

Description for the general public (in English)

In 1513 the Roman Catholic Church proclaimed the dogma of the individual and immortal soul being the form of the human body and the 15th century abounded in the treatises on the immortality of the individual soul. Are these phenomena connected? The project "Why Did Quattrocento Humanists Have to Defend Individual Immortality?" can provide the answer.

It may seem surprising, but problem of the individual immortality was rarely discussed in the Middle Ages. Christian thinkers began defending this concept more firmly in the second half of the thirteenth century and this was a result of the popularization of some interpretations of Aristotle's thought, which interpretations denied the individual immortality. In this context, a famous polemic on the immortality of the individual soul was born, of which the main participants were i. a. St. Thomas, Egidius Romanus and Siger of Brabant. However, the discussed issue was not exhausted at that time and gained a new impetus in the fifteenth century thanks to the new translations into Latin of the Platonic and Aristotelian texts, and it was characterized by a new Renaissance theological-philosophical context distinct from the strictly scholastic one. In *Quattrocento* plenty of the treatises on the individual immortality were written, the problem was taken up especially by numerous humanists (one of the most important work for the entire epoch was *Platonic Theology* by Marsilio Ficino, both a philosopher and a humanist). Among the authors of the humanist treatises on immortality were: Agostino Dati, Giovanni Manardi, Antonio degli Agli, Leonardo Nogarola, Jacopo Campora, Pier Candido Decembrio (this list is longer, but these are the most commonly known then names). Almost all their works are only in the form of old prints or manuscripts, exclusively the text of Decembrio is edited critically. The proposed project embraces the in-depth analysis of the aforementioned works (as well as other humanistic texts containing considerations about immortality), which will allow to formulate the answer to the question in the project's title. Thorough analysis of the form and content of these works will enable to assess the relation between the humanistic conception of *dignitas* and *nobilitas hominis* with the problem of the immortality of the (individual) soul and will complement the intellectual picture of the Renaissance reflections on the subject. The aim of the project is to write a monograph (including the edition two of the aforementioned treaties) and articles on the 15th-century phase of the problem of the immortality.

The issue of the individual immortality is still widely discussed, and the planned works (monograph, treatises and articles) will present new sources and arguments used to solving it. It is an important element of the intellectual heritage of European culture.