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EUROPE'S ANTHEM AND ITS MEANING

The article presents research on the anthem of the Europe. The author investigates its origins, argues about other possible variants for the Europe's anthem, and provides critical analysis of the meaning, functions and prospects of the Ode to Joy.

Keywords: *anthem, Europe, Ode to Joy, Romanticism, Bethoven.*

Problem Statement. Since the first structure of the Union's community emerged, every next step of its development cause arguments and numerous controversies. Nonetheless, before *Ode to Joy* was announced as the Europe's anthem, discussion concerning that concept was rather peaceful. Perhaps it was the effect of the fact that the discussion was made without wider participation of the most interested – the Europe's nations. It took long to compose the Europe's symbols, starting from the flag, through announcing the Europe's Day, ending with the anthem. Questions arise what motives preceded this decision and what are the consequences?

What values were taken into account by announcing *the Ode* as the Europe's anthem, important for nations of our continent? What were the decision-makers counting for? And why did they succeed, because they really succeeded, as *the Ode* has already firmed place in European political culture.

Previous research. The problem of the Europe's anthem was previously partially described by such scientists as C. Clark, F. Boedeltje, G. Lewis, I. Berlin, Einstein A. and others. Nevertheless this issue was not enough highlighted and demands further research.

The aim of the paper is to investigate origins of the Europe's anthem, to provide arguments about other possible its variants, and to provide critical analysis of the meaning, functions and prospects of the Ode to Joy.

Main body. The Ode was a child of cultural epoch distant in its features from the contemporary one. It was effect of pre-Romanticism, simultaneously stimulating romantic creation, with preference of ideals and values specific for the epoch. Does present-day in the cultural sphere live up to the romantic epoch? Creation of romantic artists not only contributed to new values in cultural life, but also was opposition to cold culture of the Enlightenment Age. In today's world the Enlightenment's mechanism is alive. Progress and development would not be possible without that. But this situation forces to make alternative choice and abandon one or the other tradition.

Romantics were opened to values of former cultures, i.e. antique, but also to the beauty of the medieval culture which was standing point for the Enlightenment's ideas. Does postmodernism with its continuous negation of values of the previous humanistic experience and the entire thought and art inherits romantic method or is it Romanticism's caricature? And if – as I think – it is so,

this postmodernist separation from creative achievements of predecessors makes postmodernists unable to relate to *the Ode* in general, and to *Ode* as anthem of all Europeans and for all Europeans.

Formally Romanticism is described as ideological and cultural trend, in the time 1789–1848, i.e. from the French Revolution to the Spring of Nations. Polish Romanticism is different in the time of later beginning, i.e. in 1822 (Adam Mickiewicz's *Ballads and Romances*) and later end – the January Uprising 1863–1864. S. Jarociński writes – and he is not the only one – that ... *Romanticism, in selected spheres of cultural actions of nations lasts to present-day* [4, s. 6]. It is much harder to determine the essence of Romanticism than the essence of the Enlightenment. S. Jarociński, referring to W. Tatarkiewicz, writes that the phenomenon of Romanticism is not easy to define precisely, because it is too ... *diversified, elusive, indefinite* [4, s. 5]. Next, in practice, we may assume that in social scale it is artistic and intellectual trend, dominating in the 19th century, and in the individual scale it is expressed in idealistic attitude to life, which is contrary to realistic attitude promoted by pragmatics [4, s. 5]. Political background of Romanticism is diversified and has different dimensions – revolutionary, integration, independence. The last one was specific for Polish Romanticism, in which Messianic and soteriological aspect were present in vision of regenerated Poland and its role in world because Poland was to be the ... *Christ of nations* Andrzej Walicki perceives ... Mickiewicz's Messianism as one of many romantic attempts to point Poland's way to national and religious regeneration, and which could be different from secularization and traditional Catholicism with traditional Polishness [7, s. 9].

Romantic artists, contrary to the Enlightenment ones, turned to new areas of interest and points of reference – culture of the East, folk culture, tradition. They rediscovered artistic values of medieval ages and the irrational – just like radical negation of rationalism – myth, fairytale and religion in Messianic interpretation. It was definitely new horizon of creative inspiration. Abandoning the primacy of reason, science and knowledge resulted in primacy of emotion with its wide range, impulsive and intuitional – love, hate, suffer, joy, sacrifice, usually those expression that go beyond shallowness of stabilized every day.

Seeking the closeness between content of culture and ideas of the Romanticism Age and the time when L. Beethoven's works were made a symbol of united Europe, it is necessary to turn to values recognized by the European predecessors of present-day as the most important ones. Those values were opposed to that priced in the 18th century. Among those are values important for individual and those important for society – values embedded in slogans of revolution of 1789 (freedom, equality, brotherhood) and values directly connected with artistic work and creator – beauty, intuition, spontaneity, honesty, creative freedom, tolerance.

The main assumption of Romanticism was synthesis of arts. Implementation of this was, amongst others, *Ode to Joy*, work that in the beginning was a poem,

but shortly after its announcement became inspiration for L. Beethoven to find musical form of expression ideas of *the Ode*.

Usually when talking about the hierarchy of arts, music is situated at the top. With reference to A.W. Schlegel, Goethe, Novalis and other authorities of that time, Alfred Einstein wrote that *Like borders between art and religion are obliterated, between conscious thought and poetic imagination, the same is with lines dividing individual arts. [...] music always is the end and final effect. [...] all of them [the authorities mentioned above] point to supremacy of instrumental music because it cannot transfer any real terms, because of its indeterminacy, but music is the art of sub-consciousness. In the end the sense of music stays in junction with pantheism* [2, s. 471].

After those general remarks we must assume that Beethoven's work, based on the philosophical *Ode to Joy* written by F. Schiller contains group of values that are objective grounds for choosing this work as possible to be accepted by everyone in Europe as standing point.

The importance of Beethoven in count of great composers of all time is unquestionable. How great composer he was, also in opinion of other artists almost as great as he, proves opinion of R. Wagner. On the occasion of the centennial anniversary of Beethoven's birth Wagner published study where he... incorporated Beethoven into count of saints, because contrary to Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven "released" music: ... *he was himself unable to be servant of luxury, but he also felt the necessity to release his own music from every sign of submission to frivolous taste* [2, s. 118].

In the 20th century Isaiah Berlin described Beethoven in a way that needs to be thoroughly cited. *The person – he said during his lectures – whose picture is dominating in the 19th century is character of torn and messy Beethoven, sitting on his attic. Beethoven is a man who makes real what flows from inside. He is poor, crude, he is gruff. His manners are awful, he does not know much and he is perhaps character not very interesting, if inspiration is not taken into account that pushes him forward. But Beethoven did not sell himself. He is sitting on his attic and works. He works in harmony with world, that burns inside him, and this is all what human being should do: this makes human a hero. [...] he was gifted with the most heroic, resulting from sacrifice, traits that human can be* [1, s. 37].

In Beethoven's biographies, authors underline, that when he was a young man, just 20-years-old, he was so fascinated with Schiller's poem, that he wanted to compose music to *the Ode*. But because of other compositions of symphonies, he temporarily resigned. However simultaneously in his other works motives specific for the 9th symphony were present.

Finally, *the Ode* – prelude to the 9th symphony, was recognized as anthem by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe at 8th July 1971 and Herbert Karajan was asked to elaborate on instrumental version for symphonic orchestra, wind-instruments and piano. But Schiller's text was abandoned as too idealistic, saying about people who become brothers. Texts of *the Ode to Joy* – in views of Europe's authorities – concerns general human values, not the European ones, moreover there could be difficulties in playing the anthem in so many national

languages. Few years later, in 1985, during meeting of Presidents and Prime Ministers of many countries a decision was made to recognize the anthem of the Council of Europe as official anthem of the European Union.

Currently the function of *the Ode* is changing by sociological reasons, because the Union's societies' expectations are changing but not for the anthem itself or the EU but for the history that is to happen and which brings more anxiety than hope. Content of the poem must remind of general values embedded in Schiller's work. Those values should still be respected not only in rhetoric, but also in actions, practice.

During my correspondence via Internet with Wiktor Iwanowicz Garadza, member of the Russian Educational Academy in Moscow and Professor of the Lomonosow University in Moscow, I received a letter, where he commented on the idea of a paper discussing the meaning of the *Ode to Joy* as the European anthem. Among other he wrote:

Choosing the Ode to Joy as the anthem is a good reason for turning back to the 1950's, to post-war period and compare hopes of that time with present-day. I think that shortly after the war people understood that Europe has gone through not only economic but also political catastrophe. But anxiety arose that moral basis of the European civilization has been destroyed. People wanted peace and normal life but new post-war conflict broke out and the "cold war" started. People expected optimistic look for the future, there was hope for unity and overcoming former hostility. The European organization for economic co-operation needed cultural signposts. Perhaps choice the Ode, work of two Germans, was a symbol of the fact, that uniting Europe should leave behind hostility and that Europe has common base – cultural heritage as a way of changes? And music was always a key factor in changing the way of viewing the world. General cultural (and philosophical) context of post-war Europe is interesting, incorporating the meaning and place of music. I write this because the idea of the paper should be put into practice and important and interesting problems should be discussed. [text of that letter in author's own archive – MJW] Coming back to present functions of *the Ode* as an anthem in systemically globalized world it seems that the content (it is being brought to many presentations of the anthem) creates illusion of reaching values that are less and less real to reach in capitalistic world. This world seems to achieve new phase dominated not by progress but rather degeneration, that usually reveals in swirl in value system recognized by societies, and politicians as well.

Is the 9th symphony too old? And does public life agree with values promoted by Romanticism? The symphony is rather getting younger, partly owing to wide popularization of it as a symbol of Europe. But does it suit to culture of contemporary societies, where middle-class is dominating? Societies are very differentiated. The Western ones, ... *based on rational bounds and cold calculation* and those Eastern ones, communities based on ... *emotional and irrational bounds*. Paweł Kubicki referring to luminaries of sociology divides societies into opened and closed, that could be described as ... *lacking rational political debate, where state is strongly interventional, were thinking in*

categories of authority dogmas, xenophobia, lack of autotelic relations is dominating, and especially lack of sound competition of place in social structure. He argues that history shaped Polish society ... *rather as closed model* [5, s. 7–8]. Rationalism and cold calculation are features of the Enlightenment culture. In Polish journalism there are many voices in favour of Polish society as rational and of enlightenment community. Many regret that ... *some ideas were eliminated from culture, ideas which were based on working civil society that in Poland was called positivist, Enlightenment, sometimes liberal conservatism* [6].

Romantic origin of *the Ode* is not close to that ideal. It seems to be closer to those who prefer emotional basis for social bounds, as well as religion, national idea and local xenophobia. It is not far away from values preferred by many romantics.

As an anthem *the Ode* was recognized in the time when in European community were Western states, with societies oriented at rational and Enlightenment ideas. Why then *the Ode* was perceived in those societies as factual or even warm? Perhaps because the idea of building the Great European Community, motivated rationally, is in fact dreamy, romantic, visionary. Including *the Ode* to this vision, as some kind of logo of the project, has logic grounds. Romanticism ended formally after the Spring of Nations but in reality it lasts. Outstanding philosopher and cultural anthropologist, Isaiah Berlin, was saying during his lectures, that ... *Romanticism is interesting not only as historical phenomenon. Many contemporary phenomena – nationalism, existentialism, admiring great people, admiring non-personal institutions, democracy, totalitarianism – are influenced by Romanticism. Romanticism infiltrate them all* [1, s. 12].

The Ode lost its confrontational function, when the utopia of building communist society collapsed. Degradation of structures of so called Eastern *sodružestwo* does not mean wiping from human memory what many members of Eastern Europe's societies claimed true, i.e. existential values, and erasing animosity or even hostility for those charged with fault for suffered harm. European symbols, if it really assumes the openness to the whole continental Europe, cannot preserve things that should be eliminated from nations' life. *The Ode* in its double role has a chance to some, small perhaps degree, break prejudices in new system of international relations through adaptation of different social groups into artistic culture.

The *Ode* is work of two Germans, but Polish trauma to Germans, as a result of history, strengthened so much during the World War II and Hitler's occupation are not transferred to the German culture. Appreciation for *the Ode's* creators does not mean transferring appreciation to all Germans, but at least it gives rise to recognition of the German culture.

What scale of influence of the *Ode to Joy* on people's behavior and their way of thinking is to be foreseen? According to view of K. Guzalska concerning formative issues of art, the influence would probably be small. Guzalska states that

In modern world art is no longer a place where reconciliation of human being with social reality is possible, as well as abolition of aporia of the epoch and funding freedom in state. The modern art does not release humans from inevitable conflicts with ethical reality and does not fund harmonic co-existence of citizens with the state [3].

Tragedy of growing social stratification, defiant pride of the richest, anger of the marginalized, create great dissonance to ideals of the *Ode to Joy*. Difference in income growing every year, and following difference in life quality, makes major gaps in social structures. Tabloids, television, popularize sophisticated forms of strange luxury in everyday living of many richest, and become ground of social rebel. Because of that many may find inspiration in Schiller's works but not in *the Ode*, rather in the earlier *The Robbers*...

Conclusions. Music provides esthetical experience, but music reflecting reality, as in Beethoven's works, shapes moral attitudes and release different behavior. Music of the Romanticism epoch is still present, but overwhelmed by new styles, means of expression, trends which lose tradition of Romanticism or re-shape it into parody of old-time romantic values e.g. in Satanic music. The European Union recognized the *Ode to Joy* as anthem. Will European leaders step further and prepare effective promotion of art, specially music, which can bring into European culture climate close to that left by music composed by romantic creators? Some actions are taken but there is some anxiety that even the highest engagement in it, in collision with crisis of social co-existence may result in depreciation of high values, specific for the music and make it powerless.

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Анотація

Янушевська-Варіх Марія. Гімн Європи та його значення.

У статті проводиться дослідження про гімн Європи. Автор розглядає історію виникнення гімну, його інші можливі варіанти та наводить критичний аналіз значення, функцій та перспектив існування Оди до Радості.

Ключові слова: гімн, Європа, Ода до Радості, романтизм, Бетховен.