

# Visitors from beyond the Grave

## Ghosts in World Literature

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# THE “GHOST” IN THE MAGIC TREATISES BY LOPE DE BARRIENTOS<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** In this chapter I have done a revision of the “ghost’s idea” in the Magic Treatises written by Lope de Barrientos. These scholastic and didactic books are related with the Aristotelian gnoseology and his theory of external and internal senses. Moreover, I will study the relation of Magic Treatises with theology.

**KEYWORDS:** Lope de Barrientos, ghost, magic, Medieval literature.

## INTRODUCTION

The main thing we have to highlight in respect to the figure of Lope de Barrientos is that the reigns of Juan II and Enrique IV cannot be understood without him. He was even exempt from attending his diocese by a papal bull in order to attend the issues of the court. He was an ambitious man who achieved excellence in every scope he decided to work: as a Professor at the University of Salamanca and tutor of the Prince Enrique, the future Enrique IV, who was the son of Juan II; as clergyman he was one of the most famous bishops of the diocese of Cuenca; as a politician he was one of the most influential and powerful man in the court of Juan II. However, he did not have so great influence during the reign of Enrique IV, either because of the age of the bishop or because of his disagreements with the king<sup>2</sup>.

There are two episodes in his life that I consider paradigmatic and exemplary of the personality of Barrientos and his vital trajectory. The first of them occurs during his initial steps in the court of Juan II as tutor of the prince Enrique. In 1434 Enrique de Villena, Marquis of Villena, dies, accused of sorcery and necromancy. Due to the serious accusations, Juan II orders a book purge and burning of the personal library of Villena<sup>3</sup>, and he entrusted Lope de Barrientos with it. This is the first book burning of which we have evidence, and it earned Barrientos the reputation of barbaric inquisitor throughout centuries. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the first person who

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<sup>1</sup> *In memoriam patris mei.*

<sup>2</sup> In relation to the biography of Barrientos, cf. Rísquez Madrid 2010 and 2011 and Martínez Casado 1994, where documentation about his activities can be found.

<sup>3</sup> In the work of Cotarelo y Mori 1896 it can be found a reconstruction of the library of the Marquis of Villena according to the various testimonies collected through years.

accuses Barrientos of doing things wrongly is the poet Juan de Mena<sup>4</sup>, who accused him of not having shared the books of Villena’s library and kept them all, except those which were burnt. Ever since, many authors have written about this action of Barrientos, even the Padre Feijoo, who blames him for not having knowledge of the topics of the books. However, it is highly improbable and nowadays it is well known that, after this incident, Lope de Barrientos wrote his Magic Treatises, where he made reference to this episode and some of the purged books<sup>5</sup>. Besides, it must be taken into account that Lope de Barrientos belonged to the Dominican order, known by his extensive inquisitorial task in Europe at the command of the Holy Office, but also by being great experts in the forbidden works.

This defence of the converted could be considered the second episode of Barrientos’ life that has marked his figure throughout centuries<sup>6</sup>, and although some scholars such as Constanza Cavallero<sup>7</sup> connected him with the writing of the Magic Treatises, I am convinced that this is a wrong hypothesis due to the own nature of the works and the topics they deal with. Moreover, in the Treatises he mentioned the episode of the purge and the fire of Villena’s library<sup>8</sup>, but there is no reference at all to the revolt of Toledo in 1499<sup>9</sup>.

Within his literary output<sup>10</sup>, the three Magic Treatises of Lope de Barrientos are the writings that have caught the interest of the literary critics and researchers<sup>11</sup>. However, there is not a critical edition of the Treatises as a whole, but individually, and, when they have been edited together, not all the available testimonies have been taken into account.

It is noteworthy that, within the literature of magic in Castile, Barrientos’ Treatises are the first ones written in the Romance language<sup>12</sup>, which speaks to the eagerness to disseminate his ideas inside Castilian territory. Moreover, the reason for choosing Castilian is not owing to his ignorance of Latin, as the bishop

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<sup>4</sup> An extensive commentary of this episode can be found in Rísquez Madrid 2010: 29-40.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Alonso Getino 1927: 122.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Rísquez Madrid 2010: 54-61.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Cavallero 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Alonso Getino 1927: 117-118.

<sup>9</sup> Regarding this event, he wrote a group of works: *Contra los cizañadores de los convertidos de la nación de Israel* (Alonso Getino 1927: 180-204) and *Opusculum super intellectu quorundam verborum cuiusdam decreti cotenti in volumni Decretorum, ubi Gratianus tractans de materia sacrilegii in casu 17 et quaest. 4 ait*: “Sacrilegii quoque reatum incurrit qui Iudeis publica officia committit”, whose translation into Spanish -*Respuesta a una duda*- has been also edited in Martínez Casado 1996: 25-64.

<sup>10</sup> A more detail study related to the work of Lope de Barrientos could be consulted in Martínez Casado 1994 and Rísquez Madrid 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Rísquez Madrid 2014a, where a review of the edition of the Treatises is given and there is also a description of one of the testimonies almost unknown up to then.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Morgado García 1999: 12.

uses it in other writings, as it is the case of *Clavis sapientiae*<sup>13</sup>, but to his concern for the reader of this work and the search for a wider dissemination.

Regarding the date of the composition of the Treatises, scholars do not agree with it, except in that they could not be written after the death of Juan II in 1454, as the king entrusted Barrientos with their composition, according to his own words in the prefaces of these works. So, the temporal spectrum considered by the scholars encompasses from his early days at the court to the last years of the king. What is proven is that the date of the copy of the oldest preserved testimonies is after 1445, because the treatment given to Lope de Barrientos is “bishop of Cuenca”, the position he held since that year. The relative chronology is also certain among the three Treatises: firstly, he writes *De caso e fortuna*<sup>14</sup>; secondly, *Del dormir e despertar*<sup>15</sup>, and, finally, *De la divinança e sus especies*<sup>16</sup>.

The Treatises have a scholastic style: their structure is established in the beginning, where their parts and chapters are distinguished, and the topic is written in an organized and clear way and with a noticeable educational character. Taking into account their structure as well as their language, nowadays we would say that it is a work of “scientific diffusion”, since it clarifies concepts, resolves doubts and gives arguments of authority necessary to defend his opinion. The Treatises fulfil the purpose mentioned in the prefaces: to give to the King Juan II the theological arguments in order to distinguish the legal magic practices and the illegal ones.

#### GHOSTLY APPARITIONS IN BARRIENTOS' TREATISES

The treatise *Tractado del dormir e despertar* deals with the concept of ‘ghost’ more extensively than the other two ones. In the *Tractado de caso e fortuna* there is no reference to either ghost or a similar concept, which is understandable as its main topic is not related to it at all. The same applies to *Tractado de la divinança e sus especies* as it does not deal with ghost or phantasia, but with the concept of ‘spirit’.

In the preface of the *Tractado del dormir e despertar* it is anticipated that in the second part of the work:

[...] se dirá cómo se causan las visiones que parecen a los onbres, así dormiendo como velando, e cómo por la mayor parte todas son yllusiones

<sup>13</sup> This work is the only medieval complete encyclopaedia written in a Hispanic sphere whose critical edition can be consulted online in Rísquez Madrid 2010, together with a detail study.

<sup>14</sup> The edition I will follow in this chapter is the edition of Godinas 2006.

<sup>15</sup> The most complete edition until now is the edition of García-Monge Carretero 2001.

<sup>16</sup> This treatise is the one that has more editions edited till nowadays. I will follow the one of Cuenca Muñoz 1994, although, for reasons of accessibility, I will quote according to number of page of the edition of 1992.

e operaciones de la fantasía, hablando naturalmente, o de los malos espíritus, hablando theologalmente<sup>17</sup>.

This double reference is very interesting to the concept, given that he mentions a duality in the ‘ghost’ to which I refer later: on the one hand, it deals with agnoseological conception, and, on the other hand, with a theological one.

The beginning of the second part of the *Tractado del dormir e despertar* is written about the five exterior powers and the five inner ones. The fifth inner power is phantasia. It is located in the middle part of the brain, because, being located in such a position, it receives the images of both the imaginative power, which is situated in the front part of the brain, and the memorative one, whose location is the posterior part of the brain. The function of this fifth power is to create images adding or dividing from others. Another characteristic of phantasia is their constant state of activity, they are either asleep or awake. Barrientos also writes in the fourth premise that the memorative power retains the similarities and the figures obtained by the external senses, so, in the absence of the sensorial stimuli, everything that have been perceived previously can be judged. Thus, these similarities or images of the things represent real things:

Así las semejanzas e figuras de las cosas impressas en las virtudes sobredichas representan al animal las cosas de quien son figuras, e por tanto los físicos algunas vezes las llaman ymágenes e a las vezes ídolos, e otras vezes simulacros, e a las vezes especies e otras vezes intenciones, e a las vezes semejanzas e otras vezes fantasmas<sup>18</sup>.

Later, it is said that:

[...] sueño es aparición que se haze dormiendo, causada de las ymágenes de las cosas conservadas en la memoria o retentiva; quiere dezir que el sueño es visión o apareamiento, el qual dormiendo se causa de la ymágenes e semejanzas de las cosas que sentimos quando velamos, las quales figuras e ymágenes se retienen e conservan en la memoria [...], quando el onbre duerme encógense los sentidos e átanse commo dicho es, por tal manera que non puede sentir nin resçebir impresiones de las cosas sensuales que son de la parte de fuera, e estonçe la fantasía ofresçe a los sesos las figuras e ymágenes de las cosas conservadas e figuras<sup>19</sup>.

Therefore, the dream is one of the main elements for the intervention of the phantasia. So, it is important to consider the dream in itself, which is the

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 2.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 19.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 19-20.

objective of this treatise, where the causes of the dreams will be given, as well as the way in which the ghosts that are originated in the phantasia –that is, the natural ghosts and the ones from the evil spirits- will be shown in the dream<sup>20</sup>.

Below he explains the ways that dreams occur. Concerning phantasia, he says: “La primera es quando dormiendo se representan a la fantasia las ymágenes e figuras de las cosas en formas indistintas e confusas, por tal manera que non se pueden disçerner e determinar las ymágenes e figuras de las tales cosas”<sup>21</sup>. That is, the dreams cause confusion in the person who is dreaming to the point of presenting the known things in different ways, so he cannot recognise them.

In the section dedicated to resolve important questions, Barrientos allocates one part to study when people are less susceptible to have dreams: in this treatise he explains that the physical cause for the production of the dream is a kind of streams that arise to the head in certain circumstances (tiredness, increase of temperature after an abundant meal, for instance); sometimes these streams are so thick that they prevent the person from seeing the images produced by the phantasia, as it happens to children or drunk people and, as a result, the dream is not produced<sup>22</sup>.

In the eighth doubt, Barrientos deals with somnambulism, where he explains that some people do things while they are asleep as if they were awake, and it is a consequence of “[...] la potencia que llamamos fantasia, por quanto, sengut dicho avemos, más sueltamente faze sus operaciones dormiendo el onbre que velando”. Thus, somnambulism is a natural product of the phantasia. Nevertheless, sometimes the actions committed by the sleeping person are of considerable importance, even for harming someone: according to Barrientos, in these cases the somnambulism is not owing to the natural action of the phantasia, but to the action of the evil spirits, who incite the person to achieve what he wants while he is asleep, because he cannot achieve it while he is awake<sup>23</sup>.

Finally, in the chapter where an answer is given to the sixteenth question, which deals with how to be able to distinguish the false dreams from the true ones, Barrientos writes that some sick people have seen their fears or their wishes and it is because the inner senses are damaged and do not work properly, as these visions are actually operations of the phantasia. When it happens to a healthy person, either he does not make an issue of it, because he knows that these ghosts are operations of the phantasia, or his case should be analysed by the sages as if they were miraculous apparitions. Barrientos describes these ghosts as operations of the phantasia that “acaescen más de noche que de día, por quanto a las personas temerosas les paresçe que veen aquello que temen, por

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 20-23.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 24.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 32-33.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 40-41.

quanto así commo lo temen, así lo representa la fantasía al seso común, e el seso común lo representa a la vista e a los otros sesos particulares”. Thus, this is the explanation of why people say they have seen supernatural beings<sup>24</sup>.

In the *Tractado de la divinança e sus especies* there are references to a concept related to that of the ghost: the spirit. In fact, it is said that the evil spirits can materialize themselves when they possess a body, as it can be read in the second chapter of the first part of the treatise<sup>25</sup>. He also distinguishes between good spirits and evil ones, although at a first moment all of them cause terror: “Asymesmo pone Tullio en el libro *De republica* que veyendo Scipión que Africano, que era muerto, le apareció en forma más espantable que lo él oviese conoçido, súbito cayó espantado, al qual dixo Scipión: *Esfuérçate, non temas, e nota las cosas que te diré, ecétera*. Esto es en prueba que causan espanto en principio quando aparecen”<sup>26</sup>. Likewise, the evil spirits increase the fear, while the good ones comfort those who see them<sup>27</sup>.

Regarding the nature of the spirits, Barrientos notices that “los ángeles buenos commo los malos toman los dichos cuerpos de ayre, el qual para tal operación se espessa e forma en la manera del cuerpo que el tal espíritu ha de tomar. Pero ay esta diferençia, que los buenos spiritus toman cuerpos del ayre alto e más limpio, e los malignos spiritus toman cuerpos del ayre más baxo e fidiendo”<sup>28</sup>. In this description of the spirits it can be noted a radical difference between the concepts of ghost and spirit: the ghost is an image understood by the inner senses, that is produced in the brain of the person, in contrast to the spirit, which is a corporeal being and, thus, is understood through the external senses.

#### CONCEPT OF GHOST AND PHANTASIA: FROM ARISTOTLE TO BARRIENTOS

Throughout the Middle Ages, two meanings of the concept ‘ghost’ can be distinguished. The first meaning comes from the gnoseological theory of Aristotle, that a ghost would be the product of the phantasia, this one being of the inner senses of the human being. The second meaning is the apparition of the person after his death: the fear of death and the dead play an essential role in this definition that is deeply rooted in the Roman tradition. It could be said that this second meaning is best known in a popular context as opposed to the first one, which is developed in a learned context. However, both have a place in the medieval literature: the gnoseological concept of ‘ghost’ is found in learned authors that study it in their philosophical works, as Thomas of

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 63-65.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Cuenca Muñoz 1992: 181.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Cuenca Muñoz 1992: 189.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Cuenca Muñoz 1992: 190-191.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Cuenca Muñoz 1992: 190-191.

Aquinas or Albertus Magnus, but also in Alfonso X the Wise or the poet Juan de Mena<sup>29</sup>; the popular concept is found in countless stories for a long time as well, starting from Pliny the Young<sup>30</sup> in the Roman literature to nowadays; likewise this concept was studied and analysed from the theological point of view of the Fathers of the Church, Tertullian and Augustine of Hippo, the most important and meaningful authors<sup>31</sup>.

The Aristotelian theory of knowledge is based in the perception through the sensitive faculties of an object of knowledge or substance, that is, the object is perceived by the external senses that send the perceptions to the common sense, which is one of the inner senses. Once common sense joins the different perceptions (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch), imagination produces a sensitive image that the active intellect submits to a process of abstraction and the passive intellect creates the concept of the perceived object. Therefore, to reach the knowledge a joint effort should be made between the senses and understanding. In this summarised way, this is the Aristotelian gnoseological process.

Having said that, during the Middle Ages (around the 10th century) the Aristotelian work came to the West through Arab translations. I will not comment on the process of translation and commentary on the Aristotelian work, but I would like to highlight that the Aristotle we have in this period is the Latin Aristotle, which is a combination of translations and commentaries on his work made by different authors. Avicenna, Averroes, Albertus Magnus, Thomas of Aquinas and a long list of authors, translators and commentators are the ones who pass on the Aristotelian ideas during these centuries. Hence the fact that we do not have neither a standardized text nor a sole interpretation adjusted to the Greek text from where nowadays the philosophical study of Aristotle is started. The appropriateness of this marginal note is emphasised when we analyse the inner senses: their number and their names change depending on the authors; therefore there would be three, four or even seven different faculties.

Concerning the topic of this chapter, I will discuss briefly the inner sense of the phantasia. *Phantasia* is a Greek term that in Latin is equivalent to *imaginatio*; thus, ghost and image are equal terms in this context. However, this comparison is found in some texts but not in all, so some authors speak about the four inner senses that Aristotle draws up (common sense, estimative power, memory and phantasia), although others add a fifth one, the imagination. This system of five inner senses is developed by Avicenna, and since then it will be present in many other authors.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Tubau 2007.

<sup>30</sup> He is considered to be the first author who wrote a ghost story (*ep.* 7. 27) that will be the archetype in the later literature of ghosts.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Lecouteux 1986: 1<sup>a</sup>, 3, 1-2.



The popular meaning of ghost as the apparition of a person after his death was subject of study for the Fathers of the Church, because the fear of death and of the apparition of the dead is established in the society of every age. As heir of the pagan culture and religion, the medieval society also inherited both these fears and the Roman literature and customs<sup>32</sup>. As it is logical, the belief in these ghosts clashes with the dogmas of the Christian Church, and due to it, the Fathers of the Church replied to these phenomena. Tertullian is the first author in dealing with this topic in his treatise *De anima* where he admits the existence of ghosts as a product of an evil’s possession through black magic and necromancy in order to provoke fear in people. Therefore, Tertullian denies that dead could return to life or stay with the living as ghost or apparition, but that these ghosts would be in fact devilish possessions. In short, he denies the supernatural nature of the ghost and transforms it into a theological question.

The discourse of Augustine is very interesting, as his starting point is the unburied dead and how they appear in dreams to their loved ones in order to reveal their location. He says that it could not be denied that it occurs, because later the corpses are found, so he introduces a new type of possession: the possession of the good angels. For him, ghosts are incorporeal, and because of it, they manifest themselves especially in the oneiric sphere, therefore the good angels are responsible of the good dreams and the fallen angels are of misleading dreams and ghosts<sup>33</sup>.

In general, in regards to the matter of ghosts, the Christian Church gave a series of solutions to explain these different phenomena. Following Tertullian and Augustine these questions will be answered, so at the end of the 12th century all ghosts and apparitions will be considered as possessions, either incorporeal or corporal, during dreams or wakefulness<sup>34</sup>.

Returning to Lope de Barrientos, the first work where the concept of ‘ghost’ can be seen is *Clavis sapientiae*, which, as it has been mentioned, is an encyclopaedia whose aim is to define and to explain the concepts of the natural and moral philosophies. Through the encyclopaedia ‘phantasia’ and ‘ghosts’ are mentioned in the Aristotelian sense of the term, that is, ghosts are apparitions, products of the phantasia, which is one of the inner senses of the intellectual soul: *Dicitur autem fantasia in quantum facit talium formarum diuersas compositiones et dicitur a «fanos», quod est apparitio, quia facit homini diuersa apparere, unde et tales apparitiones fantasie dicuntur et ipse species in ea conseruate fantasmata appellantur*<sup>35</sup>. According to this fragment, there is an etymological explanation of the term ‘phantasia’ and, therefore, of ‘ghost’: it is an apparition.

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<sup>32</sup> Regarding this topic, cf. Lecouteux 1986. See also chapter 4 of this book.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Lecouteux 1986: 1<sup>a</sup>, 3, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Rísquez Madrid 2010: 693.

In the Treatises, the term ‘phantasia’ also appears in the Aristotelian sense collected in his encyclopaedia. As the scholar Llosa Sanz points out<sup>36</sup>, it is especially related to the dream, where phantasia works with complete freedom linking known images in order to create other new ones unseen previously. Lope de Barrientos follows in his work the commentaries of Albertus Magnus and Avicenna on Aristotle about the division of the inner senses in five powers: common sense, imagination, phantasia, estimative power, and memory. In this way, he presents it in his *Clavis sapientiae* and it is written similarly in his Treatises. This division also corresponds to a division of the inner senses in a symmetrical way: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, what allows a more understandable system. As it has been said, Aristotle points out four inner senses, so the division of Barrientos corresponds to the use of the texts originated in Avicenna’s commentaries.

Thus, it is clear that Barrientos never separates himself in his Magic Treatises from the tradition, but he considers that phantasia, as either imagination or memory, as one of the senses located in the brain and its operations produce the ghosts. So, ghosts are a phenomenon neither strange nor exterior to the person, but are originated and perceived in the inner. It is interesting to highlight that the person who perceives a ghost, does not see it with his eyes, because the sight is an external sense, but because it is a product of an inner sense, the person only sees it inside his brain. In this way Barrientos studies it in the *Tractado de dormir e despertar*, from which many instances have been quoted in which Barrientos explains that ghosts are products of the operations of the phantasia.

In respect to the second meaning of ‘ghost’, the one whose nature is popular and whose difficulties have been analysed by the Church, is also dealt with by Barrientos. As it can be read in the passages quoted as examples of the treatment of the concept ‘ghost’ in the Magic Treatises, in *Tractado del dormir e despertar*<sup>37</sup> and in *Tractado de la divinidad e sus especies*<sup>38</sup>, both refer to spirits. It is said that spirits are exterior beings that can possess a body and act through it, to make good as well as to make evil. That means that the spirit is corporeal and it is perceived by the external senses: it is seen and it is hearing by the sight and by the heard respectively.

Barrientos is aware of the difference between a type of ghost and another one, and thus he specifies at the beginning of *Tractado del dormir e despertar*<sup>39</sup> when he points out that one can speak about ghosts either “naturalmente” and therefore he refers to the operations of phantasia, or “teologalmente” when it is made reference to spirits. So, he starts from the duality of the concept of

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Llosa Sanz 2008: 151-152.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 20-23.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Cuenca Muñoz 1992: 190-191.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. García-Monge Carretero 2001, vol. 2: 2.

‘ghost’, to which he will refer during his exposition. He will follow clearly the theoretical guidelines of the Aristotelian doctrine for the natural explanation and the ecclesiastical one for the theological explanation.

### CONCLUSIONS

On the 15th of December of 1434 Enrique de Villena dies in Madrid, and after his death he was accused of having practised necromancy and heresies. So, the Crown confiscated his property. Nevertheless, the charges could not convince Juan II, who asked to the then friar Lope de Barrientos to write a work explaining which magic practises were licit and which were not. Taking into account the aim of the Magic Treatises it is understandable that Barrientos would write a work of an easy clarifying and didactic reading, that he uses the arguments of authority and he knows his way around the accepted theories in philosophical and theological topic: Aristotle and his theory of knowledge and the explanations of the Fathers of the Church will be his theoretical and doctrinal sources.

This duality of the treatment of the topic –the explanation of the natural philosophy and the theological explanation- gives rise to the duality of the concept of the ghost present in the Treatises. These two perspectives of study, in short, are the two core ideas that regulate the exposition of Barrientos, who assembles in his work the double view of the dealt phenomena. None of the points of the Treatises are original in themselves, neither the concepts nor the explanations, nor the structure of the work, but all of them together lead to an agile and effective work in order to achieve the goals Barrientos resolves. This is characteristic of the vital trajectory of Lope de Barrientos.

On the other hand, it seems to me interesting to point out a terminological issue: images, apparitions, idols, semblances, species, intentions, similarities... they all are different terms used to name ghosts, not only by Barrientos, but also during the Middle Ages and throughout history. However, Barrientos distinguishes between these terms and ‘spirit’, which in the Treatises is referred specifically to ghosts, which is explained by Theology.

In sum, it has been shown the idea of the bishop of Cuenca, Lope de Barrientos, about what a ghost is, connecting it with the most important philosophical and theological theories of his time, so we can consider the magic Treatises as a paradigmatic example of the philosophical and theological thought of the 15th century Treatise.