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ABSTRACT

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CARAGIALE AND BEAUMARCHAIS

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INTRODUCTION

This paper proposes a comprehensive comparative study of the influence exerted by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais on the dramaturgy of Ion Luca Caragiale, by exploring a cultural relationship that is rarely discussed in the specialized literature. It starts from the hypothesis that, despite the temporal, geographical, and socio-cultural distance between the two playwrights, there are significant thematic, structural, ideological, and stylistic affinities between them. Through a comparative and semiotic analysis of the theatrical texts, the idea of a relevant intertextual dialogue emerges, as well as a symbolic legacy taken up and adapted by the Romanian author.

The relevance of the research stems from the growing interest in transnational cultural studies and in rethinking the national literary canon in relation to European influences. Beaumarchais, whose comedies have generated successful musical adaptations, is brought back into dialogue with Caragiale's work, in which musical echoes, similar dramaturgical mechanisms, and a critical attitude towards society, comparable to that of the French playwright, can be identified. The idea is advanced that the character of Figaro - who has become a universal model - can be found in a transfigured form in Caragiale's gallery of characters, especially in the comedy *D'ale carnavalului*.

In addition to the comparative dimension, the research is also motivated by an interest in the intersection between literature and music, investigating how comedy functions as a mechanism for challenging the social order. The following are thus examined: the dramatic structure, the satirical function of dialogue, the construction of the character type, the manipulation of theatrical conventions, as well as the ideological dimension of the dramatic text. The musical reception of the work, lyrical adaptations, and sound echoes as complementary forms of artistic expression are also discussed.

Beaumarchais was undoubtedly one of the first playwrights to understand the theatrical and ideological potential of music. Both *The Barber of Seville* (transformed by Rossini into a model of Italian comic opera) and *The Marriage of Figaro* (immortalized by Mozart) are emblematic examples of the fusion between dramatic text and musical composition. Caragiale, recognized as a fine music lover, cannot be separated from this sound horizon. It is no

coincidence that his dramatic texts have an internal logic similar to that of a musical score, both in the rhythm of the lines and in the overall dramatic structure. Analyzing this double fascination - Beaumarchais's fascination with music, transposed into the influence his plays had on opera composers, and Caragiale's fascination with the sound universe - I argue that the Romanian playwright's reception was partly shaped by the musical status acquired by the French playwright's works. Through his frequent visits to opera houses and his vast culture, Caragiale was familiar with the musical versions of Beaumarchais' plays, which allowed him to internalize not only the meaning of the lines or the stage conflict, but also the musical potential of the comedy.

The fundamental assumptions of the paper concern the existence of an intertextual dialogue between the two authors, the functioning of comedy as a form of ideological resistance and affirmation of critical spirit, as well as the importance of music as a theme and symbolic structure in the construction of the dramatic text. It is emphasized that Beaumarchais' influence is not manifested through slavish imitation, but through an ingenious and original adaptation of a foreign model to the Romanian context, a fact that certifies the modernity and complexity of Caragiale's work.

The research methodology is interdisciplinary, drawing on tools from the fields of literary criticism, theatrical semiotics, aesthetics, cultural sociology, and musicology. Methods such as text analysis, symbolic comparison, historical contextualization, and musical interpretation of dramatic texts are used.

The structure of the work reflects the stages of the analytical approach: a first chapter on theory and terminology; a second chapter dedicated to the biographical and thematic relationship between the two authors, including a comparative analysis of the plays *The Barber of Seville* and *D'ale carnavalului*; a third chapter that investigates the musical component of the two works and their reception, culminating in a section of conclusions and future directions for research.

The originality of the thesis lies in proposing a comparative and transdisciplinary reading model between Beaumarchais and Caragiale, in integrating the musical dimension into the analysis of dramaturgy, and in capitalizing on the intercultural perspective as a strategy for re-reading the Romanian canon. The study is aimed at specialists in comparative literature, theater studies, and musicology, as well as the academic public interested in the dynamics of artistic interference in the European cultural space.

1. SOME CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS. CRITICAL OPERATORS. TERMINOLOGICAL CLARIFICATIONS.

This chapter constitutes the theoretical and methodological foundation of the entire research and aims to conceptually delimit the critical operators used in the comparative analysis of the dramatic works of Caragiale and Beaumarchais. Starting from the premise that any comparative approach requires a solid foundation in a coherent theoretical framework, we propose to map out a conceptual apparatus designed to support a diachronic and intertextual interpretation of the theatrical phenomenon, with an emphasis on comedy as a literary genre and performance as a complex form of expression.

A first objective is to establish a precise terminology, essential for the comparative analysis of the dramaturgy of the two authors, by defining the fundamental concepts of theatrical art—dramatic genres and subgenres, theatrical discourse, actantial model, stage space and time, gestures, costumes, music, acting, directing, theatricality, and stage communication. These are approached in an interdisciplinary manner, drawing on contributions from theatrical semiotics, hermeneutics, and performance aesthetics, as well as theories of stage communication.

The chapter also draws on the two playwrights' theoretical perspectives on theater. In the case of Beaumarchais, his preference for bourgeois drama as a form of expression of everyday reality and the moral values of the middle class is highlighted, in opposition to ancient tragedy and superficial comedy. In the preface to the drama *Eugénie*, the French author expounds his aesthetic principles, influenced by Diderot, arguing for the moralising role of theatre and the need for the audience to identify authentically with the characters. Beaumarchais conceives theater as a means of education and reflection, and a simple style, without rhetorical artifice, is preferred in order to convey emotions. His theater is resized by reconstructing dramatic images in accordance with modern sensibilities, and its meanings are enriched by reproduction in contemporary visions and forms of theatrical art.

The same is true of Caragiale's dramaturgy, whose relevance remains intact and which presents itself to us as a universe of countless polysemies. The concept of relevance does not necessarily imply the idea of a physical or calendar moment, but must be related to the aesthetic norm of a modern and current value system that includes spectacular vision, aesthetic conception, and the idea of meaning and message. The Romanian playwright sees theater as a

syncretic art, autonomous from literature, in which the written text is only a starting point for the stage construction. Influenced in turn by Diderot, Caragiale emphasizes the role of the actor as a living instrument of dramatic creation, as well as the importance of the stage ensemble (*l'ensemble*), in which all components of the performance (gesture, mimicry, words, props, space) must function in harmony. Through his theatrical articles, Caragiale demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the theatrical phenomenon, addressing the relationships between actor and role, drama and performance, reality and artistic convention. For the Romanian playwright, theater is not a literary text, but rather a presence or an experience, and as a result, the semiotic approach to its constituent elements contributes to a correct understanding of the theatrical phenomenon.

Caragiale was a good commentator on the theatrical phenomenon and approached the problems of art from within. He likens the playwright's work to a plan created by an architect that allows you to imagine the building, but you cannot touch it or live in it, just as the written play is only a basic component of theatrical art and even of the performance itself. Since one of the means of representation is the word, we cannot include theater in a single sphere—that of literature. As a result, the playwright believes that the fundamental elements of theater are the text and the performance, which give theatrical art its specificity. Both author and director, the Romanian playwright creates a complete performance in which the characters become real actors, with many scenes played out exactly as in the theater. Theatricality means continuous movement and powerful conflicts, which Caragiale considers essential.

The comic plays of the two playwrights - Caragiale and Beaumarchais - are of exemplary theatrical effectiveness, clearly written to be performed on stage, deeply conceived and structured so that they can have a full artistic life.

Theory of theater has become a field of well-individualized ideas and referential acquisitions, which have enjoyed exceptional interest over time. Among the countless theorists who have existed over time, we have cited those who have brought something new to the field of theater theory and who have offered thorough, comprehensive, and surprising points of view. It also looks at the relationships between playwright, director, actor, and audience in the context of theater communication theory. The chapter introduces essential concepts from theater semiotics, highlighting the duality of theatrical writing, textual and scenic, as well as the importance of dialogue and monologue in shaping dramatic meaning. Language, verbal and

nonverbal, is presented as the main tool for constructing conflict and character, with an emphasis on its expressive, persuasive, communicative, and representative functions.

The analysis of theatrical discourse includes reflections on stage dialogue as a form of symbolic interaction between characters and on the role of monologue in expressing inner feelings. The forms of polylogue, verbal duel, and indirect communication are described, with an emphasis on the playful, conflictual, but also erotic function of stage language. Thus, language becomes a veritable instrument of symbolic construction and transmission of the profound meanings of dramatic works.

The chapter also highlights the differences in terminology between French and Romanian literary theory, presenting the contributions of theorists such as Patrice Pavis, Anne Ubersfeld, Peter Brook, Konstantin Stanislavski, George Banu, and Daniela Roventă-Frumușani. These terminological clarifications create a coherent framework for comparing Caragiale's work with that of Beaumarchais, especially in terms of dramatic structure, the function of comedy, and the spectacular mechanisms of the two eras.

In conclusion, this chapter sets up a rigorous analytical platform, which is essential for understanding theater as an aesthetic and communicative phenomenon. By combining the theories presented, an interpretative network is constructed that is applicable to both Caragiale's and Beaumarchais's work, with a view to identifying convergences, stylistic differences, and the spectacular potential of their dramatic texts. Thus, the chapter provides the premises for a relevant comparative reading that transcends the historical and cultural boundaries of the two authors, placing them in a common theatrical paradigm, but one that is plural in expression.

2. CARAGIALE AND BEAUMARCHAIS – LIFE AND WORK

The second chapter of the thesis proposes a comprehensive comparative analysis between Caragiale and Beaumarchais, two canonical figures of European theater who, although belonging to distinct eras and cultural spaces, show remarkable convergence in terms of dramatic thinking, satirical vision, and social commitment. After presenting the theoretical framework in the introductory chapter, this section takes on an applied role, demonstrating how theatrical and aesthetic concepts are embodied in the texts of the two authors.

The chapter outlines the biographical and professional profiles of the two playwrights, emphasizing the related activities (journalism, business, theater administration, political activism) that consolidated their status as public intellectuals. In the case of Beaumarchais, a tumultuous biography is highlighted, marked by legal conflicts, diplomatic missions, and editorial initiatives, culminating in the writing of the famous *Memoirs*, which supported a veritable rhetorical revolution against institutionalized injustice. Caragiale, on the other hand, is portrayed as a lucid and uncompromising spirit, whose satirical observations, expressed in press articles, plays, and pamphlets, target hypocrisy, corruption, and the inadequacy of modern forms in relation to Romanian culture.

In addition, the way in which the two playwrights capitalize on previous theatrical traditions, especially the *Commedia dell'Arte* and the French Enlightenment model, is emphasized, without slavishly imitating them, but reconfiguring them in accordance with national specificity and their own artistic style. Beaumarchais is presented as a precursor of militant theater, a "cheerful vigilante", while Caragiale appears as the founder of modern Romanian satire, a sharp and lucid observer of the transition to modernity.

Through their artistic approach, Caragiale and Beaumarchais claim a dual function for theater: entertainment and moral edification. Theater becomes a critical space, where collective vices are exposed and the tensions of the era are brought to light. Through a comprehensive, well-argued, and interdisciplinary analysis, the chapter "Caragiale and Beaumarchais" demonstrates the enduring relevance of the two authors and the legitimacy of placing them in a comparative dialogue, capable of revealing both their national specificity and their belonging to a European dramaturgical tradition of depth and refinement.

The subchapter "Dramaturgy" offers a comparative analysis of the dramatic works of Beaumarchais and Caragiale, highlighting the innovative, critical, and modern character of the two authors' creations, despite the differences in historical and cultural context. It highlights the fact that, although the number of plays they wrote is small, their contribution to the development of the dramatic genre is essential, both assuming the role of harsh critics of society and of the social and political conventions of their time.

Beaumarchais is presented as a precursor of bourgeois theater, concerned with realism and morality, with an obvious social commitment. His debut play, *Eugénie*, is analyzed from the revolutionary perspective of a drama in which compassion, guilt, and justice intersect, initially viewed with suspicion by the public and critics. The author affirms his aesthetic and ethical convictions in a substantial preface, arguing for the value of bourgeois drama over classical tragedy. On the other hand, Caragiale debuts with *O noapte furtunoasă* (A Stormy Night), a play which, although full of the author's characteristic humour, is received negatively by his contemporaries, who accuse him of immorality. However, the comedy highlights a Romanian society in moral and identity drift, built around absurd language, caricatured characters, and a revealing existential grotesque. This critical line is continued in *Conul Leonida față cu reacțiunea* (Con Leonida Facing the Reaction), in which social and political satire is combined with domestic farce, reflecting the fears and naivety of the Romanian petty bourgeoisie.

In *Doi prieteni* (Two Friends), Beaumarchais continues to explore humanist values, highlighting altruism and loyalty, but is again rejected by the public. At the same time, Caragiale outlines in *O scrisoare pierdută* (A Lost Letter) a fresco of political demagoguery and false patriotism, with anthological characters that combine social typology with Romanian humour.

Comparatively, *The Barber of Seville* and *O scrisoare pierdută* are presented as dramatic texts that stage parallel universes—the French aristocracy and the Romanian political class—but with the same goal: to expose the vices of the system through comedy of manners, satirical humor, and memorable lines. Both playwrights construct emblematic characters – Figaro and Cațavencu, Almaviva and Tipătescu – with obvious social and political connotations, becoming symbols of resistance through intelligence and irony.

In *The Marriage of Figaro*, Beaumarchais goes beyond the limits of classical comedy, bringing to the fore themes such as social inequality, freedom, criticism of corrupt justice, and women's emancipation - aspects that anticipate the French Revolution. Similarly, Caragiale

brings in *D'ale carnavalului* a comedy of derision, where the slums become a symbolic space for a society in which identities are fluid and the mask is a revealing element of human truth. Despite its failure at the premiere, the play is later recognized as one of the most refined Romanian dramatic constructions.

The subchapter ends with a parallel between Beaumarchais's *The Guilty Mother* and Caragiale's *Năpasta* – the last plays by the two playwrights. Beaumarchais offers a moral analysis of the decadent aristocracy, while Caragiale, in a different register, exposes the rural tragedy marked by crime, guilt, and revenge. Both playwrights abandon comedy to explore psychological and ethical depths, marking an artistic maturation and an assumption of social responsibility. The dramaturgy of the two authors appears as an act of courage and critical lucidity, in which theater becomes an instrument of social, moral, and political analysis. The alternation between comedy and drama, between laughter and seriousness, is the expression of a modern conception of the world and art, in which aesthetics is inextricably linked to ethics.

The subchapter entitled "Figaro - a universal model" presents a comprehensive and interdisciplinary investigation of the character of Figaro, created by Beaumarchais, highlighting his qualities as a universal theatrical archetype and the way in which this model reverberates in European dramatic culture, with an emphasis on the correspondences in Caragiale's theater. The analytical approach starts from the premise that Figaro transcends the simple status of valet, becoming a symbol of critical spirit, social mobility, and resistance through intelligence and irony. The valet-barber is analyzed as a composite character, at the confluence of the *Commedia dell'Arte* tradition and the picaresque model. Although relatively little present on stage, he acts from the shadows as the driving force of the plot, combining the roles of author, director, actor, and commentator on reality. Figaro is not just the classic valet, but a self-taught intellectual with a biography that reflects the struggles and aspirations of the emerging bourgeoisie. Paradoxically, despite his inferior social status, he claims moral and intellectual superiority over the decadent aristocracy.

The symbolic correspondence between Figaro and Beaumarchais himself is emphasized, with autobiographical elements found in the character's destiny and character: conflicts with the authorities, exposing abuses, the aspiration for freedom and social justice. A repertoire analysis of the trilogy (*The Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *The Guilty Mother*) reveals an

ideological and stylistic evolution: from the comic exuberance of the scheming barber to melancholic reflection on destiny and old age.

The cultural roots of this pattern are also investigated, exploring a series of literary "Figaros" from different eras and cultural spaces: from the barbers of Cervantes and Gogol to Balzac, Don DeLillo, Ion Minulescu, and T.O. Bobe. A genealogy of the barber-intellectual, artist, and agent of social change emerges. This model is illustrated by reference to similar characters in the Romanian tradition, in particular Iordache from Caragiale's *D'ale carnavalului*, considered a Dâmbovița Figaro. The Romanian author takes up the model of the versatile valet with multiple artistic talents, but adds local accents and a touch of bitter humor. It is argued that Figaro becomes a literary myth with transnational valences, adaptable to different socio-cultural contexts, and a symbol of theater as a form of intellectual resistance.

The chapter offers a coherent and subtle view of the character of Figaro as a universal model, demonstrating that he is not just an individual creation, but a cultural pattern that has crossed the ages, retaining its freshness and subversive force. Figaro becomes a synthesis between tradition and modernity, between comedy and criticism, between art and ideology, with constant relevance in European theater and the collective imagination.

The following subchapter proposes a comprehensive comparative analysis between *The Barber of Seville* and *D'ale carnavalului*, with the aim of highlighting the structural, thematic, and symbolic convergences between the two comedies. The research starts from the hypothesis that between these texts, belonging to distinct eras, cultural spaces, and theatrical traditions, there is a subtle intertextual relationship, mediated both by thematic affiliation and by the conventions of comedy of manners, carnival farces, and social satire. It is noteworthy that *D'ale carnavalului* was originally titled *Bărbierul* (The Barber), a direct allusion to Beaumarchais's source, as well as to Rossini's famous musical adaptation (Caragiale being a great lover of music).

The analysis traces the parallels between the dramatic structures, character construction, and conflict dynamics, demonstrating that Figaro and Iordache - the central characters of the two comedies - function as equivalent typologies of the "clever valet", a classic figure in European dramatic literature. Both are lucid, ironic, and ingenious spirits, true demiurges of comic action, bearers of moral ambiguity, and vectors of subversion. If Figaro, heir to the *Commedia dell'Arte*, is the representative of the plebs, Iordache is the local, Dâmbovița transposition of the same archetype – a mixture of cunning, feigned submission, and pragmatic instinct.

It highlights how disguise, lies, love notes, and identity confusion function as common dramatic mechanisms, transforming both texts into comedies of appearance and illusion. Whether it is Count Almaviva's multiple disguises or the domino masks worn by Caragiale's characters at the masked ball, disguise becomes a theatrical and symbolic strategy for exploring social duplicity.

Comparatively, Count Almaviva and Nae Girimea are avatars of the modern Don Juan, both illustrating a seductive but morally ambivalent masculinity. Another correspondence appears in the gallery of female characters and "cuckolded jealous men", illustrating by contrast two fundamental typologies of comedy of manners: the woman ruled by passion, caught between the ideal of love and social constraints, and the man ridiculed, betrayed, or deceived, who unwittingly becomes the object of public laughter.

In Beaumarchais' play, Rosine embodies the young, cultured, and intelligent woman caught between Bartholo's suffocating guardianship and her attraction to the romantic ideal represented by Lindor (Almaviva). Despite the pressure exerted by the patriarchal environment and the authority of old Bartholo, she shows critical thinking, dissimulation, and initiative—traits that bring her closer to the model of the modern woman, capable of making decisions and influencing the course of action.

In Caragiale's comedy, the female characters - Mița Baston and Didina Mazu - are defined by a mixture of excessive passion, possessive jealousy, and sentimental theatricality. Mița is the prototype of the "offended" woman, an abandoned mistress who resorts to dramatic scenes, simulated crises, and vitriolic threats to win back her unfaithful lover. Didina, in turn, plays the role of the unscrupulous seductress, who adopts disguise and lies with ease, contributing to the amplification of the ballroom farces. Unlike Rosine, the women in *D'ale carnavalului* have a stage autonomy coupled with a typically Caragialean linguistic expressiveness, in which excess, pathos, and orality play an important role in generating comedy. They are not idealized, but problematized, often caricatured, and their feelings - although sincere - are mediated by the social conventions of appearance and manipulation.

As for the male characters, Bartholo from *The Barber of Seville* and Pampon, respectively Crăcănel from *D'ale carnavalului* are expressions of the archetype of the cuckolded jealous man, tragicomic figures of threatened masculinity. Bartholo, although cultured and aware of the danger of Rosina's love, is ridiculed by his pitiful attempt at control and his inability to

decipher the masquerade orchestrated by Figaro. He becomes a symbol of decrepit authority and failure in the face of youth and intelligence.

Similarly, Pampon and Crăcănel are representatives of the Romanian slums, grotesquely amusing projections of the jealous, disoriented lover, caught up in a game of changing identities, deceived and manipulated without even realizing the extent of the farces in which he is caught. If Bartholo is defeated by disguises and refined amorous strategies, Crăcănel and Pampon are defeated by the ridiculousness of their own jealousy and their inability to escape the carnivalesque chaos.

The relationship between women and "cheaters" is doubled in both plays by the complicity of those around them: Figaro and Iordache are not only witnesses to the farce, but accomplices in destabilizing the social and romantic order. In both comedies, love is a field of illusion and disguise, and the mask becomes the central symbol of gender relations - be it the mask of travesty, flattery, or accepted humiliation.

In addition, the study notes the role of language as a generator of comedy, both comedies being animated by lively, alert dialogue, charged with orality and popular expressiveness. From Figaro's wordplay and exclamations to Iordache's colorful speech and sarcasm, language constructs not only the comic effect, but also the social identity of the characters.

The comparative analysis reveals a profound homology between the two texts, despite contextual differences, highlighting the universal character of the "Figaro" type of comedy and Caragiale's ability to creatively adapt a foreign dramaturgical model to Romanian realities. Figaro and Iordache are not just valets, but directors of the plot, embodiments of critical spirit and instances of comic lucidity. *D'ale carnavalului* thus becomes a modern and indigenous response to *The Barber of Seville*, offering an eloquent example of the re-semantization of European theatrical tradition in a national register.

3. CARAGIALE AND BEAUMARCHAIS'S LOVE OF MUSIC

This chapter looks at the musical side of Caragiale and Beaumarchais's plays, offering a complementary reading to the symbolic and comparative approaches presented in the previous sections. The starting point is the observation that both playwrights can be considered true music lovers, not only because of their personal inclination towards music, but especially because of the subtle integration of sound elements into the theatrical structure. Music becomes an aesthetic and symbolic vehicle, an element of stage performance, a link between the dramatic text and the forms of lyrical performance.

In Beaumarchais' case, his passion for music is evident not only on a biographical level - through his musical education, his frequent visits to the royal court, and his desire to become a librettist - but also in the way he conceives his dramatic texts: the lines have rhythm, many of the scenes involve musical instruments (harpsichord, guitar, violin), and the insertion of arias, vaudevilles, romances, or folk songs contributes to the construction of the characters and the dramatic tension. The comedies *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* are analyzed in detail as examples of "comedies with music" in which the structure of the text anticipates the sounds of comic opera. The analysis highlights the expressive, narrative, and metatextual function of music, which is never decorative, but essential in encoding emotions, in communication between characters, and in the relationship with the audience.

A relevant aspect is the study dedicated to the opera *Tarare* (libretto by Beaumarchais, music by Salieri), considered a musical-dramatic manifesto with ideological, aesthetic, and philosophical implications. It is argued that this creation synthesises Beaumarchais' vision of the relationship between word and sound, between poetry and music, advocating the supremacy of literature in a context of harmonious cooperation with music.

On the other hand, Caragiale's musical sensibility - often underestimated by critics - is reevaluated in this chapter as a constituent element of his dramatic aesthetics. The fact that his texts have been successfully transformed into operas attests to a latent musical structure: the lines have an internal rhythm, and the dramatic tension evolves in crescendo, like a musical score. Therefore, the interest of some contemporary composers in these texts is not accidental, but justified by this formal and symbolic affinity.

The chapter formulates an essential hypothesis for the entire thesis: Beaumarchais' musical passion not only influenced the reception of his work in a musical key, but also subtly reverberated in Romanian dramatic culture. Caragiale seems to have internalized the French playwright's model, including through his appreciation of rhythm, the harmony of the lines, and the scenic and sonic potential of comedy. Music becomes a channel of intertextual and intercultural transmission, providing a bridge between two eras, two spaces, and two aesthetics of comedy, united under the sign of theatricality and music.

The subchapter entitled "Musical Adaptations of Beaumarchais" focuses on the dramatic metamorphosis of Beaumarchais' work through its transposition into the register of European classical music, emphasizing the influence that this musical dimension had both on the French playwright's posterity and on authors from other cultures, including Caragiale. The fundamental premise of the research is that the success of Beaumarchais' plays lies not only in the literary text, but also in their formidable availability for musical adaptations - an aspect that indicates a dramaturgical construction capable of being translated into sound, emotion, and stage language. The section opens by highlighting the musical versatility of *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Barber of Seville*, considered favorite sources for renowned composers such as Mozart, Rossini, and Paisiello. The collaborative process between Mozart and librettist Lorenzo da Ponte is analyzed in detail, revealing the harmony between musical construction and dramaturgical intent. The importance Mozart attaches to dramatic verisimilitude, orchestral dynamism, and the psychological definition of characters through music is emphasized. Particular attention is paid to the way Mozart manages to give each character a distinct sonic identity, integrating recitatives and vocal ensembles into a coherent musical architecture. The chapter thus emphasizes that Mozart's version of *The Marriage of Figaro* not only adapts but also ennobles the dramatic material through stylistic refinement and emotional depth.

A second line of analysis is the comparison between *The Barber of Seville* as seen by two major composers: Giovanni Paisiello and Gioachino Rossini. A comparative perspective is offered, noting the textual fidelity and melancholic tonality in Paisiello's version, in contrast to the comic exuberance, rhythmic vivacity, and playful character of Rossini's version. In addition, it is noted that Rossini dares to go beyond the previous model through interpretative freedom and a much more dynamic orchestration, which gives the comedy a new lease of life. In this comic

opera, music becomes a privileged instrument for expressing conflict, tension, and farce, often replacing the actual lines with suggestive orchestral passages.

This section documents the reception of these adaptations on European and Romanian opera stages, through the analysis of some landmark productions: *The Marriage of Figaro* in Vienna, Berlin, Bucharest and Constanța (directed by Hero Lupescu, Alexander Rădulescu, and Ștefan Neagrău), as well as *The Barber of Seville* in Cluj-Napoca, Brașov, Suceava and the National Opera in Bucharest. Specialized criticism, as well as the testimonies of personalities such as Hegel, are invoked to support the idea that the musical impact of Beaumarchais's opera was not only aesthetic, but also ideological and cultural.

The final sequences are dedicated to the re-evaluation of the last play in the trilogy – *The Guilty Mother* – and attempts at musical adaptation, in particular that by Darius Milhaud, considered by exegesis to be more of a stylistic experiment than an authentic lyrical success. Observations are added regarding the theatrical relevance of Beaumarchais' texts, illustrated by the modern productions of Net Grujic and Theo Adam.

In conclusion, it is highlighted that Beaumarchais' texts not only allow but demand musical transposition, and music thus becomes an extension of dramaturgy. This multiple reception -literary, theatrical, and musical - has consolidated the universal status of these plays. Moreover, the musical reception of Beaumarchais proves revealing for understanding the indirect influence he exerted on Caragiale, whose texts reveal a similar concern for rhythm, sonority, and theatricality.

The subchapter "Caragiale – more than just a music lover" aims to reevaluate Caragiale's sound profile, not only as a receiver and lover of music, but as a playwright who integrated the musical dimension into the structure, style, and functionality of his theatrical text. Contrary to the traditional perception that places Caragiale outside the musical sphere, the present analysis supports, through documentary and textual arguments, the idea that the Romanian playwright is not just a passive music lover, but a creator with a profound acoustic and rhythmic vision of the performance.

Based on biographical and confessional testimonies and episodes evoked by contemporaries in their memories of the writer, the research highlights Caragiale's constant interest in opera and operetta. His love for these genres is not limited to listening, but is reflected

in his writing, in which the rhythm, the sound of the dialogue, and the alternation of dramatic tension are reminiscent of complex musical structures.

The text also argues that in Caragiale's comedies – *O noapte furtunoasă*, *Conul Leonida față cu reacțiunea*, *O scrisoare pierdută* și *D'ale carnavalului* – music is present in multiple forms: hummed songs, references to instruments or performances, vocal and structural rhythms. These elements are not accidental, but build a coherent soundscape that enhances the expressiveness of the scenes, accompanies the irony, and supports the satirical function. Verbal comedy is doubled by phonic comedy, and the dramaturgical intention is served by a veritable "score of language". An important contribution of the chapter is the detailed analysis of the ways in which Caragiale exploits music in theatrical performance: from the spatial suggestion of a carnival world to the rhythm of the action through repetition and semantic-acoustic variations. In this context, the proximity to the techniques of vaudeville and comic opera is highlighted, which brings him closer—indirectly, but significantly—to Beaumarchais.

In conclusion, the subchapter demonstrates that Caragiale's status as a "music lover" must be overcome in favor of a deeper understanding of the role of music in his dramaturgy. Caragiale does not just listen to music, but incorporates it into the mechanisms of his plays. This hypothesis supports the general thesis of the paper: the affinity between Beaumarchais and Caragiale is not limited to the thematic or structural dimension, but extends to a common vision of theater as a total art, in which words, gestures, and sounds merge into a complex performance.

The section "Echoes of Music in Caragiale's Dramatic Texts" analyzes the musical dimension of Caragiale's dramaturgy, demonstrating that music is not just an ornamental element or a simple background sound, but an essential constructive principle that structures the rhythm of the stage, outlines the identity of the characters, and enhances the comic effects.

The analysis begins with *O noapte furtunoasă*, a play in which music is present both through explicit references (romances, sung lyrics, references to international repertoires) and through a stylistic language deeply influenced by rhythm and repetition. The refinement with which Caragiale orchestrates the dialogue is highlighted, creating dialogical sequences reminiscent of dramatic recitatives and the vocal polyphony specific to opera. Episodes such as Ipingescu's lines or the duet between Chiriac and Veta are analyzed as recurring rhythmic structures, in which orality is stylized to create musical comedy effects.

In *Conul Leonida față cu reacțiunea*, music appears in a latent form, incorporated into the discourse, in the rhythm of the pauses and intonations. Noteworthy is the tense orchestration of the nocturnal space, in which external noises (bells, gunshots, knocking on the door) and the crescendoing voices of the characters create a soundscape that evokes a melodrama. The dialogue between Leonida and Efimita becomes a comic duet, with operetta accents, in which panic, absurdity, and the grotesque are accentuated by alternations in tempo and vocal intensity.

In *O scrisoare pierdută*, a veritable operatic structure can be identified, in which choruses, arias, and duets are replaced by the voices of political figures and voters. In the scenes at the tribune, the background sound is created by the shouts and boos of the crowd. Trahanache is analyzed as a "conductor of pauses", whose verbal tic becomes a leitmotif with a musical function and recognizable rhythmic structure. The parody of political speeches is accentuated by vocal tone and stage gestures, with the author demonstrating that the entire play functions as a comedy with a directed sound structure.

The highlight of the chapter is the detailed analysis of the play *D'ale carnavalului*, identified as the most musical of Caragiale's comedies. Here, the carnival structure is complemented by an elaborate musical structure: from Iordache's songs to the dynamics of the dances (waltz, polka, quadrille, mazurka), each sound element contributes to defining the stage space. The presence of a subtle orchestration that combines vocal timbres, affective rhythms, and stage movements in an almost symphonic unfolding is emphasized.

Finally, this section of the thesis supports the idea that I. L. Caragiale is not only a music lover, but an author whose dramaturgical approach is shaped by a deep understanding of the musical phenomenon. Music is not a simple backdrop, but an essential dimension of theatrical expressiveness. This approach confirms the affinities between Caragiale and Beaumarchais, both of whom were creators of polyphonic theatrical concepts, in which music, satire, and stage rhythm merge into a total spectacle.

The section "Caragiale in a new musical guise" brings to the fore a reinterpretation of Caragiale's work through the prism of contemporary musical productions, emphasizing the stage adaptations that have given it a new breath of life and a distinctive sound. In an era in which the boundaries between the arts are becoming increasingly permeable, Caragiale is rediscovered not only as a master of words, but also as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for composers and opera directors.

The focus is on the analysis of the staging of the opera *D'ale Carnavalului*, directed by Ștefan Neagrău, with original music by Dan Dediú, a courageous artistic endeavor that manages to combine Caragiale's satire with the dizzying dynamics of contemporary opera theater. This creation premiered in May 2025 at the Bucharest National Opera, as part of the "International Week of New Music" Festival, and impressed with its aesthetic freshness, orchestral originality, and modernity of the directorial concept. The show is structured in two distinct scenes – "The Barber Shop of Metaphors" and "The Hall of Broken Mirrors" – both loaded with symbolic and sonic meanings. This transformation of the dramatic text reveals a rhythmic, ironic, restless, but also deeply musical Caragiale – an author who seems to have written in counterpoint to his own era.

The section demonstrates that the musical adaptations of Caragiale's texts are not just formal experiments, but a profound rewriting, a "re-sonorization" that brings to the surface latent layers of meaning. *D'ale carnavalului* thus becomes not just a comedy of errors, but a score of social derision, a sound fresco of everyday absurdity. This new musical guise makes Caragiale accessible to contemporary audiences, reconfirming his universality and

CONCLUSIONS

A comparative analysis of the dramatic works of Caragiale and Beaumarchais highlights significant similarities in terms of structure, theme, and style. Among these, the indirect influence exerted by Beaumarchais on the Romanian playwright stands out, particularly through the musical adaptations made by Mozart and Rossini. Caragiale, known for his constant interest in music and his solid musical culture, was familiar with and frequented the European lyrical repertoire of the 19th century, which justifies the hypothesis that he was receptive to the way Beaumarchais' theater was integrated into musical works. This familiarity contributed, at least in terms of structure, character construction, and dramatic conflict organization, to the consolidation of his own artistic vision, which was compatible with the tradition of modern satirical comedy. Thus, it can be argued that Beaumarchais' influence on Caragiale is not exclusively literary in nature, but also includes a musical dimension, relevant to understanding the specificity of Caragiale's dramaturgy.

This thesis proposes an innovative perspective in the field of comparative studies and theatrical aesthetics, bringing Caragiale's and Beaumarchais' dramatic creation into dialogue through an interdisciplinary reading grid - literary, semiotic, and musicological. The analysis highlights a latent musical dimension in the structure of the dramatic text, common to both authors, which contributes to the internal rhythm, the stage dynamics, and the functionality of comedy.

The case study focused on the comedies *D'ale carnavalului* and *The Barber of Seville* allowed the identification of common features in the dramatic construction, such as the mechanism of farces, the correspondence between characters, symbolic literary structures and motifs, and the demystifying function of comedy. The originality of the approach lies in directly relating these elements to the rhythmic and musical expression of the dramatic texts, demonstrating that there is a "score" that regulates the tension and resolution on stage. This type of analysis can also be applied to other classical or modern comic plays, with a view to musicalized directorial readings.

Caragiale is reevaluated as an author deeply attentive to the rhythm and musicality of language, and Beaumarchais, often analyzed from a political and social perspective, is

reconfirmed as a playwright concerned with harmony, lyrical alternations, and structures inspired by *opera buffa*. This approach not only opens up new directions for directorial interpretation, but also contributes to the consolidation of a theoretical framework in which comic theater is understood as a sound phenomenon, not just a visual or verbal one.

The practical relevance of the thesis can be found in fields such as performance criticism, theater directing, applied musicology, and the development of university courses focused on the intersection between dramaturgy and music.

The limitations of the research derive from the restricted selection of the analyzed corpus and the impossibility of accurately reconstructing the authors' sound intentions. Nevertheless, the proposed musical reading, even if interpretative, is based on verifiable stylistic and structural coherence.

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