

Functions of cultural prejudices: concepts and applications

Abstract: Prejudices – which are formally judgments – generally have foundation role in various argumentations, opinion networks and theoretical constructs. Those regarding culture or any forms of it (philosophy, science, religion, art etc.) are in fact valued judgments whose structure may be put into analogy with that pertaining to that Kantian “infinite judgments” (affirmative judgments with a negative predicate). Such prejudices make possible the phenomena of pre-judicative circularity, which consists in the crossover of prejudice from the public space towards cultural philosophy with the purpose of philosophically justifying it and returning it to its place of origin. There are, on the other hand, aside from the cultural prejudices present in a public space other prejudices of a representational nature, which join the judicative components of cultural (pre)judgments and prejudices which are the result of a nonjudicative experience. Sourced in this are some problems of cultural philosophy, but also some solutions regarding mainly the limitation of the functions of cultural prejudices that a foundation (a transcendental constitutive) of the judgments that formal philosophy of culture and that of ordination (finalistic-regulatory of cultural philosophy and cultural prejudice)

Keywords: cultural prejudice, transcendental-constitutive and finalistic-regulatory function of cultural prejudices, pre-judicative circularity, philosophical hermeneutics, nonjudicative experience.

1. Introduction

In our cultural environment which at least in part is the same with our public space, different prejudice circulate about Romanian culture and its relation with other cultures as well as about other cultural forms like art, philosophy, etc. in their relation with similar forms from western cultures. The specific prejudice refers foremost to the minor condition of our culture to its unfulfilled status if compared to other European cultures, to its dependency to foreign cultural traditions. On the other hand, there are also philosophical reconstructions of culture with applications to Romanian culture and, therefore, to Romanian philosophy, in which various prejudice either become significant ideas in theory, or, without being revealed, to be recognized as they are, become conditions of possibility for philosophical

* Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, Romania; email: cernicav@gmail.com.

undergoings on the theme of culture. Starting from this situation of conjunction of the same prejudice both in public space as well as cultural philosophy, it is natural that we ask ourselves:

- (1) Can these philosophical reconstructions of culture be free of prejudice ?
- (2) Once placed in (cultural) circulation do these fore mentioned reconstructions become sources of prejudice for the public space ?

The first question may beget a straightforward answer: philosophical reconstructions of culture are not and cannot be free from prejudice. The ideas comprising them have to be supported and this operation demands some judgment to begin from. These are the primary judgments of any argumentation, those that support its conclusion. These judgments have logically necessary functions and become free judgments (prejudice) due to their position in the structure of arguments.

Therefore, freedom from prejudice of the philosophical reconstruction of culture argumentations is not a natural thing as far as logical functionalities of prejudice is concerned. There are on the other hand in any philosophical construct besides the natural logical prejudice (pre-judgment), some representations (sometimes concept-representations) which have the strength to determine some problems and interrogations, concepts and ideas to give them direction and set them on a trajectory that is “meaningful” from their perspective. Such representations are, in fact, still judgments even if they appear in a “representative” form in philosophical reconstructions; and they are, in their significant content, cultural, that is they are directly tied to the environment open to philosophical interrogations corresponding to a particular culture. On the grounds of this position in philosophical construction, cultural prejudices, both the “logical” as well as the “representational”, have two functions: that of *foundation* of philosophical reconstructions of culture (the transcendental constitutive function) and that of *ordination* of the fore mentioned (the finalistic regulatory function).

To the second question – are philosophical reconstructions of culture sources of public prejudices regarding culture ? – one may answer, provisionally, of such: these rather solidify some prejudices in particular those that they themselves seem to derive from to such effect that it is possible to consider some form of pre-judicative circularity which comprises both the philosophical reconstructions of culture as well as cultural prejudices from the public space.

2. The logically-formal function of cultural prejudices

From a logically formal standpoint, cultural prejudices are *value judgments* in the structure of which the subject is represented by a notion that refers to a particular culture (for instance the “Romanian culture”), and the predicate to a notion that expresses a quality of the subject (“minor”, “major”,

“unfulfilled”, “fulfilled”, “model”, “configuration” etc.). They have always been present in the history of culture and on their ground there have been built both the symbolical structures specific to a “natural” culture, as well as the cultural ideologies and the multi/trans/intercultural. In their logical structures, we therefore have the known and familiar judicative elements: terms, verb and time, quantifiers etc. Such valued judgments are grounded most of the times on other judgments and other representations, they themselves with pre-judicative functions which intervene constitutively but without being brought to a recognizable form in the very own logical structure of judgment.

For instance, in the judgment: *the Romanian culture is a minor culture* (as we generally agree when our attention is being directed towards what the public conscience has to say, but also towards some philosophers have said, for instance Lucian Blaga in *Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii*). The support representation, maybe even the foundation one for this judgment is that of a structural-qualitative hierarchy of (particular) cultures. It is the case of a representation with the function of prejudice, but not only in the logical sense, because it serves as grounds for theoretical constructs or for value judgments regarding a certain culture or culture itself, but also in a transcendental sense we might say because the specific representation makes possible or constitutes the fore mentioned value judgment as well as other value judgments whose subject is a particular culture (some of these, important parts of Blaga’s philosophy of culture, in the sense of a “morphology of cultures”, model of philosophical thought that the Romanian philosopher doesn’t accept proposing a formula that he considers a “metaphysics of culture”).

Given the somewhat transcendental sense, one could think that cultural judgments may be more appropriately expressed with their foundation function in the form of the infinite judgments that Kant speaks about in the *Critique of pure reason*: affirmative judgments with a negative predicate (Kant 2010, 77-8). This way, the judgment in the earlier example – *the Romanian culture as a minor culture* – appears as such: *the Romanian culture is a non-major culture* (S is non-P). From a logically formal point of view a usual negation of the initial judgment must be operated, allowed by traditional formal logic (resulting in *the Romanian culture is not a major culture*) then an obversion must be operated, allowed as well, in the respective context (reaching the judgment: *the Romanian culture is a non-major culture*). Though, once the “infinite judgment” is obtained we are no longer in formal logic but in a transcendental one, should we accept the Kantian perspective regarding the functional between the two affirmative judgments. Anyhow, the cultural philosophy’s judgments’ function of foundation, of constitution, is better connected to the infinite judgment than the one in classical format (*the Romanian culture is a minor culture*). Maybe it would be the case to put into play

the category of limitation also, the categorical correspondent of the infinite judgments in the specified Kantian context. For a cut in the subject's infinity of possibilities of being – the Romanian culture – is operated here: it may not be a major culture. Also, on the other hand, there is a crossover beyond this “limitation” into the new infinity that is expressed by the negative predicate. In fact, the transcendental function is being taken over by the infinite judgment by means of this very crossing beyond any positivity which is expressed by the initial (formally) positive predicate: minor culture.

As a matter of fact many of the Romanian philosophers' cultural projects – and not only theirs – are supported somehow on such a change of judicative structure. Mircea Eliade, for example, speaking of the “discrete” and “obscure” role of the Romanian culture and, in fact, of the entire Romanian history, in a text: *Romanians. historical sketch*, published in Lisbon in 1943¹, rather assumes the cultural prejudice's form of infinite judgment that we have mentioned he is not all entirely in agreement with the idea that we have a minor culture, although he admits that this culture is, somehow, by its performances lagging behind others, in certain areas due to certain reasons. Therefore, the Romanian culture is *non-major culture*: this is the form of the thought that we have to accept about Eliade's undergoing in the quoted text: what relates (referentially) to the subject (the Romanian culture) is achieved in its own determination and existence as something in “the world”. It is, but not a given, as it happens with those that are everywhere around the world but, an active negative that somehow may be continuously constituted (through creation etc.). On the other side, the predicative (*non-major culture*) shows that this subject may be anything, but not a major culture: it may be, for example, a contact culture, a liaison, between the western culture and the oriental one (as Eliade himself sustained as well as other philosophers of the new generation).

In the horizon of the philosophical construction, through the cultural prejudice's logical structure change, a phenomena of modification of transcendentalism takes place (formula which reminds of one of Husserl's terms, the “modification of neutrality”, of which the philosopher speaks in his papers, regarding the possibility of the “intentional object” of any conscious act to maintain intact its power to intervene in constitutive acts that follow the specific phenomena in which it occurs)². The modification of transcendency refers to the intervention of logical operations in order to change the structure of a judgment in such a way that it may exercise its function of foundation of judgments in the system of a cultural theory. Altogether the named phenomena draw into its own order the representational pre-judgments, those representations that play significant role in the cultural judgments' construction. They do not have the logical form of judgment – they are not, formally, cultural judgments, alike the prejudices

from the aforementioned examples – but they have, but they have the transcendental function of it because they intervene in a constitutive fashion in the construction of the most efficient judgments of a philosophy of culture, that is the judgments which support its essential meanings those by which it shows itself into the world of philosophy and the public space of a culture. The representation of a culture as an *organism* (organicism) or as an efficient *work technique* (instrumentalism) or as a *cosmoid* that evolves towards a “natural“ state of its own (cosmism), or as a *scale* (hierarchy) of particular cultures which evolve towards the culture seated on the highest step, a variant of the western culture (finalism) are such representational pre-judgments. We can easily recognize all of them in various philosophies of culture.

3. The foundation (transcendental-constitutive) function of cultural prejudices

As I was saying earlier the philosophical reconstructions of culture rather strengthen some of the cultural prejudices from the public space, usually the once they themselves are supported on or derived from. This is why we may speak while considering such a relationship of a pre-judicative circularity while considering “such a relationship”. The most wide spread of the cultural prejudices that are in circulation both in the public space as well as in the cultural philosophies in our parts is the one exemplified earlier in Blaga’s *the Romanian culture is a minor culture (when compared to other cultures considered major)*. Moreover this cultural prejudice is a sort of matrix for other cultural prejudices situated of course in both public and philosophical media. Its formal schematic is as follows:

(1) By means of direct experience which implies knowing once own cultural environment as well as other such environments in working with the representation of a hierarchy of cultures, all entirely possible as long as culture may be but a particular one, tightly knit to the life of a determined community, one might reach in the public space the judgment by which the Romanian culture is considered inferior to other cultures (historically and/or geographically), without specifying the criteria of the comparison, the degree of similarity or difference the representative traits of the comparison etc. In the support of prejudice there may intervene some sensitivities, (cultural) feelings, acts of will etc., all targeted at modifying culture in a certain way.

(2) The particular prejudice is taken over by philosophers in order to “rationalize” (argument, justify, exemplify, interpret) it; this is when comparison criteria are found and degrees of similarity and difference, even representative traits for the comparison, are being determined. The theory of culture and its application to Romanian culture are integrated into systems, conceptions and philosophical visions without the underlying

prejudicial substratum to be dislocated, marginalized, set aside or limited in its power to sustain the cultural judgments that such a particular theory is made up from. Prejudice returns toward where it came from, the public space; of course reinforced. This way the circle closes: philosophy rebuilds its ties to the public life of people while, regarding cultural prejudices, the latter is validated and left open to similar experiences.

The connection of the common conscience, a public one, with the philosophical conscience, a consensually technical one, is problematic. The scheme above does nothing but depict the chronologically – formal moments of a culturally determined relation of a public space full of cultural prejudices and a particular philosophy in which such prejudices are “checked” in order to validate them. Such a scheme may be found in the cultural philosophies from our part even if the turns and the connections between them aren’t exactly the same with the four mentioned ones. The difference between this schematic and the structure of the undergoing of the philosophy of culture with applications to the Romanian culture derive from the intervention of prejudices of a different nature, namely the representational ones. At the same time this schematic brings forth a cultural phenomenon present in any modern culture or any that was built through public projects (cultural ideology) which may be called *pre-judicative circularity*.

This phenomenon has, as a matter of fact, two hypostases: (1) a very large one which engages the public space corresponding to a particular culture and the philosophy of culture of the latter (*the cultural hypostasis*); (2) a narrow one, limited to a certain philosophy of culture (*the philosophical hypostasis*). Of course these hypostases are not mutually autonomous; on the contrary, they co-exist and condition one another. Albeit, they may be examined separately with the purpose of identifying their components, their functions and the cultural consequences of exercising such functions. The philosophical hypostasis includes first of all representational cultural prejudices. These have a foundation function for the judgments that make up the theory and which confer this theory its thematic and technical unity.

Here are some philosophies from the Romanian culture which illustrate the phenomenon of pre-judicative circularity in both its hypostases.

Titu Maiorescu considered, in his studies that comprise the “critique of direction”, his model of a philosophy of culture, that the grounds for any culture are the truth³. However our culture from the second half of the 19th century was moving – due to its minority status we might add – on the wrong direction, that of historical forgery. This is why a critique of direction is necessary, that is a critique by which the Romanian culture could be oriented towards the truth, could move on a line of truth, because only in this way it could get closer to the western ones, or better said, to the possibility of reconstructing cultural experiences from the latter’s historical

past. The structure of the pre-judicative circularity of the “critique of direction” is as follows:

(1) the Romanian culture (from the second half of the 19th century) privileges falsity, because the direction on which some cultural productions – which are taken into consideration by the public conscience and the specialized, cultural one – are aligned does not promote the truth regarding our history and our language;

(2) The critique of direction (the philosophical reconstruction of culture) is necessary so that the direction of its evolution gets oriented towards the truth, many cultural creations (literary foremost) which have the meaning of truth already existing;

(3) the initial prejudice is reinforced; there are two directions for the evolution of the Romanian culture, but only one of them is the “correct” one, the viable, in “conformity” with the cultural experiences of the cultural west. The strongest historical evidence for the reinforcement of the prejudice of the precarious, sub-western condition of the Romanian culture we find at Maiorescu’s “students” from later periods of the Romanian philosophy (C. Radulescu-Motru, P.P. Negulescu, Ion Petrovici, etc.) who, in turn, have built their philosophies of culture and the applications to the Romanian culture on the grounds of the phenomenon of pre-judicative circularity.

Constantin Rădulescu-Motru stated, in his 1904 paper *Cultura română și politicianismul Romanian Culture and Politicianism*, working to some extent in the “morphology of cultures”, that cultures are of different ages; which means that they (at least) appear as organisms depending on their interior coherence on the convergence of the aptitudes of individuals and their communities’ ideals, on the emphasis placed either on the community or the individual, three forms of cultural existence are significant: (1) *pseudo-culture*: specific to the cultures destined to a superficial life for they are not supported by communities which are adapted to a natural environment and they have not built in their cultural tradition efficient response techniques to the difficulties of the natural and social life, in their environment, but they have rather privileged the individual’s interests in their environment; such cultures may look better than the real ones but only on the surface of their public life due to the fact the elements that comprise them are borrowed; (2) *semi-culture*: specific to the cultures at the age of childhood, not at the one of maturity of creation, vocational, etc.; this refers to a necessary stage of the evolution of culture towards its own fulfillment, which may be “intuitively depicted by the image of a house well situated on its foundation having its roof and rooms ready, but unequipped yet with stairs, windows and furniture.” (Rădulescu-Motru 1984, 14); (3) *culture itself*: “true”, particular to some European peoples. The Romanian culture is a semi-culture it is necessary for it to mature and transform into a fulfilled culture

by renouncing the mimicry that was dominant in the second half of the 19th century by discarding the petty politics, by the education of vocations, etc. The scheme of prejudicative circularity is not as visible as with Maiorescu and neither its public and philosophical impact has had the extension of the Maiorescian one. Also the idea by which the Romanian culture, semi-culture, has all the chances to become a real culture seems to be opposed by the judgement by which the Romanian culture is minor; it evolves on a wrong path, etc., which would limit the phenomenon of prejudicative circularity upheld by the theory of C. Radulescu-Motru. But there are other cultural pre-judgments, of a representational nature and from the same category with the ones observed at Maiorescu in his critique of direction, which are present here and ensure continuity between these two moments of Romanian cultural and philosophical history that are represented by these two philosophers. For instance, the representation of culture as an organism, or the representation of cultures in a hierarchy, that of the instrumental representation of culture, etc.

Lucian Blaga opens his representative work for his philosophy of culture – *Geneza metaforii și sensul culturii*, published in 1937 – with a chapter titled “Cultura minora si cultura majora” (*Minor culture and major culture*). The concepts in question – minor culture and major culture – designate different types of culture and they are designed so they do not attract the organicist meaning they have for the morphology of cultures (bearing different denominations: ethnographic culture and monumental culture). It refers to age, not that of culture but that of man. The first type is built on the grounds of man’s age of childhood; the other one, it is understood, becomes possible due to the maturity of man. Anyhow they do not refer to the ages of the same organism, although they may be the result of the same stylistic matrix and, therefore, different cultures of the same community. The criteria of differentiation between the two types have to do with the person who is their “subject”; therefore they are structurally-qualitatively differentiated like the ages of man. Such an image maintains its organicist note but not the one observed in the case of the morphology of culture, which is consistent with the idea of culture itself as an organism. At the same time the structural-qualitative conception of particular cultures keeps the instrumental note that is given by representational pre-judgment that of culture as a regulative instrument of man’s relation with nature. A note of finalism may be felt (that is of a hierarchy of culture depending on their chances to be or become a “major culture”), as far as Blaga’s depictions, in the fore mentioned context, have to do only with the passing, in the case of the community, from a minor culture to a major culture.

Constantin Noica in “Ce e etern ai ce e istoric in cultura romaneasca” (“What is eternal and what is historical in Romanian culture”), from his 1944 published volume – *Pagini despre sufletul romanesc* (*Pages about the Romanian*

soul), asserted: “We know we are what is called ‘a minor culture’. We also know it does not mean of inferior quality.” (Noica 1991, 7) Here we don’t have an actual theory of culture, but the representational pre-judgment about a hierarchy of culture may be recognized. In other contexts, some very late ones, Noica operates in the fashion of a “morphology of culture”, eliminating some of its representational pre-judgments, but instituting others⁴. Besides, his image on culture is in the stamp of the cultural prejudice that we have spoken about so far.

The same philosophically-public and representational prejudices on the Romanian culture and culture in general we also find in **Emil Cioran**’s 1936 paper – *Schimbaria la fata a Romaniei* (*The transfiguration of Romania*). Big culture and small culture, the “new” terms used by the philosopher, are defined by the “political and spiritual destiny” by which a people individualizes itself in the world (Cioran 2001, 7-31). In any case, they designate qualitatively different cultures. History has not allowed in so far but a few peoples to become big cultures; and the rule shall live on, since nothing seems to contradict or nullify it.

The phenomenon of pre-judicative circularity, connected to the two “media”, both public-cultural space and the philosophy of culture, brings forth, naturally, two sets of consequences, corresponding to the two “media”: philosophical and public-cultural. The latter have to do with the reaccreditation of the prejudice by which the Romanian culture exists in a condition of minority; further on, cultural behaviors have to be continuously retailored in order to correspond to this prejudice: to treasure our contribution in other culture, namely the great ones, in order to gain individual and collective recognition; attention must be attuned to what goes on in the great cultures, so as not to miss out on “opportunities for synchronicity”, etc. The *philosophical* ones entail, first of all, the effort of continuous resizing of the Romanian culture itself. The concept of “adamitic culture” that Cioran was speaking about in *The transfiguration of Romania* is well suited to understand this type of philosophical consequences that derive from the phenomenon of pre-judicative circularity. “The Romanian culture is adamitic, because whatever is born in it has no precedent.” (Cioran 2001, 33) Therefore it has to be reconstructed, re-made continuously, all from the beginning. We may understand from here that one of the principal roles of cultural prejudices, in both their hypostases, is the justification of the type of philosophical reconstruction of culture that is put into play.

In a simple enumeration, here are four problems involved in the foundation function of cultural prejudices, particularly those from the cultural hypostasis, which seems to be complete, engaging from the very get go both the public-cultural space, as well as the philosophies of culture; without losing track though of the representational prejudices, which are so

efficient in the function of constituting the conditions of possibility for any theory (philosophy) of culture.

The first of them may be formulated as such: if we reject the prejudice of the Romanian culture's minority in Blaga's formulation – the Romanian culture is a minor culture- could we be certain that its opposite is no longer a prejudice with public circulation and philosophical justification? I believe we cannot. As a matter of fact the opposite (logically-formal, not transcendental) judgment, *the Romanian culture is not a minor culture*, is itself a prejudice (and from the very get go, even without thinking of it as opposed to another judgment), for the very reason it contains in itself the "affirmative" answer: *the Romanian culture is a major culture*. It is a prejudice also for the fact that it can serve itself as grounds for a pre-judicative circularity: the case in which the Romanian culture appears as excellent in comparison to other cultures the very ones that the common prejudice from which we have started indicated as "major", "real cultures", etc.; see, for this line of understanding, what the ideology of "protochronism" has represented and, unfortunately, still represents.

The second problem refers to the evaluative and hierarchizing excess, instrumentalist and organicist, regarding the comprehension and interpretation of culture. It is present all throughout history. But does it apply unproblematically to different cultures that are historically and geographically conditioned, and further on through personal or acquired tradition and through various "local" data? I believe we cannot eliminate it! As a matter of fact modernity seems to have transformed it in a life principle; in any case historicism used it in a constitutive way in its descriptions, analyses and interpretations of culture, and the morphology of cultures, by extensively using it in the construction of cultural hierarchies, reached the subordination of its own logic. See for this purpose the idea of the demise of the western culture believe to be the most evolved one.

The third problem has to do with the coverage of the philosophies of culture that are conditioned by a cultural space. Living inside a minor culture, aren't the results of reflections on it that come from itself, they themselves "minor"? And then could the prejudices circulated inside it be transferred to any other culture, in order to beget the natural sense of validity? Aren't some cultural behaviors, like of instance, in philosophy, the lack of quotations of those around us, connected to the one's own culture and philosophers' evaluation as minor? Here we have to do with the idea of a strong conditioning of cultural facts by the cultural context data in which men of culture are formed, particularly philosophers. And if this seems impossible for the construction of judgments that make up a philosophy of culture, still, with respect to the cultural prejudgments that are unassumed, but active, in both their hypostases, things seem clearer: this conditioning is possible, I believe? The test to validate them as "major" in any cultures of the "major" type remains yet a problem.

The fourth problem is connected to the first: if we reject a prejudice of the form: *the Romanian culture is a minor culture*, what do we get? Solely the opposite prejudice about which we have spoken earlier? Many other prejudices, I believe! Working, even philosophically, in the narrow perimeter of this prejudice, we only reach other cultural prejudices, which gain meaning both in the philosophy that formulates them as well as in the public cultural space in which they are and in other philosophical reconstructions of culture from the same horizon. The problems formulated here above may, if taken into consideration, lead they themselves to rethemization of culture. In any case they are aimed at philosophical justification of the attitude of acceptance or rejection of public cultural and representational prejudices.

4. The ordination (finalistic-regulatory) function of cultural prejudices

This function gains meaning from the observation that cultural prejudices refer most of the times to solid cultural facts, situated on firm ground, they themselves having an unshakable stability. It is unaccounted, though, the flux of cultural facts – which we may call events – that constitutes, as a matter of fact, *the live culture*, itself a source of diverse cultural prejudices. The function is finalistic-regulatory because the prejudices towards which the philosophies of culture (from our parts and from other parts) are directed, prejudices that get to the public space (but not in a philosophical form because it wouldn't be possible), are the same with the prejudices that they derive from. Lacking under the strong and continuous influence of the prejudices from the public-cultural space a sensitivity suited to value the authentically-cultured *event*, that which claims any one of us as “support” (subject of a cultural experience, we might think of some philosophical techniques of fluidization of cultural prejudices and reordination of culture.

Such a technique may be the operational engagement in the interpretation of culture. This is necessary especially to give chance to a process of dislocation of prejudices or at least to their criticism, with the risk of making room for others. For example, for the Romanian culture would be suited a “model of the specificity”, as an “instrument” of dislocation of the prejudices that concern it, a model that may be methodologically “generalized”, in order to respond to a need for the “fluidization of prejudices” from any particular philosophy. Such a model may comprise: *the life rhythm of philosophy, philosophical sensitivity of thinkers, the language, the aporetic accent, the identity representations, events that establish and move the forms of philosophy*; all of these, as it was aforementioned, operationally interpreted⁵. In addition, on the grounds of the specificity model it becomes possible the operation of differentiation between the *cultural history* and the *topological history* of a philosophy. The latter assuming some of the “prejudices” of cultural history remakes the order of philosophy as such.

Also the direct implication of existential time has a certain significance in the reordination of culture and fluidization of cultural prejudices. In the “radical hermeneutics” of John Caputo, the flux of acts of conscience and its result, like a perpetual ordering of this one, are definitory for any cultural-philosophical “reality”. The tragic and the religion, as event experimentation horizons, define philosophically cultural attitudes similar to the Apollonian and Dionysian from Nietzsche’s philosophy of culture. The amplitude of radical hermeneutics project exceeds the place of cultural prejudices, aiming at opening a reinterpretation of the (cultural) functions of philosophy.

The rethematization of culture, of which we were speaking at the end of the previous chapter, would be possible by regular philosophical “techniques” of interrogation and “speculation” and they would have the purpose of reordination of cultural judgments in the philosophies of culture and that of remaking the order of the philosophers of culture within a culturally determined space.

The take over, in the philosophical construction of culture, of “systems” of judgments in which the prejudices in question lose their meaning (purpose), would be such a technique. *Philosophical hermeneutics* may be such a system of judgments, this way *relating to tradition*, but not by the prescriptions of a method (empirical knowledge experiment mathematical forms, etc.) but by the “conscience of historical efficacy”, could bring forth to light the prejudices unknown in the beginning and would subject to critique the very prejudices that this “method” of philosophizing over culture could not do without. In addition, the means in question have the power to perceive both the calling of one’s own cultural tradition, as well as the generally “humanistic” one, which makes possible the actual phenomenon of cultural synchronization. Noica seems to work this way, on the theme of Romanian 18th century philosophy, in one of the papers that make up the volume *Pagini despre sufletul românesc (Pages on the Romanian soul)*, mentioned above (Noica 1991, 45-72). Equally so, does Mircea Vulcanescu and again Noica regarding the thematization of the Romanian philosophical utterance⁶. The humanistic tradition that we have spoken about above is well seated in any modern culture. The “existential” meaning of this one are also present in the Romanian culture as far as it is “modern”. Yet, they have to be looked for.

Furthermore, the study of the elements that make up prejudice and the unravel of their origin, their nature might be a technique for refreshing the interrogation and the speculation regarding culture. As we already know, in the structure of cultural prejudice are involved proper logical elements (logically formal this is what a judgment is), but also elements of a nonjudicative experience of the sort of representations that support the philosophical reconstructions, or the sort of identity motivations that do the same thing. In the philosophy of culture we find many examples of

“theories” in which such elements of nonjudicative experience take over the roles of discourse foundation. The necessarily hierarchical representation of cultures, the superiority of some that have philosophy among their forms, are representational and public-cultural prejudices from Wilhelm Wundt’s *Nations and their philosophies*, published in 1915 and known to some extent in the Romanian cultural environment. Similarly, the feeling of discomfort regarding belonging to a minor, weak, powerless culture, yet “adamitic” one as experienced, seemingly, by Cioran, while writing the *Transfiguration of Romania*. There, also, all sorts of conventional or pragmatic subterfuges (masked by the utilization of cognitive judgments) like: there is but one single culture that all people participate to – the representation of a human universalism without touching the concept as in the case of Kant in the *Critique of the faculty of judgment*, where culture is considered “the aptitude and skill for all sorts of ends for which he can use nature (external and internal).” (Kant 2002, 297). There is, in the shape of a fulfilled, real culture, only the European culture from which the Romanian culture is a part of; this is the case of the representation of a cultural exclusivity, as with Noica in *The European cultural model*: only the European culture is an actual culture, a “model”, while the others (totemic, monotheistic, pantheistic, polytheistic cultures) are simple cultural configurations⁷. In general, cultural prejudices are supported on such elements of nonjudicative experience and of representational nature – in the case of the Romanian culture both the philosophies which preach its minority (from the previous examples), as well as those according to which the Romanian culture is well balanced and with the potential of being a model for other cultures (“advanced” protochronism for instance).

The consideration, in a critical fashion, of the opinions of others regarding the culture, may be another technique regarding speculation and interrogation about culture. For example, taking into consideration, when the Romanian culture is philosophically reconstructed, of the opinion of foreign travelers about our popular culture, or about other components of the Romanian culture.

The prejudices about culture which are the object of pre-judicative circularity lead also to the formation of cultural ideologies and the absence of which cultural modernity would not be possible. This way avoiding “ideological horizontality” gains meaning according to which the opposite of cultural ideologies is represented by other cultural ideologies. *Philosophically the opposite of cultural ideology is philosophical hermeneutics* that is *the live relation to tradition*, which may extract culture – or some elements of it – from the movement of the available and three-dimensioned time, in order to bring it on an *existential support*, in the moment of a flesh and bone person. One that lives culturally does not aim at resolving problems of cultural hierarchy, of instrumental finalities attached to culture in general or to a determined

culture, for his stake is his own being. In such an experience, culture no longer seems a “thing” in front of “I” but a fact trapped in “my” very own existence: only now and only in this way am “I” a *cultural being*.

5. Conclusions

The two functions – transcendental-constitutive and finalistic-regulatory – of cultural prejudices must be brought out to sight, problematize or thematize in such a way that they make possible cultural events and participate to the relation that the “conscience of historical efficacy” activates, that is the relationship between “us” and our cultural tradition, tradition that is not limited to the history of a determined culture.

Also, it is possible to avoid, through the knowledge of cultural prejudices, excesses of the sort: (1) there is no Romanian philosophy (or literature); (2) there is a Romanian philosophy (or literature) that is extraordinary. Therefore, it becomes necessary to practice a topological (thematic) history of philosophy, so as to get closer to other philosophies while recognizing the (operational) cultural specificity of the Romanian philosophy.

Cultural prejudices cannot be excluded from the philosophical reconstruction of culture (and its forms), but recognizing and studying them may become significant philosophical acts. Therefore, a chance at clarity outside our culture and our philosophy has the philosophical reconstruction that has loosened cultural prejudices, have recognized them and have limited their functions⁸.

Notes

¹ Mircea Eliade published, in the same time (1943): 1. *Os Romenos latinos do Oriente*. Lisboa: Livraria Clássica Editora. 2. *Los Rumanos. Breviario histórico* Madrid: Editorial Stylos.

² Cf. Husserl. 1983. *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First book: *General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, Part three, Chapter four: “The set of problems pertaining to noetic-noematic structures” (&97-&127): 236-303.

³ The first edition of this article, in *Convorbiri literare*, 1868.

⁴ For example, in *Modelul cultural european (The European Cultural Model)*. (First edition, in German: *De dignitate Europae*, translated by G. Scherg București: Editura Kriterion, 1988.)

⁵ For this model, see my paper: *Lucrari de istoria filosofiei romanesti (Works of History of Romanian Philosophy)* vol. I, II. 2015. București: Editura Universității din București. Vol. I, 1. “Note metodologice asupra istoriei filosofiei românești” (*Methodological Notes on Romanian Philosophy*): 21-42.

⁶ Mircea Vulcanescu talks in *Dimensiunea românească a existenței (Romanian Dimension of Existence)* about two conditions for emerging identity of a culture: temptations (ispite) and philosophical potentialities of some words from natural language. C. Noica constructs in *Rostirea filosofică românească (Romanian Philosophical Utterance)* a “system of Romanian utterance” (This expression is used by Alexandru Surdu in *Comentarii la rostirea filosofică (Commentaries to the Philosophical Utterance)*).

⁷ This Noica's "theory" appears in cap. IV "Tabloul schematic al culturilor" (*The Schematic Table of Cultures*): 42-49, of cited book.

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