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ANTHEM

One official EU symbol is musical: the European anthem, based on the ‘Ode to Joy’ theme from the final movement of Ludwig van Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. This has a parallel history to that of the flag, stretching even longer back in time but with a rather different position and way of being used. The idea is that people need some joint activity when they are gathered to celebrate European unity. Silently waving flags is then not enough: this is a classical case where music and singing tends to play a key role, just like it has for so many nation states, not to forget ritual chanting, sing-along, karaoke, ecstatic moments in pop concerts and other examples of how joint singing is used to reinforce feelings of belonging and community, as individuals gathered in a space actively express some kind of shared identity in sounds and lyrics.

What’s in an anthem?

A hymn is a song of praise, the term deriving from the Greek *hymnos*: a song or ode praising gods or heroes, possibly related to *hymenaios*, wedding song, derived from ‘Hymen’, the Greek god of marriage. It has from the Middle Ages acquired a sacral accent, mostly denoting some kind of religious song or praise. The term ‘anthem’ derives from Greek *antiphona* (against + voice), a song performed in a responsorial fashion. In the late fourteenth century, the term came to apply to any sacred composition or a song of praise, and became used for the British national song ‘God Save the Queen/King’. This was the first national hymn, with unknown authorship and a complicated genealogy, was published in 1744 and has been in public use since 1745. From there the term came to be applied to all subsequent national hymns, without any remaining link to its original responsive meaning: ‘a rousing or uplifting song identified with a particular group or cause.’³³⁰

An anthem as well as a hymn is a song of praise made for communal singing. It should preferably be reasonably easy to remember and to sing, making it tempting or even irresistible to join in singing, and this activity of participation is intended to spill over into some level of identification with what the anthem stands for. In this way, anthems are constructed to emotionally boost collective identification, through the medium of voice and sound. Peter J. Martin sees the unprecedented demand of popular music today in the light of its capacity of forming communities: ‘The close-knit communities of Romantic mythology have given way to the quest for a sense of belonging’, where individuals ‘seek to identify themselves with symbolic entities’. Here ‘popular music becomes a useful commodity’, offering ‘a sense of who you are and where you belong’.³³¹ Popular songs help construct a wide range of different collective identifications, while anthems are made for underpinning those that have a more official character, being supported by formalised institutions, such as nation states.

Malcolm Boyd has analysed a great number of national anthems and divided them into five main categories, of which the two first are most common: (a) *hymns* with a solemn pace and melody (for instance the British ‘God Save the Queen’ or the European anthem); (b) *marches* (such as the French ‘La Marseillaise’); (c) *operatic tunes* (exemplified by El Salvador and some other Latin American countries); (d) *folk tunes* (mainly used in Asia, for instance by Japan and Sri Lanka); and (e) *fanfares* without text (found in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and other oil states in the Middle East).³³² Just like the idea of a nation was established in Europe, this is also true for the sound of national anthems. Except for the few, mainly Asian, examples of folk anthem category (d) that build upon a Herderian notion of ‘*specific* musical nationalism’, expressing a particular ethnicity, Martin Daughtry has argued that most national anthems tend towards a ‘*generic*’ musical nationalism, as they by musical means signal that they are precisely that by adhering to the classical European musical conventions that have established musical nationalism as a kind of specific supranational genre, where they are perceived as sounding familiarly ‘anthemic’, rather than specific, to a particular nation.³³³

As a mode of communication, music has several peculiarities advantageous for communal celebration.³³⁴ First of all, it is based on sounds that involve the ear and the human voice, but organises these sounds differently than in speech that is based on a verbal logic of relatively late origins in the history of mankind. What is seen of a person is primarily the outside surface, while what is heard tends to derive from the interior of that person’s body, in particular the sonic organs in and around the throat. The combination of physiological constitution and genetic origin lends to music an extraordinary emotional reach and subjective involvement that have led many to understand it as a unique and privileged mode of expression, reaching beyond or underneath the more conscious modes of visual and verbal communication. Swearing an oath, proposing to a beloved, crying or laughing—such strong subjective expressions

normally need to be made orally in order to fully convince of their authenticity and sincerity, and music is a way of organising such expressions in a more direct way than in the linguistic system built on words. Susanne K. Langer thus characterised music as a presentational symbolism, which is experienced in a holistic way, in contrast to the discursive one of verbal language, where clearly distinct elements are added in a sequence.³³⁵ Psychoanalytical theorists have similarly linked music to pre-verbal psychic strata, as hearing is developed earlier in the infant than seeing, and thus has mental roots that go back to before language acquisition, to more archaic strata that are closely linked to deep-seated bodily and pre-rational emotions. Such specificities have led some semioticians and cultural theorists to argue that music is a form of communication without meaning.³³⁶

This whole line of thought has been brought under critical scrutiny by theorists like Jacques Derrida, who questions the linear developmental logic and essentialist romanticisation behind the idea that sound and voice are more primordial than sight and vision.³³⁷ I see no reason to believe that musical sounds are any less meaningful than words—only the precise signifying procedures differ.³³⁸ The particular kind of bodily activity involved in the use of voice and ear in making or listening to music do not prevent them from communicating meanings, but may at least partially explain why music is so often experienced as a vague and emotional mode of expression. Whether art music or popular music, with or without words, foregrounded or for instance in film soundtracks—music certainly is able to invoke meanings that are determined by interpretive communities of listeners and music makers, in geographically and socially situated communities that evolve historically, but it never escapes the cumulated networks of signification that constitute the traditions of musical genres. Parallel to verbal and visual modes of communication, pieces of music mean something to people in shifting contexts, and these meanings are polysemic and negotiable, inserted in the never-ending stream of conflicts of interpretation that is extended by every new usage and discourse.

While eyes may deliberately be directed and closed, this is not as easily done with ears. Music therefore has an almost intrusive material force on human bodies, and can be perceived even when people strive to focus on something else. Music is hard to block out but at the same time often out of focus, serving as a background to other activities. These qualities also make it difficult to focus on discursively, and most people find it much harder to find words to clearly describe music than images.

Music is itself a multimodal form of expression, as a full musical experience does not only emanate from abstracted sounds but also involves sight and other human senses. Music is further easily combined with other modes, not least verbal and visual ones. Music also often exists in combination with lyrics in song and with gestural or cinematic visuality in opera or film. Besides such multimodal genres and art forms, many people enjoy reading, writing or working with something silent while simultaneously listening to music in the background that boosts their energy or

soothes their nerves. They may of course also have a nice picture on the wall, but lifting eyes to really look at it demands a break from desk work that is not in the same way required, at least on a subliminal level, to enjoy music while working.

These traits also combine to make music particularly suitable for collective interaction, to a higher extent than most other modes of communication, except possibly for dance (with which it is as a rule fused, as silent dancing is a rarity). Music lends itself to be made collectively not only *for* but also *by* groups, in heterophonic or polyphonic modes of communal expression, while for instance images or words tend to demand exclusive momentary concentration and thus function in a more monologic or dialogic way.

Visual symbols are typically integrated in lots of settings, both solemn and vernacular. Flags can be sighted all year round, and logos may appear on car number plates as well as on printed and electronic documents, for instance. Anthems are drastically different. Few people hum them several times a day: instead they are brought forward on festive occasions. They are less 'banal' or 'unwaved' in Michael Billig's sense. Other kinds of music may well be heard in the background, as soundtracks to everyday life, but anthems have too strong a symbolic force to lend themselves to such banalisation. Being actively performed at distinct ceremonial events, they are often the focus of attention, performing a kind of sacralising function of consolidating a kind of communion. Benedict Anderson has talked of 'a special kind of contemporaneous community' suggested by poetry and songs, for instance national anthems as sung on national holidays, when they give rise to 'an experience of simultaneity', an image of 'unisonance' and a 'physical realization of the imagined community', as 'people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody', connected by nothing but 'imagined sound'.³³⁹ Among the main symbols discussed so far, one may argue that the flag is the most integrated and vernacular one, followed by the motto, then the anthem, with the day at the other extreme, as the whole point with Europe Day is to be a unique annual event supposed to be consciously celebrated, even though it may in this respect largely be seen as a failure so far. While a motto can be hinted at often in political discourses, and a logo may be integrated in a large number of settings, an anthem is more apt to be used on special occasions, when there is cause for a common celebration of shared matters, for instance on national holidays. In Klaus Bruhn Jensen's terms, anthems belong to ritualised 'time-out culture', while flags can also take part in the 'time-in culture' that is an integrated part of ordinary everyday life.³⁴⁰

Music thus has a strong potential for both collectively constituted and emotionally charged expression. Being a piece of music, the European anthem has the characteristic capacities for emotionally involving and bodily anchored community building, but these capacities are typically confined to ceremonial events rather than integrated in everyday life.

Introducing the European anthem

The European anthem is supposed to be that of Europe in a wider sense, including non-EU nations as well, and was first officially adopted by the Council of Europe in 1972. Its melody is the core theme of the fourth (final) movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, composed in 1823. It was set to Friedrich von Schiller's 'Ode to Joy', expressing an idealistic vision of the human race united in brotherhood: 'Alle Menschen werden Brüder'. The poem was written in 1785 but published in slightly revised form in 1803, which Beethoven compressed and modified to suit his purposes (Figure 7.1). However, though the general melodic line and the name 'Ode to Joy' remain, the official hymn differs from its original source by being compressed to two minutes, selecting and reshuffling Beethoven's melodic elements, and also cancels the lyrics. (The reasons and signifying effects of this will be discussed below.) 'Without words, in the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity for which Europe stands', says the EU website, where it can also be listened to as an audio file: 'It is not intended to replace the national anthems of the Member States but rather to celebrate the values they all share and their unity in diversity'.³⁴¹

Aside from the name 'Europe' and the myth of Europa, and not counting various ancient star circles that might have inspired the flag emblem, the anthem has the oldest pre-history, as its music goes back at least to 1823 (and the lyrics to 1785), and highly different actors have almost ever since used it to celebrate common European endeavours. In the post-World War II unification process, many activists called for a unifying anthem to supplement the common flag. Many other songs were proposed through the years, or newly composed by various enthusiasts, but Beethoven's hymn came to be repeatedly used in this function, and seemed to have a resonance with at least how the European elites wished to define themselves.

Several pleas and proposals for European songs, often in several languages, were proposed by various citizens to the Council of Europe in the aftermath of the war.³⁴² Early examples from the autumn of 1949 were 'Chant de la Paix' by Mrs Jehanne-Louis Gaudet, and 'Hymne eines geeinten Europas/Hymne à une Europe unifiée' by Carl Kahlfuss. In 1955, the Paneuropean Union's President Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who in 1950 had proposed the Council of Europe to use the movement's sun-cross flag and also had recently pledged for a Europe Day, proposed 'the hymn from Beethoven's 9th Symphony'. This music had already from 1929 been used by that same movement.³⁴³ It continued to be sporadically used at European events, for instance at the tenth anniversary of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, 20 April 1959. An increasing number of European events created a need for joint ceremonial singing. In the following years, some favoured the last movement of Georg Friedrich Händel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749), while the Belgian section of the Council

Lyrics for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

German original

O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!
Sondern laßt uns angenehmere anstimmen,
und freudenvollere.
Freude! (men's chorus: Freude!)
Freude! (chorus again: Freude!)
 Freude, schöner Götterfunken
 Tochter aus Elysium,
 Wir betreten feuertrunken,
 Himmliche, dein Heiligtum!
 Deine Zauber binden wieder
Was die Mode streng geteilt;
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,
 Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.
 Wem der große Wurf gelungen,
 Eines Freundes Freund zu sein;
 Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,
 Mische seinen Jubel ein!
 Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele
 Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!
 Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle
 Weinend sich aus diesem Bund!
 Freude trinken alle Wesen
 An den Brüsten der Natur;
 Alle Guten, alle Bösen
 Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.
 Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,
 Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod;
 Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,
 Und der Cherub steht vor Gott.
Vor Gott!
 Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen
 Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan,
 Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,
 Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.
 Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
 Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
 Brüder, über'm Sternenzelt
 Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.
 Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?
 Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?
 Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!
 Über Sternen muss er wohnen.
Finale repeats the words:
 Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
 Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
 Brüder, über'm Sternenzelt
 Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.
 Seid umschlungen,
 Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
 Freude, schöner Götterfunken
 Tochter aus Elysium,
 Freude, schöner Götterfunken
Götterfunken!

English translation

Oh friends, not these tones!
Rather, let us raise our voices in more pleasing
And more joyful sounds!
Joy! (Joy!)
Joy! (Joy!)
 Joy, beautiful spark of divinity
 Daughter of Elysium,
 We enter, drunk with fire,
 Into your sanctuary, heavenly (daughter)!
 Your magic reunites
What custom strictly divided.
All men become brothers,
 Where your gentle wing rests.
 Whoever has had the great fortune
 To be a friend's friend,
 Whoever has won a devoted wife,
 Join in our jubilation!
 Indeed, whoever can call even one soul,
 His own on this earth!
 And whoever was never able to, must creep
 Tearfully away from this band!
 Joy all creatures drink
 At the breasts of nature;
 All good, all bad
 Follow her trail of roses.
 Kisses she gave us, and wine,
 A friend, proved in death;
 Pleasure was given to the worm,
 And the cherub stands before God.
Before God!
 Glad, as His suns fly
 Through the Heaven's glorious design,
 Run, brothers, your path,
 Joyful, as a hero to victory.
 Be embraced, millions!
 This kiss for the whole world!
 Brothers, above the starry canopy
 Must a loving Father dwell.
 Do you bow down, millions?
 Do you sense the Creator, world?
 Seek Him beyond the starry canopy!
 Beyond the stars must He dwell.
Finale repeats the words:
 Be embraced, you millions!
 This kiss for the whole world!
 Brothers, beyond the star-canopy
 Must a loving Father dwell.
 Be embraced,
 This kiss for the whole world!
 Joy, beautiful spark of divinity,
 Daughter of Elysium,
 Joy, beautiful spark of divinity
Divinity!

Figure 7.1. The lyrics of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; words written by Beethoven are shown in italics; Schiller's original had a handful of more verses inserted before and after the words 'Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?/Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?/Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!/Über Sternen muss er wohnen'.

Anthem

of European Municipalities in 1962 recorded a 'European song' based on Beethoven's music, which had the advantage of being quite well known, though the lyrics were felt to be a bigger problem.

Activities in support of an anthem were particularly lively in Belgium, the Netherlands and France. It was less surprisingly also often used in Germany, for instance as a national anthem in sporting events where the two States entered a joint team, for instance at the Oslo Winter Olympics 1952 and the Tokyo Games 1964. Germany's affection for the tune actually went back to the Third Reich, where it was played at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, for Hitler's birthday and in concentration camps.³⁴⁴

The year 1970 was a Beethoven anniversary year, as he was born in 1770, which contributed to putting his work the focus of the anthem discussions. Also, early in 1971, Stanley Kubrick's movie *A Clockwork Orange* was released. Like Anthony Burgess' novel from 1962, it placed the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in a key narrative position, as the tune that the delinquent Alex first likes and then is tortured with by playing it together with extremely violent films from Nazi Germany. In spite of the very negative associations made with the theme in the story, it became immensely popular, not least when the film soundtrack with Wendy (formerly Walter) Carlos' arrangement of the music for Robert Moog's recently invented electronic synthesiser was released in 1972.

Hence the huge popularity of the Ode to Joy, which is now a tune on everyone's lips, a tune, however, which has lost its power to involve and unite, having become a soundtrack for films, documentaries, advertising spots, sporting events and much else besides.³⁴⁵

Adding to the pressure from institutions such as the Council of European Municipalities and the Committee on Local Authorities of the Consultative Assembly, a 'Round Table for Europe Day' in February 1971 also concluded 'it would be desirable for a European anthem to be instituted to symbolise the faith of our peoples in the cause of European unity'. This was in April 1971 supported by the Consultative Assembly and the Committee of Ministers. A Consultative Assembly report in June 1971 considered a selection to be made from suggestions received by the General Secretariat, or a Europe-wide competition to be organised, but both these options were discarded.

All members were against the idea of a competition for the purpose of 'producing' an anthem; on the other hand, it was agreed unanimously that Beethoven's music was representative of the European genius and was capable of uniting the hearts and minds of all Europeans, including the younger generation. Also, bearing

in mind that the tune of the *Ode to Joy*, from the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, had frequently been performed as a European anthem by local communities in particular, the Committee considered it preferable to give official approval to this incipient tradition and to propose the prelude to the *Ode to Joy*.

An arrangement of the work was in fact made for the Belgian section of the Council of European Municipalities in 1961 and published by Schott Frères of Brussels; this could be used for reference purposes.

As regards the words for an anthem some doubt was felt, mainly with regard to the words of the *Ode to Joy*, which were in the nature of a universal expression of faith rather than a specifically European one.

Members also wondered whether any words acknowledged as 'European' could ever be translated into another language and accepted as such by the other linguistic groups of the European family.

The Committee therefore preferred, for the time being, to propose only the tune for a European anthem, without words, and to allow some time to pass. One day perhaps some words will be adopted by the citizens of Europe with the same spontaneity as Beethoven's eternal melody has been.³⁴⁶

While the melody was widely accepted, Schiller's lyrics were an obstacle. One objection was that any words would be bound to a single linguistic community and thus run into conflict with the unifying purpose of the anthem. The other main objection was even more fascinating, as it questioned the validity of a universalist text to identify Europe: Beethoven's version of Schiller's words was thus deemed to be too little European and too globally inclusive to signify a specifically European identity, whereas the music itself appeared to have passed the test as being specifically European enough to serve this purpose. Skipping the words altogether became the easiest way out.

The 10 June 1971 Report by the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe on a European anthem from which this long quote derives was thus of the opinion that 'it would be preferable to select a musical work representative of European genius and whose use on European occasions is already becoming something of a tradition.'³⁴⁷ In a long 'explanatory note', the Assembly's rapporteur, Mr René Radius, gave a background to the anthem plans and confronted a counter-argument 'that to propose a European anthem is too bold an undertaking for politicians'. He argued that this was part of the key task of 'spreading the European idea', not least in face of the expected enlargement of the European Communities, where 'the Council of Europe is required by its Statute to propagate the ideal of European unity and thus to prepare the citizens of Europe to live together in a spirit of solidarity and fraternity', and 'to

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inspire the peoples of Europe, who are still divided in more than one respect, with a genuinely European spirit, compounded of generosity, of faith and of fellowship'. The Flag and Day of Europe had been steps to this goal, and it was now time to add an Anthem to this toolbox:

At this crucial hour in Europe's search for her identity, the time has perhaps come to provide her with what she still lacks in the trilogy of symbols by which our States identify themselves: like them, she needs her Flag, her Day and her Anthem. These will give her the new impetus she needs in order to advance on the road to unity, and she will find therein a resounding expression of her driving force and of her faith.³⁴⁸

Curti Gialdino finds the political contextualising of the anthem in relation to the whole European project elucidative: 'Thus the feeling of identity associated with Beethoven's artistic heritage was to act as a means of filling the void in terms of a historical basis for European integration, which was still lacking, or at best precarious.'³⁴⁹ In resolution 492 of 8 July 1971, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe decided to accept the report's advice and 'propose the acceptance by member countries as a European anthem of the Prelude to the *Ode to Joy* in the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony' and to 'recommend its use on all European occasions if desired in conjunction with the national anthem'. A few months later, the Committee of Ministers also supported this idea.³⁵⁰

The conductor of the Berlin Philharmonics Herbert von Karajan was asked to write three instrumental arrangements—for piano, for wind instruments and for symphony orchestra. He also conducted the performance for the official recording. The Council of Europe then announced the anthem in Karajan's arrangement on 19 January 1972, and launched an extensive information campaign on Europe Day 5 May 1972.³⁵¹ The 'Ode to Joy' theme became increasingly popular in many different settings. In the 1970s it even became the national anthem of Ian Smith's apartheid rule in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).³⁵²

In June 1984, the Fontainebleau European Council set up a Committee on a 'People's Europe', the so-called Adonnino Committee, which was a prime motor for establishing the European flag. Its second report on a 'People's Europe' to the European Council meeting in Milan 28–29 June 1985 argued strongly in favour of the adoption and use of a European anthem:

The music of the 'Ode to Joy' from the fourth movement of Beethoven's ninth symphony is in fact used at European events. This anthem has also been recognized by the Council of Europe as being representative

of the European idea. The Committee recommends to the European Council that this anthem be played at appropriate events and ceremonies.³⁵³

The European leaders gathered at the Milan summit followed this recommendation and thus chose the same anthem for the European Community as that adopted in 1972 by the Council of Europe. Finally, Beethoven's music had become the official EU anthem in 1985. At the ceremony where the European flag was raised for the first time at the European Commission building in Brussels on 29 May 1986, a Flemish brass band played the arranged anthem, after which a choral society sang its original German setting with lyrics.³⁵⁴ Since that time, the anthem continues to be played at official European events and ceremonies, and it is also released in many different versions on record and on the web, as sound files or ringtones, arranged in many different musical styles and with a variety of traditional and newly written lyrics. It continues to accumulate meaning by being used in highly divergent contexts, including the 1989 protests at Tiananmen Square in Peking as well as the Japanese New Year celebrations.³⁵⁵

Referring to translation problems and the vast number of languages in Europe, Schiller's words were thus again excluded in 1985, as they had been in 1971. Though the original German lyrics thus have no official status, the music's meaning remains indissolubly tinted by Schiller's poem and not least its title, 'Ode to Joy'. This immediate intertext has to be taken into consideration by any attempt to interpret the cluster of meanings that has come to surround this anthem.

Interpreting Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*

This is the only EU symbol that is so expressly derived from an existing work, picking out a small part of that work and revising it for the new format. Resolution 492 (1971) of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe on a European anthem (8 July 1971) stated that 'it would be preferable to select a musical work representative of European genius and whose use on European occasions is already becoming something of a tradition'. A deliberate decision was thus not to look for a newly composed tune, but to go back in history to find a suitable classical melody that was already anchored in citizens' minds and that also had firmly established the solemn aura capable of bearing the overwhelming weight of expressing shared European values. No such provision was made concerning any of the other symbols. While they also leaned on inherited tropes, they still allowed for a contemporary treatment of these, not being content with inheriting something rather finished from the past. The flag may for instance have borrowed all its elements from tradition, but

it was still presented as a unique and new design, rather than as an adherence to a pre-existing symbol. However, for the music, none of the proposed new compositions gave any hope of finding anything remotely as attractive as what the European canon of classical music had to offer. The implied signifying result was already by such a decision to devalue later developments in music and to instead inscribe the anthem in a rather conservative classicist tradition.

This also makes Beethoven's oeuvre a clearly privileged intertext, in particular his Ninth Symphony and Schiller's poem which he integrated in its final movement. I will therefore save comparative references to other intertexts until next section, in order to focus on the most obvious contexts for the European anthem, in a concentric set of circles from the European anthem, over Beethoven's Ninth's fourth movement, Beethoven's Ninth symphony as a whole, Beethoven's total oeuvre and Schiller's poem to early nineteenth century bourgeois culture and art music and post-revolutionary modern capitalism in general. As Esteban Buch has argued, the Anthem functions as a metonym for 'the whole fourth movement, the whole Ninth symphony, the whole work of Beethoven, or even the whole Western "great music", which, in this way, is appealed to in order to reinforce the ethical and political legitimacy of the European community as a whole'.³⁵⁶

The interpretive analysis could either start with the EU anthem as a separate work in its own right or approach it as a reworked excerpt from Beethoven's symphony. While only a minor group of art music specialists know the symphony context in any greater detail, many will associate the anthem to Beethoven and thus have some basic idea about some of those contextual aspects as well. The EU itself repeatedly makes it known that the anthem has precisely that origin. The European anthem as such is not yet sufficiently established to have full autonomous work status, even though this may possibly change in the future, should the anthem survive and become successful, in the way that for instance the Eurovision tune for most listeners has managed to cut off its ties to Charpentier's *Te Deum*, as will be discussed below. There are many different anthem versions of shifting length, sung or instrumental, so that it remains a bit uncertain how it goes as such, and in settings where it is used, it is repeatedly linked back to Beethoven, so that the melody's origin in Beethoven's symphony still tends to overshadow its independent existence as EU's anthem. Therefore, I will here start my analysis by relating the Anthem to its original Beethoven context, rather than treating it as a completely distinct work. I will first discuss how it has been understood in its original context within Beethoven's own work, and then in the following section listen closer to the arrangements of the Ode melody that have been presented as the European anthem. Though it may sometimes be difficult to keep them strictly apart, I will strive to reserve the term 'Anthem' for the EU version of the tune, while speaking of the 'Ode' when discussing the core melody as found in the symphony.

The *European Navigator* finds it crucial to contextualise Beethoven's work in relation to its original political, social and historic setting, as he 'straddled the end of one period of history and the beginning of another'.³⁵⁷ In the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, a new bourgeois order was established in Europe. For Beethoven—'a musician of the internal world, the realm of the mind'—music 'was pregnant with meaning and almost always embodied an idea'. 'Seriousness is the predominant feature of Beethoven, but this very seriousness may, even fleetingly, be transformed into joy, as in the Ninth Symphony.'

The melody of the *Ode to Joy* is simple, almost elementary, and of an approachable and clear musicality to which it is easy to listen. Beethoven's main concern was to strike a perfect balance between unity (and exact repetition) and variety, in a form which was readily memorable. In the verses singing of the values of truth, liberty, universal fraternity and human happiness, man emerges victorious over all his physical and moral oppressions. Throughout his life, and even in its happier periods, Beethoven was beset by the torments of his deafness, financial straits, unhappiness in love and the agonies of life. The Kantian ideals of the enlightenment culture of the time, which provided a focus for Beethoven's knowledge and internal life, are brought to life and sublimated through the interweaving of music and poetry. It is precisely this exhortation to fraternity and friendship, to love and to peace, of which the *Ode* is a highly figurative symbol, that explains why the Council of Europe and then the European Communities decided to take as their official anthem a hymn to fraternity going beyond the confines of nations and beyond the differences between peoples in order to bring about something more sublime and exceptional in European society.³⁵⁸

Efforts were made to construct Beethoven as European, for instance by mentioning his Dutch ancestors and his move from birth and youth in Bonn to mature achievements in Vienna.³⁵⁹ However, these seem rather contrived, as it would have been easier to show how composers such as Georg Friedrich Handel, Joseph Haydn or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart were considerably more cosmopolitan in their life trajectories as well as in their musical production—and in the latter respect, even Johann Sebastian Bach's oeuvre appears more obviously a melting pot of highly diverse European elements deriving from German, French and Italian sources. However, the choice of Beethoven had other causes. Much emphasis was put on his seriousness and the way he was engaged in the complex issues of his day: issues of progress and fate, emancipation and oppression, destruction and hope, war and peace. It was often argued that he

was not just a skilled musician but also a socially responsible thinker, already by his contemporaries seen as a true ‘genius’ who regarded music as pregnant with meaning and embodying more abstract human values and allegedly universal ideas.³⁶⁰

It is thus no mere coincidence that Beethoven in several compositions used, developed and invented themes relating to topical ideas of his time, including expressions of universal humanism and heroic anti-authoritarian liberation, for instance in the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* (op. 43, 1801), the third symphony (*Eroica*, op. 55, 1803) or the opera *Fidelio* (op. 72, 1814; the original version *Leonore* was from 1805). He consciously linked himself to such leading ideas of what was to become classical European modernity, and thus lends himself well to being appropriated by those who later seek to express these ideas, either to hail or to problematise them. Beethoven is perhaps the most widely known European art music composer. No other composer is equally well known and above all respected all over the world, even though Mozart and Bach come close.³⁶¹ Chuck Berry’s ‘Roll over Beethoven’ (1956) is but one example of how the serious composer has been used as a generalised symbol for traditional high arts, and Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) being another example.

There is an interesting homology between Beethoven’s time and our own, in that his hopes for the Congress of Vienna to establish European peace after the Napoleonic wars parallel the intentions behind the Coal and Steel Union after World War II to finally put an end to the repeated catastrophic hostilities between France and Germany. Beethoven’s words sung before Schiller’s ‘Ode to Joy’, ‘Freunde, nicht diese Töne’, were precisely heard as a call against violence, silencing the preceding aggressive chaos. This process of civilising domestication of dark forces is also represented in the music itself, where chaotic strife is forced into reconciliation, not by expulsion of the brutes but through their disciplining integration and submission under a more peaceful and happy order, forging unity out of diversity. With the carnivalesque ‘Freude schöne Götterfunken’ sung by a mass ensemble to an elevated but joyful dance tune that fuses high and low culture, a kind of Promethean aura is established around a secular but transcendental humankind, upholding Enlightenment values of human rights and dignity. The music therefore is linked to both the Europa and the Prometheus myths, and not least to the founding myth of the EU, in which Europe’s economic post-war reconstruction is defined as an empowering peace project.

Already before analysing the music as such, the Anthem is clearly placed within a classical European high culture tradition of elevation. Gerard Delanty argues that the bureaucratic form of EU institutions has ‘a reifying effect’, mirrored in the chosen anthem, with its ‘reifying tone’ through which ‘the politics of European identity sought legitimation in bourgeois high culture.’³⁶² However, there are interesting complexities involved here as well. Using an already existing tune from the classical art music heritage, and specifically by Beethoven, has several implications that confirm the theme of elevation that is so consistently present in all EU symbols discussed so far.

The tune constitutes the climax in the final movement of a late Beethoven work that is generally understood as a high peak in his oeuvre. He was himself the last of the big three Vienna classics providing a transition from classical early modernity to the Romantics and later the self-critical fragmentation of the Enlightenment impulses. His mature period is often associated with seriousness and wisdom. The main tune of the final movement thus draws a great work to a conclusion. Romain Rolland regarded Beethoven's 'immortal *Ode to Joy*' as 'the plan of his whole life': 'All his life he wished to celebrate Joy; and to make it the climax of one of his great works.'³⁶³ In many respects, the Anthem bears the mark of age, maturity, finality, rich experience and wisdom. However, this stands in opposition to some aspects of the musical composition—as well as of the lyrics—that have an almost revolutionary and almost naïvely youthful urgency.

The music itself is in the centre of the classical European art music tradition, using the twelve-tone equal temperament foundation of major/minor tonality and functional harmonics that underpinned new modes of modern musical narrative through structural progression and tension development, including verse/chorus transitions as well as the sonata form. These creative tools evolved from late sixteenth to early nineteenth century Europe and enabled a series of new modes of musical expression corresponding to the lifeworlds and outlooks of an emerging modern society, with the bourgeois public sphere as an important hub of civil society. Big changes took place in the period around the French Revolution, as the post-aristocratic ruling classes took over the initiative and strived to construct a more suitable sound organisation that emphasised individualised emotional development, but also lifted up popular expressions in sublimated and refined forms into a more elevated sphere of fine arts.

Nicholas Cook has succinctly pointed out that Beethoven's music is full of contradictions and ambivalences: between unity and fragmentation, energy and despair, Classicism and Romanticism, seriousness and ironic jokes, sorrow and happiness, solemn abstraction and physical force, high art and 'low' popular earthiness, and universality and subjectivity.³⁶⁴ This music in many respects expressed and tried to come to grips with basic contradictions in emergent bourgeois society and culture.³⁶⁵ Susan McClary describes this music as juxtaposing 'desire and unspeakable violence': 'The Ninth Symphony is probably our most compelling articulation in music of the contradictory impulses that have organized patriarchal culture since the Enlightenment.'³⁶⁶ János Márothy has argued that the early nineteenth century bourgeoisie developed a kind of 'Dionysian complex', resulting from a basic contradiction of bourgeois society and art: an 'insoluble duality of the *citoyen-bourgeois*'.³⁶⁷ Modern life had become abstract and private, creating a nostalgic longing for public collective experiences. The loss of public experiences of Dionysian mass collectivity of antiquity was recovered in romantic events, sparked off by the

re-emerging mass experience in the French Revolution, and expressed in aesthetic ceremonial forms such as Beethoven's symphonies, displaying a heroism stylistically deriving from the mass dances and marches of the French Revolution.³⁶⁸ Márothy shows how the melodically lengthened rhythm of the 'Ode to Joy' melody has a sentimental declamation that is stylistically a subgroup of polka rhythm: a series of open-closed pairs with ancient roots, much used in medieval plebeian forms.³⁶⁹

Beethoven's introduction of a choir and sung words in the symphony genre was an innovation with immense influence on later generations.³⁷⁰ Schiller's 'An die Freude' had since long interested Beethoven. It was written in 1785 but in 1803 published in a revised version where some political elements were softened. Beethoven went even further in the same direction, using only half of Schiller's lyrics and making considerable alterations and rearrangements to suit his purposes. He avoided the most overtly political attacks at the tyrant's power, for instance changing 'Bettler werden Fürsten-brüder' ('Beggars become Princes' brothers') to 'Alle Menschen werden Brüder' ('All men will become brothers'). This was not only in order to avoid Metternich's censorship but also to produce the more abstract, utopian and idealistic expression that Beethoven himself wished to convey, focusing on the all-embracing community rather than the political act of revolution. With the same idealistic purpose, he also omitted sections reminding of a drinking song, and reordered the choruses to create an unbroken line of development from the terrestrial to the divine.³⁷¹

In its symphonic setting, the ode introduces a popular voice, a steady tune that could be heard as 'natural' and authentic in contrast with aristocratic forms: a song of the people or 'of the good human being' ('des guten Menschen') in a more universal sense. Like so many other commanding marches and fanfares, it starts with an upward movement, but instead of swinging rapidly to the sky, it walks steadily upwards, starting with two sturdy steps on the same spot before ascending step by step, and with even and steady beats reminding more of common people on the move than of gallant horses or flying angels. This fusion of highly advanced composition techniques with low popular tunes, inspired by democratic and revolutionary practices, has great potential for meeting EU's need for satisfying popular demands as well as the cultural and political elites.³⁷² But the further elaboration of this tune in the symphony movement has puzzled many listeners, as it enigmatically eludes any easy interpretation.

Musicologist Nicholas Cook describes the Ninth's finale as formally 'a cantata constructed round a series of variations on the "joy" theme', but it has also been analysed as a sonata form, a concerto form or 'a conflation of four symphonic movements into one' (the latter suggested by Charles Rosen).³⁷³ The following outline of the main sections of this complex movement is constructed on the basis of Cook's analysis (Figure 7.2).

Signifying Europe

Part	Length	Function	Element	Length	Music	Lyrics
A	1-207 = 207 b. ≈ 6'20"	Instrumental intro d-D	Review & recitative	1-91 = 91 b.	Review & recitative d	-
			Joy theme	92-115 = 24 b.	Joy theme D	-
			Joy v. 1	116-139 = 24 b.	Joy variation D	-
			Joy v. 2	140-163 = 24 b.	Joy variation D	-
B	208-330 = 123 b. ≈ 3'30"	Vocal exposition d-D	Review & recitative	208-240 = 33 b.	Review & recitative d	R: "O Freunde..."
			Joy v. 4	241-268 = 28 b.	Joy variation D	V1: "Freude..."
			Joy v. 5	269-296 = 28 b.	Joy variation D	V2: "Wem..."
			Joy v. 6	297-330 = 34 b.	Joy variation D	V3: "Freude..."
C	331-594 = 264 b. ≈ 4'10"	Turkish march Bb-D	Intro	331-342 = 12 b.	Intro Bb	-
			Joy v. 7	343-374 = 32 b.	Turkish march Bb	-
			Joy v. 8 extended	375-430 = 56 b.	Turkish march Bb	C4: "Froh..."
			Fugato	431-542 = 112 b.	Joy-based fugato Bb	-
			Joy v. 9	543-594 = 52 b.	Joy variation D	V1: "Freude..."
D	595-654 = 60 b. ≈ 3'20"	Starry episode G-g	Episode	595-626 = 32 b.	Episode G	C1: "Seid..."
			Episode	627-654 = 28 b.	Episode g	C3: "Ihr..."
E	655-762 = 108 b. ≈ 2'30"	Double fugue & episode D	Double fugue	655-729 = 75 b.	Double fugue based on Joy & episode themes D	V1: "Freude..." C1: "Seid..."
			Episode	730-744 = 15 b.	Episode D	C3: "Ihr..."
			Episode	745-762 = 18 b.	Episode D	C1: "Seid..."
F	763-940 = 178 b. ≈ 4'00"	Coda D	Coda 1	763-831 = 69 b.	Joy-based coda D	V1: "Freude..."
			Cadenza	832-850 = 19 b.	Cadenza D	-
			Coda 2	851-903 = 53 b.	Coda D	V1: "Freude..." C1: "Seid..."
			Cadenza	904-919 = 16 b.	Cadenza D	V1: "Freude..." C1: "Seid..."
			Coda 3	920-940 = 21 b.	Joy-based coda D	-

Figure 7.2. Graphic overview of the Fourth Movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

A. Bar 1–207. The movement starts with a three minutes d-minor introduction that unfolds a frustrated dialogue between a review of the preceding three symphony movements and an instrumental string bass recitative. It is as if the motives from those previous movements or times were presented and all lead to strife and chaos, which the bass recitative has to interrupt with its rubato speech-like but still wordless voice. This leads up to bars 92ff. where the D-major 'Joy' theme is first presented by the string basses and developed in higher and fuller registers through three variations: first by the full string orchestra, then finally with full orchestra and much wind instruments

on top. The last variation is extended in an exalted frenzy, which suddenly quiets down around six minutes into the movement.

B. Bar 208–330. The sounds from the d-minor introduction reappear for a minute, again with chaotic drums being interrupted by the same recitative as before, this time sung by a baritone on lyrics by Beethoven: ‘O Freunde, nicht diese Töne! / sondern lasst uns angenehmere anstimmen, / und freudenvollere. / Freude! Freude!’ (‘Oh friends, not these tones! / Rather, let us raise our voices in more pleasing / and more joyful sounds! / Joy! Joy!’).³⁷⁴ At bar 241, this opens up the D-major vocal ‘Joy’ variations 4–6, with the Schiller lyrics of verses 1–3, starting with ‘Freude, schöner Götterfunken, / Tochter aus Elysium, / wir betreten feuertrunken, / Himmlische, dein Heiligtum!’ (‘Joy, beautiful spark of divinity / daughter of Elysium, / We enter, drunk with fire, / into your sanctuary, heavenly (daughter)!’). The first time, a solo voice is accompanied by the choir in the last eight bars of the tune, like a chorus. Each of these variations adds voices, creating a climactic process. The second repetition involves a polyphonic solo song ensemble and a chorus in full choir like before; the third varies the melody so that it almost sounds like laughter. It ends with a transitory extension.

The introduction to the movement thus presents three different musical ideas that each time ends in chaos (A). They echo each of the preceding three movements, so that the finale starts by summing up what has come before, but it is also easy to interpret them as symbolising three failed efforts to live together or build a society. This interpretation is particularly invited by the words ‘Oh friends, not these tones!’ and not least by the following ‘Ode to Joy’ lyrics that immediately forces the listener to hear this melody as the only successful way out of the compositional impasse—as well as of the interactional impasse for humanity which it has signified (B). At this point, the ‘Ode’ tune has the role of a jubilant and in many ways is a simple solution after so many efforts to integrate deeply divided forces: a strong and accessible hymn which lifts the whole symphony to a new—higher and more solemn but also more basic and popular—level.

In Greek mythology, the virtuous heroes had the privilege to rest in the Elysian fields of the Underworld.³⁷⁵ Schiller’s ‘Ode to Joy’ constructed joy as a ‘beautiful spark of divinity’ and ‘daughter of Elysium’, that is happiness as a personification of a divine spark to humanity from the paradise of eternal rest. This is already a quite complex picture. On the one hand, this joy is described as an elevating energy from the gods, parallel to how Prometheus stole fire to humanity. This is reinforced by the next line that depicts how ‘we enter, drunk with fire’ into the holy place or ‘sanctuary’ of joy. On the other hand, the dimension of eternity also makes death and the dead present in this joy, and the fire-drunkenness is also not without its dangers: this joy is obviously sublime rather than just pleasantly relaxed. The joy could remind of the intense desire in Europa and the bull, but surviving fire may also recall the resurrection of the Phoenix. The cathartic release is further emphasised by the next lines that talk

about how the magic of joy ‘reunites what custom strictly divided’, so that ‘all men will become brothers’. The narrative goes from dark suffering to sparks of joy and from traditional division to brotherly reunion. Associations include heroes finally resting and rejoicing after wars, perhaps reunited with their beloved dead. This could be relevant to a post-war experience that was urgent for Beethoven as a new Europe was to arise from the battlefields of the Napoleonic wars, and was to become again actualised after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–1 and the two twentieth century world wars, which propelled Robert Schuman and the other EU architects. The symbols add up to a kind of palimpsest of meanings on several historical levels.

The next verse invites ‘whoever can call even one soul his own on this earth’ to ‘join in our jubilation’, while those who were unable to build any kind of friendship ‘must creep tearfully away from this band’. In verse 3, joy is depicted as a natural resource for ‘all creatures’, ‘all good, all bad’. Indeed, ‘pleasure was given to the worm’ so virtually no living being seems excluded in this universal celebration.

C. Bar 331–594. This whole section starts in Bb-major and introduces a highly contrasting element, in tone and expression as well as in key, reminiscent of the second subject in a sonata form, so that the return to D major in bar 543 feels like a kind of recapitulation. The choir exclaims ‘O Gott’ (‘Oh God!’) in a prolonged fermata, and a march in Turkish style starts quite softly, with Glockenspiel and woodwinds, first instrumental, and then with increasingly loud instrumentation to the bass soloist singing ‘Froh, wie seine Sonne fliegen / durch des Himmels prächt’gen Plan’ (‘Glad, as His suns fly / through the Heaven’s glorious design’) to an ‘alla Turca’ version in ‘Joy’ variation 7, followed by the Chorus 4 lyrics sung to ‘Joy’ variation 8, with extension leading to a fugato episode based on the ‘Joy’ theme, ending with the more straightforward ‘Joy’ variation 9 sung by the full choir in D-major. This ‘Turkish’ variation of the ‘Ode’ theme introduces a new and, to generations of listeners, often problematic perspective on its meaning, which will be further discussed below. Its chorus words talk about ‘brothers’ running ‘joyful, as a hero to victory’. This introduces a male heroism that contrasts to the previous all-encompassing and more passive reception of the blisses of nature.

D. Bar 595–654. But the marching Turkish episode is a short parenthesis. The music halts and the choir gently sings ‘Seid umschlungen, Millionen’ (‘Be embraced, you millions!’) to Chorus 1 lyrics in G-major, partly performed in a kind of dialogue between male and female voices, embodying the idea of men and women embracing each other. This again ends in a fermata, after which Chorus 3 in g-minor sings ‘Ihr stürzt nieder Millionen?’ (‘Do you bow down, millions?’), sounding as if angelic voices sail down from heaven to earth. The lyrics of this whole section offer a glimpse up to the heavens, as the human brothers are embraced by ‘a loving Father’ who is supposed to dwell ‘above the starry canopy’. This is expressed more as a hope and conviction than as truth, formulating the religious dimension as a matter of faith rather than

of fact. Cook hears the lyrics expressing a belief in ‘the existence of a loving Father above the stars; set to music in ‘a remote, hieratic style’ that evokes ecclesiastical chant, sounding like ‘a series of daydreams’, where the repeated notes in bars 647–54 ‘are surely meant to depict the twinkling of the stars, it is as if time stood still.’³⁷⁶

E. Bar 655–762. This section opens with a D-major double fugue based on the ‘Joy’ and ‘Seid umschlungen’ themes, thus mixing lyrics from Verse 1 and Chorus 3, ending with the ‘Ihr stürzt nieder’ episode of Chorus 3 and finally the Chorus 1 lyrics, so that the symphony ends with repeating the frantic ecstasy of joy. Cook sees this double fugue as representing ‘a reawakening, a return to reality’, with a concluding, integrating and recapitulatory function but also serving as a transition to the next series of codas.³⁷⁷

F. Bar 763–940. D-major ending starts with Verse 1 lyrics sang to coda figure 1 based on the ‘Joy’ theme, followed by a cadenza and then coda figure 2 with Chorus 1 followed by Verse 1 lyrics, and finally coda figure 3 again based on the ‘Joy’ theme ends the work. These coda sections sound like a rather traditional operatic finale. The words ‘Alle Menschen werden Brüder’ are strongly emphasised, until in the final bars 920ff. everything is united in ecstatic harmony: choir and soloists, strings and wind instruments, solemn and military sounds—all joyfully united in diversity!³⁷⁸

Commentators such as Romain Rolland have described the Ninth Symphony’s finale as a climactic victory over deep misery: a joy of struggle transformed into transcendental ecstasy and finally a veritable ‘delirium of love.’³⁷⁹ Cook describes in detail how subsequent listeners have interpreted Beethoven’s symphony differently, according to their own agendas. For instance, Wagner chose to read the baritone’s words ‘not these tones’ (*nicht diese Töne*) as referring ‘to the horror fanfare, to the first three movements, ultimately to instrumental music as a whole’, so that musical time is transformed into ‘dramatic or ritualistic time’, and ‘what began as a musical event turns at this point into a social one.’³⁸⁰

Cook also shows that even quite recent twentieth century critics have generally been disturbed by the heterogeneity of the work, in particular having great problems with ‘the most outrageously foreign element’ of the ‘Turkish’ music in bar 331ff., finding it ‘almost perverse’ that Beethoven combined this music—with both military and popular associations—with lyrics speaking of God’s angels in the sky.³⁸¹ In this frustration, Cook recognises a dominant Romantic strategy of ‘creating meaning out of incoherence’ that tends to domesticate Beethoven’s music, reducing its excess of meaning.³⁸²

Romantic interpretations reduce the contradictory elements of the Ninth Symphony to a narrative thread or a series of pictures; absolute-music interpretations reduce them to an architectural plan. And the result in each case is the same: the music is deproblematized, sanitized, shrink-wrapped.³⁸³

Beethoven's music is obviously an eminently open text, full of 'unconsummated symbols' says Cook, borrowing a term from Susanne Langer. He shows how this has tempted different listeners to interpret the Ninth in highly contradictory ways, letting it support universal peace, western democracy, Nazi rule or even Chinese communism.³⁸⁴ Cook instead follows Theodor W. Adorno by stressing the inner contradictions in this music: 'its lack of organic unity, its fragmentary quality, its ultimate refusal to make sense.'³⁸⁵ 'The work that symbolizes the pursuit of wealth in Hong Kong and communist orthodoxy in the People's Republic, that stands for Western democracy and forms part of Japan's social fabric—how can such a work be said to mean anything at all?'³⁸⁶ This work is 'profoundly ambivalent': the music deconstructing Schiller's lyrics which in turn deconstructs itself, as the Turkish march clashes with lines such as 'And the seraph stands with God.'³⁸⁷ Cook believes that Beethoven here detached himself from his own affirmative message.³⁸⁸

Beethoven's last symphony proclaims the ideals of universal brotherhood and joy; that is unmistakable. But at the same time, and just as unmistakably, it casts doubt upon them. It sends out incompatible messages. And that is why, like *Parsifal*, the Ninth Symphony has the capacity to resist being wholly assimilated within any single, definitive interpretation; however it is interpreted, there is always a remainder that lies beyond interpretation. But this resistance can only be effective if we remain conscious of the incongruities, the incoherence, the negative qualities of the music.³⁸⁹

In spite of this, Cook does not at all *abandon* interpretation but on the contrary argues for the need for *continued reinterpretation*, as 'the only way to prevent the Ninth Symphony from being consumed by ideology'.³⁹⁰

The most scandalous obstacle to any straightforward interpretation of the symphony lies in how the 'Turkish' march music is positioned in the overall design of the work. As Cook has shown, it has been perceived as an 'outrageously foreign element'. It had since the late eighteenth century been common to play with 'alla Turca' elements in classical music, inserting exotic touches of rough marching rhythms and instrumentation of percussion and wind, inspired by the military march music of the Ottoman Empire's janissaries, which had existed since at least the fourteenth century and had a growing influence on Europe, as part of an Orientalising vogue for Turkish culture. These military bands originally had the function to make maximal frightening noise so as to rouse respect when Turkish troops came marching in. When tamed by classical composers, with Mozart's piano sonata no. 11 in A-major K. 331 (c. 1783) as the most famous example, the style was reduced to an exotic spice signifying a combination of popular and Oriental roughness and rage.

When such tones are suddenly heard in Beethoven's Ninth, they immediately ask for some kind of justification and interpretation, and critics have generally baulked at their alien character in relation to what has come before. One example of this alienated reception is when for instance Walter Riezler hears the Turkish music 'like a march from another world, war-like, but first almost incorporeal, as if it, hardly anymore audible to us, emerged from the most distant far of the universe.'³⁹¹ However, the main provocation of these sounds does not lie in the sounds as such, but in their structural position within the work as a whole. A contrasting element of otherness could well be accepted if it was in some way contained and made intelligible within a totalising meaningful narrative, but the first appearance of these noisy and unsophisticated rhythms is combined with angelic words that commentators have found inappropriate for it, creating an 'almost perverse' effect. And when it then returns in the concluding orgiastic feast at the very end of the work, this also has caused trouble for those who found it much too unpolished and uncivilised to live up to their ideas of heavenly joy in an Elysian paradise.

As Cook mentions, interpreters have used shifting strategies to deal with these apparent anomalies. For instance, the 'Turkish' music could either be understood to denote the revolutionary mass activity of the common people, or to signify some kind of eastern ethnic otherness in relation to the basic western classical idiom of the work as a whole, with radical effects on how to understand Beethoven's 'message'—if there is any to be understood, a fact which Cook's deconstructive analysis seems to question.

One interpreter has linked this issue to the European unification project. In a series of articles from 2006 and 2007, Slavoj Žižek saw the negative results of the EU constitutional referendums as expressions of political populism that refuses complexity and constructs simple bipolarities of us and them, where the enemies comprise Brussels bureaucracy as well as illegal immigrants. He argued that instead of dismissing these sceptical French and Dutch opinions as misled, one should dare to abandon the blind faith in Europe's technological modernity and cultural traditions in order instead

to dispel the fetish of scientific-technological progress AND to get rid of relying on the superiority of its cultural heritage. [...] It is time for us, citizens of Europe, to become aware that we have to make a properly POLITICAL decision of what we want. No enlightened administrator will do the job for us.³⁹²

This was the context in which Žižek, leaning on Cook, exemplified with the European anthem, 'a true "empty signifier" that can stand for anything' and therefore can ideologically serve as a musical basis for forgetting all existing inequalities in an ecstatic moment of unification. Žižek's primarily focuses on precisely the problem with the 'Turkish' march:

The mode then becomes one of a carnivalesque parade, a mocking spectacle—critics have even compared the sounds of the bassoons and bass drum that accompany the beginning of the *marcia turca* to flatulence. After this point, such critics feel, everything goes wrong, the simple solemn dignity of the first part of the movement is never recovered.

But what if these critics are only partly correct—what if things do not go wrong only with the entrance of the *marcia turca*? What if they go wrong from the very beginning? Perhaps one should accept that there is something of an insipid fake in the very ‘Ode to Joy’, so that the chaos that enters after Bar 331 is a kind of the ‘return of the repressed’, a symptom of what was errant from the beginning.

If this is the case, we should thus shift the entire perspective and perceive the *marcia* as a return to normality that cuts short the display of preposterous portentousness of what precedes it—it is the moment the music brings us back to earth, as if saying: ‘You want to celebrate the brotherhood of men? Here they are, the real humanity’.

And does the same not hold for Europe today? The second stanza of Friedrich Schiller’s poem that is set to the music in ‘Ode to Joy’, coming on the heels of a chorus that invites the world’s ‘millions’ to ‘be embraced’, ominously ends: ‘But he who cannot rejoice, let him steal weeping away.’ With this in mind, one recent paradox of the *marcia turca* is difficult to miss: as Europe makes the final adjustments to its continental solidarity in Lisbon, the Turks, despite their hopes, are outside the embrace.

So, when in the forthcoming days we hear again and again the ‘Ode to Joy’, it would be appropriate to remember what comes after this triumphant melody. Before succumbing to the warm sentiment of how we are all one big family, I think my fellow Europeans should spare a thought for all those who cannot rejoice with us, all those who are forced to ‘steal weeping away’. It is, perhaps, the only way we’ll put an end to the rioting and car burnings and other forms of the Turkish march we now see in our very own cities.³⁹³

Žižek thus links Beethoven’s composition to an argument about contemporary obstacles for unifying Europe, particularly on its eastern border:

The main sign of today’s crisis of the European Union is precisely Turkey: According to most of the polls, the main reason of those who voted ‘no’ at the last referendums in France and Netherlands was

their opposition to Turkish membership. The ‘no’ can be grounded in rightist-populist terms (no to the Turkish threat to our culture, no to the Turkish cheap immigrant labor), or in the liberal-multiculturalist terms (Turkey should not be allowed in because, in its treatment of the Kurds, it doesn’t display enough respect for human rights). But the opposite view, the ‘yes,’ is as false as Beethoven’s final cadenza. [...]

So, should Turkey be allowed into the Union or should it be let to ‘steal itself weeping away’ from the EU’s circle? Can Europe survive the Turkish march? And, as in the finale of Beethoven’s Ninth, what if the true problem is not Turkey, but the basic melody itself, the song of European unity as it is played to us from the Brussels post-political technocratic elite? What we need is a totally new main melody, a new definition of Europe itself. The problem of Turkey, the perplexity of European Union with regard to what to do with Turkey, is not about Turkey as such, but the confusion about what is Europe itself. The impasse with the European Constitution is a sign that the European project is now in search of its identity.³⁹⁴

Žižek uses what he hears in Beethoven to reinforce his critical opinions on the EU project. His specific reading seems to contradict the ‘empty signifier’ thesis he borrowed from Cook, but may also be regarded as an example of Cook’s request for continued reinterpretation to prevent the music from being appropriated by ideology.

Interpreting the European anthem

This whole argument is based on the larger symphony context of the ‘Ode,’ but its relevance to the European anthem is questionable, as the latter silences all the lyrics as well as the Turkish sounds. The European anthem is thus at a significant distance from the text that Žižek and Cook analyse. It is possible that the Beethoven context remains an absent but still somehow remembered intertext, but one must also consider what the anthem expresses as such, in order to see how relevant these echoes from its original setting may still be.

It should first be noted that the uses made of the ‘Ode’ melody are not equally divorced from the original symphony context. Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony is the most significant context in which the ‘Ode to Joy’ melody is embedded, and from which any interpretation of the European anthem necessarily fetches at least some elements. But to what extent is it its location in this context that has enabled it to have so many different uses, or is it on the contrary its isolation from this context that has opened up such an interpretive span? This is not easy to assess. The expressive force

of the ‘Ode to Joy’ melody certainly cannot be fully explained without considering its original link to Schiller’s lyrics as well as its place in the Ninth Symphony. It has been praised as a humanist credo to universal brotherhood but also been loved by the German Nazis who performed it at big celebrations, including Hitler’s birthday; it was the national anthem of Rhodesia during apartheid but has also continued to inspire left-wing revolutionaries as well as peace-loving romantics.³⁹⁵ It has been invested with immense positive value, but also with suspicion, on the verge of becoming an ‘empty signifier’, but precisely in this general function, it at least seems to have a capacity of signifying a wish for universal unification between humans in spite of divisions and strife: a suitable musical expression of the European motto of ‘united in diversity’. In order to get to grips with more of its signifying range, it is time to have a closer look at the instrumental anthem as a separate text.

The anthem is not just an excerpt taken directly from Beethoven’s symphony, but rather a transformed abstraction of a section from it. There are several versions of this anthem itself available at different websites, including a main instrumental version composed, recorded and copyrighted by Karajan, but also a vocal variant of this. A search through various websites of the EU and the Council of Europe shows that a whole range of different versions are available, several claimed to be to some extent official. Some build on Karajan’s 1972 arrangement, others on a reworking from September 2000 by the French composer Christophe Guyard, ‘specially commissioned to illustrate documentaries, news and other programmes covering the Council of Europe’.³⁹⁶ A Council of Europe CD, including the first hip hop version of the European anthem world-wide, was put on sale to the public in April 2004. Entitled “Variations”, it includes other adaptations of the “Ode to Joy”, in particular symphony orchestra, organ, piano (classical and jazz), rock guitar, jazz violin, techno and trance versions.³⁹⁷ Some versions boosted by the Council of Europe are instrumental, others vocal, and with lots of different instrumentations, musical styles as well as lengths, tempos and formal compositions. There is for instance a piano version, a hip-hop version with a rapper and excerpt from famous politicians’ speeches, as well as four Romani variations also released on CD (one with famous singer Eσμα Redzepova). The choice of presenting rap and Romani styles is interesting. While the hip-hop versions testify to a will to reach out to young generations, both of these stylistic offers also have an ethnic twist, associating the anthem to mobile, migrant people and to immigrant populations not least from the south and east. This is in line with the ‘Turkish’ sounds in Beethoven’s original setting, and on a musical level seems to respond to Žižek’s criticism, as it expresses a willingness to include those ‘foreign’ (stylistic as well as cultural and demographic) elements into the larger European ‘we’.

However, no such reworked version—with or without lyrics—has any official status at all. The original decision to adopt ‘the prelude to “The Ode to Joy”, 4th movement of Ludwig van Beethoven’s 9th symphony’ was not crystal clear, and more recent EU

Anthem

presentations instead just describe the melody as ‘taken from’ Beethoven’s work. It is really not in the symphony a prelude to the Ode, but rather that melody itself, and could be described as the first, instrumental version of this ‘Ode to Joy’: the 24 bars 92–115 in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony finale, following the recapitulating introduction and the instrumental recitative. Together with those 91 introductory bars, the subsequent three other variations on the same tune (bars 116–207) and a following second introduction with vocal recitative (bars 208–240), it comprises a very long (240 bars \approx 7 minutes) ‘prelude’ to the vocal rendering of the Ode melody, but it is not all this ‘prelude’ that is included in the anthem.

The core of both the symphony movement and the anthem is at any rate the ‘Ode to Joy’ theme (Figure 7.3). Nicholas Cook describes it as both simple and complicated: ‘The key to the finale is the “Joy” theme. It sounds as effortlessly natural as a folk song. But it gave Beethoven an enormous amount of trouble; there are literally dozens of versions of the last eight bars in the sketchbooks.’³⁹⁸ Arguments for choosing this melody for the anthem often stress that it is a catchy song, easy to sing and remember, almost with a ESC quality. Its stylistic characteristics in terms of melody, rhythm and formal structure have roots in revolutionary French songs and marches such as the ‘Marseillaise’, ‘Ça ira’ or ‘La Carmagnole’.³⁹⁹

The theme comprises 24 bars in 4/4 rhythm, with a straightforward song structure: AA’BA’BA’. In the symphony, when the solo voice first sings the ode (AA’BA’BA’), the choir joins in for the last eight bars (BA’). Also in instrumental versions, the last BA’ repetition is often performed louder with more instruments. This makes this section



Figure 7.3 The European anthem melody.

work like a chorus or refrain, reinforcing the impression of a folk ballad or street song, and the repetition itself creates an insistent expression. The melody moves in a number of arcs. Each odd bar in the A (and A') sections climbs up four tones while each even bar climbs down three or four tones again, so that a full four-bar A (or A') section consists of two two-bar arcs. In the B parts, each bar instead presents an arc-formed motif with three or five tones, adding up to four one-bar arcs. Two syncopations are characteristic even in the simplest standard versions. First, the last bar of each A (and A') section starts with a dotted crotchet note (♩.♩♩). This little dance-like swing breaks off the steady 4/4 walk (♩♩♩♩), lending emphasis and energy to each phrase conclusion. Second, a syncopation is always made as the first note of the A' section following after a B section starts one unit earlier and is thus prolonged (♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩). This twist at each transition from B to A' sections help lending the tune a certain restless and eager energy that avoids the otherwise threatening stomping character.

Rhythmically, Beethoven presents several varieties, some solemnly hymn-like, other syncopated, energetic and march-like. Similar variations are made in instrumentation and harmonisation. In the symphony, its various settings explore its wide range of expressive potentialities, from the simple and steady folk-like hymn singing, reminding of the Lutheran Reformation tunes that Bach turned into high art, to the more urgent march of struggle and optimism in the 'Turkish' variation, as well as a series of complex fugato treatments. In the symphony movement's coda, there is also a version that is reminiscent of the operatic anthem type, so that Beethoven himself in his symphony suggested at least three of Boyd's main anthem varieties: hymn, march and opera.⁴⁰⁰ The various rap and Roma variations mentioned above have a similar function of exploring the signifying potentials of the core melody. But certain modifications are made already in the standard versions presented as the European anthem at various EU websites.

The French composer Christophe Guyard's September 2000 arrangement of the anthem, supported by the Council of Europe, has roughly the same tempo as in Beethoven's symphony movement (140 bpm).⁴⁰¹ Lucidly performed by a small orchestra, its 41 seconds just include the main theme without any introduction or ending, nor any repetition. It avoids the ceremonial as well as the march-like character of other versions and appears more like a kind of relaxed cinematic background than a hymn. It is drawn from Guyard's 6'34" long 'Rhapsodie sur l'Hymne Européen', where it is surrounded by a fluid rhapsody of intertwined voices. It does not interrupt a chaotic torture like in Beethoven, but rather with light hand evolves from a playful mix of musical ideas that gently crystallise into the hymn tune and ends with some elegantly shimmering brass chords. This arrangement does not at all invite any singing or explicitly reminds the listeners of the hidden lyrics, but may perhaps be heard as a purely musical illustration of joyful happiness in the merging of different musical voices.

The more well-known original arrangement made by Herbert von Karajan in 1972 is much more solemn, dark and dense than Guyard's, with a Romantic nineteenth century feel, and definitely leaning towards the hymn type rather than the mid-tempo march that is more prominent in Beethoven's original setting.⁴⁰² Karajan recorded one vocal version and one with wind orchestra; the latter is in focus here. The tempo is also considerably slower (115–128 bpm) than in Beethoven's original version (140–160 bpm).⁴⁰³ The total time length of 2'14" (in some versions 2'07") includes four introductory bars with the five first notes of the melody performed twice, rising up against a G major chord; then the 24-bars anthem melody twice in C major, first *piano*, then *forte* with full winds and percussion; and finally a 4 bars coda. The first hymn performance is presented with soft and quiet woodwinds, the second with louder percussion and brass instruments added as well. There is no transition in between, but they follow immediately after one another. The second repetition has some very slight echoes of Beethoven's *alla Turca* version, in the celebratory triangle and flute, but not at all in any noisy or rough way, rather adding *festivitas* to the solemn joy this arrangement expresses. The whole arrangement signals an almost sacrally serious, ceremonial, officious and pompous art music that seems to invite a reverential procession and/or communal hymn singing. Karajan's arrangement thus effectively downplays the Dionysic element, reinforcing the effect of omitting Schiller's lyrics.

Some existing 1'00" versions of Karajan's arrangement only have one verse plus the coda. There are also other versions with Karajan's sound, for instance a 2'27" vocal one where the hymn is after a slightly different introduction repeated three times in different keys, resulting in a forward-oriented progression with a stepwise release of tension (F#→B→G→C), and with shifting transitions between each part, probably intended to increase the climactic progression effect.⁴⁰⁴

Different sources thus offer shifting versions of the anthem, but some elements remain roughly constant, compared to its original symphony setting.

1. All of them place the tune in completely different context, either without any introduction and ending at all, or sometimes with just a couple of bars of brief intro and fade-out. Esteban Buch laconically notes that Karajan has made a kind of cut and paste exercise from Beethoven's movement, adding a clear beginning and end to keep it within a strictly confined two minutes format.⁴⁰⁵ This *decontextualisation* cancels every hint of the ode as rising from the ruins of chaotic aggression that was so crucial for Beethoven as well as for the EU founding myth discussed in relation to Europe Day above.
2. The musical narrative is *linearised*, as all musical parameters are accumulated and heightened with each repetition, leading up to a unique moment of apotheosis where the anthem simply ends.⁴⁰⁶ While Beethoven went through a series of

grave challenges into a carnivalesque celebration uniting highly contradictory musical elements, the EU anthem simply builds up a climax effect, reducing the implicit meaning to one of growth and increasing strength.

3. The anthem is normally performed in a considerably slower tempo and with a simplified instrumentation, texture and timbre compared to the symphony, resulting in a conventional ceremonial or even *sacralised* hymn feeling, lacking the vivid energy that Beethoven inherited from the late eighteenth-century French revolutionary music.
4. All anthem versions perform the tune in the *simplified* and more straightforward form it had in the first parts of the symphony movement, with no real polyphonic counterpoint and very faint traces, if any at all, of the wilder and noisier arrangement Beethoven used for the contrasting ‘Turkish’ section. In one way, this aspect tends to diminish the relevance of Žižek’s comments for the anthem as such, but on the other hand it verifies that the Oriental representation is repressed by official EU policies.
5. The *devocalising* decision to omit the lyrics silences the original narrative element and paves the way for the much more simple formal arrangement mentioned above. Some European citizens will remember fragments of the lyrics, at least the word ‘Freude’ (‘Joy’) that is included in the title of the anthem. Still, the avoidance of words has important repercussions on what the anthem signifies.

The symphony movement analysis above showed how Beethoven’s music together with Schiller’s lyrics depicted war-like chaos being silenced by a gathering of forces, first in tranquility and then developing into a climactic dance: from chaos to harmonic union and then carnivalesque joy. The original lyrics and music thus combined to give the communion a Dionysian twist of ecstatic happiness. The orgiastic happiness of the Promethean ‘fire-drunk’ brothers is much more in line with the self-forgetting desire expressed in the Europa myth than with Captain Euro’s perfect efficiency—it actually is reminiscent more of the Captain’s main enemy Dr D. Vider’s carnivalesque circus. Schiller’s and Beethoven’s praise of universal brotherhood that knows no boundaries also hints at the hybridity of the classical myth as well as of the egalitarian theme of the European flag and the motto ‘united in diversity’, though here more as a momentary—liminal or subliminal—ritual than in any permanent institution-building. But all this is silenced in the official instrumental version.

It should be remembered that the initial motivation for at all adopting an anthem was to get a basis for communal ritual activity on solemn occasions such as Europe Day. When the anthem was finally adopted without lyrics, this gave rise to a strange

paradox that seriously limited its signifying potentials. Who sings an anthem without words? Are citizens supposed to whistle or hum? In practice, the use of an identificatory anthem lies in using it, and in particular for crowds to sing it jointly, which becomes so much more difficult when there are supposed to be no lyrics to the song! It seems obvious that the repressed lyrics will still contribute to how the anthem is perceived and interpreted.

While the anthem was selected to celebrate shared values of freedom, peace and solidarity, Beethoven found Schiller's words necessary to adequately express precisely these values. Music historians agree that instrumental music did not suffice to express Beethoven's ideas at this specific point in the Ninth Symphony.⁴⁰⁷ The path-breaking decision to introduce a choir and sung words in a symphony was a necessary step in order to express the ideas he wished the work to embody. Beethoven himself made that very clear, by taking the extraordinary measure to add vocals to a symphony, and also by the way he constructed the musical texture of the finale movement. In the 6 minute instrumental introduction to the finale, fragments from the preceding movements are presented and each time stopped by an increasingly impatient double bass. The 'Ode to Joy' melody then appears as a kind of alternative solution in a hopeless situation, a final rescue in a cul-de-sac of humanity. The melody is first tentatively presented by woodwinds that are interrupted again by 'negotiations' with the sceptical bass, but then the strings start playing it with growing confidence, building up a dramatic crescendo. However, this is not the whole story: it is here that the composer seems to betray his respect for the necessity of words and human voices to convey his core message. There is a new stop, and that is where the bass voice recitative enters ('Oh friends, not these tones!') to introduce the singing of the 'Ode to Joy' lyrics. The melody itself does not seem sufficient to stop the chaotic tragedy: human verbal expressivity is a necessity. This makes the omission of lyrics in the European anthem even more problematic. When the music was adopted as anthem without words, the German lyrics having no official status and not being used by the EU, then it remains an open question how the music in itself could manage to have that function in the absence of the lyrics that Beethoven himself could not manage without. One may seriously doubt if Beethoven could ever have agreed with the EU website: 'Without words, in the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity for which Europe stands.'⁴⁰⁸ If so, that would probably be just because those who use the anthem will always also remember at least some parts of the original lyrics to which it is sung in its original symphony context.

To briefly sum up this last discussion, the omission of the lyrics thus has two main consequences. (1) On the semantic level, it represses an element of signification that even Beethoven himself found necessary, hiding the verbal narrative away and reducing the total expressive force of the anthem. (2) On the pragmatic level, it contradicts the original motivation for adopting an anthem by reducing it from a basis

for communal singing that could interactively help forge an emotionally supported sense of co-presence with others to a kind of cinematic soundtrack as a backdrop for other activities where citizens participate more as consuming audiences than as members of a European community.

The words were left aside by a combination of reasons.

First, though rarely acknowledged, there seems to have been a reluctance to adopt a *German text* that had been loved by Adolf Hitler—and which yet has no really established and attractive English (or French) translation either. In any case, it was explicitly argued that Europe could not just have a *monolingual* anthem. Just as the motto immediately got translated into all main European languages, the song lyrics perhaps also should. This would then however be a much more difficult task than for the short motto, and would also risk causing confusion when the anthem is sung by transnational congregations. Doubts were expressed whether the words could at all be satisfactorily translated to all European languages and accepted by all parts of the continent.

The choice of a German tune with German lyrics had a controversial subtext that was sharpened by in 1972 letting the famous Austrian conductor Herbert von Karajan make the official arrangement and recording, which was released by Deutsche Grammophon and broadcasted on Eurovision on 5 May that same year, together with a message in 30 languages on images of Karajan, Berliner Philharmoniker and the European flag.⁴⁰⁹ Karajan was skilled in marketing himself in the media and had conducted a series of admired recordings of Beethoven's symphonies. As Buch points out, there was also a certain logic in letting the new hymn of universal peace and brotherhood be sung from the heart of Europe, on the ruins of the *Third Reich* terrors.⁴¹⁰ Yet, the choice was highly problematic, as he had been a member of the Nazi party, which Buch feels compromises the humanist ethical claims of the EU and its anthem.⁴¹¹ Buch also notes that contrary to national anthems and also to Beethoven's Ninth, which is in the common domain, the European anthem legally remains Karajan's work, for which he receives copyright fees.⁴¹² The same applies to Guyard's more modern arrangement. It certainly is paradoxical that the EU has agreed to let an anthem that is supposed to belong to the whole of Europe remain the private property of living individuals who actually have 'only' arranged a song taken from Beethoven!

A different argument was also explicitly made when the anthem was to be decided. There were sincere doubts that Schiller's lyrics were actually *too universal and not specifically European*. This is a very interesting objection. One may well argue that universal human rights are a key European invention, with the Enlightenment and the French 1789 bourgeois revolution as milestones. But if Europe today needs something more specific to define itself and distinguish itself from other continents, must then universality be avoided and replaced by some kind of regional uniqueness? Is this in fact—tending to contradict the 'united in diversity' motto—a step back to exclusionary

self-identification of the traditional kind that leans heavily on differences between Fortress Europe and its surrounding others, the West and the rest?⁴¹³ The conflict of interpretations has not reached any firm conclusion in this respect.

Beethoven's modification of Schiller's lyrics was thus deemed to be both too specific (German) and too general (universal). Many European officials and politicians expressed a hope for some future 'genius' to be able to provide a new and acceptable, more properly European text in the main European languages. This will remain highly difficult due to linguistic and cultural differences within Europe. Meanwhile, in order to at all get the tune accepted by all European states, the compromise was to have it without words, which makes it difficult to actually sing it jointly, thus paradoxically annulling the original motivation behind an anthem in the first place: to occasion communal singing. The instrumental anthem silences the collective human voice that Beethoven found essential to introduce to convey his intended meaning of the ode, and which the whole idea of having a European anthem in many ways continues to be dependent upon in order to function as a ritual marker of collective identity.⁴¹⁴

Esteban Buch concludes: 'Thus, the European anthem will not be vocal music, nor instrumental music, but well a song where the lyrics is missing, an unfinished symbol.'⁴¹⁵ This critical formulation may perhaps open up for a partial rescue of the anthem, as the lack of words gives the music a chance to transmit its message across linguistic barriers, in a kind of 'universal language', which is a widespread (though highly problematic) presupposition about music's innate capacity.⁴¹⁶ It was previously argued that the open circle of the European flag also in a sense presented an unfinished symbol, inviting other actors to step in and fill it with shifting contents. The textless tune could likewise be used for karaoke, opening up a sonar space for singers to fill with expressive activity.⁴¹⁷ What from a critical perspective is an empty void may then simultaneously imply an invitation for participation. In any case, the original lyrics linger in the background for those who know a little bit about Schiller's poem or Beethoven's symphony, and at least the anthem title hints at happiness as a core value, coinciding with the desire and pleasure of the Europa myth.

Even though the anthem has excluded so much of its original context in Schiller's and Beethoven's works, it is still full of tensions, paradoxes and contradictions, which Buch clearly points out.⁴¹⁸ First, the anthem is a musical translation of the universal values of joy and brotherhood, but is forced not to explicitly express those same values. Second, it is supposed to express collective European democratic principles but is the work of a former Nazi. Third, the anthem illustrates the rootedness of the EU symbols in the nation-state tradition, but also the wish to be different from this tradition and develop truly late modern and transnational symbols. Fourth, it is to incarnate the 'voice of the Europeans' but with its silenced lyrics is impossible to sing. Only the music but not the lyrics have official status:

Signifying Europe

The hymn confirms the emblematic position of the ‘Great Composer’ Beethoven within a mythology of ‘Great Europeans’. But by excluding Schiller’s lyrics from its performance, the hymn refuses the ritual, established since the first modern national hymns, of using a single voice to express a community of citizens. This paradox has sometimes been felt to represent a failure, a sign of the ‘unfinished’ character of the symbol. But at the same time it may be taken to suggest the openness of Europe. In this sense, the hymn signifies Europe’s refusal to adopt a fixed identity, and marks a deliberate break with nationalist discourses.⁴¹⁹

Buch sees two possibilities. Either Europe copies national symbols in defining European identity through a gesture of excluding all others: ‘strangers, immigrants, other states, other continents, the excluded of all sorts—all that “whole world” that was united in the universal brotherhood Schiller and Beethoven sang of’. Or else, Europe could be faithful to the unfinished anthem in striving to remain a land of hospitality and openness.⁴²⁰ The whole discussion about this anthem thus links back to central and unresolved dilemmas for renewing a transnational European identity. There is a great political problem in how to integrate the experience of brutal wars and of Nazi genocide in Europe’s historically anchored identity. Beethoven’s Ninth can be heard to do precisely that, as did in a way the Europa myth. Whether Karajan’s anthem manages to do the same is open to debate.

With Foucault or Adorno, one may perhaps want to step out of the interpretive entanglement and refrain from offering any new meaning for this tune, but rather respond to it with silence. Cook and Žižek walk another way and instead offer new and critical interpretations as their method to go against ideological uses of the music. This is also in line with Paul Ricoeur’s recurring hermeneutical argument that the only way to react to problematic readings of a text is by proposing better ones, and thus to contribute to the unstoppable conflict of interpretations. This is precisely what I have strived to do here as well.

A brief look at how the anthem has been received indicates that some voices have really found it difficult to accept a song that was venerated by Nazi Germany as well as by apartheid Rhodesia under Ian Smith. In 2008 European Parliament, Jim Allister (NI, UK) was one of the few who went against both the anthem and the flag:

Ode to Joy which we are going to purloin may be a very nice tune, but so is Jingle Bells and like Jingle Bells it heralds a fantasy, the fantasy that the EU is good for you. But unlike Jingle Bells, it will damage your national sovereignty and the right to control your own destiny. More, like code to destroy, than Ode to Joy.⁴²¹

A brief mention of the European anthem in the web newspaper *Telegraph.co.uk* in 2009 immediately attracted more than 100 comments from predominantly British readers, most of them hostile towards the idea of substituting national anthems with a European one, for instance at sports events.⁴²² One example was Darby Allen: ‘The Franco-German Empire is not a nation, so cannot aspire to a national anthem’; another Balor Bericks: ‘the British people are not part of Europe and never will be’ (both 2009-11-16). John from Finland suggested: ‘If you hate Europe so much then move your island to the pacific’ (2009-11-19), to which signature ‘midenglander’ responded: ‘We Brits cannot accept an EUSSR, a successor to Napoleon’s Continental System or Nazi Germany’s Europe’ (2009-11-21). A more balanced view was expressed by John Morgan (2009-11-18): ‘A European anthem would have its place in pan-European affairs where a national anthem would be inappropriate. It could also be used as a salute to the European president on a state visit outside his or her home country, followed by the national anthem of the host nation.’ An interesting proposal came from tony (2009-11-17): ‘How about changing the anthem every year and using the winning entry from the Eurovision song contest as the anthem.’

The many lists of comments to YouTube recordings of the European anthem mainly contain political debates, but there are also some views on the choice of music. For instance, ‘timpani112’: ‘the most prominent reason why I hate the EU so much is probably this freaking anthem. It’s originally from Beethoven’s 9th symphony where it is played in d. Here however, it’s played in b, dragging the reputation of the song in the mud. Why did they have to ruin such a beautiful song?’ Some find it awful (‘Who wrote this shit?’), others love it (‘I dont like the eu much but it has a good anthem’). ‘Waranoa’ is surprised: ‘That’s Beethovens 9th! I didn’t know that was our anthem! Hurray for Europe, the silliest and most wonderfull place on earth!’ Several also comment on the missing lyrics, some finding the German text ‘just beautiful’, others like ‘UnbirthXXI’ suggesting to ‘use sentences from several european languages, it would contribute to the “european” feeling of this song’. Unintentionally highlighting a tension between Schiller’s lyrics and the European motto, ‘vlamara123’ thinks ‘this piece expresses the beautiful thought of Europe: together without differences!’

In sum, it is hard to find outside the EU hard kernel any great enthusiasm over the anthem, but neither has it stirred up any overwhelming opposition.

Comparisons

Comparisons may fruitfully be made with (1) anthems for other nations or supranational unions, including alternative tunes proposed for Europe; (2) tunes for European organisations; (3) other pieces of music identifying Europe, mainly through lyrics.

(1) In the discussion at the ‘What Story Should Europe Tell’ website mentioned in Chapter 6, it was the anthem that sparked the whole debate. The administrator initiated the debate by asking if the anthem could be played at European sports events such as the EuroCup or Champion’s League. The critical user Gheryando found this idea ‘ridiculous’ since this is ‘an artificial anthem’ that may well be used at political ‘meetings, or celebrating important EU dates’, but not otherwise.⁴²³ He argued that ‘a symbol must mean something to people’, but people have little attachment to European symbols since they have not through a long history been anchored in public consciousness and memory and thereby linked to collective identity: ‘Most EU symbols are empty’. His counter-examples were the Portuguese National Anthem ‘A Portuguesa’ and the French ‘La Marseillaise’, both of which were linked to historical events of great and continued importance to the citizens of each country. By comparison, the European anthem seemed irrelevant to him: ‘What does the “anthem” of EU mean...?’ Therefore, it should not be imposed ‘in all events in Europe’, though it may be useful to just celebrate important EU dates.

Like ‘Ode to Joy’ in its slow Karajan adaptation from 1972, the British national anthem ‘God Save the Queen/King’ is of the hymn type, though in triple time. It has been widely used in other works as well: for instance by Beethoven who in the early 1800s developed it into a set of piano variations (WoO 78, 1803) as well as in his battle symphony *Wellington’s Victory, or The Battle of Vitoria* (op. 91, 1813). Even if the British and European anthems belong to the same main category of rather slow and solemn hymns, Beethoven’s ‘Ode to Joy’ actually has more melodic and rhythmic similarities with the French ‘La Marseillaise’, which is an anthem of the more energetic march type (and which in turn is also related to the socialist ‘The Internationale’). The melodic structure is more similar, with a rising arch ending in a fall back to a stable level, as is the march-inviting 4/4 time. This is not surprising, given its inspiration from songs and marches of the French Revolution. In the symphony context, it is also performed in a steady quasi march-like tempo, though its melodic contour is considerably more calm and limited than the bolder ‘La Marseillaise’. In comparison to many European national anthems, ‘Ode to Joy’ seems to present a kind of common denominator: a strict basic melody of folk-like character, avoiding extravagant embellishments that would bind it to any specific nation or region. This way, in line with its composer’s intentions, it makes itself available for representing transnational humanism, and thus for pan-European unity, even aspiring to universality.

There are various ways for national anthems to solve the linguistic problems that caused the European anthem to be deprived of its lyrics. There are of course always immigrant populations that problematise the idea of a dominant national language everywhere, but also prominently bi- or multilingual nation states such as Belgium, Finland, Spain or Switzerland still have sung national hymns with lyrics, with varying

degrees of acceptance. The original French lyrics of the Belgian ‘La Brabançonne’ (The Song of Brabant) from 1830 has continuously been revised to avoid anti-Dutch elements, and of course also has a version in Flemish. Given the internal tensions between the Vallonians and the Flemish, it is no surprise that the lyrics have no official status, but still the song is actually used in practice. Finland’s ‘Maamme/Vårt land’ (Our Land) from 1848 was written in Swedish but has a Finnish translation. It is again not officially legislated but used in practice. Switzerland’s official anthem ‘Schweizerpsalm’ from 1841 has its text in all four official national languages, that is, translated from the German original to French, Italian and Romansch. Only the Spanish ‘Marcha Real’ (Royal March), going back to the mid-eighteenth century, is mostly performed without words, and its link to the royalty makes it problematic for semi-autonomous regions like Catalunya and the Basque countries. In Kosovo, the European anthem is also often played, as an act of respect for EU’s role in assisting the process of national independence. Since 2008 it has a conventional national anthem named ‘Europe’ that has no lyrics, in order to avoid discrimination of any of its ethnic groups, while neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina has chosen to have an anthem with lyrics available in both Bosnian and Serbian language.

There is no officially established anthem for the whole of Asia, North or South America, but the African Union has in 2010 adopted an official African Union anthem, ‘Let Us All Unite and Celebrate Together’.⁴²⁴ It is on various websites played by a wind orchestra in a classical European-French slow military march style, but there is also a set of lyrics presented both in English and in French:

Let us all unite and celebrate together
The victories won for our liberation
Let us dedicate ourselves to rise together
To defend our liberty and unity

O Sons and Daughters of Africa
Flesh of the Sun and Flesh of the Sky
Let us make Africa the Tree of Life

The next verses speak of joint singing for fighting together ‘for lasting peace and justice on earth’ and of joint working for Africa as ‘the cradle of mankind and fount of culture’. The tune thus seamlessly inscribes itself in the European anthemic tradition, but the lyrics recontextualise it into a postcolonial context. Africa is not so much elevated to a supreme position (as is the case with Europe) but rather described in terms of roots and origins of mankind and culture, with political liberation, cultural creativity and unbroken ties to nature as main values, and with a union seemingly (and unrealistically!) unthreatened by any internal divides.

Signifying Europe

From the end of the war in 1945 to the adoption of the ‘Ode to Joy’ in 1972, a large number of alternative anthems have been proposed for Europe. Here, just one example will be scrutinised. On 9 May 1948, at the Hague Congress that was the cradle of much of the following European unification measures, a municipal brass band supported the participants singing in several languages the anthem ‘Europa Één!’ (‘Europe Unite!’), specially created by Dutch composer Louis Noiret and Dutch lyrics by H. Joosten, translated also to English, French and Italian.⁴²⁵ The first verse lyrics paint a gloomy picture:

The world of today is overshadowed and grey
her people have suffered much sorrow.
And after the tears of the past bitter years
they pray for a brighter tomorrow;
But from distant shores there are rumours of wars
that threaten all Europe’s foundations,
So this is our call to one and to all,
Unite! Just as one mighty nation.

Precisely two years before the Schuman Declaration, uniting is here depicted as a safeguard against new dividing wars. The verse melody is in f minor, gently oscillating up and down, but the mood slowly evolves into more optimistic sounds, in particular when the F major chorus breaks in, with a fanfare-like figure reminding the listeners of the opening of ‘La marseillaise’. The call for Europe to unite ‘as one mighty nation’ expresses a federalist perspective that would not be supported by the more sceptical voices that remain against all efforts to fuse the EU into a new supra-level nation state, and also tends to contradict the ‘united in diversity’ motto and other policies later developed to safeguard against such a melting-pot strategy. The chorus then defines the leading values for this union: ‘Europe unite for happiness and freedom! / Europe unite to win enduring peace!’ Echoing the ‘Ode of Joy’, happiness, freedom and peace demand a union that is also a matter of ‘strength’ and ‘might’. The second verse calls for Europeans to ‘save all our glorious tradition’ in a central position, squeezed between ‘the East’ and ‘the West’—reminding of west and central Europe’s political wish to uphold some kind of sovereignty between the Communist Bloc and the United States. The third verse focuses on welfare issues: ‘There are riches to spare for all peoples to share’, calling for ‘good, honest labour’ to provide new wealth. Thus, the song illustrates precisely the agenda of the formation of modern European unification, combining peace and brotherhood with joy and happiness as well as with strength and expected new riches. While hybridity is not openly focused in this song, there is obviously an expression of desire and pleasure in joining forces. There is also a clear sense of elevation both in talking of Europe’s ‘glorious tradition’ and in the image of union as a

a continuous crescendo from the gentle beginning up to a full climax with timpani and trumpets as the choir sings: 'And all the people rejoic'd, and said: God save the King, long live the King, may he live forever! Alleluia, Amen.'⁴²⁶ These words are then repeated in shifting combinations with musical motifs.

Whereas Händel's *Zadok* lasts for more than 5 minutes with a 90 seconds instrumental introduction and a contrasting middle section, the UEFA anthem is 3 minutes long, with just 25 seconds introduction. Its final 1-minute chorus is played before matches and television broadcasts. It is an adaptation made by Tony Britten in 1992, as part of the symbol package mentioned in Chapter 6, commissioned by TEAM. The music makes use of several elements from Handel's original composition, but reshuffles and transforms them to suit the new context. The UEFA anthem thus differs in melodic detail from *Zadok* much more than the EU anthem diverges from Beethoven's original work. It was performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields chorus, while a remixed version called 'Victory' has also been used, released by Polish trance/dance duo Kalwi & Remi in 2006.⁴²⁷ Its choir sings simple, disjointed and heavily repeated phrases, alternating in UEFA's three official languages: French, German and English. This multilingual montage exemplifies another way of dealing with heterogeneous situations than when lyrics are constructed in several parallel translations. The words express the strength of the teams and of the sports events: on the one hand 'These are the best teams', 'The masters', 'The biggest teams' and 'The Champions', on the other hand 'The main event', 'A big gathering' and 'A big sports event'. Together they designate the greatness of the national sports teams that fill UEFA with specific competence, and of the pan-European Champions League that is organised for them by UEFA. The climactic moment is set to the exclamations 'Die Meister! Die Besten! Les Grandes Équipes! The Champions!'

It is no coincidence that the German words in the hymn include the word 'Mannschaften', which is the standard synonym of 'teams', belonging to the many words that tend to link sports to a masculine sphere, mirrored by the persistent privileging of male football also in this traditional context. Anthony King's analysis of UEFA's visual and musical symbols hears the *Zadok* anthem reinforcing the required aura of 'tradition and quality'.

The majestic music which rises to an impressive major key crescendo signifies the installation of a new head of state. The baroque music of the *Zadok* anthem associates the Champions League with the monarchies of Ancien Regime Europe. The baroque music also interconnects with the silver house colours, for the aristocratic connotations evoked by the silver are reflected and affirmed in this noble music.⁴²⁸

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King points at a clear homology between the televised images and the musical jingle: 'Music and colours merge together as one dense signifier, communicating a concept of silver in both sound and vision.'⁴²⁹

Handel's music involves a series of lesser chords symbolizing a diverse subject population below the monarch but, at its climax, the music reconciles these lower chords into a single major key fanfare; a sovereign nation is unified beneath a supreme monarch. The Champions League Anthem communicates the same message of diverse subordinate elements unified beneath a sovereign body; the clubs are represented by the lower chords which are brought together in a majestic union under UEFA.⁴³⁰

A couple of *Zadok* clips on YouTube have attracted a lot of discussion where royalists and football fans join in expressing their love for Händel's music, even though the two groups sometimes clash, as when 'bulked' exclaims: 'its been reduced to as lowly and classless as a football anthem'. 'PremiumUnleaded' jokingly finds it 'appropriate that the first part of a piece for a coronation forms the basis for the theme of the world's most prestigious annual sporting competition'. But otherwise the discussion is more about monarchy and democracy than about the tune itself or its use by UEFA.

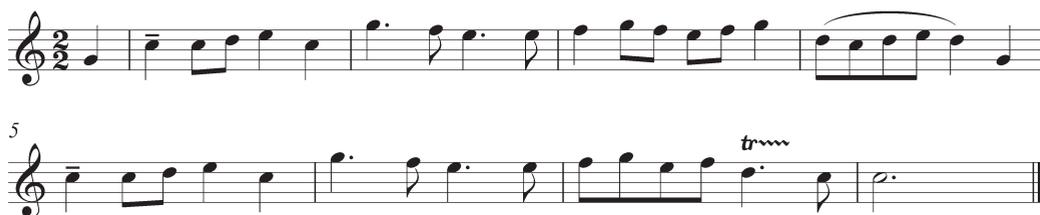


Figure 7.5 The Marc-Antoine Charpentier theme used as anthem for the European Broadcasting Union EBU and its Eurovision.

Whereas UEFA has anthem of the solemn hymn type, the televisual EBU has favoured a march (Figure 7.5). The Council of Europe radio broadcasts used excerpts from Georg Friedrich Händel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and the *Water Music*, but the EBU for its Eurovision transmissions instead selected a jingle consisting of the instrumental 'Prélude' to the grand motet *Te Deum* in D major (op. 146), composed in Paris in the early 1690s by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704).⁴³¹ In 1953, the French-Belgian musicologist Carl de Nys rediscovered this *Te Deum*, whose opening

‘Marche en rondeau’ was in 1954 adopted by the EBU as a jingle for its newly launched disseminations. There seems never to have been any serious discussion of adding any lyrics, nor any such need, since nobody expects any viewer/listener to join in singing such a televised jingle.

Charpentier composed his most famous *Te Deum* in D (one of total six) in the Jesuit Saint-Louis church in Paris. In the late seventeenth century, the Jesuits were suspected of supporting Spanish interests in France. Charpentier had studied with Carissimi in Rome, and he brought modern profane sounds into the conservative church music, with straightforward and symmetric melodies and charmingly sonorous choruses. The only 1.5 minutes long *Te Deum* prélude is an anthem of the march type, and the composer himself characterised it as ‘bright and very warlike.’ It starts with an upward swing closely reminiscent of ‘La Marseillaise.’ However, while the latter continues with fanfare motifs calling people to rise against authorities, the former instead continues with neatly rounded melodies to conciliatory harmonies. While ‘La Marseillaise’ has radical or liberal republican and universalist associations, Charpentier’s march instead seems to attract rather conservative and nationalist French royalist fans, judging from the many comments like ‘Vive la France!’ and ‘Vive le roi!’ found under recordings at various YouTube sites, where for instance ‘darlingelf’ says ‘I wish that when I die my soul is magically transported to the time of the Grand Monarch!’ and gets support from ‘Sallieri1’: ‘Heil to the Old Europe! Beautiful! Anthem of christian, strong world! Nowadays our civilisation is dead ... R.I.P.’⁴³²

A reviewer has described it as ‘a rousing bit of splendor out of which we moderns have constructed a musical icon of Louis XIV’s France’, combining ‘martial, dance-like, and intimate’ aspects into a piece that ‘evokes the close unity of church and state.’⁴³³ In the twentieth century, the media, headed by television, can be said to have taken the place of religion, recontextualising the same music to now instead evoke public service’s close unity of media culture and nation states.

With the EU, UEFA and EBU anthems, a wide range of west and central European influences balance each other. EU selected the German-Austrian-Dutch Beethoven, UEFA opted for Händel with his English basis while importing also German and Italian styles, and EBU chose the French Charpentier with some Spanish and Italian tints. Together they significantly cover the most influential of the original EU national traditions, though less relevant for the eastern and also northern part of Europe. All of them manage to symbolically elevate the bodies they represent, but while the European anthem has a republican, almost plebeian and modern ring, uplifting not by ceremonial brilliance but by quasi-natural, balanced perfection, the two others are firmly anchored in a traditional aristocratic and royal context. EU’s hesitation to the ‘Ode to Joy’ lyrics for being ‘too universal’ has no counterpart for the other two anthems, and it may well be that the republican spirit of Beethoven is less bound to Europe than the monarchist mentality found in Charpentier and Händel, though

modern elites cannot make this official EU policy. Except for all three having been recontextualised from their original uses to their respective new uses, in musical or lyrical terms none of them induce any strong sense of dislocation. There are no obvious associations to hybridity except maybe in the way the UEFA arrangement modifies the baroque style to a rather different expression, but all three may perhaps be said to embody some kind of pleasure and desire, at least in a general sense of musical luster, and to some listeners even provide sublime shivers of enjoyment.

(3) There are hundreds of other musical symbols of Europe, if counting not only tunes representing various European organisations but also programmatic art music and popular songs with lyrics that characterise Europe and Europeanness. I will here focus on the latter kind, and in particular songs presented in EBU's ESC. Among the more than one thousand songs performed in the ESC finals 1956–2010, five had 'Euro' in their titles and a lyrical topic that explicitly thematised Europeanness—the Belgian Telex: 'Euro-vision' (1980), the French Cocktail Chic: 'Européennes' (1986), the Irish Liam Reilly: 'Somewhere in Europe' (1990), the Italian Enrico Ruggeri: 'Sole D'Europa' (1993) and the Spanish Rosa: 'Europe's Living a Celebration' (2002). To these should be added the winner of 1990, Italian Toto Cotugno's 'Insieme 1992' with its repeated chorus line 'Insieme, unite, unite, Europe'.⁴³⁴

In 1980, Telex's 'Euro-vision' (by H. Dirks = Jacques Duvall = Eric Verwilghen) gave Belgium a seventeenth position (third last) in the Dutch Hague finale. Three men in black suits, blue shirts and white scarves—the singer surrounded by two synth players performed a kind of comic song, the singer ending by pouring out golden confetti (apparently symbolising the European stars, in a double sense) from his pockets and then taking out a mini camera to take a photo of the audience/camera, while the first two bars of Charpentier's Eurovision theme is heard played with a thin, plastic sound. Both the performance and the (French) lyrics are distanced, ironically mocking the whole event in which they take part. The first verse talks of beautiful singers nervously getting ready: 'May the best win / The borders are open.' The chorus just monotonously repeats 'Eurovision, Eurovision'. The link between stars and media is tight: 'Old Europe cheers the country that wins'; 'The eyes of the whole world are waiting, impatiently / for news flashes / that are going to announce / by satellite and by shielded cables / what's happening in their regions.' The song thus depicts the ESC itself as an artificial media event, with only one clear hint towards identifying Europe, namely that it is 'old', which links to a tradition of seeing Europe as endowed with a mature civilisation but can in retrospective also be seen as confirming the western confines of how it was then defined.

In 1986 in Norwegian Bergen, France also stood as number 17 (of 20) with Cocktail Chic's 'Européennes' (by Michel and Georges Costa). The quartet of female singers were dressed in much gold and typical 1980s' outfit (poodle hairstyle, long wide sweeping coats) and made simple, synchronised gestures. The lyrics talk of 'European girls' who

'feel like going away / when there's no more sunshine in the house'. This celebration of holiday trips first stays within Europe's borders, mentioning Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Capri, London and Paris as destinations. However, there is then an allusion to the globally connecting force of US music culture: 'We're European girls / and the things we love / we find them here, from London to Paris / even if the music is connected / live from Radio L.A.' Yes, 'We like the old continent / with background music USA', and to the global outlook is then also added images of 'Indian summer' and 'African sunsets'. In fact, there is an increasing ambiguity opening up a rift in the initial Eurocentrism, when at the end the words 'The weather is nice in California / but Saint-Tropez is also good' seem to place Europe as the second best. The song describes Europe as a united but diverse site of pleasure, and compares it as an old continent with the youthful United States as a given centre of the modern universe.

These two songs thus propose popular music, television media and tourism as uniting tools. This unification still only included the good 'old' western half of the continent. It was no mere coincidence that it was in Zagreb, Slovenia 1990, the year after the breakdown of the Communist Bloc, that no less than the two most successful tunes explicitly thematised European fraternity. It was evidently a moment where good music makers, artists and producers agreed with the wide audience that the European project had a renewed urgency. Still none of these two tunes explicitly widened the concept of Europe to include also the part that had for so long been confined behind the iron curtain.

On a joint second position (with equal votes as France) was Ireland's Liam Reilly with his own 'Somewhere in Europe'. Singing from his grand piano, dressed in shirt and tie but a loose brown jacket and trousers, and backed by two female singers, Reilly sang as an 'I' to a 'you' about having been separated but wanting to reunite: 'We should be together, and maybe we just might / if you could only meet me somewhere in Europe tonight.' The text mentions a wide range of European destinations—Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, German Black Forest, the Adriatic Sea and Seville—all of which are firmly located in the old, western part of Europe, and again focuses on tourist destinations and leisure-time practices. Such nostalgia for happy memories of lazy nightlife may be interpreted as a conservative lament for old Europe's lost innocence, rather than a celebration of the recent developments.

Italy won that same year of 1990 with Toto Cotugno's own composition 'Insieme 1992'. It was characteristic that this year the old West European nations favoured Ireland while Italy got more high points from the comparably few East European countries that had at that time entered the competition. Cotugno was a popular singer, performing here in all white, in front of five mixed-gender backup vocals. The song has a typical Italian pop sensibility, with melody hooks that are easy to remember and sing, and the song builds up an increasing pressure as it rolls along; a real popular hit with a symphonic sound on a steady walking beat. 'Insieme' means 'together', and the

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song is strongly focused on its repeated chorus 'Together, unite, unite, Europe', sung in English while the rest of the text is in Italian. Its central lyrics much more explicitly relate to current EU policies, though of course with the more intimate and personal double meaning needed to make it a real hit:

With you, so far and different
With you, a friend that I thought I'd lost
You and I, having the same dream
Together, unite, unite, Europe

And for you, a woman without borders
With you, under the same flags
You and I, under the same sky
Together, unite, unite, Europe

We're more and more free
It's no longer a dream and you're no longer alone
We're higher and higher
Give me your hand, so that we can fly
Europe is not far away
This is an Italian song for you
Together, unite, unite, Europe

For us, in heaven a thousand violins
For us, love without borders
You and I, having the same ideals, mmm ...
Together, unite, unite, Europe⁴³⁵

The title's '1992' was the year when the European Communities' 1986 Single European Act planned to launch the EU; in practice the EU was established with the Maastricht Treaty in November 1993. Phrases such as 'We're uniting more and more' and 'Our stars, one single flag / We're stronger and stronger' directly links the textual universe to the EU's vision of 'love without borders', which in turn echoes ideas from the European anthem and even back to the Europa myth, as the male Italian 'I' flies away with the woman to a dream-like Europe in a manner that may well remind of how Europa was abducted to Crete by Zeus-as-bull. The union called forth here is borderless, but like in the previously mentioned songs, an element of hybridity and diversity remains in initially describing the 'you' as 'so far and different'. The several times repeated declaration of the song as 'Italian' also adds situated particularity that affirms the persistence of national differences within this union.

In Irish Millstreet the same year that the EU was established, Enrico Ruggeri—perhaps in an effort to follow up on Italy’s success three years earlier—only managed to place ‘Sole D’Europa’ at the twelfth position in the final. Ruggeri, dressed in black and white, stood alone with the microphone, singing his own emotional and rather melancholic ballad, accompanied first acoustically and in the end by rock drums and an electric guitar that gets a brief concluding solo. The Italian lyrics present a poetic reflection on the effects of war, with rather complex metaphors and a stretched-out narrative instead of concise political hooks. ‘Sole D’Europa’ means ‘Sun of Europe’, and the song is like a prayer to the sun to return to a war-stricken and forgotten Europe. A sad picture is given of a rather hopeless situation where ‘the days never change’ but also ‘the dreams never change’, and the chorus lines beg the sun to finally return: ‘Wake up, sun, so we can feel you / Today nobody asks for you / Cover Europe with light, do you remember where it is? / Come with me, fly with me, warm me up again.’ An undefined ‘they’ is said to ‘change their uniform and colour / but their tired souls wait for the sun’, and the final chorus repeats its prayer, but this time collectively: ‘Wake us up, sun, make us understand [...] Rise for us, come up with us, warm us up again.’⁴³⁶ There are many echoes here of the Schuman Declaration and even of Schiller and Beethoven, but the hope for a redeeming sun as a *dues-ex-machina* has a religious feel that differs from the dominant political tradition where Europe’s awakening is instead supposed to derive from its own determination.

A kind of religious awakening spirit returned to Tallin, Estonia in 2002 when Rosa from Spain performed ‘Europe’s Living a Celebration’, getting an honourable seventh position in the ESC competition. The song had lyrics by Xasqui Ten and music by Toni Ten, and sounded like disco with gospel influences, underlined by Rosa’s steady voice and energetic performance in sweeping black dress, and with five backing vocalists. The song leaves a strong impression, with syncopated call-and-response polyphony that creates a sense of an ecstatic congregation. The title words in English are often repeated, but all other words are in Spanish and contain no specific reference to Europe; instead they celebrate an abstract feeling of togetherness. The ‘I’ feels a thrill as a new dream (or illusion; the Spanish term can have both meanings) is born inside her, opening a way from ‘me’ to ‘you’: ‘All together, let us sing / Europe living a celebration / Our dream—our reality.’ The song is about trusting passion and love in the heart, singing together and never saying goodbye again. This may of course signify again the unified European peoples, but is abstract enough to also cover more personal love unions, in the tradition of gospel and soul music where the line between spiritual and profane love was always thin.

So far, there seems to be two main topics involved in the ESC songs of Europe. One theme that rings in all the songs is a kind of touristic celebration of Europe’s cultural density and historical heritage, with urban culture in the traditional western part of the continent in focus. A second topic that is most prominent since 1990 is a celebratory

depiction of expanded and intensified European integration. Other topical Europe songs have also competed in the ESC's national qualification competitions as well as in the ESC semifinals. Let me just mention two interesting examples.

In the 2008 Swedish finals the ESC included a hit by the popular dance music veteran Christer Sjögren, 'I Love Europe', composed by Torgny Söderberg and Magnus Johansson, with lyrics in English by the veteran Swedish hit author Ingela 'Pling' Forsman. The song title is a melodic hook that is insistently repeated, often by the female chorus in a call-and-response fashion. The song is like a glimmering pastiche or parody of traditional German-Austrian Schlager, and the visual performance is full of kitschy elements, starting with the flirting interplay between Sjögren (dressed in black suit with dark blue shirt), the camera and the can-can choir-dance girls with small hats who generously lift their blue skirts and happily dance around the singer (Figure 7.6). Sjögren has a deep and warm masculine voice that contrasts with the almost metallic voice of female background singers who remind somewhat of the ABBA sound. Metallic carillon shimmers reminding of Christmas seem to place the tune in the north, but the rhythms of an acoustic guitar and a shining trumpet instead add a sunny Spanish spice to the mix, illustrating the love of Europe 'from the sun in the south to the ice in the north'. The trumpeter is a bald musician in white suit that contrasts Sjögren's dark colours, and he also adds several funny gestures to illustrate turning points in the music. At a key moment when there is an upward chord lift (in fact the second one in this), the women fold their skirts and magically transform them into a mix of European flags, completing the symbolism in a combined verbal, musical and visual climactic moment of ecstasy. The words speak of dancing and romancing in an enchanted Europe where 'a party's going on, and we are invited'. Being together is what creates the excitement, and it is fun to hear the EU described in so enthusiastic terms:

This is magic! C'est magnifique!
 And all our people are together
 Ciao! Buenos dias! Que tal? Wie geht es dir?

In Paris or in Rome, the same good vibration
 It's just like coming home, in all of our nations
 I feel it all around, this groovy sensation
 I love Europe, we're a part of one big family
 Yes, this is the place for you and me, we're a part of one big family

Again, only 'old' West Europe is mentioned, in a touristic approach that had obviously already become a strong but also somewhat outmoded tradition, as it did not manage to even get a chance to represent Sweden internationally that year. This comically naive

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song is in a way in line with the EU motto as well as the social democratic 'People's Home' ideology, where there is room for 'everyone'. The distance is actually not that great from the Europe anthem, except that the moment of high culture elevation is totally absent. However, a slight hint of the elevation theme may be heard in the talk of a party going on to which only true Europeans are invited. Like some of the other songs mentioned above, 'I Love Europe' can be heard as an example of how the European motto of 'united in diversity' has been illustrated, while the desire of the Europa myth has here been transformed to just pure happiness, and the diversity factor reduced to highly superficial aspects of style, instead emphasising the natural unity in terms of being 'one big family'. With his deep voice and firm body, Christer Sjögren is like the Zeus bull enjoying the company of the smiling nymphs, and the falling out of the flags could then signify the dislocation resulting in the establishing of Europe. The absence of any trace of past wars and pain may be typical for a country that has not since 200 years on its soil experienced such fearful destruction.

In 2010, the Lithuanian InCulto's own 'Eastern European Funk' only made it to the semifinal, but made an explicit symbolic statement on EU's controversial expansion to the east, in stark contrast to the previously analysed song. Five boys in checkered brown trousers, white shirts and black ties, and playing with colourful plastic mock instruments, sang and danced on the stage (Figure 7.7). The music was a funky modern dance tune with a few Balkan brass elements lending it a mildly eastern sound. Let me quote the whole English lyrics, presenting a fresh perspective on unification seen from the 'new' part of the continent:

You've seen it all before
We ain't got no taste we're all a bore
But you should give us chance
Cause we're just victims of circumstance
We've had it pretty tough
But that's ok, we like it rough
We'll settle the score
We survived the reds and two world wars

Get up and dance to our Eastern European kinda funk!

Yes Sir we are legal we are, though we are not as legal as you
No Sir we're not equal no, though we are both from the EU
We build your homes and wash your dishes,
Keep you your hands all soft and clean
But one of these days you'll realize Eastern Europe is in your genes

Until that moment, only West European entries (Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy and Spain) had presented songs with an explicit focus on Europe. Here, Baltic Lithuania made a very clear statement that somehow repeats the Schuman Declaration idea of rising from war disasters to glory, but transposed onto the post-Communist experience and adding an East–West tension to the equation. This had almost two millennia old roots back in the division of the Christianised Roman Empire into a western and an eastern half. In Culto's song made explicit the mutual distrust that has surfaced both on the general political level and within the ESC, where there has since the early 1990s been a recurrent debate on how to balance the taste structures of East and West Europe, that came to disturb the already precarious balance between north and south European preferences.

Other songs outside the ESC and from other genres of popular music than mainstream pop add shifting flavours to the identification of Europe. Some join the ESC chorus by giving a positive image of Europe's historical richness and beauty, often with a kind of nostalgic memories of experiencing inter-European encounters.

German electronic band Kraftwerk's 'Trans-Europe Express' and 'Europe Endless' were released on the group's album *Trans-Europe Express* (1977), with one complete version in English and another in German. The imagery of transcontinental trains revives futurist and modernist themes of the 1920s' avant-garde. Typical for Kraftwerk, both these songs have minimalistic lyrics, with short catch phrases endlessly repeated. Repetitions excluded, the complete lyrics of 'Europe Endless' is thus: 'Life is timeless / Europe endless [...] / Parks, hotels and palaces [...] / Promenades and avenues [...] / Real life and postcard views [...] / Elegance and decadence [...]'. The central element of urban civilisation links to the theme of aristocratic elevation, while the initial and concluding combinatory pairs are highly ambivalent: eternity and repetition, reality and image, elegance and decadence. The resulting meaning is deliberately evasive, except for the linkage of Europe to classical aristocratic city culture that is problematised by the synthetic and repetitive sound structure, transforming infinite grandiosity into almost unbearable boredom. 'This song makes me feel good about being a European', writes a fan on a website for interpreting songs, but is contradicted by another: 'This song is not an ardent ode to Europe. Life is not timeless and Europe is certainly not endless, that's the point.'⁴³⁷ In a way, the two do not directly contradict each other, and both readings may well be challenged, as the song's evaluation of Europeanness is far from unequivocal and it is hard to say if timelessness is in this case good or bad.

The same album's lead song had a similar structure: 'Trans-Europe Express [...] / Rendezvous on Champs-Élysées / Leave Paris in the morning on T.E.E. [...] / In Vienna we sit in a late-night café / Straight connection, T.E.E. [...] / From station to station / back to Düsseldorf City / Meet Iggy Pop and David Bowie'. 'Station to station' is an intertextual reference to Bowie's song and album from 1976, and to his and Iggy Pop's collaboration in Berlin, where they were influenced by Kraftwerk's experimental

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style. In spite of esoteric avant-garde references and advanced musical expression, the lyrics share many thematic elements with the ESC and other popular tunes that depict cosmopolitan travels between the streets and cafés of west and central European cities.

Ex-lead singer of the English electronic synthesiser rock band Ultravox!, John Foxx (real name Dennis Leigh) in 'Europe after the Rain' (1981) speaks of a kind of archaic love reunion story: 'It's time to walk again / It's time to make our way through the fountained squares'; 'Your smile is glimmering when I say you've hardly changed / in Europe after the rain / when the nights are warm and the summer sways / in Europe after the rain.' British pop band Suede in 'Europe is Our Playground' (1997) declares that 'Europe is our playground, London is our town / so run with me baby now'—'let's take a chance / from Heathrow to Hounslow, from the Eastern Bloc to France' and 'let's make a stand / from peepshow to disco, from Spain to Camber Sands.' Terms differ from Sjögren's 'I Love Europe', but there is a celebration of diversity here too. Even more programmatic is German heavy metal band Bonfire's 'Thumbs Up for Europe' (1999) whose EU-celebrating lyrics remind of 'I Love Europe' and Captain Europe:

There's a new kind of challenge
Its colours are gold and blue
It's got a circle of stars
shining for me and you

Let's all give it a shot
ready or not
it's our destiny

Human blood is one colour
so let's make history

It's just a little step
in mankind's dream
One world united—in liberty [...]

Thumbs up for Europe—you and me
Thumbs up for Germany

This energetic rock tune was released on the album *Fuel to the Flames* that also included tunes like 'Proud of My Country' and 'Ode an die Freude' (simply a slow instrumental version of the anthem for electric guitars). However, most other tunes are less apologetic and straightforward. Some are indeed very difficult to interpret

coherently. The UK rock band Psychedelic Furs' 'Sister Europe' (1979) never actually mentions 'Europe' except in the title, and is a poetic allusion to some kind of decay and decline, with sailors drowning, talking, drinking and falling, a broken radio playing Aznavour out of tune, and new cars falling to dust. Echoing the song title, the chorus line 'Sister of mine, home again' may perhaps hint that this is a depiction of a gloomy continent where 'even dreams must fall to rules' and 'words are all just useless sound'—a suitable phrase to characterise this song itself. A listener thinks the song 'is about the continent of Europe', and offers a quite complex reading of it:

Europe is seeing all these people doing stupid things and acting out their petty, futile dramas. Europe is there the whole time through many generations and sees the same mistakes being made over and over and how everyone dies with nothing to show for it and everything eventually falls to dust. I think the person is calling Europe 'sister of mine' because he sometimes steps back and sees the big picture and starts to identify with things that are less transitory like the land which could represent the eternal witness or something. When he does this he feels like he's home.⁴³⁸

The lyrics of American indie rock band R.E.M.'s 'Radio Free Europe' (1985) are hard to understand or even hear. The 'I' seems to get off a ship in Europe (presumably from America) and expresses some kind of media critique: 'Raving station, beside yourself / Calling on in transit / Radio Free Europe / Decide yourself, calling all of the medias too fast'. Most listeners seem to agree that while the song touches upon Cold War radio propaganda, its precise meaning is deliberately vague and open.⁴³⁹

The meaning of Australian post-punk Birthday Party's 'Dumb Europe' (written by Nick Cave and Christoph Dreher, 1983) is equally hard to pinpoint, as it alludes to an intoxicated and dizzy state of mind: 'On this European night out on the brink / the cafes and the bars still stink / The air is much too thick for seeing / but not thick enough for leaning'. It then talks of utopia and destruction, catatonia and death, possibly referring to Australia's history of participation in twentieth century European wars, but it is far from clear what is meant by the chorus words 'we could all just die of shame / dumb Europe'.

In 'Fortress Europe' (2003), British electronica band Asian Dub Foundation offers one of the rare examples of a direct critique of European migration policies. From the initial 'Keep bangin' on the wall / of Fortress Europe' to the concluding 'Break out of the detention centers / Cut the wires and tear up the vouchers / People get ready it's time to wake up / Tear down the walls of Fortress Europe', the song takes a clear stand for free movement and against boundary controls: 'We're the children of globalization / No borders, only true connection / Light the fuse of the insurrection /

This generation has no nation / Grass roots pressure the only solution / We're sitting tight / 'cause asylum is a right.

Outside the mainstream pop field represented in the ESC, the topics of war, division and death stand out as a dominant thematic cluster in songs with 'Europe' in their titles, at least in indie rock, metal and singer-songwriter styles. To some extent, this supports the previous interpretation of Europe Day, the EU motto and the EU anthem. Just to pick an example, Roxy Music's melancholic 'A Song for Europe' (1973) depicts how the 'I' walks alone in Paris and Venice, remembering lost moments without any hope for future redemption: 'There's no today for us / Nothing is there / for us to share / but yesterday.' At the end of this truly melancholic song, words are also sung in Latin and French. This was written at a time when Europe was still caught between the superpowers, with a serious atomic threat looming large. British post-punk band Killing Joke's 'Europe' (1985) expresses a deep anxiety over the history and threatening future of war: 'Take up your arms pick up your courage / A black sun is rising as the gods of Europe sleep'. Catastrophes and atrocities are mentioned: 'What have they done, what are they doing? / The place I love so butchered, scarred and raped / The years have passed us, still we're fighting'. The song is desperately pessimistic: 'Glory glory how we watch in Europe / the day humanity is over / Let nations east and west tremble at the sight' until 'reason dead forever—god let it be soon'.

'Europe after the Rain' is the title of a song by John Foxx that has been reused with a completely different tune by the German thrash metal band Kreator (1992). It also spans a temporal narrative with a problematic past, a paralysed present and an even more frightening future. Today's 'indecisive government' with bizarre 'perversion' has created confusion concerning good and bad: 'Can't remember who we are', 'Emotions paralyzed', 'Terrifying industry protect departed nations / Can't get back together again / Leaving Europe after the rain / Acceptance of neo-fascist / Persecuting anarchists / Put the wrong ones on the list'. Meaninglessness and hopelessness rule in a capitalist Europe run by 'materialistic parasites'.

The Swedish melodic heavy metal band Europe was founded as Force in 1979 but changed its name in 1982, allegedly inspired by the Deep Purple live album *Made in Europe*.⁴⁴⁰ The band has never released any song with 'Europe' in its title, though it had one called 'America' (2004), indicative of the direction of identification of the band, in spite of its chosen name. However, some 1980s Swedish singer-songwriter tunes paint a similar picture as the previous ones. Jan Hammarlund: 'Jag vill leva i Europa' ('I want to live in Europe', 1981), Anders F. Rönnblom: 'Europa brinner' ('Europe's burning', 1982) and Björn Afzelius: 'Europa' (1984) all relate not to the wars left behind in the past but to a persistent war threat with missiles accumulating on both sides of the iron curtain. Hammarlund's song combines this with the other main theme, that of enjoying romantic visits to key continental cities, but in a nostalgic light, expressing the risk of loss through nuclear war. This depressing feeling lifted after 1989, and

for instance in the Swedish rock artist Tomas Ledin's 'Genom ett regnigt Europa' ('Through a rainy Europe', 2006—probably inspired by John Foxx's 'Europe after the Rain'), there is consolation in that 'I' and 'you' at least can walk together in love even though the sun is not always shining.

However, 9/11 and the subsequent challenges posed by radical Islamists have continued to fuel rather dark narratives of a Europe caught in mortal combat on its east frontier. Some songs use a dark and violent imagery to defend Europe's mission to stand up against all external threats, thus giving voice to more or less openly fascist sentiments. One example is the Belgian black/folk metal band Ancient Rites with 'Mother Europe' (1998) and the rather similar '(Ode to Ancient) Europa' (2001). 'Mother Europe' is a phrase often used in white supremacist debates on European issues. This song points out 'the proud Hellenic civilisation' as 'the cradle of Europe where it all began', then adds a series of brave and gallant regions that have added to its glory: Flemish, German, French, English, Scandinavian, Italian, Slovenian and Celtic contributions are mentioned and each briefly characterised. These 'knights' are summoned up to stand reunited and proud: 'Mother Europe born from your womb / Mother Europe on Your soil shall be my tomb'. This is reminiscent of Captain Euro's mission, but the song never explicitly clarifies if a new war is expected and who is in that case the new enemy.

The British Nazi punk band Skrewdriver's song with the same title 'Mother Europe' (1994) explicitly expresses a xenophobic creed. It mentions how 'Mother Europe's sons / faced so many tragedies at the barrel of a loaded gun' but are now protected by her 'guardian angel', 'with a flag held high': 'Mother Europe stands by our side / Mother Europe, we all live for you now.' 'So many martyrs, 'honest men' and 'warriors' have been sacrificed through history: 'For keeping Europe sacred, will be our fateful quest.' This fascist imagery shares certain aspects with the European flag's symbolism of sacredness, and Skrewdriver continues by summoning to a new war against Europe's enemies.

For far too long now we've sat in apathy
But just be warned now, before the coming tragedy
For the power and the glory stand within our reach
We must prepare the struggle for the victory we seek

Mother Europe stands by our side
Mother Europe we will die for you now

Here, the enemies are never specified, but it is not difficult to fill in the blanks by thinking of the usual Nazi combination of homosexuals, Muslims and atheist Communists as intended targets of this forthcoming battle. And in some ways a more problematic example is the song 'Europa' by Globus—a band, or rather a commercial

Signifying Europe

project propelled by the lead composer Yoav Goren's 'passion for dramatic, epic, cinematic music.'⁴⁴¹ Goren is also the co-founder of an LA-based production company for film trailers, Immediate Music, and Globus's music has an orchestral and epic tone and structure. 'Europa' appeared on their debut album *Epicon*, first released in 2006 in the United Kingdom. It has a fast but steady ground beat, with a rock sound, supplemented by a large choir and orchestra, and with short melodic phrases with a British or Nordic folk-ethnic quality that is also found in some heavy metal and black metal music. The song is organised in a dramatic flow that reminds the listeners of an emotionally dense cinematic experience, with war imagery projected on the walls behind the artists. The first verse enumerates a series of historical 'battlefields of blood and tears', including Agincourt, Waterloo, Gallipoli and Stalingrad: 'The cruellest of atrocities / Europa's blood is borne of these.' The second verse prolongs the list:

Bolsheviks and feudal lords
Chivalry to civil wars
Fascist rule and genocide
Now we face the rising tide
of new crusades, religious wars
Insurgents imported to our shores
The western world, gripped in fear
The mother of all battles here

The choir chants 'Heaven help us in all our battles' and in the chorus longs for 'glory', 'honour' and 'victory'. The new 'rising tide' soon locates the new threats coming from the east:

Descendants of the dispossessed
return with bombs strapped to their chests
There's hate for life, and death in hate
emerging from the new caliphate
The victors of this war on fear
will rule for the next thousand years

The message is ambiguous and may be interpreted either as a call for peace ('Europa, Europa / Find better days before us / In kindness, in spirit / Lead us to a greater calling') or for a final blow against the Islamic menace: 'Drop the bomb, end this fight!' In a similar double reading, the concluding exclamation 'Never again!' may remind of Käthe Kollwitz's famous 1924 pacifist drawing 'Nie wider Krieg' ('Never again war') but is also the slogan of the Jewish Defense League, which has been characterised as a right-wing terrorist group for its violent actions against Muslims. A YouTube site where 'Europa' is

published had also by June 2010 attracted 3000 comments that mostly express fear and hate against alleged enemies: 'islam is a danger to Europe', 'russia&putin will fuck europe', etc.⁴⁴² The dramatic song succeeds in stirring up strong emotions, as when 'ayrond091' sighs 'I'm asian but tottaly love this song and dream of being a european I hate asia', or when 'Mordercabrudasow' ominously declares: 'I mean there should never again be a war in europe, but there will be, a fight of christs an muslims, an We christs will win. But it will be a Fight of Brothers. One european against another, not beacouse of Land but religion!! I will fight on the front an cleanse Europe!!' Others protest that 'religion only brings war and hatred between nations', while many post short lines like 'Proud to be German [or French, Finnish etc.] and European.' The song's ambiguity is sensed by many, including 'borsza2' ('it's very contradictory, ranging from utter extremism to total pacifism'), 'cptfursten', who sharply pinpoints why it is so 'confusing' and even 'false', and 'CountArtha': 'Epicallly xenophobic ...'. The confusion clearly manages to spark off substantial debate, as the song itself can evidently be interpreted in highly contradictory ways, expressing very strong emotions but leaving the question of how they are to be directed open-ended, thus inviting a racist and 'Islamophobic' reading.

The musical styles and expressions of these songs cannot be reduced to any common denominator. Traits either from European ethnic folk music or from the European art music tradition are often used to hint at a shared legacy, just as is the case with the European anthem. However, within these wide frames, the songs can make considerably diverging statements. Like the ESC entries, the other most 'mainstream' tunes express a joyful pleasure of sharing happy experiences across borders, which is close to the message of the official EU symbols. The more artistically ambitious ones tend instead to focus on painful memories and fears of alienation, strife or even destruction, constructing Europe as something deeply problematic and filled with unresolved tensions. Many tunes are quite open in their interpretations, merely pointing at the risks of new conflicts, but some are more politically explicit: either problematising the ongoing developments from leftist positions that question the new power structures that marginalise various weak others, or a right-wing position of traditionalist nostalgia for strong nations, emanating in xenophobic, tending towards even racist and fascist discourse. What most have in common is an idea that Europe is selected for a particularly important task and challenge, again confirming the centrality of the theme of elevation.

Conclusions

The flag analysis in the previous chapter ended by underlining how the different visual symbols proposed indicate an ongoing conflict of interpretations of what Europe means. Adding an auditory symbol to the previous verbal and visual ones, the European anthem further widens but also to some extent narrows the symbolic

polysemy of officially defined Europeanness. The complex relationship between the wordless anthem, Beethoven's symphony and Schiller's poem gives ample evidence of an ongoing conflict of interpretations in this symbolic sphere, involving a confusing (palimpsestic) superimposition of different historical layers. Comparisons with other explicitly European songs further underline the ambiguities and contradictions apparent in this identification process.

1. Beethoven's composition is full of *dislocating* elements. Its introduction moves the listener restlessly between unbearable remembrances of the preceding movements, and then follows a breathtaking journey through sharply contrasting moods, from the rumbling Turkish march to the crisply glimmering stars and finally the mixing of all these seemingly disparate elements in the operatic finale. In contrast to this, Karajan's EU anthem manages to delete almost every trace of such mobility, instead presenting a fixed world of solemnity. Even the mixed roots of the 'Ode to Joy' tune itself, having transferred a melody with a popular and French revolutionary aura to become the backbone of a quasi-sacral hymn within the highest of the high arts, have effectively been played down by the slow and even tempo and the majestic arrangement. Several of the other official anthems have a similarly fixed and stable character, while the popular songs expectedly vary in this respect.
2. There are plenty connotations of desire in Beethoven's and Schiller's fused works. Many agree that Beethoven's Ninth represents a contradictory 'combination of *desire and destruction*'.⁴⁴³ A similar tension may actually be traced all the way back to the Europa myth, where violent rupture and erotic lust were closely intertwined in both the main actors. It is this destructive side of Europe's history that has led to the quest for control and security that supplements and is meant to protect the living out of joint desires, but also tends to threaten these same desires, in a negative dialectics. However, the anthem makes a deliberate move away from this ambiguity, by removing all hints of the initial chaos as well as of the Turkish march noises blurring the final apotheosis. Instead, it chooses to conform to the flag's expression of harmonious balance and thus control. Some of the analysed songs, not least Christer Sjögren's 'I Love Europe', stand closer to Beethoven in this respect, whereas others tend more to express the destructive aspect of the European heritage, as a kind of desire for disaster, often wedded to a mortally magnified desire for control.
3. Both the music and the (repressed) lyrics of 'Ode to Joy' strongly contribute to the previous symbols' emphasis on some kind of *elevation*. On the one hand, the choice of classical music, borrowed from the ultimately high-ranked composer Beethoven, and taken from one of his most mature and complex works, clearly

states a will to define Europeanness as having top quality and status. Also, both the lyrics and music contain several markers of uplifted, solemn or even divine attributes. On the other hand, they both also present a temporal narrative moving through initial troubles upwards towards a jubilant climax—and this applies to the short anthem versions as well as the full symphony movement. The same is true for several of the other examples, including the Eurovision and the UEFA anthems, as well as for some of the popular songs with European titles, where Europe is described either as a particularly happy and lovable place, or as selected for a fateful world battle against evil forces. The few dystopic songs that instead describe Europe as a particularly nasty and doomed place are critical exceptions to the by now well-established rule, but even they tend to define Europe as something special (even if bad), that is, they reproduce the trope of selectedness.

4. Finally, there are plenty of *hybrid* structures in Beethoven's original work—so much that Nicholas Cook and others have concluded that all its internal contradictions make it impossible to interpret it in any coherent fashion. Schiller's reference to humanity as becoming 'brothers' in combination with that to 'daughter of Elysium' immediately combines the two main genders, and the music then also adds different ethnic flavours, particularly the Oriental flavour of the central march section. Here again, the EU anthem carefully avoids all such complications and presents a sanitised version of Europeanness as white and (with the brass instruments) male. *Uniform homogeneity* rules, with only faint traces of any kind of diversity. This is also true for the other organisational anthems, while it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions from the popular songs. However, EU authorities' parallel release of anthem variants in a wide range of styles, from rap to romani, have again opened it up for recognising diversity, in a similar manner as the barcode has supplemented the official flag with its missing element of vital pluralism and difference.

All in all, the anthem basically confirms the main message conveyed by the flag, with a certain affinity to that from Captain Euro, depicting Europe as a rather controlled, fixed and unitary entity. However, its various contextual neighbours provide contesting identifications, and in particular the anthem's origin in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which still remains hard to repress as even the omission of the lyrics is not always respected when the anthem is performed at EU-related events, casts a shadow reminding the listeners of the heritage expressed by the Europa myth of a Europe full of dislocation, desire and diversity. As with all other official symbols, the idea of some kind of selectedness and elevation remains a constant element that in a naturalising way places Europe in the centre of its own universe, as if its status as the first geocultural world region was completely self-evident.