



R. Bode, Rhythm and its Importance for Education

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Abstract : Rudolf Bode's text *Rhythm and its Importance for Education* (published by Eugen Diederich, Jena, 1920) has both a theoretical and a practical aim : to clarify the nature of the rhythm phenomenon in order to lay down the foundations of 'Rhythmic Gymnastics'. Bode engages with the work of his contemporaries, such as Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Karl Bücher and Ludwig Klages, and comes to identify rhythm with a continuum devoid of rationality. The text is unique in its ability to meaningfully connect such diverse fields as philosophy, gymnastics, anthropology and politics and shows, in this way, the potential of 'rhythmanalysis'.

Keywords : 1920s, body, Germany, politics, rhythmanalysis, rhythmic gymnastics

Preface

The aim of the present work is twofold. First, it should help to remove the serious ambiguity currently inherent in the word 'rhythm' that we use so often ; this work should resolve a fundamental problem concealed within the word. The second aim is more practical ; it should provide

a theoretical background to 'rhythmic gymnastics', a form of education for young people that will become more prevalent than has been possible until now. Part of this work has already been published, before the war, in the pedagogical collection of essays of the Leipzig Bugra, entitled : *The Rhythmic Problem and the Jaques-Dalcroze Method*. This method has also been a subject of discussion since the war, because from it, more than from any where else - so to say, *ab origine* - has unfolded the activistic-mechanistic principle which marked the previous decades and is no longer tenable in the future in Germany. The essential content of this work counters this principle, as found in the Jaques-Dalcroze method. However, other issues which could not be developed further are also raised between the lines.

I would like to thank the sculptor Ludwig Eberle for his active participation in my endeavours in the field of gymnastics ; I share his conviction that the apparently insuperable boundaries dividing art and physical education today will soon be a thing of the past.

Nymphenburg, October 1919, Rudolf Bode

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