

## Abstract

The present work belongs to the context of phenomenological ontology and tries to find out, what play/game is and what relationship it has to the nature of being.

I understand the question what „play”/“game” („hra“ in the Czech language) is as the question what characterizes the matters referred to spontaneously by this word, and whether it is possible to find one universal meaning present in all these cases.

I answer that such a universal meaning does exist, that a play/game is an „in its meaning autonomous process of being decided about something“ (where „being decided“ is meant impersonally, with no necessary reference to any conscious subject which decides) and I explain in what sense all the types of instances referred to with the abovementioned Czech word display these features.

I further show in what sense the most general or fundamental situation in which we are, i. e. the situation of appearing of anything, displays the features of a game/play – it can be viewed as the always the same, „unescapable” process of being decided about what will be present. On this ground a theory of being or the world as, *ultimately*, a play/game can be conceived, which may sound very convincing, if it is presented as a seeing through the illusion that anything determinate can be „self-sufficient” and granted once for ever as the last instance, and if it suggests that to realize the double openness of the determinate (in the sense of depending on something else and being not secured for all the future) equals to realizing that the world is a play/game, in which it is *being decided* about everything determinate, or about its presence.

Nevertheless, in what follows I show that a game/play is only one of the types of situation in which the openness of the particular is manifest in some way. (Other such situations are „way” or being on the way, the movement of integration, the universal flow, and others.)

So I ask, what is the ultimate nature of this situation of general openness of everything determinate, which enables it to appear in these different forms, and how these particular forms are constituted.

As an answer, I propose to understand situation as such as a processual belonging-together of certain irreducible moments and I identify the becoming itself, and the poles of the following differences as such moments: the determinate – the indeterminate, the present – the absent, the partial – the whole, done by me – happening by itself, the more suitable – the less suitable.

A situation acquires primarily one or another general character due to these particular features and their relations stepping into foreground or withdrawing into background. In the becoming of meaning, it is always being decided not only about the degree of emphasis laying on the individual essential moments, but also whether the becoming of meaning will further display this character and whether there will be any becoming at all. (Therefore the becoming of meaning is not enclosed within any definite limits and consequently, it never is (only) a play/game in the last instance.)

In the second part of the thesis, I place the theory presented here into the context of some currents in „contemporary“ philosophy. I confront it with the relevant thoughts of three important phenomenologists – Martin Heidegger, Eugen Fink and Jan Patočka – in the greatest detail. Generally, I strive to show that a considerable part of the contemporary philosophy shares the conviction about the „openness“ of anything determinate, but often does not reflect thoroughly upon the non-self-sufficiency and mutual implication of the particular dimensions of the world themselves, as well as the multitude (and non-self-sufficiency) of the different specific forms of the situation of the „openness” of „anything” determinate and does not systematically inquire into the constitution of these forms of the processual mutual implication of the essential moments. The proposal of such a research, which I present here, follows Heidegger’s crucial „late” conception of the processual belonging-together of the dimensions of the appearing situation, but, proceeding from clear questions (among others, the question which moments, precisely, belong irreducibly to the situation as such) to clear general answers, is more „traditional“ than Heidegger’s late thinking.

Another specific feature of the sketch of phenomenological ontology presented here is the emphasis which I lay on the fact that our „embodiedness”, our co-being with others, and other features of the ordinary, everyday experience do not, from a phenomenological point of view, belong to the situation of appearing *essentially* (since we also know uncommon situations which do not display these features). In the analysis of Patočka’s argumentation I show that his attempt to *essentially* bind the appearing as such to the abovementioned features of the prevailing situations fails (as well as his attempt to show that any appearing is *essentially* an appearing of a pre-phenomenal „reality”). I express my conviction that a radical phenomenological ontology, or a general theory of meaning, cannot avoid taking the non-essentiality of those moments *for the appearing as such* seriously, and is forced therefore to abandon quite a few deeply rooted thinking habits and set off on a little explored ground.