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Ludovico Beccadelli: Philology Safeguards the Unity of Truth

Abstract

The recently discovered letters by Ludovico Beccadelli on the immortality of the soul give a new direction to the debated issue. Beccadelli, pupil and secretary of Cardinal Gasparo Contarini, sides with him against Pietro Pomponazzi in arguing for the immortality of the individual human soul, among other reasons on the ground that the possible and the agent intellect are factually the same in the individual. Beccadelli's method is innovative in that he strictly adheres to the text of Aristotle and thus avoids the clash of revelation and reason by having recourse to philology.