
PART ONE.

THE ORIGIN OF RHYTHM.

CHAPTER I.

ARTS OF REPOSE AND ARTS OF MOVEMENT.

ARTICLE 1. — DIVISION OF THE ARTS.

1. The aesthetic system of the Greeks as shown by Westphal (1) and by Gevaert (2) may serve as an introduction to the study of Gregorian Rhythm, because it determines with exactitude the place that music ought to occupy in the sum of humanity's artistic creations.

Among the Greeks, the arts, numbering six, were grouped in two triads :

1. Architecture, sculpture, painting;
2. Music, poetry, the dance.

This division holds all its truth and reality even to our own day.

2. In the first triad, the *Beautiful*, which is the aim of art, “is realized in the *state of rest, of repose*; its divers elements are in juxtaposition in *space*; it is not represented in a successive development, but fixed in some single moment of its existence”.

(1) WESTPHAL, *Metrik*, I, § 1.

(2) GEVAERT, *Histoire et théorie de la Musique de l'antiquité*, I, p. 22.

Here, the notion of *repose* is the essential condition, the manner of being of the work of art, although, in a certain sense, movement is not absolutely foreign to it; but this very movement can be suggested only by the fixing of a single moment. It is thus that the creations of architecture, sculpture and painting appear to us.

3. In the second triad, “ the beautiful is realized in a *state of motion* by the succession of its elements in *time* ”.

4. These first, the arts of repose, are in relation to *space*; and these others, the arts of movement, are in relation to *time* (1).

ARTICLE 2. — THE ARTS OF MOVEMENT.

5. Consequently, music, poetry and the dance received the name of *musical arts* or *arts of movement*. All three were subjected to the laws of a common rhythmic. The same terminology served to explain its theory; the same gestures — of the foot, of the hand, of the fingers, of the whole body — guided at once singers, instrumentalists, and dancers. In a word, there was but *one rhythm* that could simultaneously give form to three things, musical sounds, words, and orchestration.

6. However, although the principles of Greek rhythm and those of Latin rhythm differ in more than one point from the rhythmic principles of the Gregorian melodies, nevertheless, these differences can only be secondary; for we shall see that there exists only one general system of Rhythms; its fundamental laws are based on human nature itself and are necessarily found in all the artistic creations, musical or literary, of all peoples and in all times.

Indeed the multiplicity of rhythmic systems is explained by the various ways in which these laws have been applied or even, at times, ignored.

An exposition of these general laws, followed by their application to the Gregorian melodies, theoretically and practically, thus becomes the object of this book.

(1) GEVAERT, *Histoire et théorie de la Musique de l'antiquité*, I, p. 22-23.

ARTICLE 3. — TIME AND MOVEMENT.

7. *Time* is the measurement of movement and of quiescence. Taken by itself, time cannot be measured nor produce upon us any sensation. It is only through the things that take place in time, that occur and *move* within it, that we become conscious of time, are able to discern it, and give it its value. Moreover, apart from these things, time does not exist.

8. *Movement* is the condition which, by dividing time, renders appreciable to our senses its invisible and silent flow.

9. The faculty of perceiving the *movements* which divide the sum of the moments of which time is composed, this faculty is reserved above all to two of our senses, our *sight* and our *hearing*.

The *eye* seizes these divisions, these instants, by the visible movements of bodies; thus the second hand that turns on the face of a clock or the movements of dancers, etc.: these are *local* or *visible movement*.

The *ear* perceives these divisions through the sonorous vibrations of the air, through *sound*, and the succession of sounds: it is *sonorous movement* — *instrumental*, if produced by instruments, and *vocal*, if produced by the voice, in speech or in song.

It is especially with vocal music that we shall concern ourselves.
