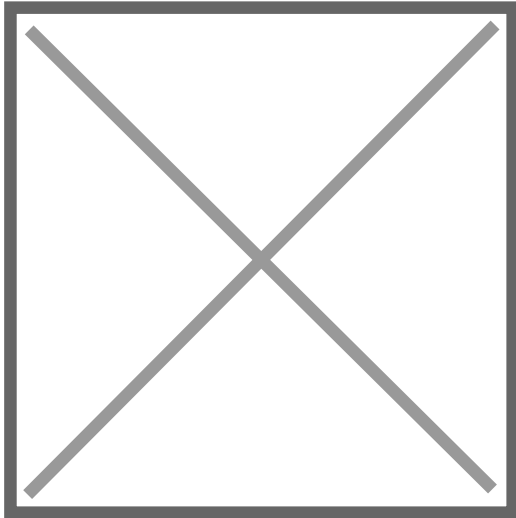


# 35 Raymond Lull

Raymond Lull (or Ramon or Lully or Llull or Lullii, 1232 - 1315) is a highly influential author. He will be quoted extensively for the next 400 years. He is one of the very few considered both a saint and a heretic by the Church.



He began life as a troubadour with a wife and two children. But that changed:

“Ramon, while still a young man and Seneschal to the King of Majorca, was very given to composing worthless songs and poems and to doing other licentious things. One night he was sitting beside his bed, about to compose and write in his vulgar tongue a song to a lady whom he loved with a foolish love; and as he began to write this song, he looked to his right and saw our Lord [Jesus Christ](#) on the Cross, as if suspended in mid-air.

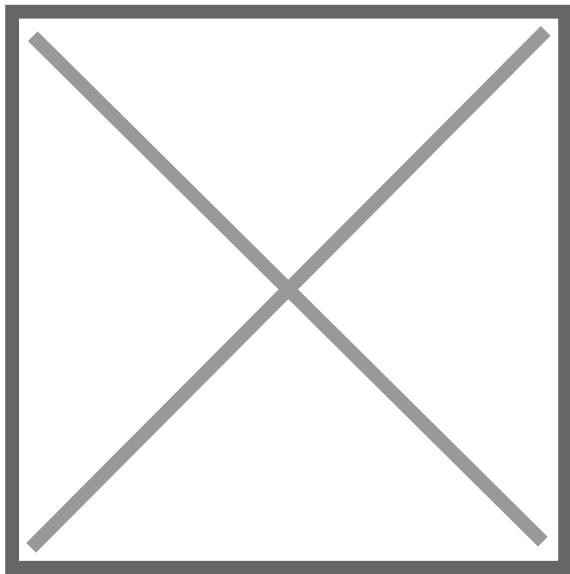
Wikipedia: Raymond Llull

He saw the vision five times. This inspired in him three intentions: to give up his soul for the sake of God's love and honor, to convert the 'Saracens' (Arabs, living in Spain) to Christianity, and write the best book in the world against the errors of the unbelievers. He sold his belongings and became a pilgrim to the shrines across southern Europe. I can't say what happened to his family. When he came home from his pilgrimage he purchased a Muslim slave to teach him Arabic and never returned to his family.

By 1271 he was writing, but he didn't finish his University education until just before he died. The centerpiece of Lull's writing was *Art*, describing a way of thinking based on Arabic symbols and diagrams, and it's Q&A form of dialog. As the method changed he wrote new books explaining the

new system, which was clearly Arabic in origin.

With all the writing, he never wrote an authentic work on alchemy. He was against transmutation. But the glamor of his name was enough for alchemists to use it to sell their ideas. His legend holds that he was able to turn himself into a red rooster, and that he transmuted twenty-two tons of metal into gold to help finance the crusade of King Edward III against the Turks. A fellow named John Cremer, a supposed Abbot of Westminster is said to have helped Raymond and put him up for two years, during which time Ramon taught Cremer the art of transmutation. Cremer took Ramon to King Edward, and Edward asked Ramon to do the transmutation. Ramon insisted that some of the gold needed to go to the church but the King refused and locked Ramon in the Tower of London. According to Ashmole, Ramon made himself a "leaper," or vaulting pole, and escaped out an upper-story open window and fled to France. Edward is said to have had rose nobles struck (a type of gold coin not actually minted until 1465 by Edward IV). On the reverse of the coins was a phrase from the Bible, "Jesus passed invisible and in a most secret manner by the midst of the Pharises" so that the gold was not visible to the ignorant. Or something like that.



Thus begins a 400 year period where stories of alchemists and coins are the highlight of alchemy, typically shining poorly on the charlatan alchemist.

The two fundamental works of the Lull corpus are the *Testamentum* and the *Liber de secretis naturae seu de quinta essentia* which both date to after Lull's death.

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