

# Preface to the Abridged Edition

THIS READER is an abridged version of the two-volume *Selected Works of Ramon Llull* published by Princeton University Press in 1985. If there I tried to give a representative selection of Llull's thought and of his place in the history of European thought and literature—a task already almost hopeless in a man who wrote some 265 works on every subject conceivable—then in this selection of a selection all I can reasonably hope to give is a small taste of the man's work. To that end I have chosen part or all of four works. The first consists of excerpts from the *Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, Llull's principle work in the field to which he dedicated his life, that of apologetics. The last is the *Ars brevis*, the most famous formulation of the system around which all the rest of his thought revolved, and which has made him a precursor, however remote, of modern logic and computer science. In third place is his finest narrative work, a truly marvelous piece of political satire, the *Book of the Beasts*. All this is preceded by what constitutes almost a fifth work, Llull's (auto)biography as, apparently, told by him to the monks of the Chartreuse de Vauvert in Paris: this is the *Contemporary Life*, to which I added commentaries and historical interpolations to pad out the gaps in its narrative.

In the larger anthology, I had pledged myself to include only entire works which had not been previously translated into English. The removal of such constraints has made it possible to replace the mystical work in that anthology with the justifiably much more famous *Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, which is the second work presented here. The new translation, together with an introduction and notes, was done by my wife, Eve Bonner. My only role in this crucial part of the reader has been to help coordinate the notes with the rest of the anthology, and to write the bibliographical section at the end of the introduction to the work. I think and hope that with these four works the reader will get a good sample of the surprising range of Lull's capabilities.

The other change with respect to the longer anthology has been to reduce or omit altogether the bibliographical information in the notes, in view of possible readers more interested in entering into contact with Ramon Llull than in studying his works or thought in a scholarly way. Those interested in finding out where I got my information, however, can check the corresponding parts of the *Selected Works*.

Of the long list of people consulted and who gave advice for the longer anthology (see the preface there), three of them have very kindly repeated their services for the new translation of the *Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, reading part or all of the introduction thereto, or helping to solve problems of translation or interpretation. They are Jocelyn Hillgarth, Charles Lohr, and Jordi Gayà. Albert Soler has not only let us use the new critical text of the *Book of the Lover and the Beloved* that he has prepared for publication, but he has also gone over the introduction and translation to that work with a fine-toothed comb and offered countless useful corrections and suggestions. Finally, our editor at Princeton University Press, Timothy Mennel, has done a particularly careful and thoughtful job of seeing the book through the press. To all of them our sincerest thanks. Whatever faults remain are not theirs, but there quite certainly would have been many more without them.

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A.E.B.