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CONVERGENCES: NAE IONESCU AND 'ANALYTIC ONTOLOGIES'

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Abstract. In Nae Ionescu's academic courses in logic, the history of logic, the logic of science, and metaphysics there are concepts and themes pointing to connexions to a philosophical orientation which Russell referred to as *the scientific method in philosophy*. In this article, we frame these concepts and themes in a context of ideas that we call, (with an *ad-hoc* term), *analytic ontologies.* In analytic ontologies, the underlying ontology of the scientific method in philosophy is the first chronological segment. When Nae Ionescu described the surrounding world he utilized the means of this philosophical orientation and he roughly assumed the same kind of entities. This fact did not help him to be a rationalist philosopher. Nevertheless, it allows us to speak about his case as one of the first openings in Romanian philosophy towards the analytic orientation. The neglect of this opening may be due to the fact that Nae Ionescu's ideas discussed in this article did not arouse the interest of any of his disciples.

Keywords: Nae Ionescu, analytic ontologies, event, fact, judgment, belief.

1. INTRODUCTION[1]

An important component of the metaphysical explorations in the academic courses of Nae Ionescu (1890–1940) refers to the world that surrounds us and to the means we have to understand it. This component is present in lectures on logic, the history of logic, and the theory of knowledge[2].

The surrounding world and its knowledge (which is just scientific knowledge) end up being discredited in Nae Ionescu's reflections. The world is for him an infinite and chaotic change, and knowledge of it through science is limited, imperfect, and does not reach the essences. The ultimate call is therefore to view both the world and its knowledge from the perspective of the absolute. Only in this way, we are told, will we be able to discern something in the world, and only thus will knowledge be useful to us.

[1] Mircea Dumitru read several earlier versions of this article. His observations helped me achieve a better construction and to improve some passages. I express my deep gratitude for the time he spent reading and providing feedback. The responsibility for the present version is entirely mine.

[2] These lectures were published based on the notes of some students of Nae Ionescu or on the notes from the stenography service of the University of Bucharest. It is unclear whether the lectures published during Nae Ionescu's lifetime were supervised by him or not.

What is surprising in this argument is the contrast between the elaborate and rigorous way in which the world and its scientific knowledge are described and the interpretation of the description – discredit. A philosopher embarking on the apologia of the absolute would not waste his time with an elaborate description of the material world from the perspective of scientific knowledge.

We aim to show here that this elaborate description is the result of a dialogue with themes of a new direction in the philosophy contemporary to Nae Ionescu. The direction is what Russell called *philosophy with a scientific method* (or *the scientific method in philosophy* [3]) and what will be briefly referred to in this paper as *scientific philosophy* .[4]

We argue that Nae Ionescu's encounter with scientific philosophy (which, in his time, was still in formation[5]) was substantial. Signs of this meeting are visible in the use of a philosophical vocabulary – which was new for the time – and in the themes conveyed through this vocabulary.

In order to bring this meeting to light, we propose a contextualized reading. Nae Ionescu's reflections on the world and its knowledge are set within a defined framework, mainly shaped by similar reflections found in the scientific philosophy.

The article has the following structure: in sections 1–2, terms are identified that play an important role in the lectures on logic, the history of logic, and the theory of knowledge given by Nae Ionescu. They are *event*, *fact*, *judgment*, and (indirectly) *belief*. In the philosophical vocabulary of Nae Ionescu's time, these are new terms. Our analysis determines the function of their use in Nae Ionescu's lectures.

In section 3, we show how these terms are used in works, some of which are contemporary with Nae Ionescu's lectures. With an *ad-hoc* expression, we identify the orientation that encompasses these works as *analytic ontologies*. This term refers to reflections on the constitutive elements of the world, which are present in three intellectual orientations with distinct research purposes, but which, though, find continuity (not only chronologically): *scientific philosophy* (at the beginning of the 20th century), *ordinary language philosophy* (in the middle of the same century), and *formal semantics of natural languages* (approximately the last 30 years of the previous century). What unifies these orientations in the present analysis is, first of all, the minimal vocabulary mentioned above (*event, fact, judgment, belief*). As in the case of Nae Ionescu's lectures, we follow the way these terms are analyzed and used.

Section 4 compares the meaning and the analysis of these terms in Nae Ionescu's thinking and in the researches of analytic ontologies. The comparison reveals important convergences. However, as Nae Ionescu utilizes these concepts in his explorations of metaphysics differently from the way the same concepts are utilized in analytic ontologies, we propose an explanation for these convergences.

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[3] Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic. And Other Essays*, and *Our Knowledge of The External World.*

[4] The term *scientific philosophy* requires a historical clarification. Its sphere, as understood here, encompasses several works: those of Russell (in the first 25 years of the 20th century), those of Moore, parts of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, and writings of the philosophers in the Vienna Circle. The term is used by Nae Ionescu, too, to refer to a distinct orientation, neo-Kantian philosophy (Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 191–192). We will use the term in the first sense.

[5] Nae Ionescu made his ideas known in university lectures held between (aproximately) 1922 and 1937.

The explanation resides, in our opinion, in the fact that Nae Ionescu understood that, whatever the philosophical option may be, the representation of the actual world can only be made starting from the ontology and theory of knowledge articulated through scientific philosophy (which in our presentation coincides to the first temporal segment of analytic ontologies).

2. FACT AND EVENT IN NAE IONESCU'S VIEW

In his lectures on the theory of knowledge, logic, the history of logic, and metaphysics, Nae Ionescu repeatedly used the terms *fact* (Rom. *fapt*) and *event* (Rom. *eveniment*). Their usage is not simply a stylistic manner. *Fact* and *event* are terms with conceptual weight in his thinking. They play a role in describing the actual world and its knowledge. Moreover, in the early 20th century *fact* and *event* were new terms, which philosophers did not particularly use. The occurrence of these terms in Nae Ionescu's lectures is therefore twofold important, and it is precisely this that justifies the attention we give to them.

The terms *event* and *fact*, involve in Nae Ionescu's lectures, two themes: an ontological theme and an epistemic one. The ontological theme means that the terms refer to entities. The epistemic theme means that these entities imply specific attitudes of the knowing subject.

2.1. THE ONTOLOGICAL THEME

2.1.1. Events

With Nae Ionescu, events are part of the world, and the world is defined by two main coordinates: space and time. In this context, the temporality of events is particularly emphasized. In one of the lectures of metaphysics, it is stated:

> Time appears where something happens.[6]

This *something* that is happening is precisely the event:

> C is before B and B is before A[7]...: I am dealing with **an event**.[8] (author's emphasis)

Temporality as a property of events additionally raises the question of what is happening. How can we, therefore, more precisely characterize what is happening, namely an event? Nae Ionescu's proposal is to characterize the event as a change.[9] Events are therefore *changes*.

Another property of events arises from their relationship with negation. Nae Ionescu's perspective is that events do not have a negative correspondent that is also

[6] Nae Ionescu, *Tratat de metafizică*, București, Roza Vânturilor, 1999, p. 128.
[7] In this context, the term b*efore* has a temporal meaning: *earlier*.
[8] Nae Ionescu, *Tratat de metafizică*, București, Roza Vânturilor, 1999, p. 129.
[9] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas,1991, p. 69.

an event. In other words, with respect to any given event, there is no corresponding negative event.[10] Speaking about negation in general, Nae Ionescu points out that it affects judgment, by intervening 'from the outside' (his term). However, the same operation is not possible in the case of events, or *states* (as he also refers to events with a contextual synonym):

> One cannot ascertain a negative state... There are no negative states.[11]

Finally, in a broader context (which is the history of ontological theories), the recognition of events as entities acquires special relevance. Discussing Aristotle's ontology, Nae Ionescu notes that it privileges the object, even when what is taken into consideration is an event. This is because, with Aristotle, objects are the bearers of substance, and the substance is, in Aristotle's view, the essence of existence. This perspective on events – draws attention Nae Ionescu – is no longer the perspective of modern philosophy. In its modern meaning, the concept of event involves the abandon of Aristotelian substantialism since now events are entities articulated through relationships between objects and are additionally autonomous wholes. In Nae Ionescu's terms, they are organic units.[12]

2.1.2. Facts

The first thing to emphasize with respect to facts is that with Nae Ionescu they are placed on the same level as events. About facts, Nae Ionescu states that they happen in reality and that they are *concrete*,[13] that they *exist* [14]and that they *occur in the nature.*[15] All these formulations speak of a common world for facts and events.

The second thing assumed about facts is their connection to judgment (referred to as *knowledge* in some places). The relationship is one of correspondence: a judgment (for example, the one expressed by the sentence *It is raining*) reflects or represents reality, and more precisely, a fact (here, the fact that it is raining).[16] In Nae Ionescu's view, the fact is therefore relevant to judgment.

The idea of correspondence between judgment and fact raises a question: if the judgment is positive (= does not contain negation) and corresponds to a fact, it is a true judgment. But if the judgment is negative and is true, the question is what happens to the fact supposed to correspond to the judgment. What is, therefore, the fact that corresponds to the true judgment expressed by the sentence *It is not raining*?

Nae Ionescu's position is that the truth of negative judgments does not result from the correspondence of the judgment with a specific fact. His argument is that

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[10] For example, for the event of selling a house, there cannot be the negative **the event of not selling a house*. (we mark incorrect constructions with an asterisk).

[11] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică*, *Ultimul curs*, *1934–1935*, București, Humanitas, 1993, p. 141.

[12] Nae Ionescu, *Istoria Logicei. Al doilea curs. 1929–1930*, București, Semne, 2009, p. 107.

[13] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică*. *1927–1928*, *Opere*, III, București, Editura Muzeului Literaturii Române, 2017, p. 266.

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 275.

[15] *Ibidem*, p. 276.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 259.

when we determine the truth of a negative sentence, such as *It is not raining*, there is no fact that corresponds to the negative judgment.[17] This is because, in Nae Ionescu's terms, reality is never negative; negation cannot be found in the world.[18]

The localization of the facts in the world of contingencies and the claim that there are no negative facts (because reality is entirely positive) shows not only that for Nae Ionescu facts and events share the same world, but that, in practice, they are indistinguishable. From all that has been said so far, it follows that *facts* are another name for events. There is only one circumstance in which fact and event do not seem to be identical: in their relation to judgment. We say, as Nae Ionescu also puts it, that a judgment corresponds to a fact, but we avoid saying that a judgment corresponds to an event.[19] It is not clear whether this is just a generalized stylistic habit or something substantial. Neither is Nae Ionescu clear about this topic.

2.2. THE EPISTEMIC THEME

2.2.1. Events

From the epistemic perspective adopted by Nae Ionescu, events are known through reason.[20] However, events, as changes, are in his view the expression of the diversity and dynamism of the world we live in. A diversity and dynamism that he associates with a state of quasi-chaos.[21]

The incessant change demands, therefore, for the one who contemplates it, order. We can introduce order into the flow of events by observing repetitions. Repetitions allow us to speak of categories or types of events, just as certain common properties of things allow us to speak about categories of objects. There is, for example, something repetitive in the event that in 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand was killed by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo, and in the event that in 1963 President Kennedy was killed in Dallas by Lee Harvey Oswald, a sympathizer of the Soviet regime. What is repetitive is that on each occasion there was an unnatural loss of human life, that in each loss of live there was a perpetrator, and that the victim was a politician. These are the common notes of the two events on which we base when we abstract away what Nae Ionescu calls *the law* of these two events. The law of events is, actually, (in more familiar terms) the concept of a certain type of event – here, a political crime – which can subsume other events as well. All the other features (the identity of the victim, the perpetrator, the method of action, the place and time of the event) are the variables of the events and do not define their type.

Clearly, Nae Ionescu is interested in our rational means of identifying a type of event, beyond the variables that provide diversity. This endeavor is paired with

[17] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. 1927–1928*, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 295.

[18] *Ibidem*, p. 295.

[19] The connection between judgment and event exists only in the circumstance where a speaker utters a sentence. The utterance is in this case *an event* (of speaking) that expresses a judgment. Obviously, however, this situation is not what Nae Ionescu had in mind (I owen this clarification to an observation made by Mircea Dumitru).

[20] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 258–261.

[21] *Ibidem*, pp. 218–228.

the fact that, in other lectures on metaphysics, he speaks about the perspectives that exact sciences offer us regarding the general shape of events. In this sense, he observes that logic presents an event as being constituted by a relationship along with the participants in that relationship.[22]. Physics, in turn, represents it as a force from a source body to a target body. The relationship, Nae Ionescu says, is, in logic, what force is in physics. Also, the participants are from the logical point of view the equivalents of the physical bodies.[23]

2.2.2. Facts

Some statements by Nae Ionescu demonstrate that, for him, the linguistic contexts of the term *fact* reflect, through their meaning, the epistemic specificity of the facts themselves. For example, referring to the way we establish relations with the world, Nae Ionescu repeatedly observes that our characteristic attitude is *ascertaining* facts. The word here is important, for *ascertaining* illuminates precisely one of the epistemic elements specific to facts:[24]

> When I say: *The wall is white*... it means that I am simply ascertaining a fact that exists in front of me.[25]

Ascertaining is a cognitive activity that materializes in *judgment*. Hence, the relationship that we have already been able to observe between fact and judgment in Nae Ionescu's thinking. This relationship requires an understanding of his ideas about what judgment is.

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[22] The interpretation of predicates in logic as relations is very important in Nae Ionescu's thinking. Nae Ionescu was familiar with the theory of relations from Russell's writings. Later on, Carnap will emphasize the philosophical relevance of the concept of relation (Rudolf Carnap, *Die alte und die neue Logik*, Erkenntnis,, Leipzig, F. Meiner, 1931, pp. 12–26). Much later, in formal linguistics, the theory of relations will become the foundation of the predicate theory and their arguments (Charles, J. Fillmore,. *The case for case*, in E. Bach, & R. T. Harms (Eds.), *Universals in linguistic theory*, New York, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston,1968, pp. 1–88).

The importance of the theory of relations in Nae Ionescu's thinking as a logician is visible also in the fact that the two quantifiers of modern logic, the universal and the existential, are defined as two types of relations; the relation *All* (Π) and the relation *Some* (Σ) (Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică cu specială privire la științele exacte, 1926–1927*, *Opere*, III, București, Editura Muzeului Literaturii Române, 2017, p. 118). It is worth emphasizing that Nae Ionescu's use of quantifiers, as distinct elements in the vocabulary of predicate logic, occurred at a time when predicate logic was being taught commonly without quantification.

[23] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 310–311.

[24] In reply, it could be observed that both the adjectives expressing emotional states and the verb *to ascertain* can also be applied to the term *event*. The distinction is sometimes subtle, but it still exists and shows that we actually have distinct epistemic orientations towards events and facts. We are, for example, less inclined to talk about a *surprising event*. However, it is absolutely natural to say (and we often hear it being said) a *surprising fact*. In the case of the verb *to ascertain* things are even clearer: it's hard to imagine that a civil officer will ever say **I ascertain the event that the conditions are met*. A usual formula is *I ascertain the fact that the conditions are met*...

An explanation for these contrasts could be that, by the term *event*, we refer to something that has greater independence from the knowing subject, while by *fact* we refer to something related to our knowing consciousness

[25] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. 1927–1928*, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 295.

2.2.3. Judgements

With Nae Ionescu, judgment is a form of knowledge that must be distinguished from concepts[26]. The distinction between judgment and concept is important in his thinking, and marks the difference between what Nae Ionescu considers to be *the clichés* of the science of logic as distinct from its important truths.

2.2.3.1. Judgement and concept

There are at least three respects in which judgments differs from concepts: the existential note, the capacity to bear a truth value, and the relative independence from concept. Unlike concepts, judgments, as Nae Ionescu shows, have the property to state existence[27]:

> When the ontological existence of something is stated, I am dealing with a judgment; when the ontological existence is not taken into account... I am dealing with a concept.[28]

This observation is not isolated. In another lecture, we find the same statement:[29]

> ...in a judgment... it is expressed something that exists... [30]

Secondly, being something that *states* existence, judgments are the kind of entities to which the predicate *true* can be applied. This point is, in fact, already assumed in the doctoral thesis *Logistics – an attempt at a new grounding of metaphysics*.[31] There, treating judgments as something that can be true opens an interrogative reflection regarding the knowing subject's preference for truth over falsehood:

> if truth and falsehood are in fact inherent qualities of propositions, if truth and falsehood are also 'objects', and 'real', what is the criterion for their selection ? In other words, why do we prefer truth and not falsehood ? [32]

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[26] The existence of a theory of judgment in Nae Ionescu's logical thinking has already been noticed (Alexandru Surdu, *Prefață la opera filosofică*, în Nae Ionescu, *Opere I,* București, Editura Muzeului Literaturii Române, 2019, p. 10). In the present paper, we will focus only on the properties of one type of judgment, the assertive judgment, although Nae Ionescu also distinguishes between interrogations and imperatives as judgments. (Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. 1927–1928*, *Opere*, ed. cit., 2017, p. 258).

[27] The idea appears in George E. Moore, *The Nature of Judgment,* Mind, 8, 30, 1899, pp. 176–193. Nae Ionescu cites the article in the bibliography of his doctoral thesis. (Nae Ionescu, *Neliniștea metafizică*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993, p. 55).

[28] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică*, *Ultimul curs*, *1934–1935*, București, Humanitas, 1993, p. 129.

[29] In this quote, Nae Ionescu is categorical. But in an early work (Nae Ionescu, *Neliniștea metafizică*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993, p. 70), he was more cautious and attributed this way of understanding the judgment to the orientation he called *modern empiricism*, from which he seemed to distance himself.

[30] Ibidem, p. 14.

[31] Nae Ionescu, *Neliniștea metafizică*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993, pp. 5–56.

[32] *Ibidem*, p. 16.

Finally, a judgment, argues Nae Ionescu, can be independent of concepts, in the sense that it may not be composed of concepts – as the logic called *classical* by Nae Ionescu states:

> ... it is not true that a judgment can only be made with concepts....[33]

The argument in support of this statement is supplied by names with direct reference to the objects about which a predication is made. A name with direct reference is for example the demonstrative *this* in the sentence *This is a tiger*. The judgment expressed by the sentence *This is a tiger* consists of a property (concept), the property *tiger*. But because the demonstrative *this* does not refer by means of a concept to the corresponding entity, the judgment is composed of the referent itself – the animal referred to by *this* – and the property that is attributed to it – here the property of tiger. [34]

2.2.3.2. Judgement and negation

Another important property of judgment is that it can be negated. The option of negating a judgment distinguishes, in Nae Ionescu's analysis, events (or facts) from judgments: there are negative judgments, but there are no negative facts (events); or, as Nae Ionescu puts it, *there are no negative states.*[35]

However, with Nae Ionescu, the capacity of the judgments to be negated does not mean that negative judgments are in a symmetric position with respect to positive judgments. According to his views there is, actually, an asymmetry between positive and negative judgments, which could be explained in the following terms: a negative judgment is not obtained by integrating negation (as a logical element) into the corresponding positive judgment. This means that, although a negative sentence like *It is not raining* results from adding the negation adverb *not* to the verb *is raining*, in the structure of the judgment there is no analogous operation. Thus, a negative judgment should not be understood as incorporating a logical element corresponding to *not*.

The reason Nae Ionescu reaches this conclusion is his observation that a true negative judgment cannot reflect a state of affairs (a fact). If it could, he says, this would mean the existence of a negative state, while negative states do not exist. This conclusion broadens the analysis: since a negative judgment which is true cannot mirror a state of affairs, it follows that the negative judgment cannot arise from the direct observation of a state of affairs.[36] However, a positive judgment *can*: for example, the judgment expressed by the sentence *It is raining* arises from the corresponding observation of the weather condition.

The conditions for the emergence of a negative judgment therefore exclude, in Nae Ionescu's view, direct observation. With him, the real cause of the emergence of a negative judgment lies in discourse and, more precisely, in dialogue. A negative

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[33] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. 1927–1928*, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 262.

[34]Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. 1927–1928*, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 263.

[35] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. Ultimul curs 1934–1935*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1993, p.141.

[36] *Ibidem*, p. 142.

judgment is legitimate, therefore, when there is a prior positive judgment in the dialogue, or when there is an interlocutor who has previously requested (through a *yes/no* question) information that she receives through the negative judgment. Negative judgments are therefore conversational reactions. I say *It is not raining* because I heard someone say *It is raining* and I reject her judgment. Or, just as well, I say *It is not raining* when I am asked by the question *Is it raining?* to specify which member of the exclusive disjunction (implicit in the question) *It is raining or It is not raining* is the true one.[37]

From these specifications, it follows that the role of negation (in a statement that is a reaction to a positive judgment) is to reject the truth that the interlocutor holds through the positive judgment. When someone says *It is raining* and another replies *It is not raining*, the judgment *It is raining* is paraphrased as *It is true that it is raining*, and the statement *It is not raining* means *It is not true that it is raining*. This explains why Nae Ionescu believes that negation is not part of the judgment: in the above paraphrases, negation seems to act upon the predicate *true*, rather than directly on the judgment.[38]

2.2.3.3. Judgement and belief

Judgments can be classified. We will focus on the classification based on what Nae Ionescu calls *modality* because it is the most relevant for the current discussion.

Nae Ionescu distinguishes between assertoric judgments (for example, *It is raining*), problematic judgments (for example, *It is likely that it is raining*), and apodictic judgments (*It must be raining*).[39] These terms are traditional, but they reveal the important connection between judgment and modality. The connection is important because, for Nae Ionescu, modality is essentially illustrated through *belief*.[40]

Indeed, the modality of a judgment is, with the very words of Nae Ionescu, *an attitude of mine*.[41] *Attitude* means in this context *belief*, that is, what someone believes about a judgment. The fragment below is relevant just because the ultimate term used is the verb *to believe* (in the Romanian text, *a crede*):

> What does modality mean? A coefficient of certainty. What is the coefficient for the statement *I believe it will rain*? Some x... [42]

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[37] This interpretation of negation is unjustifiably restrictive, and contemporary analyses do not confirm it. Negation, as understood by Nae Ionescu, is known today as *metalinguistic negation*, but alongside it, another type is also recognized, in which negation is part of the truth-conditional content of the proposition; this is *descriptive negation*. (Oswald Ducrot, *Dire et ne pas dire*, Paris, Hermann, 1972, Lawrence Horn, *A Natural History of Negation,*, Stanford, CSLI, Stanford University Press, 1989).

[38] However, there remains an unanswered question in this analysis: if the paraphrase of *It is not raining* is *It is not true that it is raining*, what role should we assign to negation in the formulation *It is true that it is not raining* (which is equivalent to *It is not true that it is raining*)?

[39] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică. Ultimul curs 1934–1935*, ed. cit., pp. 142–143.

40 The correct relationship between modality and attitude is that any attitude is a modality, without every modality being an attitude. However, the context in which Nae Ionescu uses the term *modality* shows that he was actually thinking about attitudes.

[41] *Ibidem*, p. 144.

[42] *Ibidem*, p. 145.

Two of the essential features of judgment are gathered here: the property of being a bearer of truth and that of being the object of a belief. The passage additionally proposes an illustration of the concept of modality through the concept of belief: belief is a coefficient of certainty relative to the truth of the judgment. The coefficient follows both from the act of understanding the judgment and the assessment of the judgment of being true.

In his *Course of Metaphysics*, Nae Ionescu also provided an explanation of the genesis of the coefficient of certainty which is also an argument in favor of representing modality through belief. [43] He showed that when we formulate judgments, we do not rely solely on what we take into account, but we frame what we take into account within previous experiences that are (or seem to us) relevant. These experiences legitimate beliefs. If, for example, someone says *I believe it is raining*, the belief can be not necessarily based on conclusive evidence (such as seeing raindrops), but by updating a previous auditory experience (a certain sound). Since this auditory experience may not only register the noise made by raindrops, it is possible that the subordinate clause *(that) it is raining* is false. The example clarifies how we can make false judgments that we still believe to be true.

2.3. INTERMEDIARY CONCLUSIONS

Nae Ionescu's reflections presented above are a triple novelty. Through their vocabulary, they represent, as stated before, a novelty in philosophical terminology, because the terms *event*, *fact*, *judgment*, *ascertaining* and *belief* did not constitute a significant network of terms in the philosophical thinking during Nae Ionescu's time.

There is then a thematic novelty, as the approach to these concepts through ontology and epistemology was also unusual: it was not common to address an event/fact in order to provide it with ontological foundation and epistemic relevance.

Finally, the enterprise has historical relevance: the inclusion of the event in ontology and its approach as a fact through the operation of ascertaining are, for Nae Ionescu, the consequences of an epochal conceptual rupture: the abandonment of Aristotelian substantialism. The abandonment is causally associated by Nae Ionescu with two factors: the emergence of the concept of relation and the triumph of the ascertaining as an epistemic attitude. The emergence of the concept of relation has imposed the event (the fact) to the detriment of the Aristotelian object (the possessor of substance):

> Modern thought had to dismantle substance... However, dismantling substance directed research towards facts... which, in the final analysis, are resolved in relation... Therefore, what was substance in the old logic became relation in the new metaphysics... [44]

In turn, ascertaining, as a relevant epistemic attitude, has imposed the concentration of knowledge on the material world and on the correlations between

[43] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 42–43.
[44] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de istorie a logicei*. *1924–1925*, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 95.

the aspects of this world, to the detriment of the search for essence (which is, of course, beyond this world):

> The essence of things (a problem undoubtedly for other times) [no longer matters, but it matters] the fact that things occur. [45]

Considering these mutations noted by Nae Ionescu, we will now show that the novelty of his reflections encounters a direction of thought that relied on similar conceptual and thematic innovations, too. This direction is scientific philosophy, which, in its part of ontology and knowledge of the ingredients of the world, we consider the first stage of analytic ontologies. In section 3, we will present analytic ontologies in their historical stages. In section 4, we will show the points of convergence between analytic ontologies and the reflections of Nae Ionescu summarized above.

3. A CONTEXT FOR THE TWO THEMES: 'ANALYTIC ONTOLOGIES'

What we call *analytic ontologies* is a set of analyses (initially, more or less disparate) of the terms *event*, *fact*, *judgment*, and *belief*. These analyses were, for a short time, contemporary with Nae Ionescu and continued after his disappearance. In a more specific way, by *analytic ontologies*, we primarily refer to studies that were initially oriented towards the ontologies of natural sciences and which abstracted from these ontologies entities considered relevant for general ontology. We find this orientation in the writings of Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein (from the first 30 years of the 20th century) that can be characterized as illustrating scientific philosophy.

The term *analytic ontologies* also encompasses studies in the philosophy of ordinary language that have used natural language as an argument to support discussions about ontology. The reference point in this regard are two papers of John. L. Austin (*Truth* and *Unfair to Facts*), as well as Peter. F. Strawson's article, *Truth.* Finally, under the term *analytic ontologies*, we have gathered certain contributions by Donald Davidson and Zeno Vendler, which are quite divergent in their philosophical orientations but very close in their common – and new! – interest regarding natural language ontology.

We justify the use of the term *analytic* for each of the orientations mentioned above by the fact that the identification and characterization of entities is done through logical and linguistic analysis. The term *analytic* is not intended to be a more specific characterization of the orientation adopted by the philosophers we have mentioned. We are aware that some of them (Davidson and Vendler for sure) would have rejected such a labeling. Methodologically, however, what is to be presented falls within what is broadly called *analytic philosophy*.

[45] *Ibidem*, p. 54.

3.1. EVENT, FACT, JUDGEMENT AND BELIEF IN ANALYTIC ONTOLOGIES

The terms *event, fact, judgment, belief* began to be used in philosophy from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the following century. The history of their analyses is close to the present days and consists of several stages marked by the names of those who made the most significant contributions.[46]

3.2. BEGINNINGS

The beginnings of analytic ontologies are identifiable in certain themes of the writings of Russell and Wittgenstein. These are writings that we can characterize (at least in part in the case of Wittgenstein) as illustrating philosophy with a scientific method.

3.2.1. Russell

In *The Problems of Philosophy*, Russell characterized truth as a property of beliefs.[47] Truth is a *relational* property of beliefs. The relationship is established with something that is not a belief and that belongs to the world. This something is referred to by Russell as a *fact*, and the truth of a belief therefore arises from the correspondence between belief and the relevant fact. When, for example, a speaker says *It is raining*, Russell understands this to mean that she is expressing a belief which is true if it is confirmed by the state of affairs described by the statement. In this case, the state that it is raining is precisely the fact that corresponds to the belief.

A fact, on this view, is therefore what makes a belief true. With Russell, facts belong to the world. For this reason, he does not hesitate to consider them events. Thus, a somewhat paradoxical circumstance arises in that the term *fact* is associated with the meaning of the other term, *event*.

Russell revisited the problem of facts in *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* focusing more closely on facts in their connection to propositions (also known as judgments). He added in this work classifications of facts. One classification distinguishes between particular facts (such as the fact that Socrates is a man) and general facts (such as the fact that all men are mortal). Another classification separates positive facts (the fact that Socrates drank poison) from negative facts (the fact that Socrates was not Roman). Upon closer inspection, Russell's classification of facts appears to be influenced by the classification of judgments, since it is precisely judgments that can be grouped into individual and general or negative and positive.[48]

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[46] A detailed history of how the terms *fact* and *event* emerged in semantics and in the philosophy of language as objects of analysis can be found in the unpublished doctoral thesis of Ruxandra Ivan, (Ruxandra Ivan, *Entitățile abstracte în limba română actuală. O analiză semantică a cuvintelor* ***fapt*** *și* ***faptă***, Universitatea din București, Facultatea de Litere, 2023).

[47] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, London, Williams and Norgate, 1917, pp. 186–189.

[48] Bertrand Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism,* London and New-York, Routledge, 2010, pp. 5–15.

Regarding the relationship between judgments and facts, Russell insists that a judgment does not refer to a fact in the way a name refers to an object. The difference, he points out, is evident in that a fact can make a judgment true and its negation false. Such a relationship cannot be established between names and things. It may be that by making this observation Russell had in mind an idea of Frege, according to which a sentence should be thought of as a name of a truth value.[49]

Facts, in Russell's view, therefore require that judgments be discussed, as well. But the way Russell understands judgments is not easy to describe. Sometimes he seems to imply that he distinguishes between judgment and its sentential expression, but other times he no longer uses the term *judgment*, but *proposition*, and it is not always clear whether by *proposition* he refers to what is expressed by a sentence or by the sentence itself content. We can still say that in some cases propositions as contents are clearly distinguished from propositions as sentences. This is the case with sentences in which the predicate is about something that is directly denoted. An example is the sentence used earlier, *This is a tiger*. The demonstrative *this* denotes something based on direct knowledge ('acquaintence' in Russell's terms). On the other hand, *is a tiger* expresses a property. Now the complex between the animal denoted by *this* and the property expressed by the predicate *is a tiger* can be called a judgment, but it is evident that however it may be termed, Russell can only refer to the proposition as content and not to the proposition as sentence; indeed, what kind of (sentential) content could it be in which an individual combines with a linguistic expression?[50]

Independently of the considerations regarding the term *fact*, Russell also used the term *event*. The disputes surrounding the law of causality led him to the question of how we should understand this term. His answer is that when a causal law is formulated, the events involved must be subsumed to categories, because, if they are considered in their own individuality, they cannot be used in expressing laws.[51] Thus, Russell proposes to work with the concept of event, in order to navigate in the diversity of events. In Russell's ontology, an event is a universal with particular instances.[52].

Another context in which the term *event* shows its relevance in analysis is the construction of the common notion of time.[53] The way we construct the notion of time, Russell says, is different from how we come to represent time in society. Typically, time is represented by calendar dates, suggesting it has independence from what happens. But in fact, we do not originally construct the notion of moment or duration through conventional measure units, for, as Russell shows, time units are

[49] Gottlob Frege, *On Sense and Reference* (translated from German by Max Black), in A.W. Moore (ed.), *Meaning and Reference,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 29.

[50] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, ed. cit., p. 85–86.

[51] Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic. And Other Essays*, London, George Allen and Unwin, (11th impression), 1959, pp. 186–187.

[52] Russell's considerations introduce a new theme in ontology: the identification of events. This issue would be taken up by Davidson in an extensive essay (Donald Davidson, *The Logical Form of Action Sentences*, in D. Davidson and G. Harman (eds.), *The Logic of Grammar*, Dickenson Publishing Company, Encino and Belmont, 1975, pp. 247–255). Echoes of this problem can also be found in another branch of analytic ontologies: in the formal semantics dedicated to entities in natural languages.

[53] Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of The External World*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1922 pp. 121–128.

not parts of the data of our immediate experience. Time units are constructed (abstracted) from certain data of experience and in the data of our experience, says Russell, there is something else; there are events and their inherent temporality, represented by time relationships between them: simultaneity and anteriority. When we are to establish any temporal reference point, we start – naturally, Russell would say – from several events that have different durations in relation to each other. Temporal relations thus allow for the abstraction – which is in fact, the construction – of such a reference point: an interval *t* is defined, for example, as the measure unit that encompasses event A, preceded by event B and followed by event C, with A being simultaneous with an event D that occurs before the occurrence of A.[54]

The reconstruction of the notion of time through events and relationships between them had particularly fruitful consequences in later research on the semantics of natural languages. Russell is not cited, but the spirit of his analysis is strikingly present in the later analysis of events by Vendler, and especially in the construction of the Event Structure component in James Pustejovsky's lexical semantic theory.[55] In this latter work, the temporal relations between events are exploited to operate important event distinctions between verbs.

3.2.2. Wittgenstein[56]

Some themes in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*[57] also contributed to the beginnings. A significant number of statements in this work deal with issues of ontology, and one of Wittgenstein's objectives was to identify a vocabulary specific to ontology. In this context, the term *fact* appears. The term *event* does not.

The term *fact* does not enjoy too many clarifications. It is nonetheless important in the ontology of *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, as it provides content to the notion of world, which is almost the broadest ontological concept used by Wittgenstein. The terms *fact* and *world* occur in sentence 1.1 (which seems to be an indirect reference to the Aristotelian substantialism of things):

> The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

Another specification can be found in sentence 2.034, which refers to the the structure of a fact:

> The structure of the fact consists of the structures of the atomic facts.

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[54] *Ibidem*, pp. 121–130.

[55] James Pustejovsky, *The Generative Lexicon*, Cambridge, Mass, London England, MIT Press, 1995, pp. 67–75.

[56] I owe the introduction of this paragraph to a suggestion from Mircea Dumitru.

[57] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung/Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922.

The fact is therefore a link between the world and atomic facts and has a structure given to it by the latter. In turn, atomic facts are defined in sentences 2.01 and 2.032 as follows:

> An atomic fact is a combination of objects (entities, things).
> The way in which objects hang together in the atomic fact is the structure of the atomic fact.

Sentence 2.04 establishes a direct connection between atomic facts and the world:

> The totality of existent atomic facts is the world.

Sentence 2.04 does not suggest that the term *fact* loses its importance. It just shows that the world can be thought of as being composed of atomic facts. If the above statements are compared with those of Russell on facts, we see that Russell's term *fact* is more similar to Wittgenstein's term *atomic fact*. And given that Russell's term *fact* also means event, an atomic fact could be in turn easily understood as an event, too.

Atomic facts play an important role in Wittgenstein's theory of representation. Wittgenstein presents this theory and his ideas about the representational force of the sentences as preliminaries to his correspondence theory of truth. It is in this context that atomic facts are exploited, because just atomic facts may or may not correspond to the image expressed by a sentence (which is atomic, as well).

Tractatus logico-philosophicus also has contributions to the analysis of judgment. Judgment is referred to as *a thought*. Thoughts are expressed by corresponding sentences, but according to Wittgenstein, the organizing principle of a thought is more general and can be found in what Wittgenstein calls *a picture,* that is, an image:

> (2.1.) We make to ourselves pictures of facts.

The function of the image is to represent an (atomic) fact in the logical space (2.1.1). It can do this because its elements can refer to the elements of the fact and because the relationship between the elements of the image can be like the relationship between the elements of the fact itself.

A statement particularly important regarding pictures is the following:

> (2.203) The picture contains the possibility of the state of affairs which it represents.

From this specification, it follows that the picture cannot ensure by itself that it corresponds to a state of affairs[58]. The picture may or may not correspond to a state, which means that it can be a true or false:

> (2.221) What the picture represents is its sense.
>
> (2.222) In the agreement or disagreement of its sense with reality, its truth or falsity consists.

Since the picture is a thought, the thought itself is the possibility of the state of affairs that it presents. The thought therefore is the bearer of the truth or falsity.

[58] Notice that here (and in other places of the *Tractatus*, as well), Wittgenstein freely uses the terms (atomic) *fact* and *state of affairs* as synonymous.

3.3. THE PHILOSOPHY OF ORDINARY LANGUAGE: AUSTIN AND STRAWSON

The connection assumed by Russell between fact and truth is found in the writings of John L. Austin. In two studies[59] Austin argues for the necessity of using the term *fact* (understood as an ingredient of the world) in the context of the correspondence theory of truth. The new element used by Austin in his argumentation is the use of ordinary language contexts. For example, for Austin, it is relevant to note that the expression *the disaster of the German military navy* refers to an event and at the same time to a fact, or that when a detective says *Let's look at the facts*, the term *facts* refers to certain relevant data for the judicial investigation. With such examples, Austin justified his preference for the event reading of the term *fact*.

Austin's argumentative strategy is not without risks, however. Ordinary language is a rich reservoir of expressions, and anyone who uses specific contexts to establish philosophical positions can expose themselves to counterexamples. This was also the case with the contexts used by Austin for the event reading of the term *fact*. The reply came from Strawson, who in his reaction to Austin's article *Truth*[60] showed that ordinary language has a significant number of contexts in which *fact* can no longer be interpreted as an event. These contexts advocate for a more abstract interpretation of the term. A fact, says Strawson, is what is assumed by a statement when the statement is true.[61]

The expression *the fact that the boss resigned* can be related to verbs like *to know/to find out/to discover*. In all these cases, what is known, found, or discovered is not an event, but *the information* about an event. Thus, with Strawson, the fact becomes *the unit of information* that makes a judgment true.

3.4. THE RISE OF THE FORMAL SEMANTICS FOR NATURAL LANGUAGES: DAVIDSON, VENDLER AND THE CONTEMPORANEITY

Strawson's observations have paved the way to the assumption that the difference between facts and events cannot be eliminated through subsumption. This is the moment when the term *event* appears in the vocabulary of analyses with its own rights, and not just feeding the meaning of the term *fact*. The step was taken by Davidson in his study *The Logical Form of Action Sentences*.

Davidson aims to obtain the logical form of sentences denoting actions in natural languages and concludes that the least flawed logical form must utilize a new category of variables (apart from individual variables, known from the theory of quantification). The new variables have to be *event* variables. In this way, a sentence

[59] John L. Austin, *Truth., Philosophical Papers*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 117–134 and *Unfair to Facts. Philosophical Papers*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 154–175.

[60] Peter F. Strawson, *Truth,* in G. Pitcher (ed.) *Truth*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc, pp. 32–53.

[61] *Ibidem*, p. 38.

like *John ate a slice of bread with butter for breakfast* can be paraphrased in the logical form (LF) as follows:

> (LF) *There is an event **e** of eating a slice of bread with butter, and **e** features John as the protagonist, and **e** took place at breakfast.*

Davidson's proposal was stimulating and manifested in a context where the research interest was increasingly shifting from philosophical problems in language (or from the ontologies of scientific theories) to the implicit ontologies of natural languages. Evidence of this interest is Vendler's volume *Linguistics **in** Philosophy*, published around the same time as Davidson's article. The volume includes studies on the subject of these ontologies. The most significant article for the current discussion is *Facts and Events*.

Vendler's contribution consists precisely in identifying criteria for distinguishing facts from events. These criteria are provided, as Vendler shows, by natural languages themselves. The criteria in question are diagnostic contexts (in Vendler's terms, *containers*) for each of the two terms. Due to these contexts, one can determine what properties each category has individually.[62].

Events, according to the contexts indicated by Vendler, are entities that can primarily be located in time. Facts do not accept temporal determinations. Thus, it is correct to say *Before the event X, the event Y took place* (temporal determination in a succession), but it cannot be said **Before the fact X, the fact Y took place*. The temporal relationships noted by Russell therefore characterize events, not facts.

In the same line, it can also be said about events that they have or do not have inner duration, but this cannot be asserted about facts. The difference is also reflected in contrasting contexts: it is correct to say *the event X lasted two hours* as it is also correct to say *the event X occurred instantly*. The same qualifications become impossible in the case of facts: **the fact X lasted two hours* / **the fact Y occurred instantly* are nonsensical constructions.

Thirdly, the spatial localization of events contrasts with the lack of spatial localization of facts: it is thus acceptable to say *the event in the Senate* but it is not possible to say **the fact in the Senate.*

Finally, events become known through perceptual activities, but facts do not: someone might say *I heard about the event from yesterday* but it's unlikely to say **I heard about the fact from yesterday.* Similarly, one can say *I participated in the event from yesterday* but it cannot be said **I participated in the fact from yesterday*.

Facts have, in turn, specific contexts that differentiate them from events. These contexts refer to knowledge activities beyond perception; as Strawson noted, one might *state* that John is ruining the company: what is stated is indeed a fact; however, *state* is not the appropriate verb for events: one cannot therefore *state* the event that John is ruining the company (or if the expression can still be used, it means something entirely different).

Likewise, adjectives are of one type when used in relation to facts and of another type when they qualify events. One can thus characterize a fact as *being*

[62] By a *diagnostic context* we mean a linguistic context specific only to a certain category of expressions.

unquestionably certain, but it is problematic to combine the same adjective with the term *event*: **an unquestionably certain event.*

The contrast between event and fact from the perspective of negation is also interesting. At the first sight both events and facts seem to have their negatives; this is at least what is shown when the terms *fact* and *event* each may receive qualifications that make them specific: *the event of the train's arrival* / *the fact of the train's arrival*. Independently of these constructions, we have as the negative of the term *arrival* the antonym, *non-arrival*. However, it should be noted that this antonym fits with the term *fact* but does not fit with the term *event*. Indeed, one can say *the fact of the train's non-arrival* but one cannot say **the event of the train's non-arrival*. It is thus understood that facts can be positive or negative, but that there are no negative events. And indeed, an event that does not happen is a contradiction in terms, hence the contrast: *the event of the train's arrival occurred at 7 o'clock* / **the event of the train's non-arrival occurred at 7 o'clock* (or: *the train's arrival occurred at 7 o'clock* / **the train's non-arrival occurred at 7 o'clock*)[63].

The wealth of data led the Vendler and those who continued his research[64] to the conclusion that natural languages have their own ontologies which deserve to be brought to light. Vendler limited himself in his study to indicating three such 'natural' ontological types: objects, events, and facts. According to his analysis, each of them has a certain relationship with the world: objects are situated in the world primarily through their spatial positioning; events are also situated in the world, primarily through their temporal positioning; finally, facts are not in the world, as they have neither spatial nor temporal localization. Their independence from these coordinates is also evidenced by the type of cognitive operations that can be associated with them: facts turn out to be informational structures (objects), whose role is to be used by the cognitive systems of humans.

It is noteworthy here that Vendler's typology also allows for a fourth category of entities. These are intensional entities (mainly, *propositions* – or as we termed them earlier, *judgments*). However, Vendler says nothing about intensional entities in his study, even though they are also situated outside the world, (without, however, violating the extramundane habitat of facts). A few clarifications related to the status of judgments from a Vendlerian perspective are still necessary.

The first diagnostic context for judgments (already suggested by Russell and Wittgenstein) is the predicates *true* and *false*. These contexts were later to be utilized by Vendler.[65] The second diagnostic context for judgments was identified later, too: it concerns psychological predicates that, grammatically, take as their object a subordinate clause (for example, *I think it is raining*). Russell avoided claiming that

[63] The observations regarding the relationship between negation and event belong to Nicholas Asher, *Events, Facts, Propositions and Evolutive Anaphora*, in J. Higginbotham, F. Pianesi, and A. Varzi (eds.) *Speaking of Events*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 129–130.

[64] For example, Emmon Bach, *Natural Language Metaphysics* in *Studies in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics*, vol. 114, 1986, pp. 573–595; Nicholas Asher, *Reference to Abstract Objects in Discourse*, Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993.

[65] Zeno Vendler, *Res Cogitans*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1972 – see also Jonathan Ginzburg and Ivan Sag *Interrogative Investigations*, Stanford, CSLI, Stanford University Press, 2000, p. 68.

the object of belief would be a judgment. [66] However, the idea was later supported by Vendler. Thus, the verb *to believe* and the noun *belief* became the second category of diagnostic contexts for constructions expressing judgments.

4. COMPARISON

The comparison between the terms *event*, *fact*, *belief*, and *judgment* in Nae Ionescu's approach and the same terms analyzed in analytic ontologies shows several convergences.

4.1. EVENTS

The inherent temporality of events drew the attention of both Russell and Nae Ionescu. Like Russell[67] Nae Ionescu points out in his lecture on time that events are inherent bearers of time.[68] Temporal relationships are also mentioned as part of the nature of events. This perspective brings Nae Ionescu closer to Vendler.

However, Vendler's analyses went further than Nae Ionescu's intuitions. Thanks to the method of diagnostic contexts, Vendler demonstrated that events not only fit into time but also have (or do not have) internal temporality. This allowed him to classify events into *activities* (actions with duration but no completion), *accomplishments* (actions with duration and completion), and *achievements* (actions without duration but with completion).

We then saw that events are for Nae Ionescu changes. The definition is not unknown to researches in analytic ontology. It is found later in von Wright' study which formalizes the concept of change within a logic of change.[69] Davidson, for his part, cites von Wright's undertaking (but does not adopt it). He proposes a direct representation of events (through new type variables) and not a reduction of the concept of an event to another concept. This way of formally representing events is the final word in analysis and, at the same time, the most productive perspective.[70]

Another point of convergence is the relationship between event and negation. Nae Ionescu's thesis is that if an event is negated the result is no longer an event. This property will later be identified independently by Asher.[71] However, the relationship between Nae Ionescu's view of what an appropriate attitude towards events is and the perspective proposed by analytic ontologies is more complex. In the case of analytic ontologies, predicates of perception are essential. The first in this

[66] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, London, Williams and Norgate, 1917, pp. 193–194.

[67] Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of The External World*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1922, pp. 121–128.

[68] Nae Ionescu, *Tratat de metafizică*, București, Editura Roza Vânturilor, 1999, pp. 128–129.

[69] Georg Henryk von Wright, *Norm and Action*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

[70] Donald Davidson, *The Individuation of Events,* in D. Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events,* Oxford, Clarendon Press*,* 1980, pp. 163–180; Regine Eckardt*, Causation,, Context and the Individuation of Events*, in J. Higginbotham, F. Pianesi, A. Varzi (eds.) *Speaking of Events*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 105–122.

[71] Nicholas Asher, *Events, Facts, Propositions and Evolutive Anaphora*, in J. Higginbotham, F. Pianesi, A. Varzi (eds.) *Speaking of Events*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 129–130.

line of thought is Russell, who places events and their relationships among our immediate data. Immediate knowledge thus gives for Russell the key relation to events. This position is later confirmed by Vendler's method of diagnostic contexts, which indeed shows that, primarily, language speaks to us about the perception of events.

Nae Ionescu does not ignore this epistemic dimension of events, either. However, he does not stop at perception, as perception is for him the source of diversity and diversity causes quasi-chaos.[72] Therefore, with Nae Ionescu, the knowledge of events begins when we have a concept of a category of events. As we have seen, this is one of Russell's attitudes towards events, too.[73] Implicitly, Nae Ionescu participates in the inauguration of a new theme in ontology – the identification of events.

4.2. FACTS

With respect to the term *fact*, Nae Ionescu's fundamental position is similar to that of Russell and Austin. For all three, the fact must be associated with judgments. The fact thus gives the judgment the guarantee that it is true or not. The point where differences arise is Nae Ionescu's refusal to accept the existence of negative facts. Russell accepted them.

Nae Ionescu has an identical position to that of Wittgenstein regarding the structure of the fact: for both, a fact is a connection between at least two things, that is, a relationship[74] On the other hand, like for Russell, Wittgenstein, and Austin, facts are for Nae Ionescu ingredients of the world. We have seen that the inclusion of the fact in the world was to be criticized by Vendler, for whom the fact is devoid of spatial and temporal determinations. However, Vendler and his followers meet Russell in accepting negative facts. It should still be noted that the existence of negative facts, for Vendler, is a discovery tight to the ontology of natural languages, whereas for Russell it is a meaningful assumption of ontology.

The linguistic argument for recognizing negative facts (for example, the expression *the fact that the train is not arriving/the fact that the train did not arrive*) could have helped Nae Ionescu overcome the difficulty that arose in the correspondence theory of truth that he adheres to (see above, section 2.1.2). T0 recall, the problem arises if it is claimed that facts are only positive. If this is the case, then we have difficulties in specifying what the truth of a negative judgment consists of. We have seen that the price of getting out of difficulty is, for Nae Ionescu, the abandon of the idea of correspondence. However, unlike this solution, the acceptance of negative facts has the minimal advantage of keeping the idea of correspondence functional, since a negative judgment is made true by the corresponding negative fact.

We have seen that Vendler's critique of the assimilation of facts to events extends to their epistemic analysis as well. Vendler has shown that the attitudes we have towards facts are different from those we adopt towards events. Thus, the appropriate activities for facts can involve perception, but they can also very well

[72] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* București, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 218–228.

[73] Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic. And Other Essays*, ed. cit., (11th impression) pp. 186–187.

[74] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung/Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922, sentences 2.034, 2.04; Nae Ionescu, *Curs de istorie a logicei. 1924–1925*, *Opere*, ed. cit., p. 95.

surpass it, and in some cases even exclude it: they are activities denoted by verbs such as *to sustain, to argue*, but also *to forget, to remember.* The fact presents itself, according to this data, as an *informational entity* about events or states, capable of being integrated into our knowledge. Facts would thus be mediators between our judgments and the world. Nae Ionescu had the opportunity to notice this epistemic property of the fact, but he missed it (or did not find it relevant). We have seen that when he invokes the specific epistemic activity regarding facts, he constantly speaks about ascertaining: facts are ascertained. However, this epistemic specificity did not attract his attention and remained without further analysis.

4.3. BELIEFS AND JUDGMENTS

As far as beliefs and judgments are concerned, similarities can be noticed, too. First of all, in both approaches, belief is understood as a relationship between a person and a judgment. In the case of Nae Ionescu, this relationship directly derives from treating belief as a modality of judgment. As already said, for Nae Ionescu, a belief (literally, *modality*) means a coefficient of certainty in relation to the truth of the judgment. Certainty belongs to the person who makes the statement, while the judgment is what is expressed by the subordinate clause of the verb *to believe*.

In analytic ontologies, access to this view on beliefs has been more difficult. In *The Problems of Philosophy*, Russell discusses beliefs as a type of relationship, but he does not bring judgment into the discussion as one of the elements that satisfy this relationship.[75] Perhaps this way, Russell was seeking an alternative solution to what Frege initially proposed in *Sense and Reference*[76].

The idea that beliefs establish relationships between people and judgments was only later supported by Church.[77] Church revisited Frege's analysis, imagining the hypothetical case of three speakers of different languages: English, French, and German. Each speaker says in her own language that snow is white. The question is whether the three speakers (who, by hypothesis, only know their own language) have the same belief about the color of the snow. If it is argued that in each case, belief is a relationship between a person and a sentence – as seems to be the case here – then each speaker should have a different belief from others, because the sentences themselves are different, as objects of beliefs.[78]. But this cannot be sustained. The three speakers have the same belief, even if it is expressed in different ways. So, this argument implies that each person's belief establishes a relationship with the same judgment, expressed differently.

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[75] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, ed. cit., pp. 193–194.

[76] Frege argued that the subordinate clause of the verb *to believe* does not have its usual denotation, but has (as he calls it) an *indirect denotation*, which, in Frege's terms, is the thought expressed by the sentence (Gottlob Frege, *On Sense and Reference*, (translated from German by Max Black), in A. W: Moore (ed.) *Meaning and Reference*,, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 32). The thought expressed by a sentence coincides with what other philosophers after Frege would call *judgment*. This implicitly means that for Frege, the verb *to believe* established a relationship with a judgment.

[77] Alonzo Church, *On Carnap's analysis of statements of assertion and belief*, Analysis, (10), 1950, pp. 97–99.

[78] The idea of treating beliefs as relationships between people and sentences was put forward by Carnap Rudolf Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1947, pp. 53–56.

The idea that judgments are the object of beliefs and that, moreover, they can carry truth or falsehood has ultimately been utilized by Vendler. The common denominator between Nae Ionescu, Russell, and Vendler is thus the acceptance of the idea that judgments carry truth. On the other hand, we could also see that when an expression denotes something by virtue of what Nae Ionescu calls the principle of individuation *hic et nunc*, the corresponding judgment is not exclusively made up of concepts, but contains the very individual associated with the property expressed by the predicate.[79] This is actually Russell's position regarding sentences whose subject is a deictic.

The most visible convergence is however with Wittgenstein's theory of representation through language. We have seen that this theory allows us to reach the truth, defined as the correspondence between the (logical) picture expressed by a sentence and an atomic fact. Nae Ionescu's position is essentially the same. For him, too, truth means the correspondence between judgment (knowledge, as he sometimes says) and fact (or state of affairs). Moreover, both for Wittgenstein and for Nae Ionescu (and, as we have seen, also for Russell), the problem of judgment demands to explain how it is possible for us to believe as true judgments that are false.

5. CONCLUSIONS: SAME MEANS, DIFFERENT PURPOSES

It is a fact that the connections between Nae Ionescu's reflections and the reflections in analytic ontologies are numerous and not accidental. However, it is also a fact that, in their ultimate purposes, the endeavors differ, especially if we compare the orientation of Nae Ionescu's explorations with that of the scientific philosophy: for Nae Ionescu, the picture of the world, built with the means of the modern science, is necessary but not sufficient, in light of what he considers to be the ultimate knowledge.[80] On the contrary, for those who adhere to the scientific philosophy, talking about events, facts, judgments, or beliefs represents the only way to refer meaningfully to entities (assumed by scientific theories or lying in natural languages).

It is not hard to understand where both the convergences and divergences come from. Convergences result from Nae Ionescu's recognition of the importance of the themes advanced in the philosophy with a scientific method (mainly in Russell's writings). These themes shape a new 'philosophical agenda':

- The role of the logic of relations in understanding the world.[81]
- Critique of (the versions of) the law of causality.[82]
- The problem of failure in knowledge.[83]

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[79] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică cu specială privire la ştiinţele exacte,* 1926–1927, *Opere*, III, ed. cit., p. 263.

[80] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de metafizică,* Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1991, pp. 238–245.

[81] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung/Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922, sentences 2.01 and 2.032; Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of The External World*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1922, pp. 42–69; Rudolf Carnap, *Die alte und die neue Logik*, Erkenntnis, F. Meiner, Leipzig, 1931, pp. 12–26.

[82] Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic. And Other Essays*, ed. cit., (11th impression), pp. 180–208.

[83] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, London, Williams and Norgate, 1917, pp. 204–219.

- How judgment can be conceived and how we can define truth.[84]

Nae Ionescu could not adopt the vocabulary we have identified without recognizing the themes themselves related to this vocabulary. In this regard, what he said in the opening of his course in logic with special attention to exact sciences (1926–1927) is telling:

> Here is why... I announced a course in logic with a special focus on the structure of the exact sciences...: first, because it can tell us something about the crossroads that human thought is facing today in the crisis it is going through; and secondly, because it can contribute to clarifying... the precise purposes that science must have from now on... Science must have more substance from now on than it has had until now... in the life of our societies and in the spiritual life in general... [85]

Under these conditions the distinct purpose to which Nae Ionescu used the above mentioned agenda (compared to the purpose of the analytical ontologies), can be explained both by Nae Ionescu's intellectual formation (and temperament) and, also by the place of his thought in the historical context.

Due to his intellectual formation and temperament, Nae Ionescu could not detach himself from the great stakes of traditional metaphysics: the search for the absolute, in ontology, and the search for essences, in knowledge.

As for the historical context of his thinking, it must be said that it was a complicated period in the history of the philosophical ideas: the period when metaphysics was confronted with the challenges of the scientific philosophy and, at the same time, with the challenges of the phenomenology. Nae Ionescu's reflections on metaphysics are an expression of this period of challenges, as the duality metaphysics/scientific philosophy embraced by him shows that he lived the values of both currents.[86]

If these considerations are correct, their conclusion (especially taking into account the pedagogical weight that Nae Ionescu gave to his ideas) is that a disciple who had wished for an initiation into the themes of the scientific philosophy would have found in Nae Ionescu's lectures what she needed. It is not certain that such a disciple would have been encouraged by the teacher to pursue this path. But if the disciple had had independence of thought, she would have found in Nae Ionescu's reflections a stimulus for fruitful critical confrontations. However, as is well known, such disciples – unfortunately – did not exist.

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[84] George E. Moore, *The Nature of Judgment,* Mind, 8, 30, 1899, pp. 176–193; Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, ed. cit., pp. 186–203.

[85] Nae Ionescu, *Curs de logică cu specială privire la ştiinţele exacte, 1926–1927*, *Opere*, ed. cit., p. 109.

[86] Vasile Băncilă also noticed Nae Ionescu's ambivalence towards modern science: „Nae Ionescu does not limit himself to considering the world here" And in the same passage: „Nae Ionescu believes in science... in the seriousness of the laws. Nae Ionescu believed in the two worlds..." (Vasile Băncilă, *Nae Ionescu, un cavaler prestant al spiritului*, Cluj-Napoca, Eikon, 2011, p. 81). Nae Ionescu's belief in science, nonetheless, did not help him to be attached to rationalism.