

From: Gadamer, Hans-Georg. The Enigma of Health. The Art of Healing in a Scientific Age. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. 180 s. ISBN 0-8047-2692-2.

“Intelligentia referred to the highest form of insight, superior even to ratio, the rational use of concepts and forms of thought. Intelligentia is the Latin philosophical equivalent to the Greek concept nous, which we normally, and not so inaccurately, render as ‘reason’ or even ‘spirit’. Primarily it denotes the ability to recognize and identify the highest principles. ... The fact that in the seventeenth century intelligence ceased to refer to the capacity to know principles and began to mean the general ability to recognize things, facts, relations, etc., placed man on essentially the same plane as the intelligent animals. Clearly it was the Enlightenment which, motivated by pragmatic ideals, separated the concept of intelligence from any relation to principles and began to apply it purely instrumentally. ...

One can see that our contemporary concept of intelligence received its formal character from a particular set of questions which in no way directly corresponds to the original field of meaning which belonged to the Latin word intelligentia.“