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**SUNT INTELLIGIBILIA ENTIA QUAE SUNT VERA.
A LATE MEDIEVAL INTERPRETATION
OF INTENTIONALITY**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this contribution is to present the theory of intentionality proposed by the Spanish Dominican Lope de Barrientos (1382–1469), as it is offered by his *Clavis Sapientiae*: in this erudite work, written at the turn of the 15th century in the context of the new-born School of Salamanca, the terms proper to the gnoseological lexicon of the Thomist scholasticism are taken into consideration, analysed and renewed in a new original way. This makes possible to demonstrate from one hand how the tradition opened by Thomas Aquinas is inherited in the upcoming Renaissance and from another hand to look how a typical Renaissance scholar as Barrientos builds a theory of knowledge that is original, although faithful to the Thomist tradition to which it has been continuously and cogently referred and consulted.

Keywords: Lope de Barrientos, School of Salamanca, intentionality, first intentions, second intentions.

Among the authors who have dealt with the theme of knowledge throughout the history of thought, many, starting from the Middle Ages, have been interested in the process that allows human beings to know the world, in order to explain how they can act in it. Some propose *intentiones* as a medium for knowing and acting. In the theorization of Thomas Aquinas, exhaustive and complex in its content although unsystematic in its form, the term “*intention*” appears.¹ It is studied according to its meaning of “tending towards something,” both in the ethical-moral sphere, when an individual acts according to his or her own will, and in the gnoseological

¹ As a consistent bibliography on the topic of Middle Ages intentionality, see D. Perler, *Ancient and Medieval Theories of Intentionality*, Brill, Leiden 2001; G. Klima, *Intentionality, Cognition, and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy*, Fordham University Press, New York 2015; R. Pasnau, *Aquinas and the Content Fallacy*, *Modern Schoolman: A Quarterly Journal of Philosophy*, 75.4 (1998), pp. 293–314; F. Amerini, *Tommaso d'Aquino e l'intenzionalità*, ETS, Pisa 2008, L. Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis: From Perception to Knowledge*, Brill, Leiden 1994.

sphere, when the term *intentio* indicates a certain knowledge of the objects existing in the world and the construction, from these, of the corresponding mental concepts.² Both instances are taken up and re-elaborated by one of his disciples, Hervé de Nedelléc (1260–1323), who reflects on the status of *intentiones* in his *Tractatus de secundis intentionibus*, with the aim of specifying and deepening the reflection on the meaning and functioning of the theory of intentionality.³

The theories of Aquinas and Hervé were transposed and reworked in the late Middle Ages, thanks above all to the development of universities in the Iberian Peninsula; those universities formed by professors belonging mainly to the Dominican order inherited the Thomist knowledge of the Middle Ages. In particular, the University of Salamanca is of great importance; this university from the 15th century onwards studied some of the most important cultural, economic, and anthropological issues in Mediterranean Europe. Among the various interests it intended to explain how human beings can know the world around them and, consequently, there is also the analysis of *cognitio per intentiones*.

Taking these authors as an indicator, the aim of this contribution is to present the theory of intentionality proposed by the Spanish Dominican Lope de Barrientos (1382–1469), as it is presented in his *Clavis Sapentiae*: in this erudite work, written at the turn of the 15th century, the terms of thegnoseological lexicon of Thomistic scholasticism are taken into account, allowing for the construction of a theory of knowledge that is on the whole original, though faithful to the Thomistic tradition to which continuous and cogent reference has been made.

COGNITIO AND INTENTIO.

THE INCIPIIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MUNDUS

Lope de Barrientos' thought developed and consolidated in the cultural circles of Castilla y León and, in particular, in Salamanca. Born in Medina del Campo and died in Cuenca, a city in Castilla-La Mancha that had welcomed him into its diocese as bishop in 1444, Barrientos fully expressed the need for a renewal of knowledge that arose in 15th-century Spain. Dominican from the Convent of San Esteban, he received the rank of lecturer at the

² See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 85, aa. 2–3 e I–II, q. 12, a. 1; *In II Sententiarum*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 3; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV, 11.

³ Cfr. Hervaeus Natalis, *Tractatus de secundis intentionibus, A Treatise of Master Hervaeus Natalis, d. 1323, the Doctor Perspicacissimus, On second intentions*, ed. by John P. Doyle, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee (WI) 2008. See, as latest bibliography, also M. Miner, *Logic and Intentionality According to Hervaeus Natalis*, CUA Press, Washington 2017; H. Taleb, *The "Intellected Thing" (res intellecta) in Hervaeus Natalis*, *Vivarium*, 53, 2015, pp. 26–44; M. Klein, *Mental Gaze and Presence: Hervaeus Natalis, Peter Auriol, and John Buridan on Objects of Cognition*, *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales*, 1/2020, pp. 13–18.

Catedra de Prima de Teología of the University of Salamanca in 1416, following in the footsteps of the personalities who had contributed to strengthening the relationship between the convent and the university.⁴ Barrientos' philosophical activity can be summed up in his four fundamental works: the *Tractado de caso et fortuna*; the *Tractado del dormir y despertar*; the *Tractado del divinar* and the *Clavis Sapientiae*, all of which are of uncertain date but were certainly written from 1445 onwards.⁵ Of particular importance is the last one, presumably begun in Salamanca, completed in Cuenca and published in 1460,⁶ in which Barrientos arranges and analyses the fundamental terms for any philosophical and theological speculation. The *incipit* clarifies its goals:

“incipit liber qui *Clavis Sapientiae* intitulatur de terminorum seu vocabulorum significatione ac eorundem convenientia et differentia et sufficientia, scilicet, dialectice artis ac etiam naturalis set moralis philosophie, necnon metaphysice ac theologie facultatis.”⁷

The work is a lexicon analyzing the meanings of terms and vocabulary specific to philosophy, theology, and metaphysics. For philosophy, reference is made to the areas of dialectics, moral philosophy, and natural philosophy. This choice seems relevant, especially if connected to the period of the author's teaching activity: Barrientos, having taught in Salamanca at the time of the elaboration of the *Constitutions* that Pope Martin V gave to the University in 1521,⁸ fully absorbed their directives and applied them to his work, written to collect the voices of all philosophical and theological knowledge, as the title itself indicates. Of the approximately six hundred items analyzed, those most relevant to the issue of knowledge, related to the classical Medieval taxonomy and to which most space is devoted are *actio, anima, cognitio, ens et essentia, forma, homo, intentio, motus, notitia, passiones, relatio et relativum, sensus, substantia, universale, unum*.

⁴ Cfr. L. A. G. Getino, *Vida y obras de Fr. Lope de Barrientos*, Anales Salmantinos, Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca 1927; Á. Martínez Casado, *Lope de Barrientos. Un intelectual de la corte de Juan II*, Editorial San Esteban, Salamanca 1994; J. L. Fuertes Herreros, *Lógica y filosofía*, in: L. E. San Pedro-Bezares, *Historia de la Universidad de Salamanca*, v. III, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca 2006, pp. 499–504.

⁵ Cfr. L. A. G. Getino, *Vida y obras de Fr. Lope de Barrientos*, p. 125.

⁶ With regard to problems concerning the dating of the *Clavis sapientiae*, see Á. Martínez Casado, *Lope de Barrientos*, pp. 149–160.

⁷ Lope de Barrientos, *Clavis Sapientiae, Incipit*. There are currently no consultable printed editions of the *Clavis sapientiae*, but only a set of manuscripts, two of which are in Madrid. Since it is not the intention of this contribution to analyze the specificities of these manuscripts, for these aspects I refer to the doctoral dissertation by A. Rísquez Madrid, *Edición crítica y comentario de Clavis sapientiae. La llave del saber de Lope de Barrientos en la Edad Media española*, Ediciones UCM, Madrid 2014, especially pp. 3–120.

⁸ For a comprehensive discussion on the importance of the *Constitutions* of Martin V and for consultation of their full text, see P. Valero García, M. Pérez (eds.), *Constituciones de Martin V*, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca 1991. The *Constitutions* are analysed in detail in the essay by José Luis Fuertes Herreros, *Estatutos de la Universidad de Salamanca*, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca 1984.

Among these lemmas two terms, present in medieval theories of knowledge (e.g. in Thomas Aquinas and Hervé) are relevant: *cognitio* and *intentio*. Barrientos recovers their medieval meanings and uses them to build his own theory of knowledge that, placed in a scholastic and erudite context, studies the relationship between knowledge and intentionality, decisive in the scholastic theories of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Regarding *cognitio*, Barrientos expresses himself in quite clear terms:

“cognitionis nostre sunt duo processus: primus est ab effectu ad causam et iste dicitur processus ‘quia est’. Secundus a causa ad effectum et iste est ‘propter quid’. Et hec est communis distinctio, que dicitur quod cognitio est duplex, scilicet, cognitio ‘quia’ et cognitio ‘propter quid’.”⁹

Human cognitive act follows two processes: one ascending and the other descending. In the ascending process, the intellect ascends from effects to their cause, and, for this reason, such knowledge is called *quia est*, because it explains how objects are constituted and how their interactions occur, once they are given in the world. In the descending process, on the other hand, the intellect notices that there is, between two or more objects, a cause that can lead to certain effects and seeks to confirm or refute this intellectual assumption through comparison with the actual objects of the world. This knowledge is therefore called *propter quid*, since it does not refer to the *quia* of things, but to the possible *propter quid* that determine the interactions between the different objects. In order to coordinate the two processes into a single cognitive organism, one could consider the *quia est* moment as passive, since the intellect would merely recognize the object, and the *propter quid* moment as active, since the intellect would process *stimuli* from the world to confirm or refute certain conclusions about existing objects.

Regarding both the processes, Barrientos exposes the relationship that is established between the intellect of a knowing subject and the world of objects, to which a fundamental importance is assigned, almost a *conditio sine qua non* with respect to the subject. In the first process, in fact, the recognition of the cause is always subsequent to the knowledge of effects; in the second process, the elaboration of the derivation of the possible effects from the possible cause, although of an intellectual nature, draws its confirmation or refutation only from the comparison with the objects of the sensible world. In any case, the relationship between intellect and objects is highlighted, that is, the relationship between *intellectus* and *res*, in which the former is responsible for the act of knowing and the latter for being known, both *ex parte obiecti* and *ex parte nostri*, in full respect of the medieval Thomist tradition. In the *Clavis*, besides the term *cognitio*, another term typical of the scholastic gnoseological lexicon returns: *intentio*. In this entry,

⁹ L. de Barrientos, *Clavis sapientiae*, §87 Rísquez Madrid (Ed.), p. 379.

Barrientos, linking himself to *cognitio*, with the term *intentio* shows his complete adherence to the medieval tradition coming from Aquinas and Hervaeus, which he shows to know through the numerous quotations he proposes throughout the text.

The starting point for understanding what *intentio* is, however, is not to be found in the discussion of this term, but in the discussion of the entry *De differentia rei et differentia rationis*.¹⁰ Barrientos, to explain how the intellect forms the concept of *res cognita*,¹¹ defines *intentio* as “applicabilis rei, unde dicitur ratio”.¹² This very short formula suggests some important elements about the term *intentio*:

- it is “quid” that belongs to the intellect after the sensible knowledge;¹³
- arises from the relationship between *intellectus* and *res*, since it refers to *res*, but is proper (*dicitur*) to reason;
- it follows from the knowledge of the *res*, since it is “applicable” (*applicabilis*) to it.

Based on these three elements, it is possible to enter into the full discussion of the term *intentio* and its meaning, taking into consideration paragraphs 178–186. However, we should start from paragraphs 180–182, in which the Scholastic distinction, in particular that of Hervé, between *intentio ex parte intellectus* and *intentio ex parte voluntatis* is taken up. In the first paragraphs 180–181, Barrientos reflects on *de intentione secundum quod se tenet ex parte voluntatis*¹⁴ and states, at first instance, that

“intentio importat tendentiam in alterum, unde intentio dicitur, quasi in aliud tensio, et quia tam intellectus quam voluntas tendit in alterum, id est, in suum obiectum ideo intentio pertinet ad intellectum et voluntatem.”¹⁵

The *intentio* always refers to something and, for this reason, is defined as “tension towards something else,” as we can already read in Aquinas’ formula “intentio sive aliquid tendere.”¹⁶ This tension is not generic but refers to two particular capacities of the cognitive subject, namely the intellect and the will. For Barrientos, the *intentio* makes possible for these two capacities the act of “directing themselves towards” something—an implicit reference

¹⁰ Ibidem, § 168, p. 419.

¹¹ See ibidem: “ratio est idem quod illud quod respondet in re conceptioni intellectus de se factae, et dicitur ratio illud quod tali conceptioni respondet.”

¹² Ibidem.

¹³ I deliberately leave this definition generic, since Barrientos himself does not attribute a more precise status to the *res* than that of ‘something’ which is proper to the intellect that knows it.

¹⁴ Ibidem, *Clavis sapientiae*, cit., § 180, p. 486.

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Note also the use, in the context of Barrientos’ intentionality, of the verb *importare*, borrowed directly from Aquinas’ *Scriptum super Sententiis* and Hervé’s *Tractatus*. Aquinas, in fact, defines *intentio* as that which “ad alterum importat” (See Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sententiis*, cit., l. II, d. 38, q. 1, a. 3, *respondeo*), instead Hervé writes that *intentio* “formaliter importatur habitudo rei ad intellectum”; cf. Hervaeus Natalis, *On Second Intentions*, q.1, a. 1, p. 333.

to the object existing in the world—and, in this way, the object proper to the *intentio* will be proper to both the intellect and the will. It is true that intellect and will are proper to the cognitive subject, but, since the object of the *intentio* is also their object, they do not exhaust their task within the cognitive subject, but “open up” to the world. In other words, intellect and will are not self-referential and, by means of the *intentio*, are able to access the world of objects and can achieve a certain level of knowledge of this world. In this way, a link is created between intentionality, intellect, will and world.

Regarding this link, it is necessary to explain how *intentio* connects intellect and will. The first link that Barrientos analyses is that of *intentio ex parte voluntatis*, which can be accounted for in two ways:

“sciendum est quod intentio sumitur dupliciter, uno modo ipse actus voluntatis dicitur intentio, sicut si aliquis velit ire ad ecclesiam ad videndum corpus Christi diceretur talis voluntas intentiosa et tali voluntate intendit aliquis videre corpus Christi. Alio modo dicitur intentio, res intenta sicut si aliquis *differet* intentio materia est scribere [sic]. Ista res diceretur intentio, id est, ipsa scriptura et merito intentio, ut se tenet ex parte voluntatis dicitur quandoque actus eius, quo intendit quandoque obiectum eius, quod intendit per actum.”¹⁷

The first mode of *intentio ex parte voluntatis* shows that an intentional act occurs when an action is performed that is guided by the will of the sentient subject, who carries out this action in the surrounding world. This type of intention is not an act of thought, but an act that produces a modification in the subject’s reference system. Going to church because one wants to see the body of Christ, according to Barrientos, is a valid example of this first way of understanding intention according to will, since it shows the existence of a subject who, moving from his will—seeing the body of Christ—takes himself from a position A (his house, for example) towards a position B, the church, in which his initial will can be satisfied. In this case, the intentional act is the act that drives one to go and see the body of Christ. This will is defined by Barrientos *voluntas intentiosa*, since the *intentio* is governed by the *voluntas*, or *actus volitivus*.

Furthermore, *ex parte voluntatis* can be understood as another type of *intentio*, which coincides with the action performed by the sentient subject. The act of writing, for example, can be considered *intentionalis*, since the subject activates his will in order to write something that, voluntarily, has been conceived in his intellect. Through writing, the doer succeeds in satis-

¹⁷ L. de Barrientos, *Clavis sapientiae*, op. cit., § 181, p. 487. A philological question arises here about the verb *differet*, which in the context of the quotation appears to be incorrect. One could argue a transcription error by the copyist or a misprint. To remedy the problem, the causes of this error are unknown, but given the recurrent verb forms in the text, substituting *diceretur* for *differet* the period makes complete sense and agrees with Barrientos’ arguments.

ying his will and achieving, in the intentional act, his goal. Taking the example of going to church, if in the first intentional mode the *intentio* was to see the body of Christ, in this second mode the *intentio* is to walk to the church, an action that will allow one to see the body of Christ. The satisfaction of the will of the sentient subject is now achieved in the completion of the journey, rather than in the end achieved. Barrientos warns, however, that such modes of *intentio* are not the most appropriate for the full understanding of its meaning. Indeed, despite

“iste modus locutionis de intentione sepius in scripturis reperiatur tamen sic non intendo hic loqui de intentione quando dico aliqua nomina esse prime vel secunde intentionis.”¹⁸

In order to understand how the question of intentionality is to be correctly understood, it is necessary to use a more adequate way of investigating *intentio*, namely *ex parte intellectus*. It is decisive not to overlook, in fact, that this question is inserted within the debate on the cognitive modalities of the sentient subject and, consequently, the way in which he relates to the world around him must be shown with certainty. Even *ex parte intellectus*, Barrientos traces two paths of *intentio*: the first *ex parte intelligentis*, the second *ex parte rei intellectae*.¹⁹ Regarding the first path,

“dicitur intentio esse illud quoddam per modum repraesentantis ducit intellectum in cognitionem cuiuslibet rei, et quia *species intelligibilis* et *actus intelligendi* et *conceptus mentis formatus*, quem nos verbum mentale dicimus representative, ducit intellectum in cognitionem rerum.”²⁰

Ex parte intelligentis, *intentio* is defined as that which allows the intellect to be able to know any existing object, through the mental representation that derives from the apprehension of the object. This knowledge occurs by means of three concomitant elements: *species intelligibilis*, *actus intelligendi*, *conceptus mentis formatus*. The first element indicates the species to which the knowable object belongs. It is clear, in fact, that the intellect cannot know the object *sic et simpliciter*, also because it cannot understand its essence, but it can access it through the species that designates it and that, consequently, is called *intelligibilis*, borrowing this expression from first medieval scholastic theories. The second element indicates the intellectual act performed by the intellect of the cognitive subject and is the cognitive act that allows the subject to have a first knowledge of the object.²¹ The *actus*

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ See *Ibidem*: “si autem accipiatur intentio ex parte intellectus, hoc etiam dupliciter: unomodo accipitur ex parte intelligentis, et de hoc primo dicendum est. Alio modo ex parte rei intellectae, et de hoc, secundo, dicendum est.”

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ The form *actus intelligendi* comes from *Tractatus* by Hervé and, in particular, from q. I, a. I.

intelligendi is, according to this definition, what actually “brings” the object into the intellect of the subject, making general knowledge possible. In each act of intellection, after the object has been apprehended by the intellect, the cognitive subject forms the general concept of the known object, which can then be re-acknowledged in any subsequent intellectual acts. This is the third element that makes up the *intentio ex parte intelligentis*, i.e. the *conceptus mentis formatus*. Moreover, since the first element that contributes to this type of knowledge is the *species intelligibilis*, medium between cognitive subject and world, the subject will be able to re-know not only the same object, but also other objects similar to it, by virtue of the formal similarity that unifies them into a single whole.

According to Barrientos, this type of apprehension does not refer only to real objects existing in the world, but also to non-existent or fictitious ones. The reason for this cognitive extension is given by the fact that, in our mind,

“species rei visibilis in medio vel in speculo vel in oculo vel in fantasia vel species in memoria sensitiva, vel etiam imago Herculis dici possunt, quia ex sui natura ad alterum ipsum cognoscentem per modum cuiusdam tendentiae deducunt.”²²

The imagination and memory of the sentient subject’s intellect can *effective* and *realiter* produce an object, e.g. the image of Hercules, according to the succession *species intelligibilis* → *actus intelligendi* → *conceptus mentis formatus*. In this way, intentional knowledge is not only limited to the knowledge of what is sensible, but can also potentially be introduced into theological issues, which Barrientos does not consider here.²³

The *intentio ex parte intelligentis* makes possible the “internalization” of the known object, but leaves open a further question: when does knowledge of the *res* take place? The answer is provided by the discussion of *intentio ex parte rei intellectae*. In paragraph 183, *de intentione prout accipitur ex parte rei intellectae*, Barrientos begins by writing:

“alio modo accipitur apud intellectum intentio ex parte rei intellectae, et hoc modo dicitur intentio ipsa res intellecta in quantum intellectus tendit in ipsam, sicut in quoddam cognitum per actum intelligendi.”²⁴

²² L. de Barrientos, *Clavis sapientiae*, op. cit., § 182, p. 488.

²³ One of Barrientos’ sources in this part of the text is most probably Hervé. In several parts of his work, he mentions him explicitly, almost as his implicit reference for two aspects; the first is the possibility of creating mental images that do not correspond to any real element. This could derive from q. 1, a. 2 of the *Tractatus*, in which Hervé deals with the knowability of *figmenta*. The second aspect is that he hesitates to approach the discussion of intentionality to theological issues, a warning clearly expressed by Hervé in q. II, a. 4, where he notes the impossibility of knowing something about God and, in general, about transcendentals, since the constituent elements of such objects can only be known in a *diminutive* way.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, § 182, p. 488.

In this moment of the process of intentional knowledge he reconstructs what happens when the intellect tends (*tendit*) to the object of knowledge, that is, when the *actus intelligendi* presents the *res* to the intellect. Just as the *voluntas intentiosa* distinguished the objective of the will from the path leading to its satisfaction, this differentiation is also valid in the field of gno-seology. If, in fact, the *intentio ex parte intellectus* represents the path to *cognitio rei*, the *intentio ex parte rei intellectae* is the object of knowledge itself. The subject knows the *res*, which essentially represents the end (*intentio*) of knowledge itself.

As for the *intentio ex parte rei intellectae*, Barrientos makes a further differentiation, since the sentient subject can address *res* in two different ways, *naturaliter* and *formaliter*, i.e. *in concreto* and *in abstracto*.²⁵ He arranges a complex argumentation:

“*intentio dupliciter accipitur et invenitur, uno modo formaliter et dicitur in abstracto, ut hoc nomine intentionalitas, et tunc intentio dicit terminum dependentiae, sive illud quod resultat ex tali tendentia intellectus per suum actum in rem ipsam, et haec habitudo in abstracto significat precise purum ens rationis.*

Alio modo accipitur naturaliter et tunc significatur in concreto et significat id quod intelligitur quidquid sit illud. Est enim intentio concretum, sed intentionalitas abstractum, et quamvis in concreto res intellecta materialiter dicatur intentio, que aliquando est ens reale, tamen per illud quod importatur per nomen intentionis formaliter in concreto est semper ens rationis.

Ipsa ergo res intellecta materialiter in concreto dicitur intentio sive res intellecta sive ens reale, ut homo, lapis et huiusmodi, sive ens rationis, ut genus, species et huiusmodi.

Dicitur autem pro tanto intentio in concreto significare materialiter illud quod intelligitur. In abstracto autem ipsam habitudinem formaliter quae rem intellectam consequitur [...] nomine intentionalitatis.”²⁶

Barrientos starts from the *intentio naturaliter* or *in concreto*. To this intention, which is always *ex parte rei intellectae*, belong all objects as they are in the world, i.e. as *entia realia*. Apprehension *in concreto* is a form of knowledge that makes it possible for the cognitive subject to know the real aspects of things, as was the case *ex parte intelligentis*. These real entities, once known, become *entia rationis*, since they “enter” the intellect, which reflects on them and produces knowledge. The conversion of real entities into entities of reason leads to the consideration of another mode of *intentio*, the *formaliter/in abstracto*. The intellect, once it has received the objects from the outside world, codifies them and strips them of materiality in order to draw out their general attributes. The example given by Barrientos

²⁵ See *ibidem*.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

is that of the name “*intentionalitas*,” which gathers together all the possible meanings of *intentio* analyzed so far and which, therefore, follows at a formal level the knowledge of what *intentio* in particular is.

Although this argument may seem quite similar to the one presented in the case of *intentio ex parte intellectus*, it differs from it in that, in this occurrence, the content of the intentional act is described, whereas in the case *ex parte intellectus* the configuration of the structure—the container—that allowed the intellect to have knowledge was described. Following Barrientos’ argument, it emerges that in the intellect the same object can be given in two ways, *sive ens reale* or *sive ens rationis*.

According to the first mode, an entity is said to be “real” at the intellectual level when the intentional act allows the intellect to know the object as it is in reality. Examples of this mode are the apprehension of human being, stones and all objects in the world as they are in reality. For this reason, every known object will be *materialiter*, that is, from the point of view of its “materiality.”

For the second mode, an entity will be said to be “of reason” at the intellectual level when the intentional act allows the intellect to know the things in their universality, that is, according to their *genera* and *species*. Thus, this mode allows the intellect to form the concept of man, stone and all other known objects. In this case, the concept formed from a multitude of individual understandings is related to the set of real objects known through the different forms of *intentiones*.

It is possible to schematize these differentiations, in order to make Barrientos’ argument clearer, which otherwise, given its complexity, would risk appearing fragmentary:

	<i>Intentio ex parte voluntatis</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>actus volitivus</i> • <i>res intenta</i> 	
Res →	<i>Intentio ex parte intellectus</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ex parte intelligentis</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>species intelligibilis</i> - <i>actus intelligendi</i> - <i>conceptus mentis formatus</i> • <i>ex parte rei intellectae</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>materialiter/in concreto</i> - <i>formaliter/in abstracto</i> 	→ <i>intellectus</i>

The *intentio*, through the interaction *ex parte voluntatis-ex parte intellectus* acts in three ways in the intellect, in that it enables it to

- a) turn towards the world and set goals to be achieved (*ex parte voluntatis*);
- b) describe the intellectual structures that make knowledge of the object possible (*ex parte intelligentis*);
- c) to know and define the object of apprehension itself, according to a greater or lesser degree of generality (*ex parte rei intellectae*).

2. PRIMA INTENTIO AND SECUNDA INTENTIO. THE PILLARS OF THE “COGNITIO PER INTENTIONES”

Barrientos' arguments *ex parte rei intellectae* explain how the cognitive subject can know an object with greater or lesser generality, but they do not indicate precisely how this generality comes about in the intellect. In other words, a further question must be answered: what determines the material or formal knowledge of objects in the intellect?

Barrientos proposes a further differentiation of the *intentio*, which is crucial for a thorough understanding of the cognitive modes of the intellect, namely that between *prima intentio* and *secunda intentio*, to which paragraphs 178, 179 and 185 are devoted. In the latter, Barrientos deals briefly with the first intention, giving a precise definition and indicating a correct field of application:

“sunt intelligibilia, que sunt vera, entia realia que conveniunt rebus non ex operatione intellectus speculativi prout, scilicet, habent esse in intellectu speculativo obiective immo circumscripto. Tali obiectivo sunt res vere et conveniunt rebus, aliquando affirmative, ut homo, bos et similia in genere substantiae, albedo scientia quantitas in genere accidentium. Aliquando priuative, ut caecum, surdum et huiusmodi, que si non sunt res vere tamen realiter et veraciter rebus conveniunt, ut privationes sicut caecum. Et haec omnia, que sic rebus conveniunt, dicuntur primae intentiones, et nomina talium dicuntur nomina primae impositionis secundum grammaticum, vel primae intentionis secundum logicum.”²⁷

Real entities, which correspond at the intellectual level to *res mundi*, are known by the cognitive subject not by means of the speculative intellect, but because within this one *habent esse* after the cognitive act. The intellect of the sentient subject, at the level of knowledge of the sensible entity, does not set its speculative part in motion; it does not act on the res known, since this is known by the senses and, subsequently, apprehended *sic et simpliciter* according to its real attributes. This knowledge is defined by Barrientos as *obiectiva*, precisely because the speculative intellect does not carry out any kind of action or modification on the res. This type of intellectual acquisition

²⁷ Ibidem, § 185, p. 490.

of the object, based exclusively on its *cognitio* as a thing present in the world, is the condition of possibility of any apprehension of the sensible and can be *aliquando affirmative* (“man,” “chair,” “whiteness”) or *aliquando privative* (“blind,” “deaf,” “bald”). The affirmative and negative types, deputed to the apprehension of objects in their existence in the world, constitute the mode of knowledge proper to the first intention. In this way, trying to give a rough definition of this *intentio*, it could be said that it is how the intellect of the cognitive subject arrives at a direct knowledge of the object existing in the world, learning the singular or particular aspects that constitute it. This is justified, according to Barrientos, by the fact that all real entities, which agree to *res* by means of the two cognitions, are said to be proper to the first intention. Consequently, this *intentio* will perform the task of ensuring the subject a primary knowledge of the world around him, that is, a first possibility of consciously accessing it.

When a sentient subject knows the world by means of his intellect, she also derives general concepts, forms, contents, which she orders in a semantically and syntactically correct way at a linguistic level. The first intention, for such cognitive models, proves to be insufficient, since it limits itself to giving precise and singular knowledge of objects. In order to overcome thisgnoseological difficulty, Barrientos introduces in paragraph 178 of the *Clavis* the concept of *secunda intentio*:

“circa intentionem secundam tria sunt consideranda. Primum est quod sicut secunda intentio fundatur in prima, ita una secunda intentio fundatur supra aliam secundam. Sicut enim hoc, quod dico species, quod est secunda intentio, fundatur in id quod est homo, quod est, prima intentio. Ita super hoc, quod est esse predicabile de multis, quod est secunda intentio, fundatur secunda intentio, scilicet, species, et supra speciem fundatur species subalterna et sic de aliis, que sunt secundae intentionis.

Secundum est quod tam in nominibus primae intentionis quam in nominibus secundae intentionis, quedam dicuntur sine complexione ut homo vel cum dico species, quedam cum complexione, ut homo est species vel homo currit vel species est secunda intentio, et sic de aliis.

Tertium est, quod premitto, quod sicut sunt nomina primarum intentionum, quae transcendunt omne genus, ut patebit, et aliqua quae aequaliter inveniuntur in genere substantie et accidentis, et quedam sunt quae solum conveniunt uni generi. Ita in secundis intentionibus quedam sunt communes omnibus transcendentibus et omnibus decem rerum generibus, sicut hoc quod dico predicabile et multa alia. Quedam sunt solum communes decem rerum generibus sicut haec quod dico genus species et cetera. Quedam sunt specialiter pertinentes ad unicum genus, ut hoc quod dico suppositum, quia in genere substantiae solum hoc verbum inuenitur.”²⁸

²⁸ Ibidem, § 178, pp. 484–485.

Barrientos divides the discussion on the *secunda intentio* into three parts, corresponding to a) the status of the *secunda intentio*; b) the linguistic expressions proper to the *secunda intentio*; c) the relationship between the *secundae intentiones* and the categories.

a) Status of the *secunda intentio*.

In the first part of the paragraph, Barrientos determines the conditions of existence of the *secunda intentio*, i.e. he asks whether the general aspects, abstracted from knowledge *per primam intentionem*, derive directly from the first intention and whether all the *secundae intentiones* are related to it. The first question is resolved by arguing that the general concept of a *res* must necessarily depend on the *res* itself. The concept of man, for example, depends on the different men known to the sentient subject as a result of the first intentional act. The intellect of that subject, as a consequence of this multiple knowledge, will create a general concept of multiplicity. Therefore, the *secunda intentio* is effectively based on the *first intentio*.

However, it should be noted that, in the constellation of general intellectual concepts, some can be linked together, as in the case of “man is an animal.” Does this judgement, by virtue of such arguments, derive from two first-intentional knowledges, or does it connect two concepts proper to the *secunda intentio*? Barrientos favors this second option, explaining that, when faced with the connection of two general concepts, such as genus and species, the former will connect to the latter, since the relation between two general concepts can only be intellectual and, consequently, a *secunda intentio* can be based on another *secunda intentio*, as in the example “man is an animal,” where the “specific” concept of man is connected to the “general” concept of “animal.”

Based on these classifications, Barrientos establishes a norm for human knowledge, which regulates the apprehension of particular and general objects and the formulation of the related concepts. In the case of a general concept proper to the *secunda intentio*, it will be formed from the particular concept proper to the first intention. In the case of the connection between several general concepts, it will derive from the relationship between several concepts proper to the *secunda intentio*.

b) Linguistic expressions proper to the *secunda intentio*.

The sentient subject, once he has formed in his intellect particular concepts and general concepts, *primae intentiones* and *secundae intentiones*, possesses a gnoseologically valid set of concepts in order to express what he has known. It is now necessary to understand how this subject can express the known linguistically. In the case of knowledge derived from a *prima intentio*, the question is easily answered, since the corresponding linguistic

expression is composed of particular expressions, as in the case of “that hand has five fingers.”

In the case of knowledge derived from a second intention, on the other hand, the difficulty seems to be greater, since it is not immediately clear how to keep the enunciation of concepts in a general form. Barrientos argues that the difficulty is only apparent: in fact, as for the expressions proper to the first intention, also those of the *secunda intentio* can be produced *sine complexione* or *cum complexione*. In the first case, the utterances will have the structure “concept is x,” since only one concept is expressed. In the second case, however, the typical structure of the utterance is “concept is concept,” since there is the association of several concepts in a single proposition. An example of the first type of utterance is “the tree has leaves and a stem,” while of the second type “man is a species.”

c) Relationship between *secundae intentiones* and categories.

Once the status of the *secunda intentio* has been clarified and how first- and second-intentional knowledge can be enunciated, it remains to establish the most abstract relation of Barrientos’ theory, namely that between the *secunda intentio* and the categories, the *praedicamenta*. He states laconically that categories refer to the second intentions—and consequently also the names derived from them—since a *secunda intentio* always refers to the concept, i.e. the general. Categories, expressing concepts of a maximum degree of generality, are converted into the concepts of second intentions.

Barrientos’ theory of knowledge is enriched by two new concepts, namely *prima intentio* and *secunda intentio*, which unequivocally define how the knowledge of an object by a sentient subject takes place. Resuming and completing the previous scheme, this theory is presented in its final form:

<i>Res</i> →	<i>prima intentio</i> + <i>secunda intentio</i>	<i>Intentio ex parte voluntatis</i> • <i>actus volitivum</i> • <i>res intenta</i>	→ <i>intellectus</i>
		<i>Intentio ex parte intellectus</i> • <i>ex parte intelligentis</i> - <i>species intelligibilis</i> - <i>actus intelligendi</i> - <i>conceptus mentis formatus</i> • <i>ex parte rei intellectae</i> - <i>materialiter/in concreto</i> - <i>formaliter/in abstracto</i>	

Prima intentio and *secunda intentio* thus become the means by which a *res* can to all intents and purposes reach the *intellectus*, producing both the structure and the content of an apprehension.

In the field of gnoseology, Barrientos' investigation is very fruitful, since it does not aim to be rigidly anchored to the stylistic features of the scholasticism of Thomas and Hervé; rather, it proves to be full of and adequate to all those innovations in theology and philosophy that develop at the same time as the *Clavis* is written, centering his attention more on the subject, than on anything else. Knowing the world, having access to it, and discovering all its secrets, means laying the foundations for a complete understanding of it, so that what surrounds human beings can be an active part of the process that leads them to understand the world and understand himself, to question the world and question themselves.

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