no significa aver en sí nulla vertut, car si ho faya no sería no esser, ans sería cosa avent esser. Mas, car esser es en esser, per asso significa ave en sí vertut la qual no es significada en cosa qui no ha esser; e com assó sia en axí, doncs per asso es significat que esser segons esguardament de no esser es bona cos, e que no esser segons esguardament de esser no es cosa avent nulla vertut..." ORL V, p. 285.

109. Maritain, *Existence*, p. 19.