



Musical Influence and its Reflection in the Literature of Ion Luca Caragiale

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Abstract: The present work aims to analyze and compare the stages through which the playwright Ion Luca Caragiale strengthens his musical culture when he decides to move with his family to Berlin (the capital, which offers multiple cultural opportunities, with a particular emphasis on music). This overview is based on the analysis of the correspondence between I. L. Caragiale and Paul Zarifopol and the anthology by Ștefan Cazimir, *Amintiri despre Caragiale*. Through these sources, I will demonstrate the influence of music on the playwright and highlight similarities between musical concepts and the ideas he expressed. Additionally, the testimonies of his friends are significant in revealing the lesser-known side of his love for music, offering an almost complete perspective on his musical passion and its impact. Music plays a crucial role in literature, contributing to the creation of atmosphere and deepening narrative understanding. In literary works, music can be used to intensify the characters' emotions, symbolize central themes, or reflect various moods. A transdisciplinary approach, blending literature and music, opens new perspectives for analysis and interpretation, allowing for a deeper exploration of texts. Through this method, researchers can examine how rhythm, harmony, and melody influence the structure and literary style. Moreover, music can serve as a bridge between different arts, facilitating a holistic understanding of a work. Thus, integrating music into the study of literature not only enriches the aesthetic experience but also provides new tools for critical analysis, highlighting the complexity and interconnectedness between the arts.

Keywords: holistic understanding of art; rituals in artistic expression; narrative structure and music; interconnection between arts; Berlin and cultural influences; musical passion; literary analysis; transdisciplinary approach; music's influence on literature.

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1. Introduction

It is not a novelty to state that, in the landscape of Romanian literature from the second half of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, the works of Ion Luca Caragiale represent one of its cornerstones. Alongside his mastery of words, which he used to depict various aspects of contemporary society, the writer was also drawn to the art of sounds. However, his opinions about music and musicians were nuanced and at times even contradictory.

“But is there a stronger means to rid ourselves of the chaotic invasion of the entire world into our poor souls than divine music? – vague and vast, like the world itself, like this inscrutable entity, which has no other meaning than the great and sole meaning – harmony.”

Similarly, in the fifth chapter, *Arm in Arm with Caragiale*, from the book dedicated to the life and work of composer Paul Constantinescu, musicologist Vasile Tomescu mentions another quote by Caragiale: “This is art! Could anything more grandiose be expressed in words? There is no greater art than musical art.”

Because: “Self-taught, inseparable from his piano whether he visited Sinaia or settled in Berlin, the owner of a music library that included both Anton Pann's *Bazul teoretic și practic al muzicii bisericești* (*Theoretical and Practical Basis of Church Music*) and symphonic and opera scores, a lover of concerts and performances, an avid fan of high-quality interpretations, a regular attendee of events at the Romanian Athenaeum or Leipzig's Gewandhaus, a frequenter of Viennese opera performances, a member of musical societies, a music critic for *Epoca* and *Moftul român*, and a passionate researcher of folklore, Caragiale portrayed himself as follows: peculiarities: music lover! Well-developed musical ear, memory, and taste.”

The statement above, regarding the musical instrument he could not part with, is also confirmed in his letter dated April 20, 1906, addressed to Paul Zarifopol: “Day by day, I am expecting my piano, long shipped from Bucharest, to arrive.”

This acquisition is further justified in another letter, dated October 9, 1910, addressed to the same person: “An elegant pianino, possessing the most sympathetic salon voice, equipped with a double mute, as if cast especially for Haydn and for so many other venerable wigs, is awaiting with unspeakable impatience the touch of masterful fingers.”

G. Călinescu sketches his portrait in *Istoria literaturii române* (*The History of Romanian Literature*) and observes the meticulousness Caragiale devoted to writing any of his works. Although “he is somewhat akin to Pampon and Crăcănel,” the playwright enhanced his musical knowledge during his time in Berlin and felt every musical score, demonstrating a remarkable talent, for a person who senses vibrations, sounds, harmonies, and pauses possesses “the calling to create.”

However, Caragiale's opinion about music is also humorously expressed through the voice of the new-school pedagogue Marius Chicoș Rostogan, who states that, "Muzichia este ceea ce ne gâdilă în mod plăcut urechile." (Music is what pleasantly tickles our ears). In the given literary context, this definition serves to ridicule and critique the semi-education and inappropriate or sometimes brutal teaching methods in some educational institutions of the Romanian Kingdom.

"Renowned Romanian sociologist Dimitrie Gusti stated that I. L. Caragiale was a passionate and profound appreciator of Beethoven's music in particular and of music in general (though he had no interest in the visual arts). Moreover, he was an unparalleled and original commentator on Beethoven's symphonies and sonatas. If he had had a stenographer by his side to record these eloquent commentaries, the universal musical literature on Beethoven's creations would likely have included one of its most impressive works."

Here is also the opinion of Ecaterina Logadi, the writer's daughter:

"It is well known that he was a passionate music lover; however, he was judged rather superficially by some who studied this side of his inclinations. I often heard it said that my father was indeed musical but untrained and completely ignorant of basic notions and musical rules. From everything I remember, I can clarify this by offering contrary, convincing evidence. Father knew an enormous amount of musical literature, almost like a professional musicologist [...] He perfectly understood intervals and all the tones (keys) with their laws. He fully grasped the styles unique to each composer." (Logadi, 2012: 64)

Caragiale used music both to emphasize significant nuances of humor or satire and to integrate the connections between the two arts. This is confirmed by a recollection of writer and pianist Cella Delavrancea, the daughter of playwright Barbu Ștefănescu:

"In music, he found relaxation. He once showed me a long list of proper names, written in his orderly handwriting, as if printed, and added: Certain sounds have a psychological meaning and help me build the character."

Even though G. Călinescu notes about him that he is "jovial as a fiddler, boisterous as a boatman, sarcastic, a trickster," Caragiale's intense attraction to music led him to believe that it stimulated his inspiration. Music had the power to create an environment conducive to focus, mental organization, and stimulating imagination. In a letter dated October 7, 1906, addressed to D.C. Dimitriu, a pianist and professor at the Bucharest Conservatory, he wrote:

Dear maestro, with great longing, I send you a heartfelt greeting from the depths of my soul... When will I see you walking through my door, to brighten my home and strengthen my power of thought?

In another letter addressed to H.H. Petrescu, he wrote: “I work and ask Dimitriu to play something for me. Usually Haydn’s sonatas or light Mozart melodies.”

Regarding Ion Luca Caragiale’s musical preferences:

The master of sharp words, of dense, concise, and clear dramaturgy, the author who brought comedy to its apex, preferred lyrical repertoire of utmost balance and clarity, loved concentrated lyricism, not ecstatic lyricism, Gluck and Verdi, not Wagner, with mystical subjects, jumbled allegories, endless dreams, endless dialogues, with not the slightest interest.

This preference for style is also noted by Tudor Vianu: “Caragiale represents a great classical and realistic endowment, a social, voluble nature,” which explains his fervent passion for Beethoven. Beethoven innovated techniques, structured, and added a significant mark to the history of classical music. Music is delineated by musical movements, and Caragiale’s favorite seems to be Viennese Classicism. In the 17th century, Classicism emerged in architecture and literature, while Viennese Classicism formed a century later, starting in 1750 (the year of Bach’s death) and ending approximately with Beethoven’s death in 1827.

Classicism is defined as the awakening of “the desire for rigor, clarity, and simplicity, disregarding insignificant details, ignoring the barriers of religions and the long-lasting burden of superstitions. The classical spirit longed for Renaissance humanism, for the rational interpretation of phenomena and the universe from the perspective of understanding the impossible, not through fanciful explanations.” Musical notions in Classicism are defined by perfection, strict form, sobriety, balance, cyclicity, and simplicity. Sonatas and symphonies adhere to strict compositional rules with specific parts: “All musical creation from this period follows the law of contrast (melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, timbral, etc.).”

This last observation is necessary for a musical inquiry, as Ion Luca Caragiale appears to have been drawn to contrasts, antitheses, negations, and oppositions in relation to the perfect rigor of writing. Evidence of the Romanian playwright's relationship with music can be found in his correspondence with Paul Zarifopol, Ioan D. Gherea, and others, as well as in the recollections of his contemporaries.

His passion for the art of sounds brought him into close relationships with Romanian musicians of the time, such as Eduard Wachmann, Cella Delavrancea, George Stephănescu, Eduard Caudella, and others, earning him the appreciation of some of them. Thus, in a letter dated February 24, 1901, found in the collection of the National Theater Museum, the founder of Romanian lyric theater, George

Stephănescu, addressed him as follows: “In addition to the gift of writing, you also have the very rare gift of understanding the other arts better than many specialists.” In what follows, we will refer to passages from his correspondence, various recollections, and articles from the publications of those times to present some aspects of the relationship between literature and music that shaped the existence of the author of the well-known *Moments* and *Sketches*.

2. Admiration for the Works of Composers from the Baroque Period

He was not only familiar with the work of the 'Titan,' as he called his favorite (Ludwig van Beethoven, n.n.), but also with Italian music predating Bach, including Vivaldi, Scarlatti, and many others."

Antonio Vivaldi (b. 1675, Venice – d. 1741, Vienna) was an Italian composer, conductor, violinist, and pedagogue. Since he was a priest, his concert activities were limited. Music history primarily recognizes him as the author of hundreds of concertos for solo instruments and orchestra, significantly contributing to the development of the Italian instrumental style within the Venetian musical school. One of his most famous works is the cycle of violin and orchestra concertos, *The Four Seasons*. He innovated by finding musical techniques to mimic the sounds of nature.

To better understand musical terminology, it is essential to distinguish between the terms *minor* and *Major*. The following explanation is based on the conscious or unconscious emotional effects a musical piece can evoke. The term *minor* refers to sobriety, melancholy, and introspection (e.g., the feeling of a dark, rainy autumn day); *Major* conveys happiness, serenity, and uplifting states. Thus: "Among the musical modes of Western Europe, Major and minor stand out as modes of sound communication that express the dominant emotional states of human feeling: joy–sorrow." (For instance, Beethoven's Symphony No. 1, being in C Major, offers the audience a sense of happiness and energy; in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, chromaticism, the interplay of tones and primary diatonic chords, as well as minor harmonies, are used to evoke tragedy, tension, drama, and ambiguity, enhanced by the extended tonality that amplifies the sense of unease.)

The terms help better interpret the theories and preferences of playwrights, as the audience is consciously subjected to interpretations of psychological states generated by the subconscious.

The correspondence between Ion Luca Caragiale and Paul Zarifopol began during Caragiale's time in Berlin. Their letters are cordial, spirited, and cover a variety of topics: from art to political issues, theater sketches, and even weather problems.

Thanks to his vast musical knowledge, I. L. Caragiale sometimes found

himself advising friends when they wanted to familiarize themselves with European musical literature. For instance, in a postcard dated February 8, 1908: "Zarifopol inquires with Caragiale about the authorship of a musical piece whose beginning, haunting him, he transcribes on a fragment of white paper attached to the postcard. Caragiale replies in his characteristic style: The musical piece that's bothering you (a gavotte, surely), I know it all, with all its three parts and all the details of its design. And in another postcard dated February 10, 1908: I am inclined to believe it is by Haendel [...] the little Saxon chick – Halle's church."

A *gavotte* is: "1. An old French dance with moderate movement. 2. A part of an instrumental suite modeled after this melody."

Georg Friedrich Händel (b. Halle, 1685 – d. London, 1759) was a German composer and organist who spent most of his life in the capital of the British Empire. He is considered one of the greatest creators in music history. His work includes masterpieces in instrumental and chamber music (trios, sonatas), concertos for various instruments and orchestra, and extensive vocal-symphonic works (cantatas, operas, oratorios, the most famous being *Messiah*).

Another reference to a Baroque composer appears in one of Cella Delavrancea's accounts: "He would ask me to play something by Scarlatti." And, sarcastically: "He nicknamed me 'Aghiuță.' 'First, play me something by your grandfather Scărlătescu.' He enjoyed Scarlatti's music, the witty Italian of the 17th century, and claimed I played it so well that I must certainly be of the same lineage. I would sit at the piano and play a piece. Caragiale would listen, standing, with a softened expression. 'Once more...' Then again: 'Once more...' He'd make me repeat the same pages five times in a row. Then he'd ceremoniously bow: Aghiuță, give me your hand so I can kiss it... and the left one too. That's the clever one."

The Italian composer Cella Delavrancea refers to is Domenico Scarlatti (b. Naples, 1685 – d. Madrid, 1757), whose importance in music history lies in the innovative elements he brought to musical forms in his 555 piano sonatas. The pianist's statement that "I must certainly be of the same lineage" refers to the common Latin origin of Romanians and Italians. However, the nickname "Scărlătescu" cannot refer to the Romanian musician Ion Scărlătescu (b. Bucharest, 1872 – d. Bucharest, 1922), the author of the well-known "Bagatelle for Violin and Piano," published in 1917 (after Caragiale's death), but rather a "Romanianization" of the Italian composer's name.

Among German Baroque composers, I. L. Caragiale also admired Johann Sebastian Bach.

Again, Cella Delavrancea recalls: "He would appear in the morning, around 11, in the living room, with a cigarette between his thin fingers. He would sit beside me at the piano, looking tenderly at the volume *The Well-Tempered Clavier* from which I regularly played preludes. When I finished, he would smile maliciously, nod

his head, and whisper: 'The father of music, what would we do without him?'" And in another recollection: "He would ask me to play something by Johann Sebastian Bach [...]." And: "He had a true reverence for Johann Sebastian Bach. He spoke of 'The Old Man' in a voice filled with emotion [...]. You should know that a musician's spiritual sustenance, his daily bread, are Bach's preludes and fugues."

Johann Sebastian Bach (b. 1685, Eisenach – d. 1750, Leipzig) is considered one of the most outstanding composers of the Western European Baroque period. He created cantatas, oratorios, instrumental music, and sacred and secular choral music. *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, BWV 846–869, is a collection of 24 preludes and fugues composed in all keys. While he did not innovate through different musical forms, he combined rigor and profound emotions to perfection. "He appreciated Gluck's opera [...] *Iphigenia*."

Christoph Willibald Gluck (b. 1714, Erasbach – d. 1787, Vienna) was a German composer who lived and worked in Paris and Vienna. He is known in music history as a reformer of opera, introducing innovations such as shortening excessively long performances and incorporating new musical techniques to make the performances more dynamic. He created two operas featuring Iphigenia as a character: *Iphigenia in Aulis*, premiered in Paris in 1774, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*, first performed in Paris in 1779. The librettos are based on an ancient Greek legend from the Trojan War era. Iphigenia is the daughter of King Agamemnon and Queen Clytemnestra. Because her father killed a sacred deer of the goddess Artemis, he was punished by being required to sacrifice his daughter. However, at the moment of the sacrifice, the goddess saved Iphigenia and made her a priestess in one of her temples. Gluck stood out for dramatizing the subject and prioritizing simplicity, abandoning musical exaggerations.

3. Respect for the Renowned Composers of the Viennese Classical Period

Referring to the notion of classicism from the Romanian Language Explanatory Dictionary, online version, we observe three definitions:

1. A set of traits inspired by Greco-Roman culture characterized by harmony and purity.
2. A current in European art and literature that emerged in the 17th century in France, characterized by the imitation of ancient Greco-Roman models, an interest in moral aspects, the pursuit of an ideal, disciplining imagination and sensitivity, and emphasizing order, balance, and clarity.
3. A period in national or universal cultural history whose creations represent a peak of artistic achievement for the respective era.

In music, Viennese Classicism, which we will refer to, is a style developed in the capital of the Habsburg Empire approximately between 1781 and 1827. The

representative composers were Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig van Beethoven. *"Their works, through their clarity, balance, richness of expression, logic, and depth of artistic thought, constitute an essential part of the golden repertoire of universal musical literature."*

While in Berlin, Ion Luca Caragiale sent Paul Zarifopol a letter dated February 6, 1908, in Leipzig:

"Please tell me, what will be performed Wednesday–Thursday at Gewandhaus? Perhaps something by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven? Even epigones, but ours, I'd rush to you; I'm quite stifled by hibernation, and honestly, I don't enjoy going to concerts here; I've been disappointed too often when I've tried."

Joseph Haydn's name also appears in the letter of October 9, 1910, sent to Paul Zarifopol regarding the purchase of a piano. In a postcard dated February 4, 1910, we find evidence of Caragiale's passion for music and his desire: "I'd greatly enjoy something on the piano, in a warm setting – something by Papa Joseph. He's been on my mind these past days. Honestly... there are many good things I'd have liked, like any mortal, in this world, but none more than clarity of expression and depth of meaning." The complexity of musical structures is highly valued by Caragiale, and composition and technique possibly help him aspire to catharsis.

Joseph Haydn (b. 1732, Rohrau – d. 1809, Vienna), "the creator of the Viennese Classical school, is one of the most prolific and influential composers of the late 18th century." He composed 104 symphonies, chamber music, instrumental concertos, masses, cantatas, oratorios (*The Creation, The Seasons*), among others.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's works, about whom J. W. Goethe said in a conversation with Johann Peter Eckermann that *"a phenomenon like Mozart will forever remain an inexplicable miracle,"* are also mentioned in Caragiale's correspondence and his friends' accounts. Referring to the spiritual relationship between the Romanian writer and the composer from Salzburg, Ioan D. Gherea wrote in *Memories*:

I vividly remember Caragiale returning from a concert where he heard, among other pieces, the overture to Don Giovanni. He spoke extensively about Mozart and then about music and musicians in general. More than 50 years have passed, yet fragments of what he said still echo in my ears: 'Nothing would have changed music's evolution as much as if Mozart had lived longer. These great ones – a Beethoven, a Mozart – are like enormous rocks in a river's course: they force the river to change direction. Had one of them been absent, all the music we have today would have been different. In the finale of Don Giovanni, you hear the extraordinary transformations brewing in Mozart's mind. Here resonates a drama unheard of before. A drama that passes through Beethoven to Wagner. But if Mozart had lived longer, who knows how this dramatic note would have developed?! And

then Wagner would have composed differently – I don't know how, but differently. (Gherea)

The final section of the opera *Don Giovanni* did not only impress the Romanian playwright. In the novella *The Sign* from the volume *The Enchantment*, his friend Cella Delavrancea provides the following description of this impactful artistic moment:

"The epilogue approached. The statue of the Commander ordered Don Giovanni to open the door. The bass vibrated mournfully in a minor tone, and the octaves carried the sinner's doom. When he appeared, pale, with hollow eyes and stiff in his silver armor [...]. As always, the finale of Don Giovanni stirred me, and tonight I was particularly sensitive."

Don Giovanni, K.V. 527, is a two-act opera composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, premiered in Prague on October 29, 1787. The subject is inspired by a Spanish legend about a libertine, which dramatist Tirso de Molina, one of the renowned creators of Spain's Golden Age, used for his play *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (*The Trickster of Seville and the Stone Guest*), performed in 1630. The libretto, conceived by Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart's friend, narrates the amorous adventures of Don Giovanni, a young and arrogant nobleman who abuses and outrages those around him until he meets something he cannot kill, defeat, deceive, or escape.

Don Giovanni is Mozart's only *dramma giocosa*, as his other works in this genre are *opera buffa* or *singspiel*. However, from the final excerpt in the letter, we observe that the evolution of 19th-century German musical drama was not to Caragiale's liking, as it did not follow the model set by Mozart's masterpiece.

In the letter dated July 15/28, 1910, Caragiale confessed: "Here by the Baltic, after a few days of heavy rain, we finally have splendid weather; also, after a week, I heard today the overture from The Magic Flute. They say miracles last only three days. For forty years I've heard this overture, and today it seemed more miraculous than ever." He admired the overture for its complexity and emotional spectrum, from terror and fury to serenity. Each time he discovered new nuances, (re)uncovering fragments that surprised him, thanks to music's inherent power and ambiguity. Musical influences, evolving tastes, and the dynamic nature of the opera allowed this continuous rediscovery. Music is self-reflection and the expression of the "soul's state," capable of evoking something new every time.

The author of the work *The Magic Flute*, K.V. 620, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (born 1756, Salzburg – died 1791, Vienna), was also a creator belonging to the Viennese Classical School of music. He composed chamber music, instrumental music, religious music, and more. *The Magic Flute* is his last opera, composed to a libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder, and its premiere took place in 1791 at the

Burgtheater in Vienna. The work is composed in two acts and tells the story of Prince Tamino, who is on a quest to find his love, Pamina. The overture to *The Magic Flute* is made up of two sections: Adagio and Allegro.

In the article "Die Zauberflöte by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Musical-Dramaturgical Architecture," Cosmin Grigore Marcovici states that, since this Mozartian masterpiece is masonic, both the librettist and the composer belonged to the same lodge. Ritual symbols of this secret society can be found throughout the work. One of these symbols is the number three, which appears in the music at the beginning of the overture, where pauses in the sound discourse separate three musical structures (chords), announcing the beginning of a solemn procession or the appearance of an important character. Also, the three trials that Prince Tamino faces in the opera are part of the initiation ritual in Freemasonry. Additionally, the number three appears in the temples, children, slaves, and chances for the character Papageno as he seeks his match, personified by Papagena.

"The god of music lovers is Beethoven, so be it."

It is believed that literature and music come from the gods: "He liked Beethoven for his optimism and heroism full of grandeur," and Ion Luca Caragiale, creating what seems to be a legend around him, paraphrases a biblical text, saying: "Woman, thou art my humble creature – says the Almighty – behold, I have mercy on thee and I send my Holy Spirit to thee, and thou shalt bear a child for thy honor and the glory of your people; for I have wanted through thee to show mankind once more my love for them and my boundless benevolent power... and thy son shall be called Ludwig van Beethoven!"

There are many references to the renowned composer in Ion Luca Caragiale's correspondence. The creator of the Viennese classical school (born 1770, Bonn – died 1827, Vienna) wrote nine symphonies, chamber music, one opera, religious music, and more.

The respect Ion Luca Caragiale had for the personality of the great composer is reflected in his characteristic way of describing and talking about him. Caragiale presented Beethoven not just as a mere composer, but as a titan of music, with undeniable influence and remarkable creative depth. Caragiale expresses affectionate reverence and acknowledgment of his supreme status in the world of music. In his descriptions, Caragiale highlights Beethoven's impeccable technique, emotional depth, and meticulousness in his symphonies, which underscores his profound admiration and respect for the German composer's genius. Through his portrayal of Beethoven, Caragiale not only expresses an understanding of Beethoven's value in the history of music but also a personal and emotional connection to his remarkable artistic creation.

In a letter dated June 25, 1906, to Paul Zarifopol, Caragiale writes: "I heard the overture to *Egmont* – well played. The nobleman remains unchanged." The work

referred to is the overture to the stage music Op. 84, composed in nine sections by Ludwig van Beethoven in 1809–1810 for Johann Wolfgang Goethe's drama of the same name.

This work tells the story of the nobleman Lamoral, Count of Egmont (1522–1568), and his fight against excessive economic exploitation and religious oppression by the Spanish Empire in the Low Countries in the 16th century. Although he is threatened with arrest, Egmont refuses to flee or abandon his ideals. Imprisoned and abandoned by those around him, despite the desperate efforts of his beloved Klärchen, he is condemned to death and executed.

The overture is made up of three sections: *Sostenuto, ma non troppo* – *Allegro*, *Allegro con brio*. The slow section is written in sarabande rhythm, a Spanish dance, which suggests the national affiliation of the main hero. The middle fast section depicts Egmont's struggle against tyranny, while the final one portrays the Flemish (Dutch) people rising to fight.

Professor Gheorghe Țițeica reported hearing Caragiale comment on the technique, depth, and meticulousness of Beethoven's symphonies, and those around him were amazed by the detailed aesthetic analysis he provided. This shows that Caragiale was not only a pamphleteer and critic of society but also a profound connoisseur of music and classical repertoire. His ability to appreciate and dissect Beethoven's works so meticulously highlights the depth of his artistic thinking and his passion for music. Caragiale successfully combined his literary talent with a deep understanding of musical art, demonstrating the diversity and depth of his intellectual interests.

As an elaborated pedantic discourse, Caragiale's art of creation might have roots in his vast musical culture. "All of Beethoven's symphonies, which were his idol, could have been conducted by him, indicating the entrances of each instrument, with their significance and intensity. He would whistle them from end to end, making comments about them, which were considered correct and valuable even by professional musicians." The respect for music strongly shapes and defines his identity.

From the letter dated December 17, 1909, we quote: "Under the Blüthner hall, after a concert, I have the honor to declare that Symphony IV by Babac is, whatever they say and whatever happens, an unparalleled wonder."

By using the term "Babac," the writer expresses deep admiration for Beethoven's compositional personality. The term "Babac" suggests affectionate and respectful reverence for Beethoven, highlighting his immense influence and unquestionable importance in the world of music. By using this term, Caragiale not only acknowledges Beethoven's genius and musical impact but also expresses a deep emotional connection with the composer's work and personality.

Symphony No. 4 was composed by Ludwig van Beethoven in 1806 and was first performed in March 1807 in Vienna. It is positioned between the "Eroica" and "Fate" symphonies. It consists of four contrasting parts (I Adagio – Allegro vivace, II Adagio, III Scherzo – trio: Allegro vivace, IV Allegro ma non troppo). A notable section is the introduction, full of tragedy, which contrasts with the exuberant sound of the first part of the work.

In the second part of the symphony – Adagio – the musical discourse, presented in the slow tempo, is similar to that in the "Eroica" Symphony (No. 3), though it lacks its emotional weight.

The beginning of the work is marked by tension, mystery, and controlled dynamism, leading towards introspection; the listener is prepared for the Allegro. The most impressive moment of the entire symphony is the introduction to the first part – Adagio. It's as if Beethoven, from the height of his achievements and conclusions, takes a comprehensive view of all the works from this period, the happiest of his life. [...] The slow introduction is more than just a simple prologue. It contains all the primary, organizing cells of the entire symphonic discourse. [...] The prologue is the synthesis of the symphony itself, containing the factual substance from which the subsequent dynamic and brilliant narrative of the symphony is derived, all firmly situated within the lyric expression.

The tension at the beginning is the example through which the composer succeeds in creating the atmosphere for the rest of the work, with a slow Adagio introduction. The transition from suspense to vivacity is marked. "However, through the orchestral discourse, echoes of the previous symphony or indirect responses to its themes are easily recognizable here. Yet, the serenity of the expression cannot be disturbed." The lyricism here is expressed through the tension, which outlines an intimate atmosphere, while the fluidity of the harmony complements the melodic line to convey the freedom and organic character of the work. The lyricism of the beginning comes from the musical phrasing, the delicacy of the harmony, and the orchestral support.

What is almost completely absent in Symphony No. 4 is the dramatic conflict: after the introduction, which seems to say "once upon a time...", and after the unexpected clarity (from the end of the introduction, note), which in fact resolves nothing because there is nothing to resolve, the story itself follows, situated in the world of the ideal, in the world of the fairy tale. Through the internal poise of structural balance, the musical action in the first part of the symphony appears in varied tones of the epic, impregnated with lively sonic events and illuminated by the desire for absolute beauty and goodness. For the moment, Beethoven renounces the depiction of human passion, placing the music in more abstract spheres, abandoning his volcanic dramatization techniques of sound imagery, and also reducing the

dimensions of the symphony's components. In sculptural musical plasticity and finesse, a classical ideal is embodied.

The transition between *Adagio* and *Allegro* can be considered epic because the change from mystery to drama is as abrupt as it is strongly contrasting. This moment marks a sense of liberation and spiritual satisfaction. The dynamics of the second part (*Allegro vivace*) are an expression of an explosion of energy. The orchestra is engaged in passages that throughout the composition represent the power of strong and prominent harmony. The moment when the music returns to the beginning is illustrated through the sensation of triumph and glory.

In the third part – *Allegro vivace* – "brilliant flashes of genius streak across this serene music, full of vitality, cantability, and lyrical exuberance. Fine humor spices the music, and the colloquy of the instruments ensures a relentless energy for the sonic unfolding. There is no moment of rest in this dynamic music, seemingly made from a giant block. From the substance conveyed, the affiliations from the introduction of the first movement are so evident that they assert themselves naturally."

In the fourth part – *Allegro, ma non troppo* – the sonorous discourse, full of optimism, strongly reaffirms the joy of life. This vibrant and life-filled musical expression not only enriches the auditory experience but also emphasizes the essence and positive meaning of human existence. Through uplifting tones and encouraging rhythms, the sonorous discourse conveys a powerful message of encouragement, inspiration, and optimism. In a profoundly symbolic manner, it reminds listeners of the beauty and fundamental values of life, invoking a reaffirmation of the joy of living and hope for the future.

A frantic game is set here, the movement taking on the aspect of a perpetual motion. Indeed, the kinetic energy of the finale is inexhaustible, with the composer dynamically driving the action. The Beethovenian vigor is evident everywhere. The tenderness and strength, the contrast between the fast movement in the accompaniment and the nobility of some cantabile melodic lines, define the character of this serene and jovial music. In the final section of the part, the instruments seem to storm the very heavens. Twice, always from a whisper, the discourse grows suddenly. After a final general pause, the melody is nostalgic. But after the roar of the instruments in the low register of the orchestra, shouts of joy close the work.

From a confession by Panait Cerna about a dialogue with the Romanian playwright, in which there is a reference to another Beethovenian masterpiece, we learn: "After an evening of discussions in which Caragiale had argued his aesthetic thesis, we met at a concert at Gewandhaus, where we had tickets next to each other. Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* was being performed. At the solemn, grandiose

moment when the choir begins, we looked at each other. Both of us had tears in our eyes. Caragiale asked me ironically, 'How, Cerna, are you crying?' But surely he also realized that my tears matched my aesthetic ideas, while his did not fit at all with the aesthetic theories he had presented that evening." For the playwright, "the aesthetic attitude should be 'contemplative,'" a state where the observer is detached and is able to reflect on the relationship between art and beauty, being present in the moment, and the aesthetic experience is, in fact, this. There is a need for the connection between the intellectual and the object under aesthetic analysis to search for a meaning appropriate to the self. Detachment and the meditative state are the key points that define the intrinsic experience of contemplation.

Symphony No. 9, Op. 125, whose premiere took place in 1827 in Vienna, is also known as the Ode to Joy and is another renowned Beethovenian masterpiece. Composed of the verses of the poet Friedrich Schiller, the grand finale for choir and orchestra became the source of inspiration for the official anthem of the European Union.

The first part of Symphony No. 9 – Allegro, ma non troppo – is considered by musicologists to be a symbol of the embodiment of perfection. The music, whose development encompasses immeasurable sonic surfaces, is enveloped by a spell, by an impenetrable mystery at the beginning, its meanings unfolding gradually, slowly, with difficulty. The developments here can only be compared to the act of doing good: somewhere, far away, in a diffused light, in an amorphous nebula, scattered elements are gathered, caught in a process of polarization around an undefined, still neutral axis, deceptive. Over the murmur of the second violins and cellos, scattered elements accumulate in a sonic space. [...] Later, through the acceleration of events, where any phenomenon of sonic entropy is excluded, with an increase in intensity, the exposure of a qualitatively renewed result becomes imminent. Thus, with immense force, the main substance of the thematic material is outlined, which will govern the first part of the symphony.

A characteristic of this first part of the symphony is its perpetual becoming. Nothing is repeated identically; every assertion leads to the affirmation of something new, of a qualitatively superior nature. "Determination and hesitation, opposites of different orders succeed each other immediately, giving the musical discourse a fresco-like character." At the beginning of the middle section of this first part (the development, note), within a solemn march, the discourse intoned by the orchestra instruments emanates a majestic force, creating a sonic image where strong accents seem to be tongues of fire. "However, unnoticed, the expression gains in lyricism, it becomes more interiorized, without altering the sober and festive tone." But in the dynamized recurrence of the first section (in the reprise, note), the conflictual stance returns to the sonorous discourse, exposing an implacable force, an unconquerable will. In the conclusion of this first part, the composer reintroduces the first musical

idea, "asserted after an argument driven by an iron will, with the regularity of natural phenomena." Exuberance controlled dominates; *ma non troppo* ensures the coherence of the structure and ends a contract between orchestra and choir (an innovative element Beethoven will introduce in the symphony's finale).

In the second part – *Molto vivace* – the musical discourse contrasts sharply with the previous one (the grave one). "Brutal forces, unleashed forces, as well as long colloquies between barely heard voices and fiery tremors that will inevitably erupt, under these auspices the second part begins." With a lively, fast tempo, joyful, the structure of the symphony is once again outlined.

There is not a single moment of respite in this pursuit. Beethoven breaks all conventions, changes, and surpasses all the patterns he set in his earlier works in this genre. This is not a musical joke but a fantastic march, prolonged, an immense symphonic movement. Everything is encompassed by processes in which the generative substance appears in the most different guises, receiving the most diverse expressions, from opposites to opposites. At every turn, there are oppositions, the "stubbornness" of the instruments is one by one defeated by an immense force, the punishing rhythm silencing everything in its path. In this sonic deluge, small oases of silence represent stages for a logically graduated evolution: the entire action will not find its resolution and culmination except in its opposite, in the middle section called the trio, which prefigures the issues in the final part of the symphony. The joy here, pure and moving, is so powerful that the inevitable recurrence of the first section, with all its terrifying cataclysmic entourage, cannot defeat it. Fury, no matter how great, is defeated: even at the end of the part, in moments when a dramatic outcome is expected, the orchestra intones the triumph of joy, of cheerfulness even, of unshakable good, won after turmoil and battles. Now the musical discourse moves to other coordinates [...] But what exactly made Beethoven not include human voices in the third part that follows remains uncertain. Richard Wagner established as early as 1848 parallels between Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Goethe's *Faust*. Moreover, perhaps the myth of Prometheus – which had preoccupied Beethoven so many times (he also composed an overture titled *Prometheus*, note) – may have found here a new incarnation, the last and highest one, because the song addressed to humanity glorifies universal joy. The first part is marked by a titanic struggle, while in the second part, the joyful ideal is symbolically realized.

4. Conclusion

After the general presentations, the basic concepts used in music were introduced to enhance the elements that are not explained by Caragiale. The fact that he knows the domain so well (he feels the modulations, the strong points, understands the contrast in music and is attracted to it) proves the tribute he pays to

music, and especially to the arts. The musical concepts used in the musical analysis were explained precisely to highlight the knowledge Caragiale possessed. The comparative analysis of musical concepts and literary ideas in Caragiale's works showed how musical structures, rhythms, and themes are reflected in his narrative style and techniques. This interdisciplinary approach provided a new understanding of the complexity and depth of his work.

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