

## Summary

### Joseph Owens' conception of the metaphysics of existence

The subject of this doctoral dissertation is Joseph Owens' conception of the metaphysics of existence. Joseph Owens (1908-2005) was a student of Étienne Gilson and taught philosophy at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies. The aim of this work is to analyze and reconstruct the conception of his metaphysics. The question that needs to be answered is whether Owens, as a historian of philosophy, in his reflections focuses on the historical analysis of the views of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, or whether he creatively develops them. Hence, the question arises whether or not Owens is also a metaphysician. Attention should also be paid to the influence that Christianity has had on Owens' philosophy.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents philosophical context of the formation of Joseph Owens' metaphysics. It includes inspirations by Aristotle's metaphysics and Thomas Aquinas' theory of being. Owens' references to Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas - which inspired his metaphysics - are analyzed. This is not merely a presentation of historical stances, but an attempt to point out the inspiration and basis for Owens' metaphysical explanation of reality. In the construction of metaphysics, the starting point for Owens is a really existing being given in sensual experience. Owens emphasizes the role of existence in being. Such an understanding of being indicates that of Owens' thought was inspired by Aristotle's philosophy in the context of the hylemorphic structure of things and the need to complement it with Thomas' existential conception of being.

The second chapter refers to Owens' stand in the dispute over Christian philosophy. Owens first defines the relation of Christianity to philosophy, then points out in this regard that although Christianity and philosophy are non-necessary and external to each other, still Christianity is the reason for the specification in terms of the selection of the subject of study. Owens' understanding of the Supreme Being coincides with the philosophical concept of the Absolute as a subsistent being. The metaphysical arguments for the existence of God show that existence is not contained in the nature of sensible things, but comes ultimately from a subsistent being. Participation, on the other hand, shows the necessary connection and ordering of being to the Absolute.

In chapter three, the first paragraph presents the metaphysical separation. The existence of things is originally apprehended through the intellectual activity designated by the term judgment. The content of being is grasped through conceptualization. "What" things

are, is known through conceptualization, “that” they exist is known through judgment. The second paragraph concerns the transcendental properties of being and the first principle of demonstration. The transcendental properties are unity, truth, goodness, beauty, thing, otherness. These properties are called transcendental properties on account of their universality, since they belong to everything that really exists. It further discusses the first principle of demonstration. This principle is worded with these conditions: a thing cannot both be and not be at the same time and in the same respects. This maxim is so primal that it cannot be proven and needs no proof. It is known in modern times as the principle of contradiction. It allows no middle state between the two sides of the contradiction. This aspect of it is called the principle of excluded middle.

The fourth chapter presents the elements of the structure of being and its analogical cognition. Anything that has being in an independent way is called a substance. Whatever has its being in dependence upon a substance, on the other hand, is known as an accident. A substance has being in itself, exists individually and independently. An accident is any kind of modification of a substance. Subsequently, an analogous way of cognising the structure of things is analyzed. Owens distinguishes: the analogy of proper proportionality, the analogy of improper proportionality (metaphorical), the analogy of attribution.

The fifth chapter presents the entitative constituents. There are two entitative constituents: essence and existence. Essence and existence are the central elements of the concept of being in Owens’ metaphysics. Essence as a potency to being and the definitional depiction of essence are presented. Subsequently the existence of being, contingency and necessity of existence in contingent being and the real distinction between essence and existence in contingent being are analyzed.

The conception of metaphysics proposed by Owens is based on the philosophy of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas. Owens, however, does not focus only on historical aspects, but builds his own conception of metaphysics.