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Kieran Keohane

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ARTICLE



Resonance, dissonance, and the EU's 'soul': notes on Rosa's Musico-religious theme

Kieran Keohane

Moral Foundations of Economy & Society research centre, Department of Sociology & Criminology, School of Society, Politics, and Ethics, University College Cork, Ireland

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to attune to the musical theme in Hartmut Rosa's *Resonance*, not in the sense of singing from the same sheet but in a spirit of jamming and improvising, developing a *fugue*. Music, something close to Hartmut Rosa's heart, grounds us; and simultaneously, music, like all works of art, originated in the service of magical-religious ritual, and the aura of the sacred is still essential to secularized ritual. Music springs from anthropologically deep-seated needs, and music transports us towards a higher, spiritual plane of ideals. How *Resonance* may help us to respond to dissonance caused by the loss of grounds and horizons is attended to in the case of the EU's anthem.

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There is perhaps no stronger and more immediate extra-social mirror of the 'soul' of modern human beings than music ... music appears to be the very medium capable of giving direct expression ... to the various modes, transformations, and intensities of our relationship to the world. (Rosa 2019, p. 156)

1. Prelude

In Plato's *Phaedo*, even though Socrates ultimately rejects the argument in favour of the soul's immortality, the theory of the soul as 'attunement' resonates nicely with Hartmut Rosa's usage, for 'soul' is the medium between earth and heaven, ground and horizon, matter and spirit. As the strings of the lyre are ordered and held in tension by their being attached to both grounds and limits, when we are properly attuned, we are in resonance with the world and harmony is possible. 'Harmony is invisible and incorporeal, and very beautiful and divine in the well-attuned lyre, but the lyre itself and its strings are bodies, and corporeal and composite and earthy and akin to that which is mortal' (Plato 2012, p. 86). Simmias is attempting, in Hegel's terms, to 'cancel the opposition while preserving the difference' in Socrates' antitheses of materialism and idealism. Yeats (1933) resonates with this formulation, showing that in a work of art, ground and ideal, spirit and matter are inextricably bound with one another as poetic synthesis: 'O body swayed to music, O brightening glance/How can we know the dancer from the dance?' And James Joyce

similarly, when ‘the soul of the commonest object, the structure of which is so adjusted, seems to us radiant, the object achieves its epiphany’ (1955, p. 213).

Hartmut Rosa enjoys playing the organ in the church of his native Black Forest village. This grounds him, he says. His other joy is astronomy, gazing towards the limits of the starry heavens (Weyrosta 2019). Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, the *Ode to Joy*, anthem of the European Union, owes its universal resonance to the organ of the church that his father, and his grandfather, and Beethoven himself loved to play. Hartmut Rosa’s *Resonance* lets us hear how the ‘soul’ of the EU is dissonant, due to its lack of attachment to grounds and limits, and he shows us ways of attunement.

Social acceleration into hyper-modernity has meant that we have been losing contact with our anthropological grounds, in the sense of generalized shared consciousness of common foundations in anthropologically deep-seated human needs – for secure attachments, for care, for intimacy, and for trustworthy socialization, for instance; and, on the other hand and at the same time we are suffering from a loss of limits, in the sense of philosophical and moral horizons of shared transcendent ideals. The simultaneous loss of contact with structure in terms of both anthropological-sociological grounds and philosophical, moral-political transcendent limits means that what Rosa (2019, p. 8) calls the ‘vibrating wires’ between the world and our selves are missing, slack, and un-tuned. As the chords of our collective lyre are torn asunder our relationships to the world become mute, dysrhythmic, and dissonant.

Resonance and rhythm is an oscillation between ground and limit; dissonance and dysrhythmia is when there is neither limit nor ground, so there can be no vibration, no reverberation, no resonance. Only when attached firmly to one – ground, and attuned to the other – ideal, as a stringed instrument is tuned from the ‘foot’ or ‘tail’ to the ‘head’, of a lyre or a harp for example, across the bridge, along the frets on the ‘neck’ of a guitar, can resonance be created in the sound box of the body politic. The lyre represents a well-strung and harmonious social order. It was Hermes, the trickster god of politics, who made the lyre. Hermes gifted it to Apollo to calm his wrath. Apollo in turn gifted the lyre to the orphaned Orpheus, who, by playing and singing created harmony amongst people, and between people, animals, trees and rivers; and it even enabled Orpheus to come back from the underworld. Today, like Orpheus, we are orphans descending into Hades. Loss of anthropological grounds and philosophical ideals, the erosion of the moral foundations of economy and society by the accelerating global economy driven by unbridled technological growth and an unlimited profit motive is destroying the very tissue of social life. Hartmut Rosa’s theory of resonance suggests ways to stop this process by retuning our relationship to the world, in order that we may live a healthy, meaningful and good life.

2. Dissonance, and the demolition of democracy

“Move fast and break things. If you’re not breaking things you’re not moving fast enough!”
(Zuckerberg 2012)

Nikolai Tesla, the Serbian-American inventor for whom Silicon Valley’s Elon Musk named his vehicles, claimed to have affixed an oscillator to a ten-story building under construction on Wall St., Manhattan, and tuned it to the frequency of the steel

skeleton. Within a short time, the oscillator and the steel structure began to resonate with one another, amplifying one another, and the whole building began to vibrate and shake. Before his experiment ran its course, the police were called out. Tesla disconnected his machine and quietly slipped away. ‘Ten minutes more’, he said, ‘and I could have laid the building flat in the street. And, with the same gadget, I could have dropped the Brooklyn Bridge into the East River in less than an hour’ (Blair-Stewart 1999, p. 330).

Facebook is today’s oscillator-resonance-dissonance engine. Facebook’s social network is an equalizing platform on which members attune with one another, seeking horizontal resonance relations within an online community of ‘friends’ and seeking vertical resonance relations as a community of shared beliefs, aspirations and ideals. These relations begin as desires for resonance, but as the oscillation frequency of ‘similarities’ and ‘differences’ is generated by people comparing their lives and their ideas with others, all the while enviously competing for recognition in the form of ‘likes’, what begins as seeking horizontal resonance with one another and vertical resonance with shared values, beliefs and ideals, differentiates and escalates, so that ‘friends’ tend to become rivals and others tend to become enemies. In so far as Facebook [and similar social media platforms] generates ‘friend’/‘enemy’ distinctions (Schmitt 2007) Facebook becomes a systematically distorting communications machine (Habermas 1989) that breaks the online public sphere into silos, the contents of which are steered algorithmically so that they become echo chambers in which people hear voices that resonate only with their own. Facebook’s safety valve is the scapegoat mechanism (Girard 1979), hence ‘cyberbullying’, ‘trolling’, hate forums filled with vitriol are an inevitable and necessary excess waste stream that must not be closed down if the machine is to function; and that can even be fed back in to the operating system, like a turbocharger uses exhaust gasses to force an engine to accelerate even faster. Facebook is a social acceleration and dissonance machine; an infernal machine that feeds on Luciferian envy to intensify *le goût de l’infini* cathected into an artificial paradise of covetous consumption (Baudelaire 2000). A panoptic machine (Foucault 1991) that amplifies social forces to individuate, collectivize and subjectivize its members, who become part of its mechanism, Facebook is one of the core operating systems of the neoliberal new world order, and the matrix in which the subjects of that order are being gestated.

Facebook became the accelerating, amplifying machine of the social media revolution, a machine fueled by desire for resonance, but amplifying into dissonance, with a toxic waste stream of envy, vented by the scapegoat mechanism; a knowledge/power machine that includes the power to accumulate more knowledge, about its 2.4 billion users, ‘big data’ which can be converted into even more power. Congressional and Parliamentary Hearings into the role of Facebook, Amazon’s Mechanical Turk and Cambridge Analytica in the Trump election and Brexit revealed the weaponizing of powers that are intrinsic to the mimetic engine. Neoliberal plutocrats used Cambridge Analytica to fine-tune Facebook’s dissonance to individual frequencies and micro-targeted it as a demolition machine to shake down the houses of democracy. Brexit is a harbinger of a situation wherein the Rhinish and Nordic European social democratic models are repudiated and eclipsed by third-generation Free Trade deals whereby transnational corporations become ‘citizens’ that can repel taxes and

regulation. The endgame moves from legislative capture to state capture: checkmate Society; the Market wins!

3. Resonance: Music therapy for the EU's dissonant soul

If we conceive of the democratic process . . . as form of music, we can understand it as the continued modulation and moderation of both our collective relationship to the world and our own role within this relationship. Democracy then becomes a living sphere of resonance in which subjects make themselves heard but also are touched and transformed by the “singing” of others (Rosa 2019, p. 218)

At the opening ceremony of the European Parliament in July 2019 Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party MEPs turned their backs when the European anthem, the fourth movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* was played. Farage's mute gesture, turning a deaf ear, tuning out Europe, gives us a key to harmonizing dissonance and resonance in the EU.

‘The Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit was tormenting him’ (Samuel 16:14–23); which is to say that Saul and Saul's kingdom, the people of Israel was in discord; there was no horizontal and diagonal resonance between Saul and the people, and no vertical resonance between the people, Saul, and God. Saul was the first king of Israel and Judea, and so the story of Saul represents the transition of the Jews from tribal society to statehood. David plays the harp and it pleases Saul, meaning that resonance and harmony is created in the kingdom. In Vico (1999) interpretation of the Greco-Roman variant of this myth the lyre associated with Hermes, Apollo and Orpheus is a metaphor for a well-tuned harmonious social order, statehood. The individual strings represent a collective social structure, ordered in degrees of rank and division of labour, balanced, finely tuned: ‘a body comprising differences, held together by their being kept in tension, blended in due proportion’ (Plato 2012, 86b7-c7).

Orpheus, who was the orphaned child of a muse and a king, represents the convergence of music and politics, because ‘the peculiar quality of music lies in its ability to produce a highly specific form of relating to the world, one in which our relationship to the world as a whole becomes tangible and thus can be both modulated and modified’ (Rosa 2019, p. 94). The music and song that David plays to Saul represents the power of resonant speech, eloquence, rhetoric: the power to make and to modify the world by discourse. The pairing of David and Saul represents the qualities of the charismatic leader and the statesman combined: Saul and David together as doubles – youthful heroism and mature wisdom – represents the routinization of charisma and the institutionalization of legitimate authority in the kingdom. Saul is in resonance with David; the pair are in resonance with their people; and all together they are in resonance with God; for ‘divinity’, Durkheim (1974, p. 52) says, is a collective representation of ‘society transfigured and expressed symbolically’: society worshipping an idealization of itself, expressed in a harmonious collective song of praise.

But resonance and harmony are never assured, and discord and dissonance re-emerge, as the story of Saul and David's relationship becomes characterized by recurring cycles of envious rivalry between mimetic doubles. Leonard Cohen's *Halleluiah*, sings of the decomposition of relations of resonance into discord: ‘Now, I've heard there was a secret chord/That David played, and it pleased the Lord/But you don't really care for

music, do you?’ Perhaps Nigel Farage is amongst those who just don’t care for music? No; the problem is rather that in the EU the ‘secret chord’ has been forgotten, so that it is suffering from chronic and worsening democratic and legitimization deficits, and the soul of the EU is tormented by evil spirits.

The problem of Europe is a problem of scale, and not only geopolitical scale, but, metaphorically, musical scale: the EU no longer resonates! A weak base – ‘bass’- and a confused melody –‘treble’- means that creating harmony is impossible. We need an anthropology of Europe to address the question of bass – the rhythms of life: What are the deep notes of our common ground? This is at least as important as a philosophy for Europe, to recover our high notes, our shared horizon of transcendent ideals. Lacking one or other or all of these – bass and treble, grounds and ideals, and a political-economic -theological attunement as a synthesizing medium, the EU suffers dissonance in its soul. The symptom of the dis-tuned soul is the EU’s anthem: a short, hollow version of Beethoven’s Ninth, without Schiller’s lyrics. In the official account (EU 2020) ‘There are no words to the anthem; it consists of music only. In the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the European ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity.’ But the human voice is absolutely indispensable: it is essential to Hartmut Rosa’s resonance theory; it is essential to an ‘anthem’, which means specifically ‘a song, a hymn of praise’, [*antiphon* Gr]; and it is essential to Beethoven’s Ninth. If we attune to the silence of the absent lyrics of the EU’s anthem we may hear why the EU lacks resonance.

Why were Schiller’s lyrics dropped from the EU’s anthem in the first place? Schiller’s *Ode to Joy*, inspired by his reading (Kant 2007) *Perpetual Peace* had become problematic due to a paradox in the lyrics. On the one hand it calls for ‘all people become brothers’ [*Alle Menschen werden Bruder*], but with the same breath it declares a stark division: either one is part of this great joyful celebration of the cosmopolitan vision, or ‘he must slink away weeping from this Union’ [*stehle weinend sich aus diesem bund*’]. This paradox opens an abyss out of which all manner of evil has flooded, and the Ninth has a dark history of being played, and heard, perversely (Buch 2003). It was played at the opening ceremony of the 1936 Berlin Olympics; it was a favourite on Hitler’s birthdays; it was a command performance by a children’s choir at Auschwitz. ‘We have been too badly burned by those who have promised Elysium and given us gulag and gas chambers’; or as Adorno quipped ‘*Hitler und die IX. Symphonie: Seid umzingelt Millionen*’ [‘Hitler and the Ninth: Be Surrounded, Millions] (Hoyng 2011, p. 159). In 1972 the fourth movement of the Ninth was adopted as the anthem of European Economic Community (as the EU then was) – but voiceless, wordless, emptied of paradox and complexity; the Ninth, *kurt*. Nigel Farage and his Brexiteers were perhaps right to turn their backs to it, even though they did so for the wrong reasons, for what is needed is more of the Europe represented by Beethoven’s Ninth, not less.

The ambiguity of the Ninth, and the source of that ambiguity in Schiller’s twinning antithesis of unity and division is not a failing of the poetic and musical genius of Schiller and Beethoven, as though they were unaware of the paradox! Rather it represents an anthropologically deep-seated problem of the foundation of the world that it is not taken seriously enough; for this same splitting is what is echoed in Schmitt (2007) *Political Theology*’s definition of politics as making the ‘friend/enemy’ distinction, and in Vico’s (1999, 690, p. 722) reading of the mythic theme of boundary-making in the bloody rites of Vesta, wherein Vesta, Roman goddess of the household and the moral duty of hospitality

to the refugee is celebrated also and as part of the same rite, with ‘hunting down, rounding up and sacrificing those lawless, homeless, unfortunates who had trespassed on the homeland’, resonating today with Fortress Europe’s ambivalence towards refugees and assylum seekers; an ancient, primordial and foundational mythic theme – Romulus ploughing the boundary, and killing Remus for jumping over it being one well-known iteration of those ‘things hidden since the foundation of the world’ as Girard (2017) says. The paradox of the Ninth – its divergencies and complexities, cacophonies and harmonies, its dissonances and resonances, internal competitions between instruments – strings, woodwind, brasses and percussion; ranges and scales; its voices – soprano and contralto, tenor and bass, solo and choral; its reaching for higher and higher transcendences, synthetic reconciliations of the Beautiful and the Sublime; decomposing into antitheses; falling into silent voids, only from which to emerge again gloriously- all this needs to be heard not only with Kantian rational cosmopolitan ears, or even with Hegelian dialectical ears, but also with Girardian ears: the Ninth’s marvelous complexities and intensities not ascending to transcendence and Progress, but spiralling into competitive envy; its moments of unifying harmony and resonance always on the verge of collapsing into violent cacophony and dissonance, into sacrificial crisis, an ending of a Movement and a beginning-again; Beethoven’s Ninth’s four movements resonating with the four ages of Vico’s *Scienza Nova* – Gods, Giants, Men, and then . . . *ricorso*; and of course resonating also with the structure of Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* – cycles of three recurring; then an explosive thunderword; Fall; and Begin-again. The great task of the European Union if it is ever to become a model of *Civilization* rather than merely an ‘economic bloc’ is not to gloss over the paradox with a conceit of dialectical progress, or rational cosmopolitanism, expressed in the universal music of economics, but to create, foster and develop social institutions that can live with the paradox and ameliorate its worst effects.

The EU’s problem with Schiller’s lyrics in the Ninth is all the more peculiar perhaps, because the words may not even be important to the listeners; the form matters more than the content: ‘Interestingly, the music in question is rarely ever purely instrumental, even though lyrics appear to play little to no role for most listeners. This suggests only one conclusion: listeners don’t need the words, they need the voice, and this because the voice (like an elixir of life) establishes resonant relationships to the world’ (Rosa 2019, p. 65). And it is not the individual solo voice that is so essential for resonance, but voices joined in unison:

Nowhere is this more immediately evident than when singing with others, which may well explain the enduring popularity of choral singing. When everything comes together, choir singers experience a kind of “deep resonance” both between their body and their mental state and between themselves and their fellow singers, as well as the formation of a collectively shared physical space of resonance (in church or in the concert hall, etc.) [or resounding through the collective household of the EU]. In this context of fundamentally physical/bodily resonance, it is difficult not to feel at least momentarily in “harmony” with oneself and the world. And if one doesn’t, the resulting sense of alienation will be felt all the more clearly, as a kind of tension or incongruity between physical/bodily resonances and mental/symbolic “silence. (Rosa 2019, p. 64)

We will come to the voice and the choral presently, but for the moment let us pay attention to the music.

An EU anthem that resonates for European people is only possible if it attunes to the deep history of Europe's music. Rhythm and bass originated in Africa and Mesopotamia; chorus and treble came from Greece and Rome. First Constantine, and then Charlemagne harmonized the two discordant traditions in a new sacred music from which all classical and contemporary Western music derives. Bass is palpable; constant; rhythm holds us. Without bass, melody becomes frivolous, too high, remote. As the fiscal base of the collective household, the *Oikos* of the EU is eroded, the strings of social relations that could hold us all together in the rhythm of a well-ordered common life – a strong floor of good, basic, social security, health care, housing, education and public services equalized and rationally organized throughout the Union – fall slack. Weber (1978) discusses the history of the piano as an exemplary instance of Occidental rationalism, and the parallels between the technical development of an instrument, the piano-forte, on which 'soft' [*piano*] and 'loud' [*forte*] could be played simultaneously, specifically by the innovation of the cast-iron frame that maintains tension in the wires, which is the other etymology of *piano* 'floor' *forte* 'strong']. Without a cast iron frame as a strong floor, and steel wires, not only is the bass weak, but the treble, the high notes, the exalted ideals of a united Europe sound shrill and tinny; what ought to be warm notes emanating from the institutions and instruments of the EU, powerfully resonating through the collective social and body politic falls away to an irregular rhythm, a vacuous lyric, a thin falsetto. Melody dissolves, the audience stops listening, things fall apart amidst hoots and boos and derisive laughter, the concert of Europe breaks up, people turn their backs to the stage and attune instead to atavistic pied pipers and plutocrat Svengalis.

With this in mind let us now tune in to the EU's anthem, this time as Beethoven intended, with the choral. The fourth movement begins in polyphony of excitement, echoing the beginning. The unifying melody of the first movement is suggested, but it is interrupted and rejected by the basses. The theme from the second movement is then put forward, and similarly rejected. Two bars of the third movement are then proposed, but they too are dropped. The oboes then make a tentative beginning of an entirely new theme, as a way of building toward the great unity of the whole. This is finally accepted by the oboes' opposite, the basses, who play the theme straight through without accompaniment. This unifying, synthesizing theme begins to permeate the orchestra. First the first violins take it up and harmonize on it, and presently the whole orchestra is filled with it. However, the new height of synthesis reached by this beautiful theme is not comprehensive enough. The tune falters, is strongly restated, and is countered once more by the wild cacophony with which the movement began. The tune is beautiful, but a statement of it by the orchestra's instruments is not enough. A chord which sounds every note of the scale underlines the melody's inadequacy, and suddenly a new element is presented – one never before included in a symphony: the human voice. The baritone solo begins: 'O friends, not these sounds!' Beethoven declares that the music on its own is not enough to grasp and express the whole. The solo continues: 'Let us raise a song of sympathy and gladness/O Joy, let us praise thee.' In this song of praise the orchestra and soloists together strive for an ever-greater assimilation of opposites in an upward, synthesizing movement toward a transcendent, unifying and unified god-like collective voice (Buch 2003).

First, the baritone states the general theme: 'Joy, beautiful Spark of the Gods – /Daughter of Elysium/Drunk with fire, we enter/thy heavenly Shrine'. But one voice is

not sufficient. A chorus now repeats the last four lines of the solo: ‘Thy magic binds together/All that custom has rigidly separated/All people will become brothers/When your gentle wing shields them.’ Now, solo and chorus being insufficient, the second stanza is begun by the three lower voices (contralto, tenor, bass) and later joined by the soprano. Then, the whole chorus repeats the last four lines; and finally, as if to add still greater richness and resonance, variety, complexity and comprehensiveness, the four voices and the chorus join in the most powerful and beautiful vocal quartet ever written.

There follows a moment of silence, out of which the bassoon and bass drum (at the lower extreme of the scale) begins a march rhythm, against which the flute and piccolo (at the upper extreme of the scale) play a new variation of the choral theme, Schiller’s fourth stanza: ‘Hasten, brothers, on your way/Joyfully, as a hero to Victory’, blending orderliness and exuberance in a ‘Turkish march’, a form that had become popular since the Ottoman Empire and Austria had negotiated a peace treaty in Vienna in 1699. This is a counterpoint, celebration and reminder of the age-old split in Europe, between East and West, Rome and Constantinople, Christianity and Islam. Beethoven gives a voice to express and to reconcile even this abyss, first by a tenor solo, then with the chorus, all together sounding a deep-anthropological resonance in the rhythm of purposeful walking, alongside one another; and then returning again to the main theme, so that the varying, synthesizing and assimilating continue onward and upward through an increasingly complex orchestral part and vocal score that runs to 12 different lines. As the music ascends through the symphony’s upward-movement, moments of quiet are set against explosions of sound, different instruments are set against one another until orchestra, soloists and chorus combine in Schiller’s final words: ‘Be embraced, millions./’This kiss to the whole world!/Brothers, over the starry heavens/must a loving Father dwell!’

What on earth can Beethoven (using Schiller’s words) mean by this ‘loving Father’ who dwells beyond the starry heavens, for Beethoven was an atheist, according to Hayden, his teacher, he never went to church, other than in a working capacity for his ecclesiastical patrons. Though there is no doubt that Beethoven intended it otherwise – his own social, political, and moral sentiments were anti-monarchic and democratic-republican, his seditious music fell on ears even deafer than his own. Beethoven was stone deaf when he composed the Ninth. He cut the legs off his piano and lay across it so that he could feel the resonance through his body. Perhaps the Ninth found a small few appreciative ears amongst those who attended Prince Lobkowitz’s Vienna salon, but there are none so deaf as they who do not wish to hear. Austro-Hungarian court society heard the Ninth as celebrating the majesty of the Restoration of the *ancien régime*, and the ecclesiastical authorities heard it as a hymn of piety and glorification of God. More recently, on Christmas Day 1989 the Ninth was performed in Berlin by a combined orchestra of East and West and three choirs conducted by Leonard Bernstein, to celebrate the Fall of the Wall, the ‘End of History’, and the Triumph of Liberalism; and today, when the Ninth is played for audiences of Leaders, Eurocrats, and their corporate lobbyists it is heard as a hymn of worship to the sacred cows of Free Enterprise and the Single Market. The Ninth has become an empty signifier; it can stand for anything (Zizek 2007).

Rather than being empty, the Ninth is over-determined, so much so that it seems to resonate with everyone and everything. But insofar as it has been emptied, it is lacking something in particular: the human voice, and that which only the human voice can communicate as ‘elixir of life’ (Rosa 2019, p. 65). What is that ultimate word, simple, yet

profound, ‘that word known to all men’ (Joyce 1990, p. 49) a word that simultaneously expresses a universal deep human need and our highest spiritual aspiration? That word is ‘love.’ But for millions of Europeans who do not feel its fatherly loving embrace the EU doesn’t resonate at all, because if Europe is no longer ‘ambitious for the higher gifts’ as Saint Paul said to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:31–13:8a) ‘if it is without love’, then it is ‘a gong booming or a cymbal clashing.’ With Rosa’s *Resonance* we can hear what is lacking, booming and clashing in the EU; and hearing what is lacking we can see also how the EU needs re-tuning in order that it may better resonate in accordance with Taylor’s (2007) cover version of Sorokin’s (2002) song of praise for the social and political institutions of *philia* and *agape*. Sorokin (1992 [1941]), just as Taylor now, diagnoses the central malady of global Western Enlightenment/Modernity in terms of the sterility, emptiness and decadence of a culture that eschews a divine ‘supraconsciousness’ (Sorokin) or ‘transcendence’ (Taylor) in favour of an ontology and epistemology of a ‘sensate’ order (Sorokin) or ‘immanent’ order (Taylor). Contemporary civilization suffers from a morbid insatiability, hunger from lack of spiritual fulfillment, and ‘an appetite for the infinite’, and the only defense against future suicidal wars and revolutions and Apocalyptic self-destruction is ‘the Sermon on the Mount practiced in human behavior, incorporated into our social institutions, and incessantly articulated by culture’ (Sorokin 2002, p xii). But for now the ‘Father’ above the EU is very much in dissonance with the singing voices of democracy.

In the curt, wordless EU anthem he is not named, but the other key signifier, the flag, intimates the EU’s Name of the Father. ‘A flag, as such’, Durkheim says, ‘is only a piece of cloth from which no emotional meaning can be derived. However, the emotional meaning of the flag can become so dramatic that people are willing to sacrifice their life for it. The flag is the bearer of the notion of collectivity: it represents the soul of society and, as such, the flag is sacred’ (Durkheim 1995, p. 57). The flag is a ‘sublime object of ideology’ (Zizek 1989) that represents the radiant Ideal of the EU, the Name of the Father who dwells above and beyond (or perhaps is hidden behind and underneath!) the starry heavens. ‘Against the blue sky of the Western world, the stars symbolise the peoples of Europe in a form of a circle, a sign of union. Their number is invariably 12, the figure twelve being the symbol of perfection and entirety’ (Council of Europe 1955). Twelve yellow stars on the celestial blue background; 12 gods of Olympus; 12 Apostles: 12 is a ‘sublime number’ in mathematics, a number with a perfect number of divisors, and the sum of its divisors is also a perfect number. In astronomy 12 is the number of the full lunations of the moon in a year, and the number of years in a full cycle of the wandering star, Jupiter/Zeus, king of the Gods.

Two aspects of this symbolism in the flag of European Union are revealing: first, that the design was inspired by the crown of Our Lady of the Apocalypse in Strasburg cathedral, for ‘apocalypse’ means unveiling a divine plan for the end of the world; the ideal, the Name of the Father that stands in the place of the Void, and thus the Real truth of what is the EU, its ultimate goal, its eschatology. And that master signifier, the Name of the Father that sanctifies and authorizes the present European Union is not a ‘loving’ Father at all, but a demonic ‘fearyFather’ from *Finnegans Wake!*

This is revealed by second significance in the genealogy of the flag, for one of its ancestors, one of the proposed designs for the EU flag was a single yellow star on a blue background. This design was rejected, like Schiller’s words were dropped from the EU’s

anthem, because it resembled and thereby risked being an inconvenient reminder of a previous flag. That rejected, returning-of-the-repressed-unconscious flag is the flag adopted by Leopold II, King of the Belgians, of the House Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, a royal house that like a red thread links the Saxon, German, Austrian, Hungarian, Romanian, French, and English royal families, as the flag of the Congo Free State, the same yellow star against a blue background, signifying the light of European civilization brightening the sky of darkest Africa; a state wherein the ideal of Free Trade reigned supreme. ‘Freedom of Trade is complete in the Congo’, Leopold II declared (Horschild 1998). In reality, the Congo Free State was Leopold’s personal private property, so not answerable to the voice of any other political regulatory authority, under the masthead of Free Trade Leopold raped and pillaged with absolute ruthlessness, slaughtering and plundering all before him, first for ivory, and then for rubber; a complete state of Free Trade that in fact was an economy of total slavery, almost unmatched in cruelty. Leopold’s ‘active labour market policy’, as it would be called in today’s jargon, was to hack off the hands and feet of children who failed to meet his rubber-harvesting quotas so as to incentivize them and to motivate their parents. Ten million Congolese were butchered in the name of Europe’s insatiable Moloch, ‘Free Trade’, and this is the heart of darkness, the apocalypse of materialism and nihilism of rapacious private enterprise in an unregulated free market; forces ‘without law or limit.’

Roger Casement (1904) investigated and reported this first modern crime against humanity, and Casement’s conversations with Polish-English émigré Jozef Konrad were the basis of *Heart of Darkness*, the protagonist of which is the infamous Kurtz, whose name *kurtz* means ‘short’, and what has fallen short is the ideal of Europe: ‘All of Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz’ (Conrad 2009, p. 54); and this is just what Casement had uncovered, for the atrocity of the Belgian Congo was the very same throughout Africa and around the world, perpetrated by France, England, Germany, Holland, Spain, Italy, and others; that in the name of European civilization and under the flag of Free Trade global corporations like the Anglo-Belgian Indian Rubber Corporation, constituted in fact a system of ‘slavery without law or limit.’ ‘To call this “trade”’ Casement said, ‘is the height of lying’ (Casement cited in Horschild 1998, p. 202).

Kurtz is purported to be a ‘great man’ with ‘immense plans’. He eloquently expounds on the European ideals of Enlightenment and Modernity – Development, Growth, Progress – but the most striking thing about Kurtz is the dissonance between his words – his ‘inexhaustable gift for lofty expression’, and his deeds – his complete amorality; ‘he has kicked himself free of the Earth’, a freedom that has made him ‘unsound’ (Conrad 2009, p. 63). This is the ‘cold mad fearyFather’ (Joyce 1995, p. 627) – Death, the end of the world, that we glimpse behind Europe’s crown of stars still today. And Congo, first raided for slaves (4 million for the sugar industry), then rubber; and copper (the shells fired in WWI were made mostly of Congolese copper); more recently uranium (the raw materials of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs came from Congo) and now coltan-niobium, essential raw materials in the smartphones and laptops of the fourth industrial revolution (BBC 2013).

4. Neoliberal political-economic theology: the golden calf of free enterprise and the sacred cow of the single market

Economics is the method: the object is to change the soul. (Margaret Thatcher 1981)

Beethoven's Ninth was first performed in Vienna in 1824, in the afterglow of the Vienna Congress, marking the defeat of Napoleon, the end of French revolutionary republicanism, the restoration of the *ancien régime*, strutting the historical stage in the new clothes of the industrial revolution and global imperialism, all celebrated in dazzling spectacle, for this was the epoch of the 'Viennese ball': 'How goes the Congress', an ambassador inquired: '*Comment marche le Congrès? Le Congrès ne marche pas, il danse!*' was the reply (Hibbert 2003, p. 178). Vienna, even more so than Paris, was the primal scene of Baudelaire's *spectacle ennuyeux de l'immortal péché*. And when the music stopped and it all fell apart, after 1918, after the war of imperial and industrial rivalries, the Communist revolution, the fall of the aristocracy's houses, the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the work of another Restoration began-again, this time led by a dispossessed aristocrat von Hayek, the Vienna School of Economics, and the Mont Pelerin Society (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009, Steadman Jones 2012), for it is this group that are the conductors and choreographers who have been orchestrating the legislative capture of the collective household of Europe.

Hayek's original insight in *The Economic Conditions of Interstate Federalism* was that free movement of labour, goods, services and capital – a 'single market' – among a federation of nations would severely and necessarily restrict the policy space available to individual member states (Hayek 1948). The great symphony of European Union was originally composed and conducted by Jean Monnet, to be a slow movement, beginning with economic integration, gradually expanding in range and depth, building through greater and greater layers of complexity of institutions and policy instruments towards an 'ever closer Union.' But if he had one limitation as a genius historical-political social policy composer it was that Monnet was a career civil servant who never had to face the music of an election, and so the ECSC/EEC/EU has been a top-down project by a chamber orchestra of political and bureaucratic elites, 'a protected sphere ... in which policy-making can evade the constraints imposed by representative democracy' (Guinan and Hanna 2017). To complain about the EU's democratic deficit is to have misunderstood its purpose, which was to mute the voices by building a vast bureaucratic structure of purposive rational action. Hayek's was only a minor key at the beginning, but as Monnet's managerial-technocratic integrationist symphonic composition of an ever closer Union falters, straining at the full range of scale and complexity, Hayek's has become the new hymn book of the EU, the Austrian School's Mont Pelerin Society lyrics, sung by a chorus of 'independent' policy think-tanks, privately financed by billionaires and corporates (COE 2017). This new [neo-classical!] music is reduced, simplified: four chords only -the 'four freedoms' for Free Enterprise in a Single Market, banged out rhythmically, repeatedly: simple words to a straightforward tune that everyone can clap along to, has gradually infiltrated and been taken up by the whole EU orchestra, so that for some time already the main theme of European policy has been 'to extend and deepen the market through liberalisation, privatisation, and flexibilization, subordinating

employment and social protection to goals of low inflation, debt reduction, and increased competitiveness' (Guinan and Hanna 2017).

Words are absent from Beethoven's 9th as anthem of the EU because the voices of democracy were never intended to be heard to begin with. Even in Monnet's original composition the ideal of unity is represented by the mathematical perfection of the composition and the instrumental performances of technical virtuosos as the abstract formal music of economic integration, not the warm vocals expressing the ideal of a unified people under the protection of a loving Father. For Monnet that fatherly protection was presumed; something that 'goes without saying' so to speak. But it needed not only to be said, but sung from the rafters; and the Father's love put into practice as *philia* in the form of health care, social security, education, and housing. The voiceless EU anthem cannot sing of any such promise of a people joyfully unified under a sheltering wing, for the EU has in fact become a vast technocracy administering not a unifying Society but neoliberalism's ideals of Free Enterprise in a Single Market.

Neoliberalism's cold mad fearyFather demands the bloody sacrifice of democracy, killed by a technocratic managerial instrumental-rational system on behalf of a neo-feudal corporate oligarchy in a fully re-privatized Market society. This Single Market 'singularity' is the techno-pastoralist ultra-liberal dystopian dream that the EU is realizing today. The playbook, the song-sheet from which the EU is singing, is the mood music of 'a recurring nightmare of the Nineteenth Century' (Benjamin 1992); 'a nightmare of History from which I am trying to awake' (Joyce); a form of European Union that, to the strains of Beethoven's Ninth (*kurt*) doesn't resonate, but rather that 'radiates disaster triumphant' (Adorno and Horkheimer).

5. Ricorso: resonance; a new religion?

Wherever a people has grown savage in arms so that human laws have no longer any place among it, the only powerful means to tame it is religion. (Vico cited in Horkheimer 1987, p. 79)

At the end of this great age, Weber (1976, p. 181) says, when the last ton of fossil fuel has been burnt, a new religion may take the form of a 'great rebirth of old ideas and ideals' – Christian evangelical fundamentalism; global Islamic revolutionary fundamentalism, atavistic nationalisms, tribalisms, and populist authoritarianisms led by charismatic tricksters. Or else perhaps 'entirely new prophets' will emerge, as neoliberalism proclaims itself to be, despite the obvious fact that it is a revenant, a 19th Century zombie cult with a priesthood of economists and Objectivist shamans proselytising for the golden calf; cults of tech wizards, celebrity entrepreneurs and billionaire plutocrats prophesizing the rapture of the 'Singularity', all emanations of a purportedly Divine Market: 'By the little which now satisfies Spirit, we can measure the extent of its loss!' (Hegel 1977, p. 5). And there is Weber's third possibility: '... mechanized petrification embellished by a kind of frenzied self-importance ... specialists without spirit, hedonists without heart, a nullity that flatters itself that it has achieved the highest state of humanity' (Weber 1976, p. 181).

In this context those who hear in Rosa's *Resonance* religious cadences and a voice of concern for the soul of humanity in dark times are not mistaken, even though Rosa is at pains to deny that resonance is a 'spiritual' concept, for the desire for resonance gives

voice to our need to have a ‘soul’, attuned horizontally, diagonally and vertically so that the alienated thrownness of our individuated existence, the divided parts of our self, our estrangements from others, from the world, and from the cosmos may be holistically integrated and resonate meaningfully with an ultimate reality, an encompassing totality, an organizing Ideal represented by a Name of the Father. Every revolution seeks to set afoot a new man, and the ideal-type subject of the neoliberal revolution, *homo oeconomicus*, the rational satean isolist with psychotic tendencies (Dufour 2008) whose soul is being transformed by the method of economics, is as yet only an emergent anthropological mutation. We remain still, residually, constitutionally, subjects who are ‘are secular, but yearning for the sacred, ironic, but yearning for the absolute, individualistic, but yearning for the wholeness of community, asking questions but receiving no answers, fragmented, but yearning for immanent totality’ (Lukács 1971, p. 189). *Resonance* sings to our deep yearnings. The spirituality that Rosa is sounding is not a religious quest in any conventional sense. Rosa’s ‘religion’ is like Joyce’s, a radically secular-humanist counter-reformation against the accelerating currents of disenchantment, alienation and nihilism of late modernity. *Resonance*, like *Ulysses*, is a joyous, humane book, suggesting an exorcism of the Luciferian hubris of the new would-be immortals of the neo liberal revolution.

Rosa’s *Resonance* is in the grip of critical theory’s secular-rationalism. Of course, it must be so, but so much so is he in the grip that Rosa feels obliged to disavow the spiritual dimension, in a similar manner Galileo felt inclined to recant his heresy when he was taken to the Vatican dungeon and shown the instruments. A better parallel is Hegel, as Rosa’s chair is in Jena. Hegel was possessed by the spirit of the French Revolution – or more precisely as Buck-Morrs (2009) has shown, Hegel was moved by the spirit of the Black Jacobin slave revolution in Haiti, where he found his key metaphor for the dialectic – the master-slave relation: from having faced death in enduring the subhuman position of the slave Toussaint Louverture, by facing down and overturning the master becomes first an opposite, next an equal, and then an even more fully human subject, in the process freeing both slave and master and achieving a higher realization of humanity for them both. Napoleon invited Louverture to France, to meet as equal heads of state, but immediately had him seized and thrown in a dungeon, where he died. For similar reasons Hegel, like Beethoven, felt obliged to dissimulate: Hegel in the laboriously cryptic discourse of the *Phenomenology*, and Beethoven in Schiller’s seemingly innocuous references to ‘joy’ ‘Elysium’, and a ‘loving Father above the stars’ because his work and life were still very much in the grip of the *ancien régime*. Hegel and Beethoven had to work in code lest they be charged with sedition. As the inheritor of the mantle of Critical Theory, Rosa is in the grip of that secular rational inheritance: the tradition of dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living – and some of the heavyweights [Habermas, Honneth] are very much alive!

With the Fathers of Critical Theory looking over his shoulder, how does Rosa begin-again? How does he disrupt the convention, play with it, blaspheme, shake it up and open it up so as he can make his own intervention?

One thing that Rosa does differently is he refuses to succumb to despair. A hallmark of the Critical Theory inheritance – from Marx and Weber through Adorno is that the strength of the analysis and diagnosis of Modernity as a totalizing totality leads to a grim prognosis. Rosa is not a prophet of doom: like Beethoven he preserves and carries the

götterfunken, the utopian spark of theorizing as a lamp for dark times. In his inaugural lecture as Director of the Frankfurt School Horkheimer proposed ‘a programme of interdisciplinary study in which philosophers, sociologists, economists, historians and psychologists must unite in a lasting working partnership to do what all genuine researchers have always done, namely to pursue the great philosophical questions with the most refined methods [investigating] the interconnection between the economic life of society, the psychic development of the individual, and transformations in the realm of culture . . . including not only the so-called spiritual contents of science, art and religion, but also law, ethics, fashion, public opinion, sport, amusement, and lifestyle’ (Held 1980, p. 33). Hartmut Rosa is in tune with Horkheimer’s original overture.

Rosa’s materials are as diverse as Benjamin’s – the portrait of history appears in its scraps; a physiognomy of the age – Rosa’s ethnographic biographical vignettes of people who become our interlocutors, even our doppelgangers insofar as we come to see ourselves in them; and Rosa himself becomes a model: his charismatic, self-reflexive, self-disclosing style of engaging his audience; informality and accessibility as a professional practice, as a public intellectual; his ease with new social media; and his willingness to share some of his practices of care of the self -maintaining his hometown roots, playing the church organ, stargazing, heavy metal music. At a time when professors who have something to profess [or have very little to say, as is so often the case] become celebrities elevated to superstardom on a global academic concert tour circuit Hartmut Rosa is a model of how not to become swept up in mad spiral of conceit, hubris and pleonexia. As a foil contra the neoliberal subject as an autogenic trans-human isolist, Rosa is a model of theorizing as a form of life in pursuit of the good life: Rosa resonates!

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Notes on contributor

Kieran Keohane is senior lecturer in Sociology in the Department of Sociology & Criminology, School of Society, Politics, and Ethics, at University College Cork. He is co-founder of the Moral Foundations of Economy & Society research centre, UCC and Waterford Institute of Technology, and co-organizer of an international research collaboration on the ‘Social Pathologies of Contemporary Civilization.

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