

In dubio pro fide.

*The Fifth Lateran Council Decree Apostolici Regiminis (1513) and Its Impact on Early Jesuit Education and Pedagogy**

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On the first advent of the year 1503, Thomas de Vio ‘Cajetan’ delivered a sermon on the immortality of the human soul before Pope Julius II. Cajetan argues that the soul’s immortality can indeed be demonstrated by philosophical arguments and is thus not a question of faith alone¹. He concludes harshly that only a very

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¹ Cfr. T. Cajetan, *Opuscula omnia: in tres tomos digesta*, Lyon, 1588, f. 187b: «Quas ob res si animi nostri (de quo agimus) facultas certi aliquid componere potest, et veritatis quippiam de seipso percipere, si fortissimis argumentis fides ulla adhibenda est, si ratione investigata et ad sensuum usque explorationem deducta humanae sententiae quietem tribuunt ineruditi, indocilis, tardi, hebetis stupidique est immortalitatem animorum in problema revocare neutrum. O quam sibi melius consulerent isti qui se rerum occultarum scrutatores profitentes, quae natura in sole exposuit, offundunt atque obtegunt, si suam caecitatem silentio opprimerent: meliores namque haberentur philosophi dum tacerent, quam imperitiores dum tam inepte garriunt». On Cajetan’s view on the immortality and how he changed his opin-

poor or dumb mind would call the question of the soul's immortality a 'neutral problem' (*problema neutrum*), i.e. a question where both opposing positions were equally defensible. Scholars unable to prove the immortal intellect philosophically are considered better philosophers as long they keep silent on the matter instead of talking nonsense. Hence, for the Cajetan of 1503 it is equally inappropriate to cast doubt on the soul's immortality as it is to claim the mortality of the soul. Ten years later it was the next pope's decree to clarify the issue. The Fifth Council of the Lateran, summoned by Julius II but continued after his death in February 1513 by Leo X, addressed the issue of the immortality of the human soul at the council's eighth session in December 1513². Cajetan was a member of the council as well³.

The papal bull *Apostolici regiminis*, the outcome of this session, is commonly regarded as a decree defining the immortality of the human soul as a dogma of the church. However, Eric A. Constant has argued convincingly that the bull, reacting to certain habits of philosophical disputation and teaching in Italy, was not a «dogmatic declaration on immortality, but rather a

ion, cfr. K. L. Schmitz, *Problem of the Immortality of the Human Soul in the Works of Cajetan (1469-1534)*, Toronto, University of Toronto (PhD diss.), 1953, pp. 277-315; B. Hallensleben, *Communicatio: Anthropologie und Gnadenlehre bei Thomas de Vio Cajetan*, Münster, Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1985, pp. 187-204.

² Cfr. N.H. Minnich, «Julius II and Leo X as Presidents of the Fifth Lateran Council», in F. Alazard – F. La Brasca (eds.), *La papauté à la Renaissance*, Paris, H. Champion, 2007, pp. 153-166; E. A. Constant, *A Reinterpretation of the Fifth Lateran Council Decree Apostolici Regiminis (1513)*, in «The Sixteenth Century Journal», XXXIII (2002), 2, pp. 353-379.

³ On Cajetan's role, cfr. E. A. Constant, «A Reinterpretation» cit., pp. 374-375.

dogmatic condemnation of the so-called doctrine of the double truth»⁴. The *anthropological* question of the human soul might have provoked the decree as it was a major controversial subject, but the actual line of battle was formed somewhere else. The bull aimed at condemning the *epistemic* position that philosophical arguments are unable to prove a doctrine of faith, or, as the notion of the double truth is suggesting, that philosophy renders its own co-existing truth, which is in contradiction with the truth of faith. Against the background of the institutional practice of Renaissance university learning, the condemnation meant to prevent the case that a philosophy professor argued for the mortality of the soul while a theologian argued for its immortality.

Within the framework of university education this condemnation required a specific pedagogy of the philosophy course in order to assure consensus among the two faculties of arts and theology regarding matters of orthodoxy and piety. The Society of Jesus, a catholic order founded in 1540 and loyal to the pope, devoted itself to the education of young men *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* and hence was dedicated to developing a study programme that effectively ensured a philosophical education as the best possible preparation for the study of catholic theology. This article will present the case study of the Jesuit college in Rome, whose earliest educational designer, Diego de Ledesma, developed pedagogical guidelines, which put into practice what the Lateran Council had prescribed. Of course it was an important concern of Jesuit philosophy to prove the

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

immortality of the soul⁵; however, this article will focus on the epistemic aspect of the bull, i.e. the condemnation of the double truth. I will argue that this aspect had an impact on general guidelines of the Jesuit practice of philosophy teaching, mainly, though, not only with regard to philosophical psychology. I will proceed in four steps: First, the bull's content and background will be sketched as far as necessary for my argument. Next, the bull's impact on Jesuit official documents such as the *Ratio studiorum* will be outlined briefly. In a third step, I will show how Ledesma's pedagogical guidelines and measures reflect the bull's condemnation of double truth. In a conclusive step I will elucidate how Ledesma's efforts were implemented in the printed commentary on *De anima* by his Roman colleague Franciscus Toletus.

I. What does the bull of 1513 say about philosophical tenets and philosophical disputations? The bull consists of two parts: a *doctrinal* part, and a *disciplinary*

⁵ For Jesuit discussions of the immortality, cfr. H. Wels, *Die Disputatio de anima rationali secundum substantiam des Nicolaus Baldelli S.J. nach dem Pariser Codex B.N. lat. 16627. Eine Studie zur Ablehnung des Averroismus und Alexandrismus am Collegium Romanum zu Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Pub. Co, 2000. M. S. de Carvalho, *Filosofar na época de Palestrina. Uma introdução à psicologia filosófica dos 'Comentarios a Aristóteles' do Colégio das Artes de Coimbra*, in «Revista filosófica de Coimbra», XXII (2002), pp. 389-419. For an impact on Jesuit notions on animal parts, cfr. C. Sander, «For Christ's Sake: Pious Notions of the Human and Animal Body in Early Jesuit Philosophy and Theology», in R. Lo Presti – S. Buchenau (eds.), *From 'Animal' to 'Man'? Human and Animal Perception in Early Modern Philosophical and Medical Anthropology (16th-18th century)*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, forthcoming 2015.

part⁶. The doctrinal part has two concerns. First, the bull condemns «all those who insist that the intellectual soul is mortal, or that it is one among all human beings, and those who suggest doubts on this topic»⁷. Three positions are attacked. The Averroist doctrine of the unity of the intellect, the doctrine of a mortal, material intellect mostly pinned on Alexander of Aphrodisias and a sceptic position⁸. The very decree, i.e. the formal declaration of a dogma, was the second concern of the bull's doctrinal part. It reads as follows:

Since truth cannot contradict truth, we define that every statement contrary to the enlightened truth of the faith is totally false and we strictly forbid teaching otherwise to be permitted.

In the first instance, the decree does not concern the question, whether the soul is immortal or not. Rather, the bull addresses the truth value of certain claims contradicting catholic faith, which are «totally false», since the existence of two truths was considered a self-contradiction.

The second part of the bull is concerned with some institutional consequences of what had been decreed:

⁶ I follow Constant's reading of the bull, cfr. above n. 2.

⁷ Latin text and English translation are to be found in N. P. Tanner, (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Nicaea I to Lateran V*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1990, pp. 605-606. I follow his translation in all quotes taken from the document.

⁸ For a synopsis of opinions, cfr. P. F. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, pp. 282-293; O. Pluta, «'Sed hoc non videtur verum in lumine naturali': Natural Philosophy's Struggle for the Truth in the Immortality Debate of the Fifteenth Century», in F. Niewöhner – W. Schmidt-Biggemann – G. Tamer – C. Newmark (eds.), *Kritische Religionsphilosophie. Eine Gedenkschrift für Friedrich Niewöhner*, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2010, pp. 85-105.

Moreover we strictly enjoin on [...] every philosopher who teaches publicly [...] that when they explain [...] the principles or conclusions of philosophers, where these are known to deviate from the true faith – as in the assertion of the soul's mortality or of there being only one soul or of the eternity of the world and other topics of this kind – they are obliged to devote their every effort to clarify for their listeners the truth of the Christian religion, to teach it by convincing arguments, so far as this is possible, and to apply themselves to the full extent of their energies to refuting and disposing of the philosophers' opposing arguments, since all the solutions are available.

In his sermon of 1503, Cajetan did argue for the immortality of the soul on philosophical grounds, but strongly advised philosophers that it is more appropriate to keep silent on the issue instead of arguing otherwise or calling it a *problema neutrum*. The bull on the other hand did not consider silence to be a reasonable option and thus decreed that in «topics of this kind» (*alia huiusmodi*) the pious doctrine has to be taught «by convincing arguments» (*manifestum facere*). It is no wonder, then, that Cajetan voted – unsuccessfully – against this institutional part of the bull at the council⁹.

However, it is noteworthy that the bull does not only mention questions of the soul but also the matter of the eternity of the world and even admits *alia huiusmodi*. The question of the eternity of the world had been the standard example of a *problema neutrum* for Aristotelian philosophers, i.e. a question where both sides can be defended¹⁰: the creation account of the Bi-

⁹ Cfr. above n. 1 and 3 and J. Wicks, *Cajetan Responds: A Reader in Reformation Controversy*, Washington, Catholic University of America Press, 1978, pp. 5-11.

¹⁰ The origin of this *locus classicus* is Aristotle's *Topica* I, c. 11 (104b 5-16). Cfr. also M. J.F.M Hoenen, «How the Thomists in Cologne saved Aristotle. The Debate over the Eternity of the World in the

ble and the Aristotelian eternity. Philosophers such as Pietro Pomponazzi already argued that the matter of the immortality of the soul is of the same nature, namely the true answer is revealed by Scripture – and philosophical arguments alone cannot decide the matter¹¹.

The question remains how to deal with such stalemate situations in university disputations. The earliest statutes (issued before 1490) of the University of Freiburg in Germany for example already prescribe that when a student in his exam is asked about a question like the eternity of the world, he is to defend the position of the Christian faith and shall try to refute the reasons against this position¹². Although this practice

Late-Medieval Period», in K. Emery – W. J. Courtenay – S. M. Metzger, *Philosophy and Theology in the 'Studia' of the Religious Orders and at Papal and Royal Courts*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2012, pp. 181-218.

¹¹ Cfr. P. Pomponazzi, *Tractatus acutissimi, utillimi et mere peripatetici*, Venice, 1525, f. 51r: «quaestio de immortalitate animae est neutrum problema sicut etiam de mundi aeternitate. Mihi namque videtur, quod nullae rationes naturales adduci possunt cogentes animam esse immortalem, minusque probantes animam esse mortalem, sicut quam plures doctores tenentes eam immortalem declarant». On this passage and its context, cfr. H. Wels, «Die 'Doppelte Wahrheit' der Aristoteles-Exegese in der Frühen Neuzeit», in G. Frank – S. Meier-Oeser (eds.), *Hermeneutik, Methodenlehre, Exegese: zur Theorie der Interpretation in der frühen Neuzeit*, Stuttgart, Frommann-Holzboog, 2011, pp. 261-263; M. Pine, *Pomponazzi and the Problem of 'Double Truth'*, in «Journal of the History of Ideas», XXIX (1968), 2, pp. 163-176.

¹² Cfr. H. Ott, – J. M. Fletcher (eds.), *The Mediaeval Statutes of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Freiburg im Breisgau*, Notre Dame, Ind., Mediaeval Institute, 1964, p. 70: «quod si contingat ipsum determinare vel respondere in materia tangente veritates fidei, ut de creatione vel mundi eternitate, aut huiusmodi, partem fidei tenebit et contrarias rationes pro posse dissolvat». On this passage and its background, cfr. M. J.F.M. Hoenen, «Philosophie und Theologie im 15. Jahrhundert: Die Universität Freiburg und der Wegestreit», in D. Mertens (ed.), *550 Jahre Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg: Festschrift. Bd. 2: Von der hohen Schule zur Universität der Neuzeit*, Freiburg, Alber, 2007, p. 73.

was nothing completely novel, it obviously had to be officially decreed by the Holy Chair, especially with regard to secular universities in Northern Italy. This was taken up as the bull's academic imperative: In matters contradicting faith, the Christian position is the true one and has to be defended in school disputations and the false position has to be refuted.

II. How is the influence of the Council of the Lateran to be traced in official Jesuits documents of the time? A very short history might run as follows: Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society, only defined in the constitutions of the order that philosophy should follow the doctrine of Aristotle¹³. Loyola's confrère Hieronymus Nadal commented on that brief passage explaining that Aristotle only should be followed where his doctrine does not deviate from the doctrine of faith and the Saints¹⁴. Wherever his doctrines deviate, as the

¹³ I rely on L. Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Iesu*, 7 vols., Rome, Monumenta Historica S. I., 1965-1992. Henceforth quoted as MPSI followed by volume number and pages. I partially rely on C. Gómez Rodeles – M. Lecina, et. al. (eds.), *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Iesu, quae primam Rationem studiorum anno 1586 editam praecessere*, Madrid, A. Avrial, 1901. This volume is quoted as MPSI* followed by page number. For Aristotle's role in the *Constitutiones*, cfr. MPSI I, 299: «In logica et philosophia naturali, et morali et metaphysica doctrina Aristotelis sequenda est». For an outline of Aristotle's role within Jesuit philosophy, cfr. A. Inauen, *Stellung der Gesellschaft Jesu zur Lehre des Aristoteles und des Hl. Thomas vor 1583*, in «Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie», XL (1916), pp. 201-237; C. H. Lohr, «Jesuit Aristotelianism and Sixteenth-Century Metaphysics», in *Paradosis: Studies in Memory of Edwin A. Quain*, in H. G. Fletcher III – M. B. Schulte (eds.), New York, Fordham University Press, 1976, pp. 203-220.

¹⁴ Cfr. H. Nadal, *Scholia in Constitutiones S.I.*, edited by M. Ruiz Jurado, Granada, Facultad de Teología, 1976, p. 103: «Exponere quidem et sequi quae in eo auctore a catholica fide et sanctorum

Council of the Lateran has defined, they should be refuted. Nadal's comment already was reflected in the first draft of a *Ratio studiorum* for Jesuit schools, written between 1565 and 1570¹⁵. The *Ratio* of 1586 elaborated on a passage from the Jesuits' Constitutions that all philosophy teachers should also be educated theologians, since otherwise they might not be able to refute the arguments of the infidels as the Lateran Council advised¹⁶.

Determining the role of the Jesuit philosophy professor the *Ratio* of 1591 (and 1599) decrees the following:

[The professor of philosophy] shall not depart from Aristotle, unless he finds some doctrine contrary to the common teaching of the schools or, more serious still, contrary to the true faith. If he does find such contrary doctrines in Aristotle or any other philosopher, he shall be at pains thoroughly to refute them as the Lateran Council prescribes¹⁷.

doctrina non discedunt; quae vero discedunt, iuxta canonem Concilii Lateranensis sub Leone decimo ea refellere ac reicere oportebit».

¹⁵ Cfr. MPSI II, 255. For the *Ratio*'s later development cfr. J. W. Padberg, «Development of the *Ratio Studiorum*», in V. J. Duminuco (ed.), *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2000, pp. 80-100; M. Zanardi, *La 'Ratio atque institutio studiorum Societatis Iesu': tappe e vicende della sua progressiva formazione (1541-1616)*, in «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», V (1998), pp. 135-164.

¹⁶ Cfr. MPSI V, 101: «Nam si theologi non fuerint, minus erunt tuti in concludendo, in probando, in loquendo, aetatis minus maturae, doctrinae parum uberis, vix dissolvere poterunt argumenta infidelium iuxta decretum concilii lateranensis, neque ita philosophiam pertractabunt, ut theologiae deserviat».

¹⁷ Cfr. MPSI V, 283 (=1591) and 397 (=1599): «Philosophiae professor ab Aristotele non recedat, nisi quid incidat a doctrina, quam academiae ubique probant, alienum; multo magis, si orthodoxae fidei repugnet; adversus quam, si qua sunt illius aliusve philosophi argumenta, ea strenue refellere studeat iuxta Lateranense Concilium». Translation from A. P. Farrell (ed.), *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599*, Washington, D.C., Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits,

These programmatic directives clearly reflect the academic imperative of the bull. In this key passage defining the duty of philosophy professors in official Jesuit documents the papal decree of 1513 served as a crucial legitimation for promoting Christian doctrines already in the philosophy curriculum. But such a brief history falls short of revealing how these prescriptions were actually implemented in classes.

III. How did the Jesuit teaching meet the requirements of the Lateran Council? In order to answer this question with a concrete and illustrative example, I will present one aspect of Diego de Ledesma's pedagogy for the *Collegio Romano*. Ledesma (1519-1575) was the third Prefect of Studies at the Roman College between 1562 and 1575, being responsible to coordinate and supervise the studies at one college¹⁸. He experienced the first educational crisis of his Jesuit college in 1564 and immediately identified several reasons for it. He relates that in Italy experience has shown that too much liberty in teaching philosophy is harmful to the faith. Instead, philosophy should serve theology¹⁹. What

1970, p. 40. The passage has been approved at the Fifth Congregation (1594), cfr. Societas Iesu (ed.), *Examen et constitutiones, decreta congregationum generalium, formulae congregationum*, Florence, Typographia a SS. Conceptione, 1893, pp. 273-274.

¹⁸ For an overview of Ledesma's work as pedagogue, cfr. J. M. Belmonte, *To Give Ornament, Splendor and Perfection: Diego de Ledesma and Sixteenth Century Jesuit Educational Administration*, Chicago, Loyola University Chicago (PhD diss.), 2006. However, Belmonte does not focus on censorship.

¹⁹ Cfr. MPSI II, 478: «Item, sic doceatur philosophia, ut serviat theologiae; et ideo notentur opiniones non tenendae in his quae fidem concernunt, ac eae quae sunt defendendae, ut omnes sic doceant et to-

had happened? In Ledesma's eyes a colleague named Benito Perera was to blame²⁰. Perera was very popular among his students, but Ledesma observed that his students adopted some dangerous philosophical positions. According to Ledesma, he was told by Perera that it was not necessary to refute arguments against the faith and that natural reason cannot demonstrate the soul's immortality²¹. These pernicious claims out of the Jesuits' own ranks were conceived as a scandal and led Ledesma to radical measures. He first made a list of dangerous teachings circulating among Perera's students. Most of them concerned the epistemic aspect of double truth, namely the sceptic position that certain doctrines of faith cannot be known or cannot be solved. Then he compiled two similar lists of affirmative teachings that were to be defended.

He decided, together with the Jesuits' Superior General Francis Borgia that a similar list should be sent to every college. They thought it would guarantee for the unity and the safety of doctrine²². They included

tius viribus defendant, et ad id obligentur expresse, etiam secundum Aristotelem, ut de immortalitae animae etc.; ac per totam Societatem sic servetur».

²⁰ On Perera's standing among his Jesuit colleagues, cfr. P. R. Blum, *Studies on Early Modern Aristotelianism*, Leiden, Brill, 2012, pp. 141-147. I give a more detailed account in my article *The Debate between Diego de Ledesma and Benet Perera about the Philosophy Course at the Collegio Romano*, forthcoming 2014 in a special issue of «Quaestio», edited by M. Lamanna.

²¹ Cfr. MPSI II, 502: «Non esse necesse solvere rationes factas contra fidem; sed neque oportere his fidem confirmare, imo derogari fidei, si quis conetur rationibus luminis naturalis eam fulcire. Hanc sextam, partim in classe mihi respondit, et partim ex discipulis accepi».

²² On Jesuit censorship, cfr. above n. 13 and U. G. Leinsle, «Deductus opinionum. Traditionsbildung durch Auswahl in der frühen Jesuitentheologie», in G. Schmuttermayr – W. Beinert – H. Petri (eds.), *Im Spannungsfeld von Tradition und Innovation: Festschrift für*

five general remarks, chose 17 particular propositions and issued the list as *Decretum Borgianum* in the same year²³. The first general remark advises that nothing shall be taught in philosophy or theology which is against the faith, derogates the faith or even favours the faith to a lesser degree (*nihil defendatur, vel doceatur quod adversetur vel deroget vel minus fidei faveat*). Among the propositions to be taught it is stated that the intellective soul is immortal according to Aristotle and the true philosophy (*anima intellectiva est immortalis secundum Aristotelem et veram philosophiam*).

It is noteworthy that these propositions are not condemnations. Ledesma did not primarily aim at prohibiting a harmful doctrine, but at prescribing the pious doctrine. Some of the propositions on the list also have a negative, condemning part, but always an affirmative part follows with an adversative «not this, but that». Furthermore, Ledesma did not only speak about a doctrine in accordance with the true philosophy, but he also pinned the true doctrine on Aristotle. The writings of Aristotle were, as we have seen, the basis of teaching philosophy at a Jesuit College. Hence, Ledesma insisted, whenever possible, on emphasizing that Aristotle was in line with Christian faith.

Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger, Regensburg, Pustet, 1997, pp. 159-175; D. A. Bartlett, *The Evolution of the Philosophical and Theological Elements of the Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: An Historical Study, 1540-1599*, San Francisco, University of San Francisco (PhD diss.), 1988.

²³ Cfr. MPSI III, 383-385. On its impact, cfr. U. G. Leinsle, «Delectus opinionum» cit., p. 161. Considering Ledesma to be the ghost-writer of the decree is confirmed by MPSI III, 384, n. 2. In the critical edition the decree only counts 16 propositions; however, the 17th is a variant available in one manuscript, cfr. MPSI III, 385 (apparatus). It seems reasonable to follow this manuscript, since early Jesuits (like Ledesma, Bellarmin etc.) counted 17 propositions and, hence, obviously relied on this source, cfr. MPSI* 567; MPSI VI, 5.

Fortunately, Ledesma not only left behind his lists but he also commented on the *Decretum Borgianum* several years later and explained his opinion on the matter of the freedom of opinion to the Jesuit Superior General Everard Mercurian in 1574²⁴. Especially these two sources can be read as programmatic manifestos of his pedagogical beliefs and allow tackling the question of how philosophy ought to be taught according to Ledesma. By looking at these documents it becomes clear, what role the Lateran Council played within his concept of schooling.

In annotations to the first *Ratio studiorum* of 1565 Ledesma records his contention that it is not sufficient just to give very general guidelines²⁵. What was really needed in pedagogy were detailed and elaborate concepts. He compares his position to that of an architect: An architect cannot just say that a building should be bright, high and ornate, but he has to give very concrete instructions: The foundation has to be of specific dimension, the gate ought to have a particular height, the windows also ought to have a certain height and so on²⁶. The decree of the Lateran Council served Ledesma in two ways to give these concrete instructions for teaching philosophy.

²⁴ Ledesma's commentary on the *Decretum Borgianum* is not contained in the MPSI hence I rely on the older edition, cfr. MPSI* 548-569. The letter to Mercurian is edited in MPSI IV, 196-204.

²⁵ Cfr. MPSI II, 687: «Arbitror enim non esse satis in universum et generatim ordinem et rationem studioem perscribere, sed particulatim oportere per singulas classes et singula earum exercitationum genera, modum et rationem optimam magistro servandam explicare». This document relates to the teaching of humanities only, however, applying his conclusions to the philosophy course as well seems justified to me.

²⁶ Cfr. MPSI II, 688.

The first way concerns the *anthropological* dimension of the bull, i.e. the condemnation of certain heterodox positions about the human soul. He wrote a long commentary on the *Decretum Borgianum* in which he discusses each of the prescribed propositions trying to prove their individual accordance with catholic faith. For this purpose, he compiled *florilegia* of passages from scripture, cited councils of the church and collected *auctoritates* of Aristotle and of the medieval commentators. All of them serve to proof that a particular prescribed doctrine in question is in accordance with faith and common philosophy. Accordingly the bull of 1513 served as chief witness with regard to doctrines of Christian philosophy of the soul.

Ledesma's second use of the bull concerns its *disciplinary* part. For Ledesma, the freedom of opinion is comparable to the freedom of religion. And, of course, he is not in favour of that, he even considers the plea for such freedom as a sign for living in a heretical era²⁷. In his opinion the curiosity of philosophy teachers should be limited; rather they are to follow a bright light on their way. Censorship ensuring the unity of doctrine is seen as a fence to guide the teacher on his way, so that he cannot be seduced – due to man's corrupt nature – by his curiosity to take a wrong turn²⁸. To justify this belief, Ledesma twice quotes the discipli-

²⁷ Cfr. MPSI IV, 199: «Item, libertas doctrinae et praesertim in eisquae ad fidem aliquo modo concernunt aut iuvant aut nocent, esset maxima perniciēs, non solum in Societate, sed etiam in Dei Ecclesia. Quae sane petitio libertatis doctrinae et eius permissio in suo gradu (si qui id petunt) similis est petitioni ac permissioni libertatis religionis et fidei; quam hodie tanto conatu, petunt nostrae aetatis haeretici».

²⁸ Cfr. MPSI IV, 200: «Praeterea magistri ipsi habebunt lucem quam sequantur, et viam ac scopulos cognitos quos caveant. Et peregrina ac curiosa ingenia, si quae fuerint (quae nunquam desunt, ut est haec nostra natura corrupta), in officio continebuntur et intra cancellos».

nary part of the bull: The truth of the faith ought to be taught and everything opposed to it ought to be refuted²⁹.

So far the bull justifies two imperatives for Ledesma, namely that certain positions concerning the human soul are sacrosanct and that it is the papal will to promote these positions against the heretics. But it is of particular interest how Ledesma intended to achieve these two educational goals. This concerns the question of how exactly the heretic doctrines have to be refuted and of how the faithful position is to be promoted. Finally, it addresses the methodological question of how a teacher in doubtful cases can be able to decide which position he should defend.

Ledesma repeats very often, that it is not enough just to show the falsity of a position but it needs to be necessary to state, what the true position is³⁰. Thus, his list of propositions contains affirmative prescriptions, not only negative prohibitions. He argues, that with these prescriptions a teacher cannot subscribe to a less pious or heretical position due to ignorance, knowledge, will, error, deception or insanity³¹. He then gives a few examples: If he had only condemned the

²⁹ Cfr. MPSI IV, 199 and 201: «Denique concilium lateranense sub Leone X, sessione 8, praecipit aliqua in particulari, et in aliis iubet ut conentur magistri rationibus et def[endere] pro viribus et solvendo rationes contrarias etc. [...] Haec quae constituta sunt, bona ex parte sunt ea quae in concilio lateranensi sub Leone X, sessione 8 expresse ponuntur».

³⁰ Cfr. MPSI IV, 203: «Respondemus non esse satis ut negative tantum hae propositiones proponantur et mutantur ex affirmativis; ut nunc sunt in negativis».

³¹ Cfr. MPSI IV, 204: «Quare compluribus prohibitionibus hoc modo negative nunquam satis esset. Oportet ergo, ut factum fuit ob hanc ipsam causam, tunc etiam praeviam eum illa fuerunt constituta, ut opinio magis pia affirmative docenda proponatur, ne possit effugere quis ad aliquid minus pium aut impium ex ignorantia aut scientia, voluntate, errore, dolo vel malitia».

view that man has three souls, a teacher might respond: «I do not teach that man has three souls, but I teach that he has only two», or he could say, «I do not teach that there are several *rational* souls in a man»³². These somewhat childish and yet abundant examples clearly reflect what he considered to be very real problems in class. In fact, there are many passages in Aristotle where his readers cannot be completely sure about what is actually meant. Ledesma instead wanted to avoid any hermeneutical doubts in crucial cases³³. In his lists of propositions he mostly identified the true position with that of Aristotle. In doing so he aimed to avoid the following³⁴: a teacher might claim, «I am not

³² Cfr. MPSI IV, 204: «Nam ita nunquam satis cautum esset, et facile possent eludi, ut v. g. si proponatur sic: Nullus doceat esse tres animas in homine secundum philosophiam aut Aristotelem; diceret aliquis: ego non doceo tres esse animas, sed tantum duas, scilicet intellectivam et sensitivam, in homine, vel sensitivam et vegetativam in bruto; vel diceret: ego non doceo esse plures animas rationales in homine».

³³ On the 'ambiguities in Aristotle' for early-modern philosophers, cfr. H. Wels, «Die 'Doppelte Wahrheit'», cit.

³⁴ Cfr. MPSI* 568-569: «Nec illa vox affirmativa, secundum Aristotelem, mutanda negative, scilicet, non doceatur contrarium secundum Aristotelem [...] non est, inquam, mutanda in negativam, nam ita, ut alias diximus de ipsismet propositionibus, non esset sufficienter cautum 1° Quia v. g. magister doceret Aristotelem esse dubium in his, et se excusaret, dicens: Ego non doceo contrarium esse verum secundum Aristotelem, sed illum esse dubium in hac re. 2° Vel doceret in Aristotele haec esse problemata, et diceret: Ego non dico Aristotelem sic sentire, sed esse problema in Aristotele, et esse utrumque probabile. [...] 4° Etiam si in his rebus tanti momenti immortalitatis animae, etc., taceret omnino et nil diceret quid sentiat Aristoteles, quod tamen dissimulare vix aut ne vix quidem posset, tamen haec ipsa taciturnitas in talibus ac tantis rebus suspicionem et notam generaret in discipulis ipsum contrarium sentire. Nec vero expedit talem taciturnitatis licentiam concedere in his rebus maximi momenti; imo vero discipuli haud dubie magistrum interrogabunt quid in ea re sentiat Aristotelem».

in doubt about this problem, but Aristotle is». He might say that «this is a problem in Aristotle where both positions are defendable». For Ledesma even silence about these exegetical problems was no option. Leaving out these questions would only make pupils curious, he remarked. They might become suspicious and ask their teacher, who then would not be readily prepared to solve the problem. Ledesma thus tried to dismiss those readings of Aristotle, which might clash with catholic faith. Finally, his aim was not a general guidance of ‘how to read Aristotle’, but to carefully avoid the notion of double truth in matters crucial for faith.

Ledesma therefore established the following rule: if in doubt about opposing positions, always choose the most pious one! *In dubio pro fide*. He had first established this rule in 1564, but only for theologians reading Thomas Aquinas³⁵. The *Decretum Borgiaenum* started with the general remark that nothing shall be taught which is against faith and years later he justified this remark again, stating that to follow this rule is the duty of men according to natural law³⁶. And if we give

teles, et facile eius animum deprehendent, etc. Quare numquam esset satis cautum negative (et non doceatur contrarium per Aristotelem)».

³⁵ Cfr. MPSI II, 500: «Item, ea semper sequatur in dubiis et ambiguis opinionibus, quae magis videntur conducere ad fidem».

³⁶ Cfr. MPSI* 548-549: «Sed haec particula tam est pia, tam iusta et tam sancta, ut id sit iure naturae divino et humano debitum; et e contra, si detur licentia aut permittatur ut ea doceantur, quae minus fidei favent, quid inde boni futurum speramus, et non potius plurimum mali, enervando sanctam fidem ex parte, et obstacula quaedam ei ponendo talium opinionum, male cum fide aut minus consentientium? et lumen naturae ostendendo, si non omnino fidei contrarium, et ex parte ei adversum et male consonum? Ac pluribus id quidem ostenderem, nisi res esset per se tam pia et tam manifesta, et contraria tam nociva et impia. Atque omnes rationes, quas pro opinionibus vetitis in

the permission to do otherwise, what are we to expect from the future? Certainly nothing good. Ledesma here argues in the framework of moral theology. Since thirteenth-century Canon Law the so-called *regula magistralis* advised always to choose the safer, i.e. the more pious opinion (*in dubiis tutior pars est eligenda*) in matters of doubt³⁷. This of course is a purely theological and ethical argument, but it reveals, how seriously Ledesma took his pedagogical guidelines. Teaching something as a true or probable position, which contradicts faith, he considered a sin. To always choose the position, which is in line with faith, then was also the most pious option.

IV. Did Ledesma's assertive contentions have any impact on the philosophy of the Jesuits? The *Decretum Borgianum* was not accepted in all Jesuit colleges³⁸. However, its impact can easily be traced by presenting the example of Franciscus Toletus' commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*³⁹.

Societate alias attulimus, idem probant; atque ideo de his in genere plura non dicimus».

³⁷ For an overview on concepts of probability in moral theology and the *regula magistralis*, cfr. R. Schüssler, «On the Anatomy of Probabilism», in J. Krayer – R. Saarinen (eds.), *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic, 2005, pp. 153-154. The relation between censorship, moral theology and law remains to be investigated.

³⁸ Cfr. above n. 23.

³⁹ As a starting point cfr. S. Salatowsky, *De Anima: die Rezeption der aristotelischen Psychologie im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Amsterdam, B.R. Grüner, 2006, 140-150; E. Kessler, «The Intellectual Soul», in C. Schmitt – Q. Skinner – J. Krayer (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 511-512.

De anima was the central work with regard to the doctrines on the human soul and can thus be considered a matter of delicacy. In 1575, Franciscus Toletus was the first Jesuit whose commentary on *De anima* was printed, and Diego de Ledesma was one of the two censors of the edition⁴⁰. Ledesma and Toletus were colleagues at the Roman College and taught theology together⁴¹. So, it is not surprising that the commentary opens with several pages presenting ten propositions that philosophy needs to adhere to⁴². These propositions are more or less what Ledesma had issued years ago. Toletus, too, justifies his preamble by citing a passage from the decree of the Lateran Council⁴³. The tenth and last proposition states that all natural reasons, which could be delivered against the immortality of the soul, are sophistic, vain and refutable⁴⁴. Then, he quotes

⁴⁰ Cfr. F. Toletus, *Commentaria una cum quaestionibus in tres libros Aristotelis de anima*, Venice, 1575, f. 183v.

⁴¹ Cfr. H. Nadal, *Epistolae P. Hieronymi Nadal ab anno 1546 ad 1577*, vol. 2 (1562-1565), Madrid, A. Avrial, 1899, p. 442.

⁴² Cfr. F. Toletus, *Commentaria* cit., ff. 6v-8r, entitled «Propositiones aliquot Fide tenendae, quibus vera debet esse Philosophia consentanea».

⁴³ Cfr. *Ibid.*, f. 6v: «Quia multa de Anima disputanda sunt, in quibus non licet Catholico dubitare, disputantur autem, ut philosophorum errores et sophismata vitentur et reiiciantur, ac vera philosophia constet; placuit antequam quicquam disputaretur, ea omnia, ut fundamenta certa proponere, ut postea securius et ex peditius procedamus, nec hoc est a nobis hoc loco praeter rationem factum. Nam Concilio Lateranenensis tertio congregatio sub Leone X anno 1513 sessio 8 impositum est».

⁴⁴ Cfr. *Ibid.*, f. 8r: «Decima. Omnes rationes naturales, quae contra animae immortalitatem et alias veritates Fidei a Philosophis factae fuerunt, sunt sophisticae et vanae et solubiles. Nec enim philosophia vera repugnat veritati divinae. Haec est contra aliquos, qui absque ulla consideratione dicunt, secundum philosophiam esse animam mortalem et in aliis huiusmodi hoc inepto et impio utuntur loquendi modo, quos damnat Concilium Lateranensis allegatum sub Leone X

the bull again, namely that truth cannot contradict truth. However, Toletus went beyond this quotation by framing its metaphysical justification in his own words: Faith is above nature and not against it and hence the Council demanded to solve any contradictions and to teach the truth. The whole introductory text seems to be completely in the spirit of Ledesma's guidelines.

Toletus's commentary on *De anima* proceeds, as Ledesma would approve: Toletus not only shows that the catholic position is in line with the true philosophy but also with Aristotle himself⁴⁵. The name of Pomponazzi never comes up in Ledesma's writings, but Toletus explicitly attacks him concerning the question on the immortality:

Therefore Pomponazzi erred when he said that according to philosophy the soul is mortal; but maybe he was not wrong to say that the immortality of the soul cannot be proved by natural reason. Duns Scotus also holds the same opinion although such a claim seems to be a reckless statement after the Councils of Vienne and the Lateran. Nonetheless it is an error to say that it is against philosophy or that it is not in accordance with philosophy⁴⁶.

sessio 8 et determinat, quae fidei repugnant, non esse secundum philosophiam vera. Verum enim non contradicit vero. Est autem fides supra naturam, non autem contra ipsam et iubet Concilium et solvi et veritatem pro viribus quantum fieri possit, persuadere et docere».

⁴⁵ Cfr. *Ibid.*, f. 148v: «At veritas Catholica et fides determinavit omnia ista tria coniugenda: est enim anima forma immortalis et multiplicata secundum individua et hoc idem ut ostendimus, sensit et asseruit Aristoteles. Simul etiam determinatum est secundum Fidem, ut diximus I. de anima, quod ista non repugant rationi naturali et verae philosophiae».

⁴⁶ Cfr. *Ibid.*, f. 148v: «Unde erravit Pomponatius dicens, animam mortalem secundum philosophiam; et quamvis non esset fortasse error, dicere, quod non potest demonstrari naturaliter animae immortalitas; hoc enim dicit Scotus 4. Sent. d. 43 q. 2, quamquam et hoc ip-

Toletus agrees, though hesitatingly, with Pomponazzi that the immortality of the soul cannot be demonstrated by natural reason. Very likely, Ledesma would not have endorsed this concession. However, Toletus seems to suggest that this contested teaching had become a dangerous matter only after the Council of Vienne in 1311 and the bull of 1513⁴⁷. Toletus also takes up what Ledesma had argued before him asking rhetorically⁴⁸: Why would anyone decide to defend a position against the faith? If anyone claimed that the soul is mortal and errs – they will be tortured in hell for this lapse. But if anyone claimed that the soul is immortal and it turns out to be wrong – it would have no consequences⁴⁹. Nothing seems to be more rational than to hold the immortality of the soul on philosophical grounds.

sum, post Concilium Viennense et Lateranense sub Leone X. videtur dictum temerarium, sed tamen error iste est, dicere, esse contra philosophiam, aut non esse secundum philosophiam».

⁴⁷ On Vienne's impact on psychology, cfr. A. Baldissera, «La decisione del concilio di Vienne (1311) 'Substantia animae rationalis seu intellectivae vere ac per se humani corporis forma' nell'interpretazione di un contemporaneo», in «Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica», XXXIV (1942), pp. 212-32.

⁴⁸ Cfr. *Ibid.*, f. 155r: «Ex maiori utilitate, securitate et decentia huius opinionis, quam contrariae. Tandem melius est et tutius, sic opinari pro nobis quam contra nos ipsos. Nam aut haec fides et opinio vera est, scilicet animam esse immortalem et tunc quidem, si quis eam non crediderit aut credere enoluerit, post mortem luet poenas et feret supplicium; id quod non putat et quod oportuisset in hac vita praecavere. Aut non est vera opinio animam scilicet esse immortalem et tunc nihil erit periculi post mortem, sic fuisse opinatos in vita, quia cum anima post ea non maneat, redargui non poterimus de ea re neque puniri ob id».

⁴⁹ Kessler calls this argument «prefiguring Pascal's famous wager», cfr. E. Kessler, «The Intellective Soul», cit., p. 512.

Conclusion

As a Prefect of Studies at the Roman College, Diego de Ledesma designed a full-fledged concept of teaching. His efforts were partly directed against scandals that happened in his own house. These troubles basically concerned doctrines which were condemned at the Lateran Council. To build a stronghold against these dangerous trends, Ledesma reflected both on the content and the method of teaching. He compiled lists of propositions that teachers were to defend in their classes. He gave more general guidelines how they should be taught. The papal bull of 1513 played a significant role in justifying and provoking these measures. The bull had condemned what Ledesma came to condemn: heterodox doctrines on the human soul. The bull had decreed that whatever is against the truth of the faith is totally false. Ledesma had implemented his method of teaching designed as to avoid draw games of truth between Scripture and Aristotle. Ledesma established, as it were, a rule for pedagogical cases of conscience addressing philosophy teachers: always teach the pious position by philosophical arguments and refute your adversaries! As a side effect, he had a significant share in identifying the doctrines of Aristotle with those of Christian faith. The bull had demanded that university practice was to meet these requirements of faithful philosophy. Ledesma not only installed his pedagogical program in his college but also advocated that his model should serve as a blueprint for all colleges of the Society. And in fact, it had a considerable impact on the *De anima* commentary by Franciscus Toletus and partially lived on in the *Ratio studiorum* of 1599 until the 18th century.

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