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REZUMATUL TEZEI DE DOCTORAT

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SUMMARY OF THE PH.D. THESIS

In the research carried out over the past few years during the National Symposium "Constantin Noica" in Câmpulung-Muscel, it was proposed, in order to create a clearer chronology of Constantin Noica's life during the decade of compulsory residence in this town (March 1949 – December 1958), to consult the 21 volumes of the Noica–Pillat Trial, from the C.N.S.A.S. Archive, published in facsimile in 2012 by the Contrafort Publishing House, under the care of Constantin Barbu. A selection of the documents from this trial had previously been published by Stelian Tănase, but we deemed it essential, for an exhaustive study, to consult not only these selections and editions made by others, but the original documentary source itself. This work was not without new results—on the contrary. Upon examining the indictment of this trial—rather than the interrogations, which have usually drawn the most attention from researchers—in volume VII of the trial documents, we discovered two previously unpublished philosophical manuscripts, typewritten and corrected by hand. Reading and then editing them gave us a new image of the work *Stories from Hegel* (1956–1957), which we know was written by Constantin Noica during this stage of his creative life.

The work *Stories from Hegel*, as presented by Noica in his trial interrogations (found in volume I of the trial documents), contained two interpretations: *The Story of the Man Like All Men* and *The Tale of Consciousness According to the Phenomenology of Spirit*, along with all the stories contained in it. The first interpretation, sent via an intermediary to Emil Cioran in Paris, was published through his mediation in 1962 by Semne Publishing House in Paris, under circumstances described in a dedicated chapter. The second, however, circulated only privately, among Noica's friends and close acquaintances, and therefore could not be published at the time. While Noica later republished the first interpretation—with significant differences from the 1962 edition—in his book *Stories About Man. After a Book by Hegel*, published by Cartea Românească in 1980, the second interpretation—whose manuscript was probably returned to him after his release from prison—was never published. Thus, the discovery of a fragment of it in the *Noica–Pillat Trial* indictment represents a new and

original contribution to Noica's body of work, making possible for the first time a reconstruction of the project *Stories from Hegel* as it existed in the 1950s.

The theme arising from this initial effort to reconstruct *Stories from Hegel* extends toward an overall vision of Constantin Noica's interpretation of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Our study thus situates itself within the broader research on the history of Romanian philosophy in general and the thought of Constantin Noica in particular. Beyond the novelty brought by the editing of the two manuscripts, we note the philosophical influence of Hegelian thought on Noica's own philosophy, which now may take on a new form.

Our work also belongs to the recent efforts of scholars in the field of Romanian philosophy—efforts that have culminated in collective volumes such as *The History of Romanian Philosophy* and *The History and Theory of Romanian Philosophical Systems*, as well as in individual works by researchers such as Constantin Aslam, Ion Ianoşi, Ion Dur, Dragoş Popescu, Ovidiu Pecican, Marta Petreu, and Gabriel Liiceanu, among others. It is true that these studies, in their chapters devoted to Noica's philosophy, concern themselves more with other influences upon his thought—Aristotle or Kant, for example—but we are gratified to see that our research into the philosophical projects of Noica's Câmpulung period has attracted academic interest.

Our hypothesis, defended throughout the research, is that *Stories from Hegel* is a different work from *Stories About Man…*, published in 1980. This observation is not hard to make, even from a brief comparison of the contents of the two books. Nonetheless, confusion has arisen, since both contain two interpretations of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which may have led—until now—to the assumption that both interpretations in *Stories About Man…* were written during Noica's Câmpulung period. Although Noica himself lists three interpretations of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the preface to *Stories About Man…*, since he did not publish the third—and did not explain why—it was believed that it had been integrated into the first interpretation, *The Unusual Adventures of Consciousness*, and that therefore, even though this latter was published between 1969–1970, it had been written before his imprisonment. We have expanded on such hypotheses from the existing literature in a dedicated chapter, *The Avatars of Stories from Hegel*, in which we examined other critical perspectives on *Stories About Man…*, relating them to our own vision of the work's structure, chronology, and position within Noica's oeuvre and biography. Moreover, merely listing the interpretations mentioned in the cited text did not guarantee that Noica still

possessed the manuscripts of all three, especially given that some were confiscated during the drafting of the indictment in the *Noica–Pillat Trial*. Our research, however, disproved these assumptions, demonstrating the existence of all three interpretations, as well as the almost entirely different content of the 1980 book compared to *Stories from Hegel*.

The scientific aim of this research is to establish, within Noica studies, a third creative period in his philosophy—the one between 1949 and 1958—framed between the pre-war and wartime phase, ending in 1947 with the abdication of King Michael and the proclamation of the Republic, and the post-imprisonment period, during which he concentrated his intellectual efforts on writing the *Treatise on Ontology*, published in 1981 (written between 1964 and 1987). We argue in our doctoral thesis that this Câmpulung decade is just as essential to the study of Noica's creation—not only because the first "volume" of *Becoming Within Being, An Essay on Traditional Philosophy*, was written in 1950 at Câmpulung-Muscel, but also because it was in this period that his major ontological sources, Goethe and Hegel, were most deeply studied.

In order to situate *Stories from Hegel* within both Noica's oeuvre and its historical context, our study begins with an exploration of how Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* was received in Romanian culture—first in the interwar period, then in the postwar era, up until the moment when Noica wrote his *Stories from Hegel*. This chapter, without claiming exhaustiveness on the topic, reveals the weak and even hostile reception of Hegelianism in the "classical" phase of Romanian philosophy, the interwar period, in which Noica, alongside the elder Cluj professor D.D. Roșca, emerges as one of the first faithful translators and exegetes of Hegel. The chapter also reveals the critical stance of Romanian interwar intellectuals toward Hegel (in contrast to Kant, who was far more favorably received), particularly given that none of Hegel's works had yet been translated into Romanian—his first translator in the country being none other than Noica himself. Within this context, we explore the views on Hegel held by several Romanian philosophers—usually adherents of the Kantian school—such as Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Nae Ionescu, P.P. Negulescu, D.D. Roșca, Lucian Blaga, Tudor Vianu, and Emil Cioran, each in separate subchapters.

In the postwar section—the first attempt at a historical chronology of Romanian Hegelian exegesis—our study considers the contributions of Constantin Ionescu-Gulian and Pavel Apostol to the Romanian reception of Hegel's philosophy. Both published their works in the same year in which Noica was writing *Stories from Hegel*. They were, above all,

promoters of Hegel's translation into Romanian, operating under the auspices of the official Marxist-Leninist philosophy of the time, into which they sought to integrate Hegelian thought in order to make possible the publication of these translations. Yet a close analysis of their work—produced before 1958, the year of Noica's arrest—reveals a peculiar intellectual convergence: Apostol, Ionescu-Gulian, and Noica were all engaged, at the same time, with the philosophies of Goethe and Hegel. The key philosophical difference, of course, is one of perspective: the first two were Marxists; Noica was not. This divergence is also reflected in their publishing outcomes—whereas Apostol and Ionescu-Gulian's works were published by the Academy of the People's Republic of Romania, Noica's remained unpublished and were even used as incriminating evidence in the *Noica–Pillat* indictment. Nevertheless, although the outcomes differed greatly, the underlying intellectual initiative was the same, demonstrating Noica's intellectual affinity with the concerns of his time, despite his isolation.

During the interwar period, although Noica shared with his contemporaries a preoccupation with Kantian philosophy (he himself translated Kant into Romanian), he did not take a critical stance toward Hegelian philosophy—on the contrary, he began to cultivate it toward his own goal of eventually constructing a new dialectic. In the postwar period, although he was unable to publish any books before the late 1960s, he nevertheless stands out through the project *Stories from Hegel* as a non-Marxist interpreter of Hegel—the only such one in the decade 1950–1960 in Romanian philosophical history.

Our doctoral thesis, therefore, focuses mainly on *Stories from Hegel*, rather than on Noica's interwar publications, and, except for *Stories About Man…* (1980), does not address his post-1964 work. We also examine to what extent the decades separating the writing of *Stories from Hegel* from its later publication affected its content—particularly through the "self-censorship" visible in the 1980 version of *The Story of the Man Like All Men* compared to the 1962 Paris edition.

After situating Noica's *Stories from Hegel* both within his oeuvre and its intellectual context, our research deepens into his original philosophical perspective in relation to Hegelian thought. The most significant contribution of Noica's hermeneutics, we argue, is the restructuring of the Hegelian concept of "experience", reinterpreted as *story* or *adventure*. We begin, therefore, with a synthesis of this concept as it appears in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, before turning to its reworking in Noica's text. This leads to two distinct lines of inquiry within the *Phenomenology*: one on the concepts of reason and spirit—which Noica

redefines structurally—and another on the challenging section "Understanding and Force," crucial for his later interpretation.

The final chapter, which forms the philosophical substance of our work, addresses the three interpretations of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* written by Noica over his lifetime, distinguishing the two that make up *Stories from Hegel*. After tracing his life up to 1957, when these interpretations were written, we explore the "mystery" behind this project—why it was never published—and the philosopher's attempts to translate it into French for possible publication via Emil Cioran and the Paris publishing house Plon.

Following a historical and documentary analysis of *Stories from Hegel*, we turn to its unpublished interpretation, *The Tale of Consciousness According to the Phenomenology of Spirit, with All the Stories Contained in It*. Although only the "story" of the first six chapters (or first two parts: *Consciousness* and *Self-Consciousness*) has been found, the analytical summary of the interpretation suffices to reveal its originality—especially Noica's restructuring of Hegel's chapters. In Noica's hermeneutics, the *Phenomenology* is no longer divided into three parts—*Consciousness*, *Self-Consciousness*, *Reason*—as in Hegel, but four: *Consciousness*, *Self-Consciousness*, *Reason*, and *Spirit*, with *Religious Spirit* and *Absolute Spirit* treated as subchapters of *Spirit*. Thus, *Spirit* is detached from *Reason* and granted independence, approaching Kantian critique rather more than Hegelian dialectic.

This conceptual transformation raises a philosophical question: if *Spirit* is no longer rational in the Hegelian sense, is it still rational in any sense—or does it transcend rationality? Removing *Spirit* from *Reason* narrows and redefines the latter, suggesting that Hegel's famous dictum, "All that is real is rational," no longer holds for Noica. If *Spirit* were not rational, it would thus be unreal—an absurdity from both Hegel's and Noica's perspectives.

Schematic analysis suggests that Noica's four-part structure corresponds to his own fourfold dialectic: theme, antitheme, thesis, regained theme. Applied to this framework, *Consciousness* becomes the theme, *Self-Consciousness* the antitheme, *Reason* the thesis, and *Spirit* the regained theme—a wholly original philosophical reconstruction.

The chapter concludes with a section on the *Avatars of Stories from Hegel*, reviewing the reception of Noica's work in the scholarly literature—from the 1990s to recent years—and situating our own doctoral thesis within this exegetical lineage.

Our study is, of course, limited by several constraints—the most significant being that the full manuscript of *The Tale of Consciousness…* has not yet been found. Should this manuscript be recovered, *Stories from Hegel* could finally be reconstructed and published in its entirety, as Noica himself intended in the late 1950s.

Since *Stories About Man. After a Book by Hegel* was published near the end of the socialist era (1980), it has remained one of Noica's lesser-known books. Though well received at the time—reviewed by both philosophers and writers—critics mostly discussed its content and Noica's role as a "storyteller" in dialogue with Hegel's *Phenomenology*.

Despite the preface mentioning three interpretations of the *Phenomenology*—one of them explicitly "written earlier" and published in 1962—contemporary reviews ignored this fact. Likely causes include social circumstances (manuscript confiscations, the *Noica–Pillat* Trial, imprisonment) and the fact that the author was still alive and could himself have filled the gaps left by *Stories About Man…*. He might have rewritten the third interpretation, *The Intimate Journal of Consciousness*, to publish it separately, just as he had done with *The Story of the Man Like All Men*.

However, in his final years, Noica focused on other projects—*Becoming Within Being* (1981), *Three Introductions to Becoming Within Being* (1983), *Letters on the Logic of Hermes* (1986)—and thus the anticipated continuation of *Stories About Man…* never materialized.

After 1989, Romanian philosophy developed an abundant exegetical literature on Noica's life and work—often more biographical than philosophical. Examination of the *Noica–Pillat* case file, surviving manuscripts, and correspondence from the Câmpulung period has gradually clarified how his works of that time were conceived. Yet only a few researchers have approached *Stories About Man…*, and even fewer *Stories from Hegel*, though their distinct existence was known.

By contrast, studies of Noica's interwar youth and his later years at Păltiniș have been numerous, as have analyses of his *Treatise on Ontology* (1981) and of his writings on philosophical language. What has generally distanced commentators from *Stories About Man…* is that, as a commentary on another work—the *Phenomenology of Spirit*—its originality seems limited compared to autonomous treatises like *An Essay on Traditional*

Philosophy (1950). Moreover, the textual differences between the 1962 Paris version and the 1980 Romanian edition of *The Story of the Man Like All Men* demand a complex philological comparison that has yet to be undertaken.

A further obstacle is the incomplete state of the three interpretations; lacking the full text, scholars have been understandably cautious. A future complete edition of *Stories from Hegel*, with all three interpretations, would finally make possible a comprehensive commentary.

The research can indeed be continued—with a philological edition of *Stories from Hegel* comparing the 1962 and 1980 versions of *The Story of the Man Like All Men*. Even though the full text of *The Tale of Consciousness…* has not yet been found, such an editorial study on the first interpretation is already feasible, since both its versions have been published.

Our final contribution is to the broader theme "Noica and Hegel." Although this relationship has been examined before—mainly through Noica's systematic philosophy—it has rarely been studied through his role as Hegel's "storyteller." This facet deserves a dedicated study of its own, analyzing Noica's view of Hegelian philosophy both as a system-builder (*An Essay on Traditional Philosophy*, *Treatise on Ontology*) and as an interpreter (*Stories from Hegel* and later works).

Ultimately, our work is intended only as a modest contribution to the topic of the relationship between Noica and Hegel. Yet this theme is so rich that it could support a full monograph, comparable to studies devoted to the great philosophical lineages—Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, and even the non-philosopher Goethe. Noica's writings engage with all of these figures, either through direct commentary or through integration into his own system.

We believe that Romanian philosophy has seldom situated its figures—especially one as recent as Noica, who died only thirty-eight years ago—within the historical-philosophical context of their time. Viewed thus, Noica emerges as the first truly Hegelian philosopher in Romania (aside from D.D. Roșca). His postwar writings must be seen against the background of the Marxist Hegelian exegesis of the period—a context in which Noica fit so little that he was imprisoned for his ideas. Nevertheless, *Stories from Hegel* undoubtedly belongs within

the philosophical landscape of the 1950s, where the only other authorized interpreters of Hegel were C.I. Gulian and Pavel Apostol. Within this climate, Noica stands apart not only as a non-Marxist commentator on Hegel but also as an original thinker, restructuring the *Phenomenology of Spirit* according to his own logic.

Another historical point of note is that *Stories About Man. After a Book by Hegel* was published more than two decades after Noica first wrote his Hegel interpretations. This delay also affected other works—some never published (*For a Treatise on Real Logic*), others appearing under different titles (*Twenty-Seven Steps of Reality* instead of *Twenty-Seven Steps of Matter*). The question remains why texts that finally appeared in the 1980s could not have been published already in the 1950s or 1960s—*Stories from Hegel* among them, originally titled *For a Hegel Restituted to the Many*.

Finally, a philosophical contribution worth emphasizing is Noica's reconstruction of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Detaching *Spirit* from *Reason* may seem damaging to Hegel's system, yet it marks Noica's boundary between commentary and creation.

The question of "Noica and Hegel" thus remains open, but we hope our study has revealed at least a fraction of Hegel's profound influence on Noica's thinking and formation—and that, in the end, Hegel may be seen not merely as an "influence" on Constantin Noica, but as his spiritual father, within whose philosophical lineage the Romanian thinker rightfully belongs.