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## *Music Criticism on Moniuszko: Sources and Attitudes*

**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this article is to present the conditions and issues which, as recurring themes, essentially determined the content and criteria of Moniuszko debates in Polish music criticism, and shaped the scope and formula of commentary on the composer and his work from the first statements (1839) to the beginning of the 21st century. The arrangement of these issues took into account, on the one hand, the historical and social situation in which Moniuszko operated and, on the other, issues universal to art. These issues included, in particular, the aesthetic attitude and profile of Moniuszko's work under the partitions, the Polish nature of his music, the way it was received and functioned in the public consciousness, the relationship between Moniuszko and Chopin, and the propaganda dimension of the composer's work.

The permanence of these issues and the questions posed about Moniuszko's attitude and work were constantly confronted with changing political, social and aesthetic-musical conditions, which fundamentally determined the nature of the answers given to these questions. In the absence of fundamental research into Moniuszko's work, this meant that the image of Moniuszko in music criticism and, at the same time, in the collective consciousness remained, on the one hand, a function of the changing conditions in which the relevant opinions were formulated and, on the other, was often based on a superficial, ad hoc and non-artistic view.

This arrangement was characterised by the relevance of general relationships in Moniuszko's reception space: universal – national, artistic – utilitarian, current – timeless, etc., which, it seems, created an adequate space for reflection on the phenomenon of Moniuszko. Perhaps this configuration of space was, in the case of the composer (is it always so?), the source of the creation of his myth in the collective consciousness.

**KEYWORDS:** Polish music criticism, Moniuszko in Polish culture, reception, conditions of reception, Moniuszko and Chopin, the myth of Moniuszko

Stanisław Moniuszko and his music have remained a constant focus of interest for music criticism. The character of that interest, extending over a considerable period of time – between the year 1839 (Antoni Woykowski's review of three of Moniuszko's Mickiewicz settings) and the first decades of the twenty-first century – has undergone crucial changes, largely resulting from the critics taking account in their opinions of a number of elements and phenomena of contextual significance with regard to Moniuszko's oeuvre – historical, political, social, ethical, perceptual, aesthetic and so on. The critics' voices

have been more linked to current conditions and situations, dictated by passing needs and tendencies, than based on penetrating analysis of the music itself and references to the admittedly weak tradition of research into Moniuszko's music. It would appear that, given the continual lack of fundamental analyses of Moniuszko's output, 'here and now' realities as broadly conceived have often determined perceptions of Moniuszko and his music.

Then there is the polarisation of opinions into standpoints acknowledging the outstanding character of Moniuszko's oeuvre, on one hand, and critical stances, on the other. That polarisation – in various mutual relations – is based on opposing liberal and conservative attitudes and on polemics arising out of generational disputes. The activeness of those environments dynamised considerations, leading to the emergence of a cross-sectional corpus of utterances rich in penumbras. Particular authors and successive critical formations produced their own 'portraits' of the composer, attributed premises and aims to him and situated him in the cultural space. Within that corpus, one can identify recurring issues that bore a crucial influence on the content and criteria of critical debate on Moniuszko. That forged a sphere of Moniuszko issues, focussing and stabilising the range and formula for comment on the composer and his oeuvre. Those issues were of various sources and nature: they concerned questions that were universal to art, relations linked to artistic attitudes and products, the social functioning of art, and so on. Their selection was orientated towards the specific situation of Moniuszko and the environment of reception of his music, and it took account of issues characteristic of his creative profile.

The aim of this article is to present the most important of those issues, to show their role in shaping the formula of critical reflection and their potential influence on how Moniuszko was perceived in the collective awareness.

One question strongly linked to Moniuszko's work was the way it was received by the public. The critics asserted its emotional affect ('listening with the heart') and registered audiences' reactions, through the prism of which – as if in retrospect – they formulated opinions of the nature of the work itself, of its status in culture and in the awareness of Polish society. One critic wrote: 'our master's lofty ideas are always wrapped in the ineffable sweetness of wistful feelings' (Kuczyński, 1861, after Rudziński, 1961). Almost one hundred years later, the tenor of that utterance remained current, when Stefan Kisielewski wrote: 'It is hard for a Pole to write objectively about Moniuszko. How does one judge or describe a composer whose melodies have entered society's bloodstream, become a constituent part of the climate, atmosphere, style of Polish life, are even our collective property, and have acquired the features of anonymity' (Kisielewski, 1956, p. 125). Here the author was articulating at the same time the music critic's awareness of a certain powerlessness to express opinions about Moniuszko. That affected the peculiar treatment of the composer's oeuvre, gauged by a sort of peculiar 'Moniuszko' yardstick, characterised by indulgence or even tendentiousness in approaches to a range of issues. The emotional reception of Moniuszko's works eluded more penetrating examination and gestures of criticism ('how odd that term sounds with regard to the work of Moniuszko'). At the same time, the effect on listeners gave the critics a premise for regarding Moniuszko as

a timeless, endlessly current composer. It was primarily *The Haunted Manor* that was considered to be 'an immortal work of Moniuszko', a 'masterwork [that] continually returns to all Polish stages, moving successive generations of Poles' (Drabarek, 1975, p. 2). So that currency resulted not from the universal dimension of the work itself, but from its enduring place in Polish culture and its widespread popularity with the public. Moniuszko was described as a composer 'particularly loved by the whole of Polish society' (Kański, 1972, p. 6). Those were the foundations on which Moniuszko's position as a symbol of Polishness was built.

The critics' attitude to Moniuszko adhered to an approach to composers of Polish music that was broadly applied during the period of the Partitions: their positive assessment referring solely to the criterion of their national origins. In 1891 Stanisław Niewiadomski wrote critically about this:

If anyone wished to form an opinion about musicians from what he encountered in the newspapers, he should arrive at the conclusion that Chopin and Czerwiński, Moniuszko and Czubski are one and the same, since they all receive the attribute 'excellent', just as they are all 'our national' composers, and their names are placed alongside one another without hesitation (Niewiadomski, 1891, p. 8).

Although Moniuszko was placed here (alongside Chopin) on the side of composers worthy of recognition, the considerations concerning that very relationship Moniuszko–Chopin showed that he was treated here significantly differently.

The powerful effect on Polish audiences and the special kind of deference on the part of some critics with regard to Moniuszko determined the overall framework of critical judgment, and traces of this can be found in many areas of Moniuszko reflection. It often dominated the aspects and relationships discussed by the critics.

Within the orbit of perception, also noted was the issue of the relationship between Moniuszko's operatic output and the contemporary situation in European opera. Moniuszko's style was linked rather to the early Romantic operatic convention; critics did not observe any extensive use of the conventions of the New German School of Wagner or Liszt (Dziadek, 2014, p. 150). The noted influence of Wagner's concept was seen as detracting from the appeal of Moniuszko's music among audiences. In 1869 Józef Sikorski wrote about *The Pariah*: 'We would not say that Mr Moniuszko has followed Wagner, but he does appear to rely on him somewhat [...], his admiration [...] may explain why there are so few passages in this opera apt to arrest the listener, or to be adopted as popular' (Sikorski, 1869, p. 1). More important here was the accessibility of the artistic message, simplicity and clarity, reaching listeners and becoming rooted in their awareness. 'And it is all so "native", so clear, that even patrons up in the gods have no need to rack their brains in order to discern what our brilliant songsmith is getting at' (BF, 1896). At the same time, critics noted in this music a sort of ethical nobleness and universality, an unwaning charm and value, as sincere and natural output, representing 'a kind of oasis, the rampant verdure of which encourages the traveller or listener bored of the sometimes over-refined products of our musical literature to take pleasant, blissful repose. Everything in this music is sincere and honest;

there is no falsity, that is, a dearth of ideas overladen with bombastic form', wrote Franciszek Neuhauser (Neuhauser, 1902, p. 1).

Informed by such preferences, critics pointed to a particular kind of output, the principal virtue of which was its impact on audiences. In 1903 Stanisław Niewiadomski stated that 'every musical literature contains works that possess, beyond their artistic value, some separate claim on the sympathies of both the public and the critics; thus *The Countess* too, if not as a work of art, then as a typically "native" product, linked by tradition to the Polish stage, should be shown on our stage and find a sympathetic reception' (Niewiadomski, 1903, p. 3). The composer was not expected to provide supreme artistic qualities or formal innovation. His output was not treated as an ideal. Antoni Sygietyński wrote of its character and value: 'Moniuszko's music is not a masterpiece of lyrical drama [...] but *The Countess* as a whole is a curio of exquisite shape, contour and colour [...], the purpose of which is not to shock one's nerves, but to enchant, not to rouse passions, but [...] to soothe cares and melancholy' (Sygietyński, 1899, p. 2).

One motif of critical comment that was very often highlighted remained the question of Moniuszko's attitude as a composer. Referring Moniuszko's approach to that of Chopin, Józef Reiss posed the question: 'Was Moniuszko right to follow that path, or did he commit an error with regard to history by lowering his creative sights?' Reiss stated that Moniuszko made a conscious choice, 'henceforth he composed in such a way that his songs be accessible to all, [...] completely relinquishing all personal goals [...], he reduced his mighty talent "to the popular understanding", for which "the nation owes him the utmost praise and gratitude!" (Reiss, 1928, p. 9). Thus the mission with regard to society gained the upper hand over a mission with regard to art; otherwise, the composer would not have fulfilled the mission for which he was clearly destined. That was to render the populace more musical, to enhance our musical culture and aesthetic tastes, and above all to stimulate the national awareness in society. The answer was found beyond the artistic domain, with perceptual, emotional, ethical and social arguments invoked. Observers expressed the conviction that Moniuszko worked in the name of his calling, realised his social mission and created works for the social or national good, writing music intended to appeal to a broad audience. Hence his use of a familiar musical language and his choice of genres and subject matter.

Satisfying that standpoint, and at the same time the mission of creating 'new music corresponding to the spirit of the times', entailed taking account of current historical realities and was linked to a limiting of the means of modern compositional technique. Their lack was treated as manifesting independence from foreign models, which favoured regarding the composer as a 'thoroughly Polish' composer (Niewiadomski, 1891, p. 8). Interpreted in a similar way was the idiomatic and – from the perspective of European audiences – hermetic aspect of Moniuszko's music. In that, it was considered to be all the more a national treasure. The composer's fulfilment of his mission with regard to society merited the utmost recognition. In the opinion of Stanisław Niewiadomski, the composer's attitude gave rise to the alternative that he faced, which the author worded in straightforward terms: either write music that can be appreciated by the public at large or not write it at all. He asserted that if Moniuszko were 'prepared to give

up all of his modest home dinner ‘for a crumb of the “global” feast’, he would have turned his back on that provincial poverty and would no doubt have ceased to work’. Yet ‘he preferred [...] to bond [...] with his nation and the land of his birth, and today we can only be grateful for him and admire his well-aimed instinct and resolute character’ (Niewiadomski, 1925, p. 4).

A distinctive range of terms were invoked by the critics in relation to that orientation towards a broad audience: sincerity, truthfulness, simplicity, unpretentiousness and accessibility, ‘wistfulness without sentimentality’, ‘refined cantilena’, spontaneity and directness, ‘enchanting melody’, Sarmatism, ‘an exquisite lyrical note’, humour, cheerfulness, a departure from ‘martyrdom’, ‘an old Polish noble-peasant amalgam’, and finally that almost universally cited native character. One quality conducive to universal clarity was simplicity, which in Moniuszko ‘acquires a crystalline quality, becomes synonymous with sensitivity and elegance’. Its importance was also noted in a special situation: in January 1946, one critic wrote: ‘The music of our excellent composer is comprehensible and uncomplicated. [...] it easily reaches every listener. With regard to the cultivation of musical and artistic culture among the broadest masses, we are of the opinion that that which we have had the opportunity to hear [...] represents the most appropriate and expedient path’ (g, 1946, p. 3). Out of the features cited above, there resulted a category that was crucial to forging Moniuszko’s standing in the culture of those times: popularity. In the opinion of the critics, such an approach had its worth. As Władysław Malinowski stated: ‘The special appreciation that is always bestowed upon the national element in art in conditions of political enslavement favours the lowering of artistic postulates. A familiar, native quality begins to satisfy the needs of the national art’ (Malinowski, 1969, p. 5).

Moniuszko’s work was perceived from the outset through the prism of its Polish character. From the Warsaw premiere of *Halka* in 1858, the composer was dubbed ‘the father of Polish national opera’. The category of nationality (Polish style) was defined through the prism of references to the noble (Sarmatian) and folk traditions and the presence of such features as songfulness, lyricism, rusticity, wistfulness and immediacy of expression, and at the same time the avoidance of excessive refinement and technical complexity (Dziadek, 2002, pp. 470-471). Thus this category was reduced to the dimension of the ‘native’ or the ‘familiar’, widely adopted with regard to Moniuszko and treated almost like a synonym of Polishness. That native, familiar quality validated all technical and stylistic solutions, constituting a point of reference for the formulated opinions.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, such an understanding of ‘nationality’ was represented by the older generation of authors, for whom it constituted the unequivocal expression of the composer’s intentions and the national criterion to the suggestiveness of his work. In such a formula, nationality easily manifested itself in the process of a work’s reception, enabling listeners to properly recognise the character of the music and help to forge the tradition of Moniuszko’s perception as a composer fated to be ‘credited for all eternity with creating Polish opera’.

Nationality as thus understood invariably accompanied opinions about the composer, and in the collective awareness it became entwined with the figure of Moniuszko. Looking at the composer through the prism of Polish style led to the

consolidation of his leading position in Polish music. In the universal awareness, this status of Moniuszko's, a legacy of the period of the Partitions, remained current also after Poland regained independence. In 1979 Witold Rudziński wrote that Moniuszko's works, 'together with the works of Chopin and the writings of Mickiewicz, Norwid and Wyspiański, shape our national imagination', and as such they are etched into the national identity (Rudziński, 1979, p. 11). The composer became an almost symbolic figure, and his works came to embody all crucial and desirable qualities. As Stanisław Niewiadomski stated in 1933, '*Halka* has remained not a European operatic work, but a strictly national one. And that suits both it, and us' (Niewiadomski, 1933, p. 10).

As Agnieszka Topolska sees it, 'the bundle of features regarded as determining the national identity that arose during the nineteenth century and was shaped largely by Romantic ideas became rooted in the mentality of the Poles, creating an enduring part of it, present to this day in political discussions carried on in the public domain' (Topolska, 2014, p. 8). That tradition largely orientated the perception of Moniuszko and underpinned the forging of a sort of myth of the composer. A counterpoint to this, of incomparably lesser weight, was the approach adopted by Young Poland critics based on oppositions: national–universal, aristocratic–parochial, artistic–rustic, idealist–realist, etc., which led to Moniuszko's standing being questioned.

Views on Moniuszko were reorientated by the accentuation of the category of individuality and the individualisation of a conception of national music based on the spirituality, autonomy and creativity of composers and on the reflection in art of feelings and ideas present in the life of society. As Antoni Sygietyński asserted, 'Moniuszko takes as national not a colouring in motifs and rhythms, but the depth of national sentiment' (Sygietyński, 1899, p. 2). Thus the accusation of cosmopolitanism levelled at Moniuszko, the source of which was seen in national identification based on essentially limited references to musical folklore, was revoked. A redefining of the category of nationality afforded a different look at Moniuszko's work, while preserving his status as a national composer.

Comparing Moniuszko with Chopin, although something of an historical imperative, was essentially a rather dubious procedure, on account of the difference in stature and essence between the two oeuvres. It arose out of the respect for Moniuszko's position as the most outstanding Polish composer besides Chopin. That procedure was almost invariably part of critics' reflections when Moniuszko was being considered from a broader perspective.

The relationship between the two composers ranged from their equation (as bards, forming pillars of the 'edifice of Polish music') to contrast ('let us just leave out of this Chopin, whose lofty world resides above') (Szopski, 1932, p. 126). The polarisation of the critics' attitudes was conditioned by their preferences with regard to the general premises and criteria which they adopted, concerning the artistic condition of music or its consideration in relation to numerous non-musical contexts. This polarisation manifested itself most distinctly between the two world wars. The primacy of artistic arguments was advocated by Karol Szymanowski and composers of a neoclassical orientation, with the other side

taken by conservative critics. For the former, Chopin was held up as a paragon: 'the six volumes of his oeuvre remain the only great Polish national music to this day' (Szymanowski, 1984, p. 40). Moniuszko, meanwhile, was lacking 'inner greatness, that fanaticism of creative output proper to Chopin which is the sole repository of true *universal* great art. [...] [Moniuszko] has remained our private property, not weighing on the history of universal art' (Szymanowski, 1984, p. 42–43). The opinions of the latter were based on the composer's own attitude: 'After all, Moniuszko's output has always evinced a popularising intention [...]. Hence [...] that feature of "domestic" style, generally easy and accessible [...], [in which] the range of means remained essentially unchanged throughout virtually his whole life [...]. Moniuszko's mission was the musical education of the broad strata of the nation. [...] Thus Moniuszko's domestic, homespun character was an historically grounded characteristic' (Gliński, 1931, p. 191). The critics were aware of the artistic difference or even opposition that existed here. The oeuvres of Moniuszko and Chopin were perceived as two different propositions for creating Polish music. In accepting Moniuszko's approach, commentators admitted the existence of a concept for the creation of national music – grounded on social tenets – that was equally as legitimate as that of Chopin. Moniuszko's take on that concept was the only one possible in the Polish political, social and cultural realities of those times. Moniuszko wrote music which Polish society could identify with.

After 1945, when the crucial disputes over musical aesthetics fell silent, the Moniuszko–Chopin relationship fell into the shadows. In the general view, the position of the two composers was stabilised, and interest in Moniuszko began to focus on issues relating to the staging of his operas and to interpretation and ideas. Moniuszko was often mentioned at the same time as Chopin, with commentators pointing to a certain (artistic, aesthetic, stylistic and generic) complementarity between their oeuvres (Ciesielski, 2014, p. 373–375).

One feature present with varying intensity in critical opinion was comment on Moniuszko's oeuvre in the domain of propaganda, understood as the dissemination of certain views with the aim of influencing the thinking of individuals or society. To some extent, many opinions expressed from specific aesthetical-musical stances displayed such a character. Moniuszko, although possessing a distinctive profile (as a bard or a parochial composer), was susceptible to widespread exploitation for the purposes of propaganda. In such instances, he became an instrumentally treated example of a Polish composer of provincial stature most appreciated for his attitude.

If the propaganda aspect remained of secondary importance to the genuine aesthetic disputes concerning Moniuszko carried on up to 1939, after 1945, propaganda, now functioning as a system for imposing particular views, became part of the official actions of the state authorities and of the ideological line of the socialist party. From this perspective, in relation to Moniuszko, it was appealing to highlight the social aspects of his output. The work which became the prime subject of overinterpretations of a propaganda character was *Halka*, which ceased to be the drama of an individual and became a symbolic critique of social relations, a representation of the class war and its victims.

One formal element in the propaganda use of Moniuszko's work was the institution of Moniuszko Year. That formula was adopted in the years 1950, 1958, 1965, 1969 and 1972. At those times, work intensified on increasing the presence of Moniuszko's output in musical life. A climax of those actions came on the centenary of the composer's death, with Moniuszko Year 1972. In that year, an impressive number of projects were realised, although at the expense of their artistic dimension. The organisation of Moniuszko Year was an undertaking on a grand scale and in a wide range of forms (shows, concerts, productions of Moniuszko's operas abroad, recordings, radio and television programmes, film screenings, academic conferences, publications and exhibitions). Moniuszko was written about widely, but in a very general and superficial way. The dominant view was that 'Moniuszko's music has again served the social role about which its composer dreamed. It has become a common good, a means of universal understanding, of uniting hearts and minds' (Rudziński, 1979, p. 11). In the Moniuszko Year 1972 celebrations, the facade was very prominent, as was often the case with the organisation of cultural life in the People's Republic of Poland (Ciesielski 2008, pp. 161–178; Ciesielski, 2014, p. 367; Ciesielski, 2019, p. 243).

Evoking the most fundamental conditions which have defined perception of Moniuszko's oeuvre, taking account of their consequences for the polarisation of critical opinion and the fact that they have been expressed across a broad space of reception, varied in respect to its historical, political, social and aesthetical-musical conditions, shows just how complex has been the formation of the composer's image and standing in Polish culture. On one hand, they were underpinned by the defining of Moniuszko as the 'father of Polish national opera'; on the other, they were counterpointed by the undermining of the formula of his oeuvre (devoted to the domestic, familiar, native aspect instead of the artistic – Polishness not raised to humanity, as it were). Hence it was considered to be of an episodic character in Polish music. The former attitude was informed by patriotic-national considerations explained in terms of historical circumstances and the decisions made by the composer himself; the latter fed on the universal laws of art. Reflection veered now towards the artistic perspective, now towards the perceptual. At times, non-musical criteria were considered with regard to Moniuszko (which allowed for a broader perspective on the place of his work in culture, but at the same time exposed his oeuvre to being instrumentally and superficially treated and exploited for utilitarian or ideological purposes); at other times, reference was made to the features and essence of his music as an object for consideration.

In relation to Moniuszko, the oppositional character of these categories, perceived within the tradition of his reception, has lost its sharpness and suggestiveness. In critical opinion, the two perspectives did not so much appear to be combined (since that was impossible), but rather – as the disputes and polemics panned out – enabled their arguments to be seen as notionally equiponderant; they both – with changing strength and results – influenced the way in which that work was seen, the way it affected listeners and ultimately the image of the composer (within the context of the lasting position of Moniuszko's oeuvre in Polish culture, one might ask provocatively on which of these orientations that

enduring quality has been, and continues to be, based). The continual presence (usefulness?) of Moniuszko's work in musical life and critical reflection tempers or even overthrows the conviction that it belongs to its time, and as such is historical.

Maciej Jabłoński saw the disposition of artistic-notional relations proper to Moniuszko's work as a combination of two elements: music and idea. They set the framework for the composer's attitude: 'As an ideologist, however, Moniuszko could not adopt any other role than that of an advocate of national affairs, enclosed by the horizon of their Polish understanding; as a composer, he could not write in any way other than to place all means of musical expression at the disposal of the Polish cause. As a result, Moniuszko is not universal, be it as an ideologist or as a composer, but then that was not his intention or his calling'. Jabłoński sets Moniuszko within the context of Polishness (as a complex of language, tradition and customs, national belonging, a conviction of the excellence of domestic forms of social life, Catholicism), a category that was shaped and cultivated particularly distinctly within the realities of the nineteenth century: 'Thus the native or domestic became the cornerstone of a new conception for the survival of the nation', which was based on a conviction of the stature of national art as the bedrock of national identity, since 'the artistic worth of music was to be judged according to conservative, and above all patriotic, considerations' (Jabłoński, 2008, p. 104). In its overtones, this approach may be treated as a sort of analogy to the holistic way of commenting on Moniuszko's oeuvre in music criticism: it evokes the arguments of the two sides in the polemic, combining them in a nexus that defines the core features of the composer's attitude and creative profile.

The picture of Moniuszko that emerges from reception is forged within the orbit of polemic stances. Yet it is not drawn in black and white, but reveals its shape in countless 'shades of grey'. This situation results largely from a number of relations and interdependencies evoked in music criticism, the bulk of which refer to the broad cultural context of Moniuszko's oeuvre. Aspects of this domain formed the contours of critical reflection and impinged on the ways in which the composer was perceived. In music criticism, the enduring currency in the sphere of Moniuszko reception of the relations universal–national, artistic–utilitarian, current–timeless, and so on, together with the network of issues and conditions determined by those relations, seems almost timeless. Within that network, critical attitudes towards Moniuszko are polarised each and every time. It could be that this network as such – seen from the perspective of experiences relating to the functioning of music in contemporary artistic culture – essentially possesses the hallmarks of universality, enabling an artistic approach to be complemented by an equally important approach taking account of the realities of the time, the formula of reception, market conditions, and so on. It would appear that in the case of Moniuszko such a dichotomic network in criticism represented not a sort of desertion from the field of art, but rather an adequate way of approaching the Moniuszko phenomenon. As a stable form, it assured him of a constant presence in critical reflection, in musical life and in the awareness of audiences. Within that framework, the process of reception was incredibly dynamic, creating a plane for aesthetic discussion and polemic, activating critics, composers and audiences, forming a broad scope for reflection on music in general. The fact that to some

extent it triggered the creation of a Moniuszko myth in the space of public and collective awareness (with all its constituent strands in individual and collective emotions, complexes, stereotypes, prejudices, simplifications, expectations, and so on) may have been its natural consequence, but at the same time a sign that Moniuszko's work was acquiring a real and lasting place in Polish culture.

The extent to which this network was proper to Moniuszko alone remains a separate question. In its application, is there a polarisation linked to the artistic standing of a body of work or its utilitarian, functional profile (e.g. greater usefulness for lesser composers)? Could its fundamental, dichotomic structure have wider (contemporary?) applications? And if so, to what extent? That would be a crucial legacy of critical musical reflection on Moniuszko.

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