EXCERPTS FROM

FASCINATING RHYTHMS

VOLUME 1–THE FOUNDATION

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MICROBEAT GROUPINGS IN BINARY AND TERNARY METERS

An excellent way to take advantage of solkattu's potential is to vocalize memorized sequences of microbeat groupings. I like this approach because it builds a strong sense of audiation, kinesthetic hand-foot-voice coordination, and rhythm pattern memory, all without the visual distraction of reading notation.

Chanting the groupings against a metric structure (macrobeats) and trusting the math to "work-out" on the downbeat without seeing the notation might seem intimidating at first, but will become liberating once you gain some aural and kinesthetic trust. "Playing by ear" is an approach often not emphasized in Western music pedagogy, or sometimes the rhythmic structures we do play by ear are so simple as to not optimally challenge us.

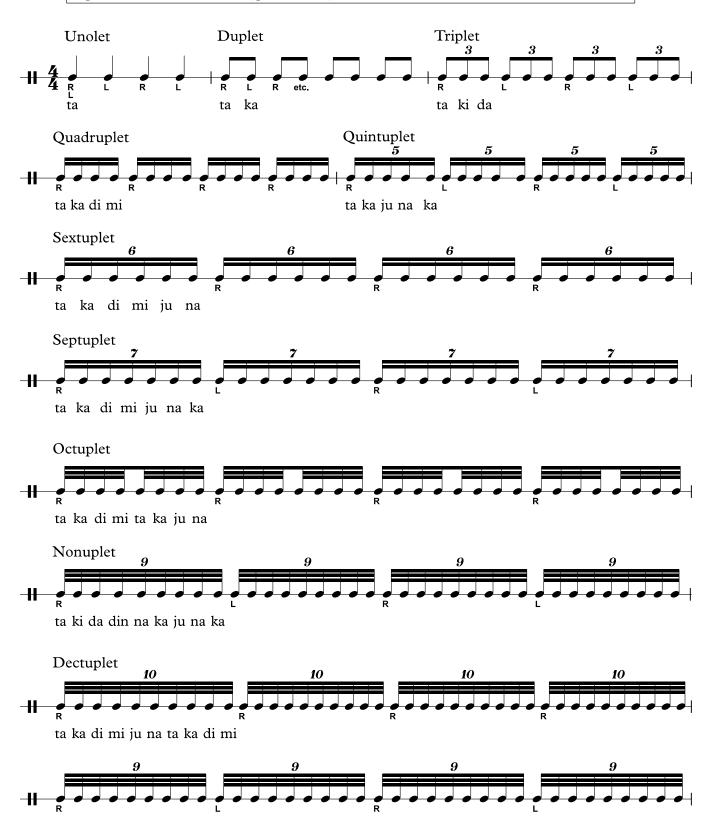
I recommend foot tapping macrobeats, chanting the microbeat groupings with solkattu, and counting the meter on your hands as described below in "Counting Meters." Set the metronome to macrobeats, with a distinct downbeat sound. If foot tapping seems difficult to coordinate with solkattu and counting, try larger macrobeat motions (walking, stepping side to side, or marching) until you trust the math. Thereafter, foot tapping should be easier. Eventually, eliminate the meter counting and play the groupings in unison with solkattu and your hands (alternate sticking), accenting the first note of each microbeat group. Once these groupings are "in your ear and hands" you will have entered a new rhythmic dimension. Memorize each phrase group and play it many times to internalize the feeling. Mastering a few phrases will prove more beneficial than merely surveying a large amount. Use whatever solkattu you prefer.

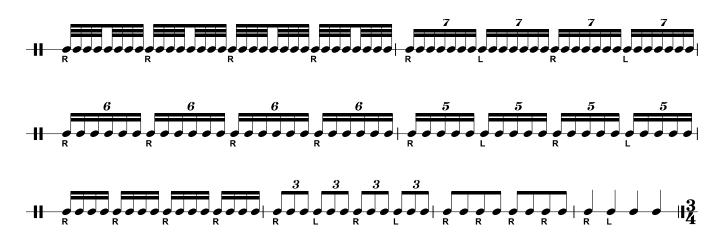
| BINARY METER, 2 MACROBEATS, 8 MICROBEATS | | | |
|---|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2222 | 44 | 332 | 233 |
| 323 - palindrome | 35 | 53 | |
| BINARY METER, 4 M. | ACROBEATS, 16 MICRO | BEATS | |
| 34333 | 33334 | 33343 | 33433 -Brazilian clave, palindrome |
| 33424 - son clave | 44323 | 43333 | 44233 |
| 44332 | 34243 - palindrome | 33442-gahu | 34324 - rumba clave |
| 43234 - palindrome | 4534 | gankogui 4453 | 5344 |
| 3535 | 5533 | 5335 | 5443 |
| 5353 | 3553 | 3355 | |
| 565 - palindrome | 655 | 556 | 475 |
| 547 | 574 | 754 | 457 |
| 745 79 | 772 97 | 727 - palindrome | 277 |
| BINARY METER, 5 MACROBEATS, 20 MICROBEATS | | | |
| (33)(33)44 | 6644 | 44444 | 5555 |

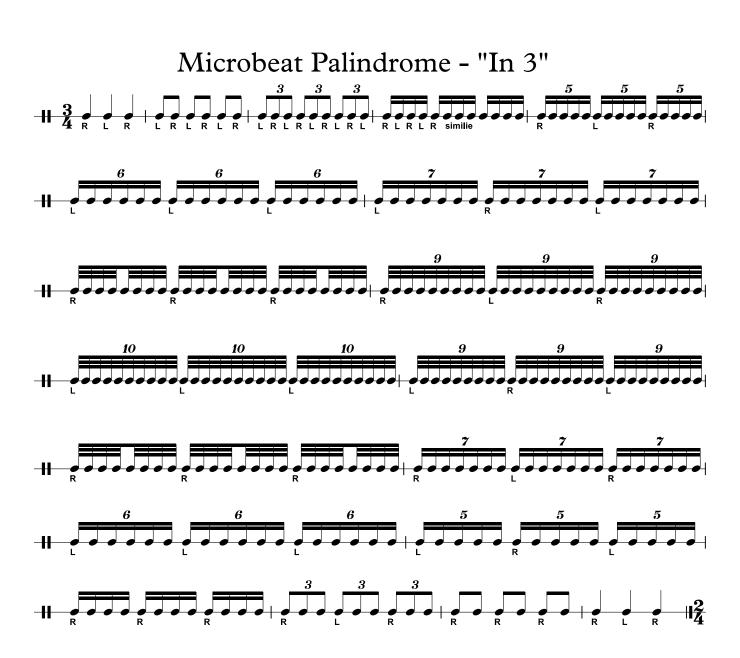
| BINARY METER, 7 MACROBEATS, 28 MICROBEATS | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 555544 | 6679 | | |
| BINARY METER, 8 M | ACROBEATS, 32 MICRO | BEATS | |
| 333333338 | 55553333 | 993344, (9=2223) | 4455554 |
| 59567 | 77774 | | |
| BINARY, 12 MACROB | EATS, 48 MICROBEATS | | |
| 33222,33222,33222,33 | 3222 – Bernstein-Americ | ca theme | |
| TERNARY METER, 3 | MACROBEATS, 9 MICRO | OBEATS | |
| 54 | 45 | 72 | 27 |
| 522 | 252 | 225 | 432 |
| 234 | 342 | 324 | 2223 |
| 2232 | 2322 | 3222 | |
| TERNARY METER, 4 | MACROBEATS, 12 MICE | ROBEATS | |
| 3333 | 444 | 22323 - son clave | 23223 - rumba clave |
| 75 | 57 | 552 | 525 |
| 255 | 534 | 543 | 435 |
| 453 | 345 | 354 | 732 |
| 723 | 372 | 327 | 273 |
| 237 | 222222 | | |
| TERNARY METER, 5 | MACROBEATS, 15 MICE | ROBEATS | |
| 44(43) 33333 | 447 333222 | 474 3222222 | 744 |
| TERNARY METER, 7 MACROBEATS, 21 MICROBEATS | | | |
| 5 5 5 6 | 5565 | 5655 | 6555 |
| TERNARY METER, 8 MACROBEATS, 24 MICROBEATS | | | |
| 55554 | 5559 | 7773 | 9753 |
| 5559 | 7755 | 7557 | 996 |
| | | | |

Microbeat Palindrome - "In 4"

Tap foot on each macrobeat (quarter note). Set metronome downbeat to a different timbre.

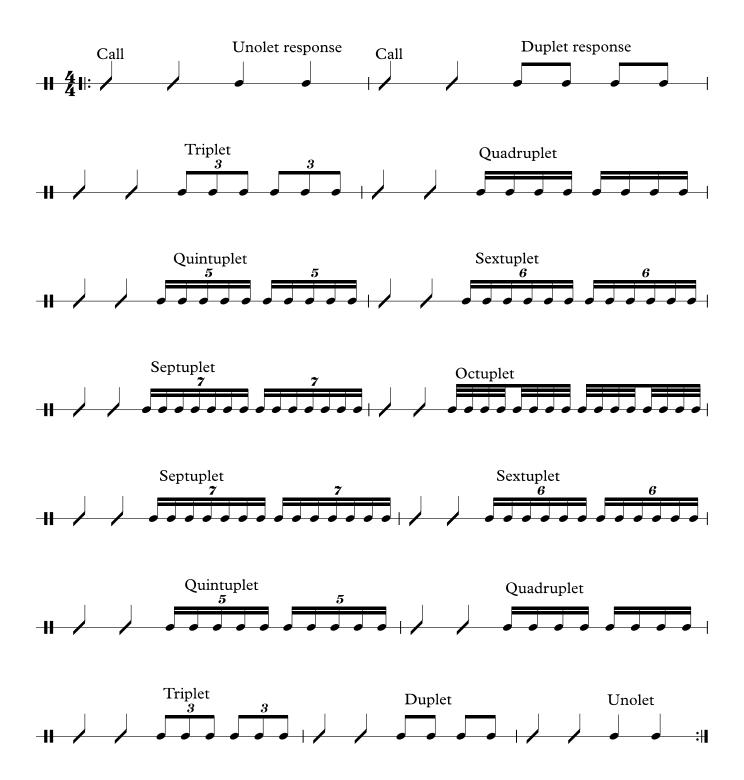






Ping-Pong Microbeats

Play this call and response exercise eight times with a different call speed each time; i..e. first time the call (dash notation) is interpreted as an unolet and the responses as notated. 2nd time = duplet call, 3rd time = triplet call, etc. Tap foot on each macrobeat.

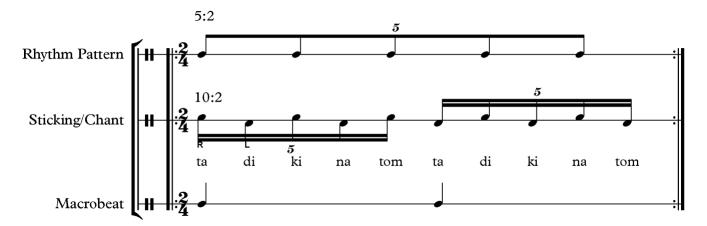


TUPLETS

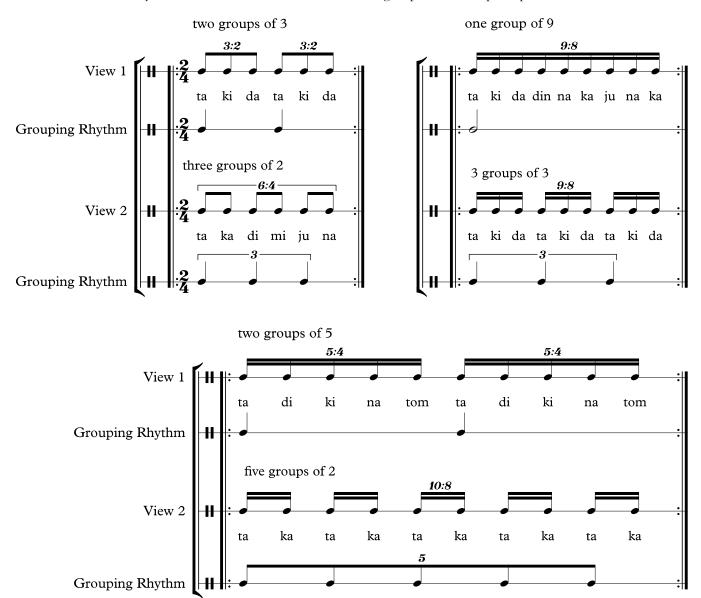
Tuplets are equal length notes that form an irregular number of divisions of one or two macrobeats. Tuplets are sometimes called irrational rhythms, artificial divisions, or irregular divisions. In a binary feel, the first numeral in the ratio is an odd number—3:2 denotes 3 notes in the space of the usual 2. In a ternary feel, the first numeral in the ratio is an even number—2:3 denotes 2 notes in the space of the usual three.

PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

- o Practice two macrobeat speeds:
 - metronome set to quarter notes each measure feels "in 2"-the normal rate. Remember to set the downbeat to a different timbre than the second macrobeat.
 - half notes each measure feels "in 1." Learning to feel the tuplet against the longer half note macrobeat (half-time feel) is typically easier.
- O When learning unfamiliar tuplets such as 7:4 eighth notes, accurately internalizing the more familiar divisions on either side (6:4 eighths and 8:8 sixteenths) is helpful. Play 6 and accelerate or "slide" into 7. Next, play 8 then decelerate or "slide" into 7. Often this kinesthetic "feel in the hands" proves an effective way to find the desired tuplet speed.
- o When playing any tuplet (across macrobeats) such as 3:2, 5:2, 7:2, 9:2, or 10:2, if you audiate, chant, and stick microbeats twice as fast as the desired ratio you will be able to eventually focus on just the lead (right) hand which is playing the desired rhythm pattern. For example, for 5:2, begin by playing 10:2 with both hands the same dynamic. Then reduce the volume of the weak (left) hand as this will allow you to hear and feel the right hand 5:2 ratio.



Views 1 and 2 illustrate different notational groupings of the ratios 3:2, 9:8, and 5:4. Changing your visual perception and audiation can affect how challenging a tuplet is to execute. For example, reciting a group of 9 as 4+5 is possible, but in most Western style music, I find it easier to think of three groups of 3–a simple triplet base.

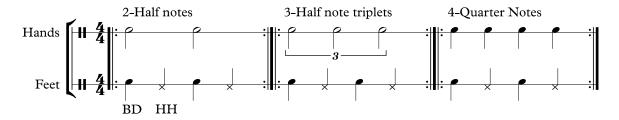


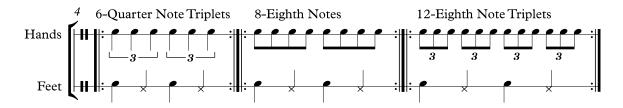
Top Ten Rhythms Timetable

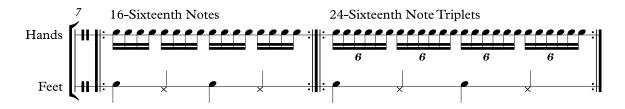
Duple and Triple Divisions of a 4/4 Measure

Tempi may range from quarter note 40-180 BPM. Repeat each measure as necessary; I recommend starting with 4-bar phrases. Play sequentially through the patterns (ascending) and then back down (descending) to form a rhythmic palindrome. Experiment with various foot ostinati.

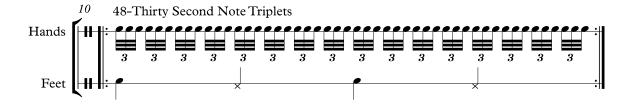
Glenn Schaft-2020







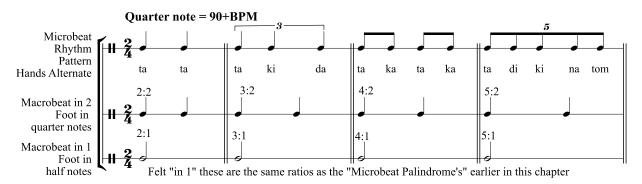


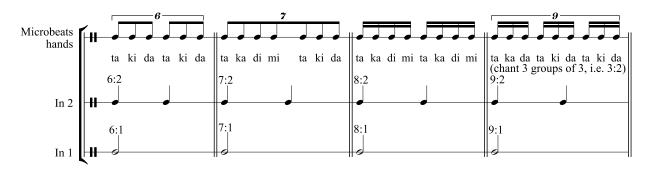


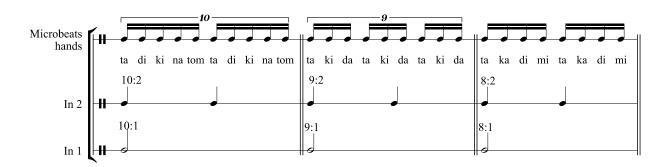
Tuplet Palindrome

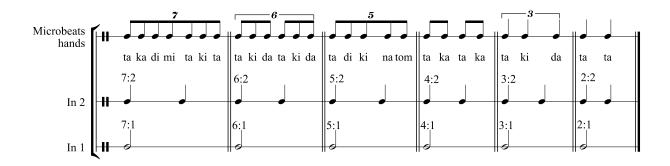
Spanning Two Macrobeats

This is the ultimate microbeat rhythm pattern skills test. Repeat each measure as necessary before moving ahead. Use alternated sticking. When playing "in 2,' set metronome downbeat to a different timbre than beat two. Slower tempi make the tuplets that cross the second macrobeat (3:2, 5:2, 7:2, and 9:2) more difficult, so I recommend beginning no slower than quarter note = 90-100 bpm. At these tempi and above, feeling each measure "in 1" is easier because the half-note macrobeat is not too slow.







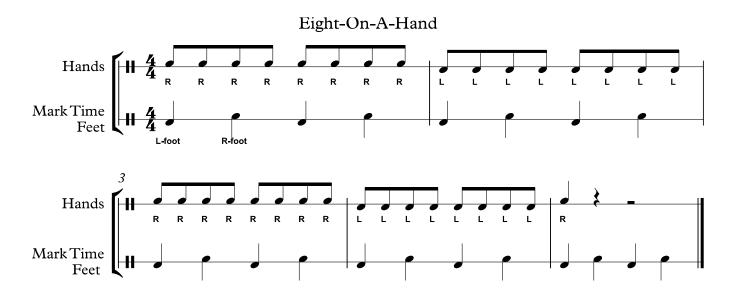


CHAPTER 3 - MARCHING PERCUSSION PEDAGOGY

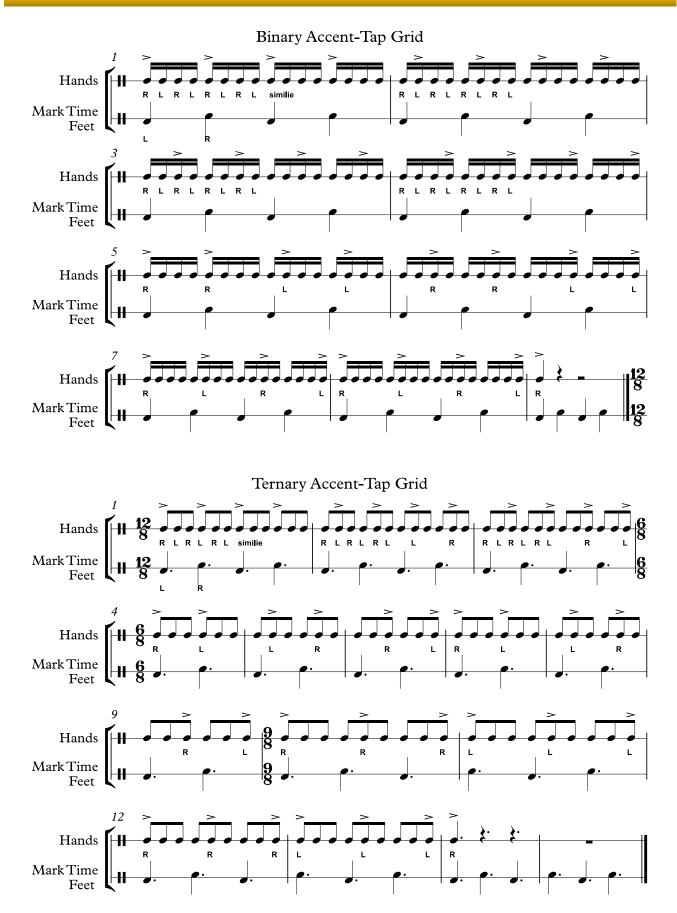
Contemporary marching ensembles across the United States utilize a remarkably unified collection of pedagogical methods for technically and rhythmically training their members. I find some of these concepts and exercises valuable in my own playing and teaching and am especially impressed with how marching pedagogues teach many diverse students to relatively quickly achieve a high level of rhythmic competence. Marching exercises are memorized and played many times daily to facilitate physical coordination, technical mastery, and aural/visual uniformity across the ensemble. I would encourage any musician to adapt some of these time-tested exercises for your own purposes.

Marching "warm-up" exercises have a two-fold function, to warm-up the ensemble physically and mentally and to serve as the primary rhythmic and technical training material to prepare members for "show" repertoire. Warm-ups usually include at least three categories: unison rhythms, accent patterns, and timing patterns. All exercises are played while "marking time" i.e. marching-in-place. When marking time, the downbeat begins with the left (weak side) foot; assuming even number measure signatures; but when marching to odd number meters, successive downbeats alternate feet.

Warm-ups typically begin with the famous unison rhythm exercise—"eight-on-a-hand"—a single rhythm and dynamic. It helps establish hand/foot (microbeat/macrobeat) coordination, unified hand technique, ensemble balance, and rhythmic precision throughout the ensemble.



The second pedagogical step is "accent-tap" exercises which introduce binary and ternary rhythm patterns and two dynamic levels—accentuated rhythm patterns over a grid or layer of hand-to-hand "tap" (soft note) motions. This approach builds kinesthetic sticking fluidity and microtiming accuracy via the constant microbeat hand motions. I recommend memorizing these accent-tap grids and practicing them two ways: as written and then omit the taps and just play the accents against your feet marking time.

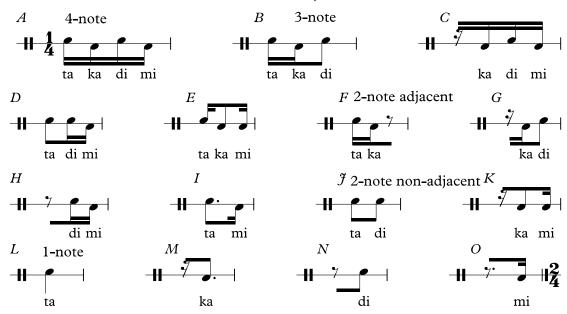


Timing Exercises

Mark time or tap foot on macrobeat quarter notes

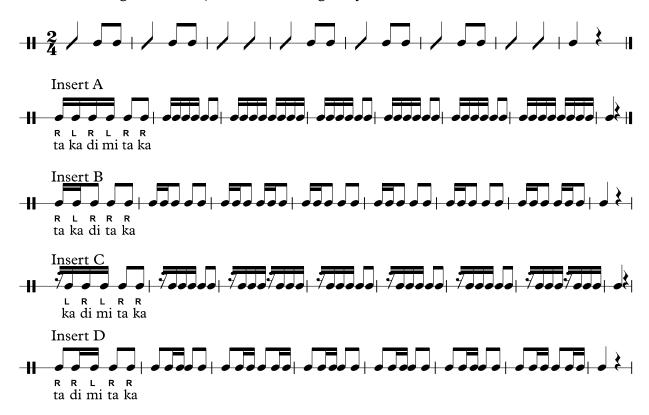
Fundamental Binary Motives

Above line = R, below line = L



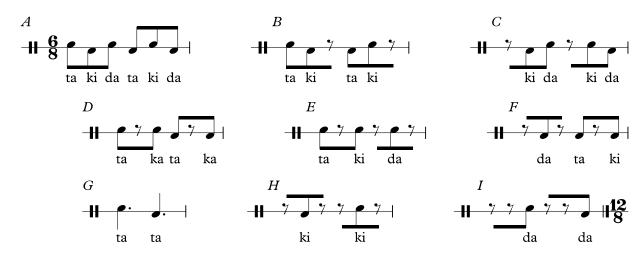
Binary Comparisons

Insert a Fundamental Binary Motive (from above) into the slash notations. Right-lead sticking is indicated, but other stickings may be used as well.





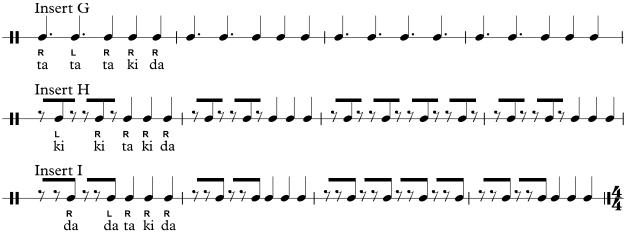
Fundamental Ternary Motives



Ternary Comparisons

Insert a Fundamental Ternary Motive (from above) into the slash notations. Right-lead sticking is indicated, but other stickings may be used as well.







CHAPTER 4 - BINARY RHYTHMS

BINARY RHYTHMS IN GRAPHIC NOTATION

| Partition | Permutations | (\bullet) = onset, $(-)$ = re | est | |
|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| P=4 | A — — — | B — ● —— | | |
| 1+3 | E ● | F — ● ● — | G • ● | • • |
| 1+1+2 | • • • — | J — • • • | K | L • • — • |
| 2+2 | M ● — ● — | N — ● — ● | | |
| 1+1+1+1 | O • • • • | P - zero onsets | | |
| P=8 | A — — — | | B — ● — — | |
| | C —— • — | | D • | |
| 1+7 | E ● ● — — | | F — ● ● — | |
| | G —— ● ● | | ● | • |
| 1+1+6 | I | | J — ● ● ● | |
| | K ● ● | • | L • | • • |
| 1+1+1+5 | M • • • • | | N — ● ● ● | • |

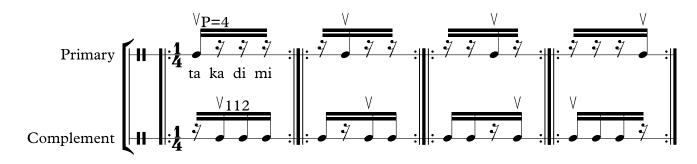
| | 0 | P |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| | •• • • | $ \bullet \mid \bullet \bullet \bullet -$ |
| | | |
| 2+6 | Q | R |
| | • - • - | - • - • |
| | S | Т |
| | | • - • |
| 2+2+4 | U | V |
| | • - • - • | - • - • - • |
| | W | X |
| | | |
| 2+2+1+3 | Y | Z |
| | Aa | Bb |
| | | |
| 3+1+4 | Cc | Dd |
| $J \cap I \cap T$ | •• • | _ • • • |
| | Ee | Ff |
| | • - - • • - | |
| 3+5 | Gg | Hh |
| | • • | -•- • |
| | Ii . | Jj |
| | | |
| 2+1+5 | Kk | II |
| | V = V | _ |
| | Mm | Nn |
| 1 . 2 . 5 | | |
| 1+2+5 | Oo | Pp |
| | Qq | Rr |
| | • • _ • | |
| | | |

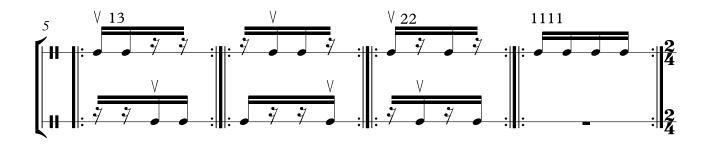
| 1+2+1+4 | Ss | Tt |
|-----------|---|--|
| | Uu Uu | - |
| | • • - • • - | • • - • • |
| 3+3+2 | Ww - tresillo | Xx |
| | Yy —— • —— —— | _ |
| | • - • - - • | - • - • • - |
| | Aaa | Bbb |
| | $ \bullet - \mid \bullet \bullet \mid$ | ullet $ullet$ $-ullet$ $$ |
| | Ccc | Ddd |
| 2+1+2+1+2 | Eee - cinquillo | Fff |
| | lacktriangledown - lacktriangledown - lacktriangledown - lacktriangledown - lacktriangledown - lacktriangledown | $- \bullet - \bullet \mid \bullet - \bullet \bullet$ |
| | Ggg | Hhh |
| | | Jii |
| | _ • • _ • _ • • | |
| | Kkk | Lill |
| | | $- \bullet \bullet - \bullet \bullet - \bullet $ |

Binary Rhythm Patterns

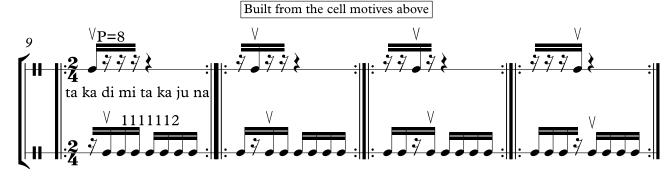
4 Microbeat Rhythmic Cell Motives

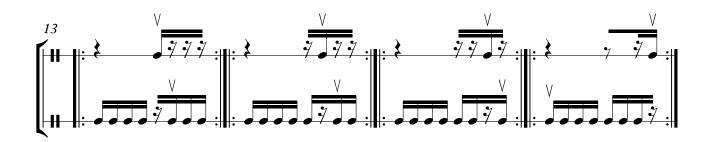
Elemental binary motives contain partitions and permutations of 4 microbeats, whether onsets or rests. Tap foot on each macrobeat/quarter note. Chant solkattu.

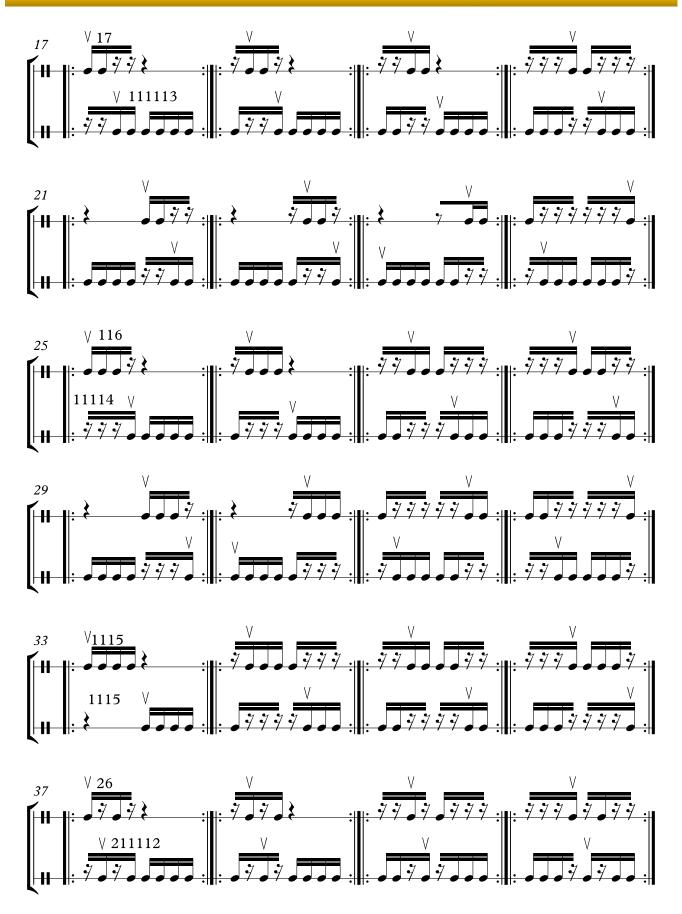


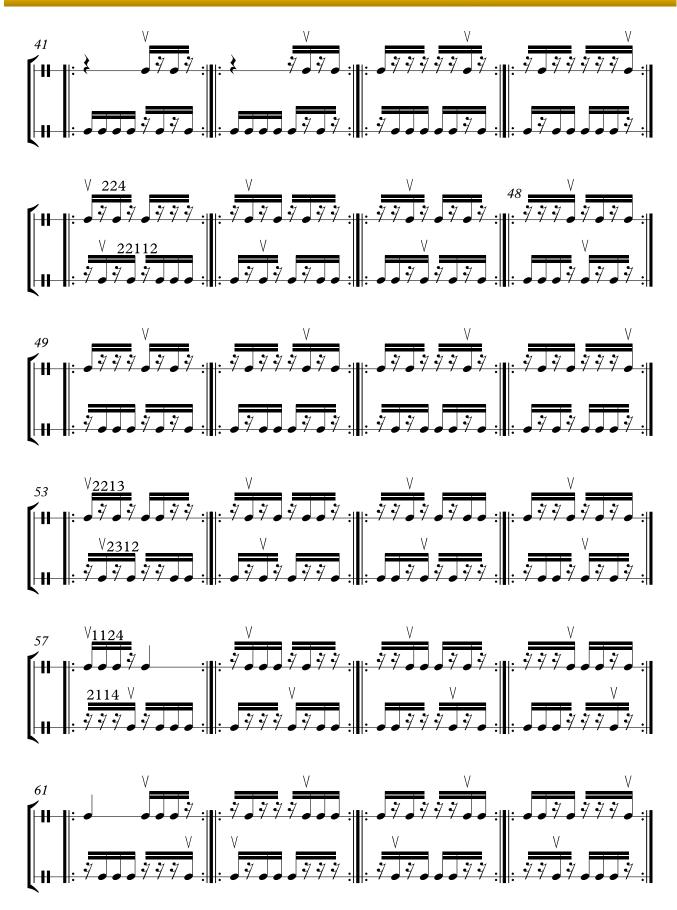


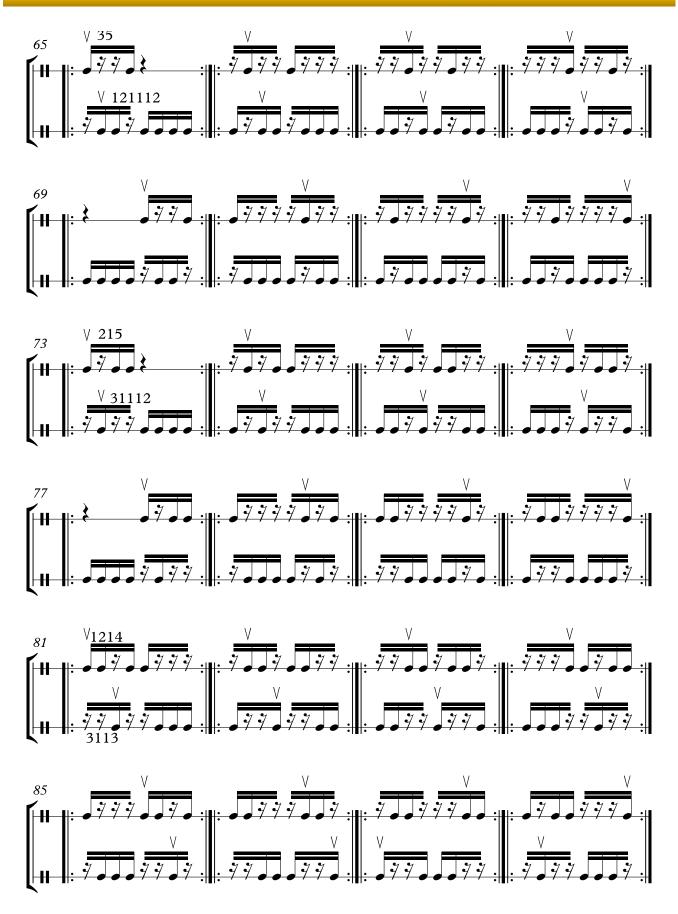
Compound Phrases - 8 Microbeat Cycles

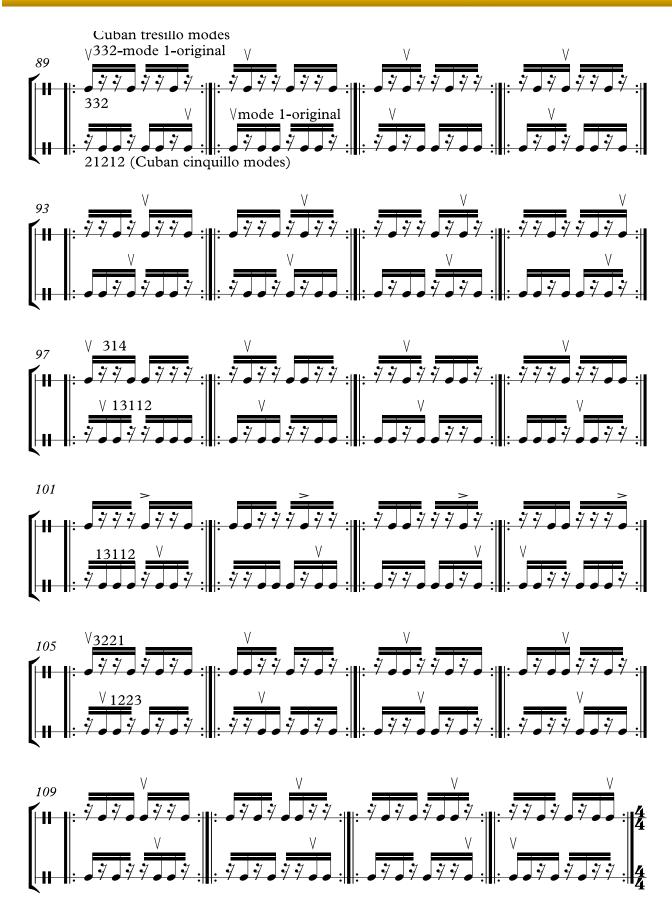


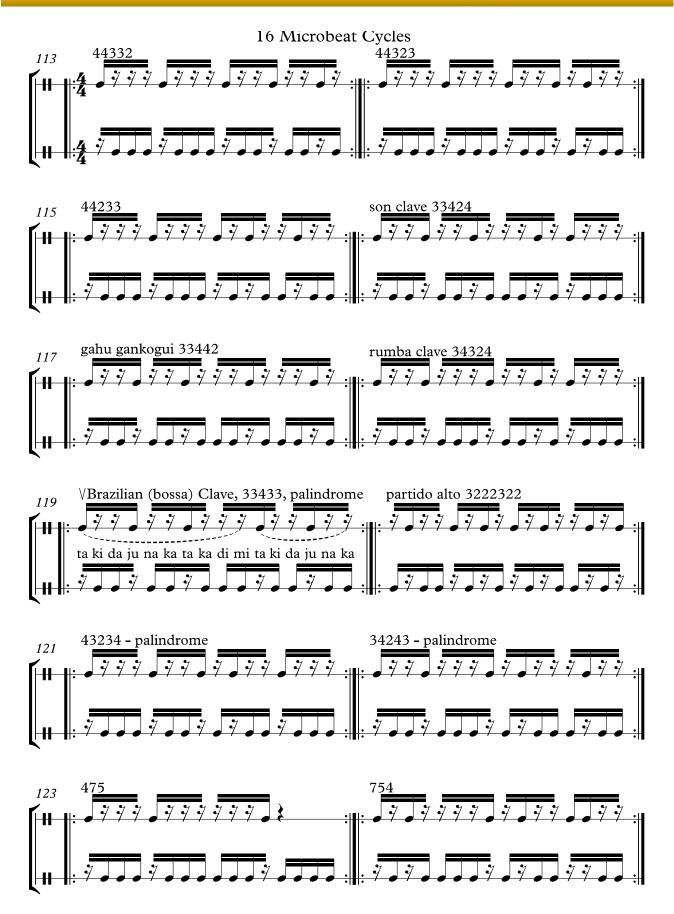


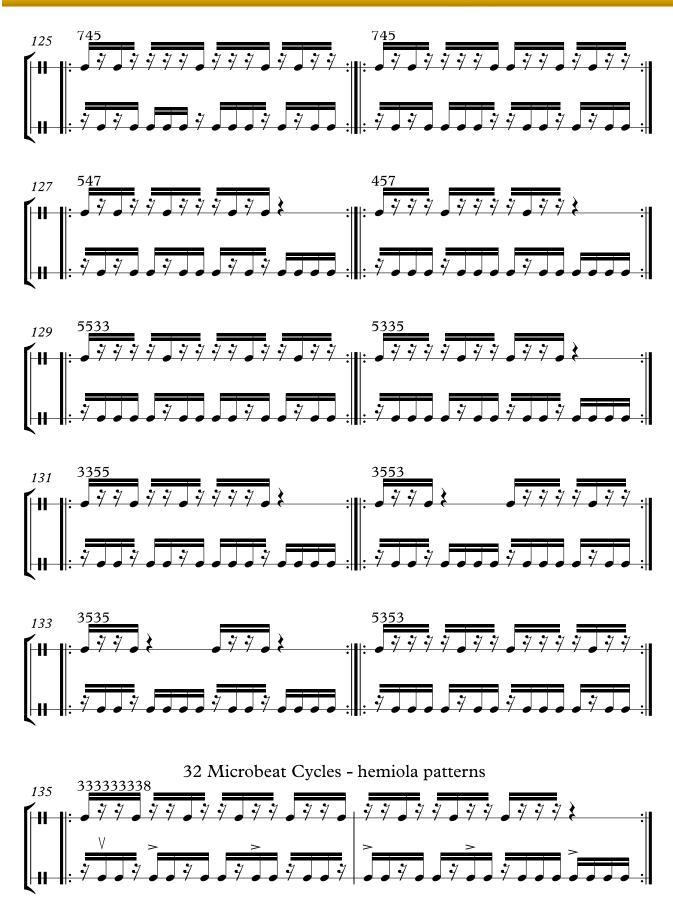












CHAPTER 5 - TERNARY RHYTHMS

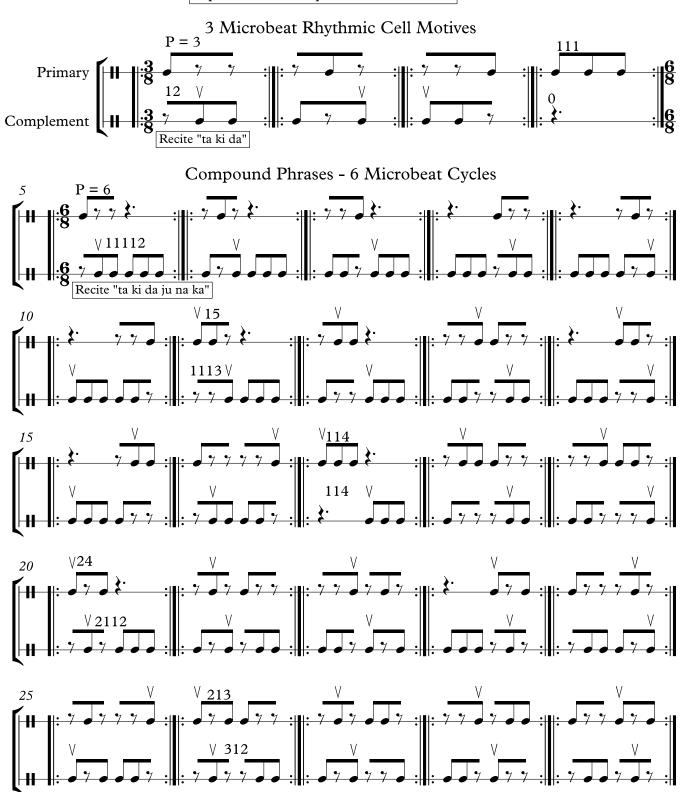
TERNARY RHYTHMS IN GRAPHIC NOTATION

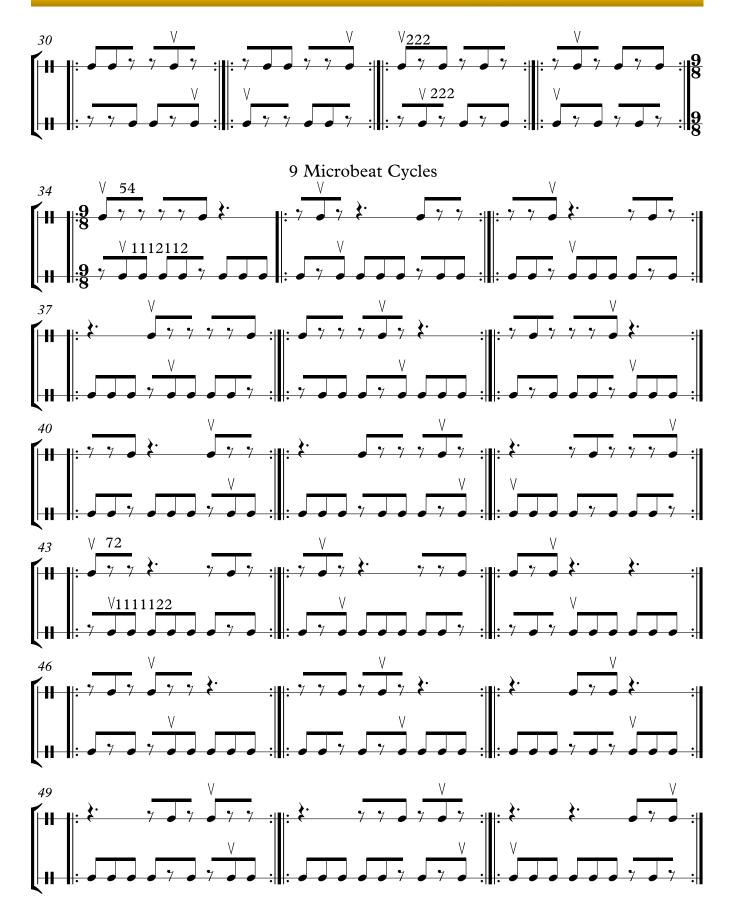
| Partition | Permutations (•) = onset, (−) = rest | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| P=3 | A — — | B — ● — | C — — • |
| 1+2 | A • • — | B — ● ● | C |
| 1+1+1 | • • • | P=zero onsets — — — | |

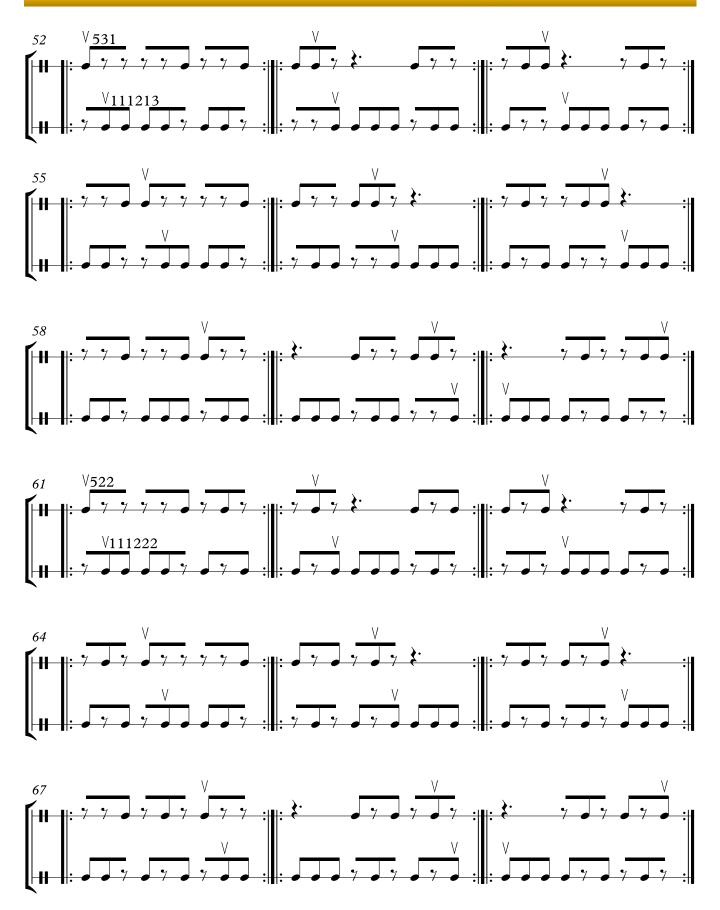
| P=6 | A | В | С |
|-----------|---------------|----------------------|-----------|
| | • | - • - | • |
| 1+5 | A | В | С |
| | • • - | -•• | • • |
| | D | E | F |
| | • • - | - • • | • • |
| 1+1+4 | A | В | С |
| | • • • | -•• • | • ••- |
| | D | E | F |
| | • • • | • - • • | • • - • |
| 2+4 | A | В | С |
| 214 | • - • | - • - • | • -•- |
| | D | E | F |
| | • - • | • - • - | - • - • |
| 2+1+3 | A | В | С |
| 2 1 1 7 3 | • - • • | _ • _ • • _ | • _ • • |
| | D | E | F |
| | | | |
| | | | _ |
| 2+2+2 | A | В | |
| | • - • - • - | - • - • - • | |
| | | • | |

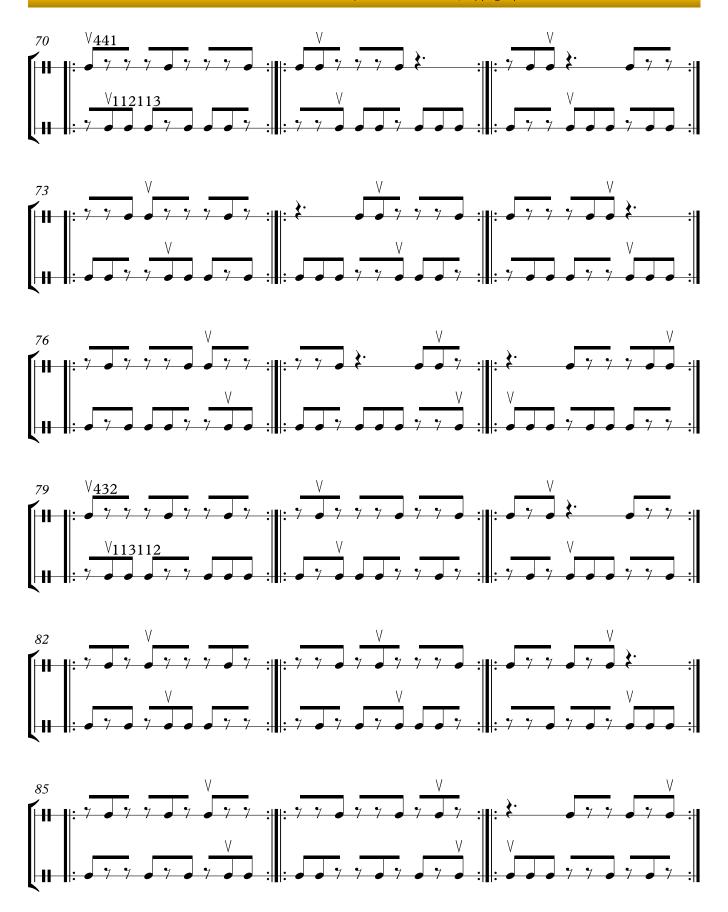
Ternary Rhythm Patterns

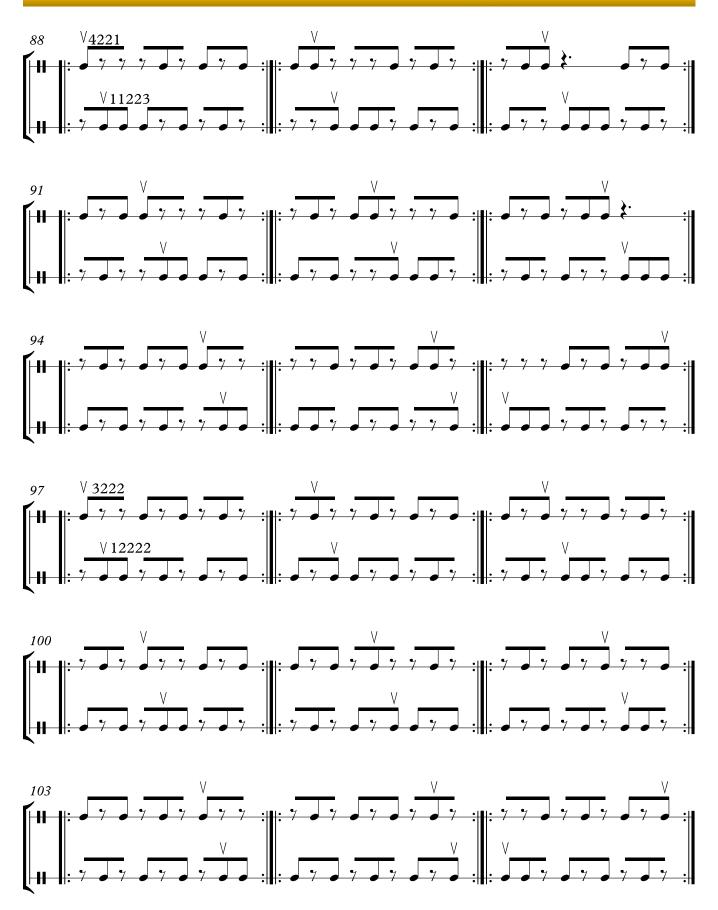
Tap foot on dotted-quarter note macrobeat

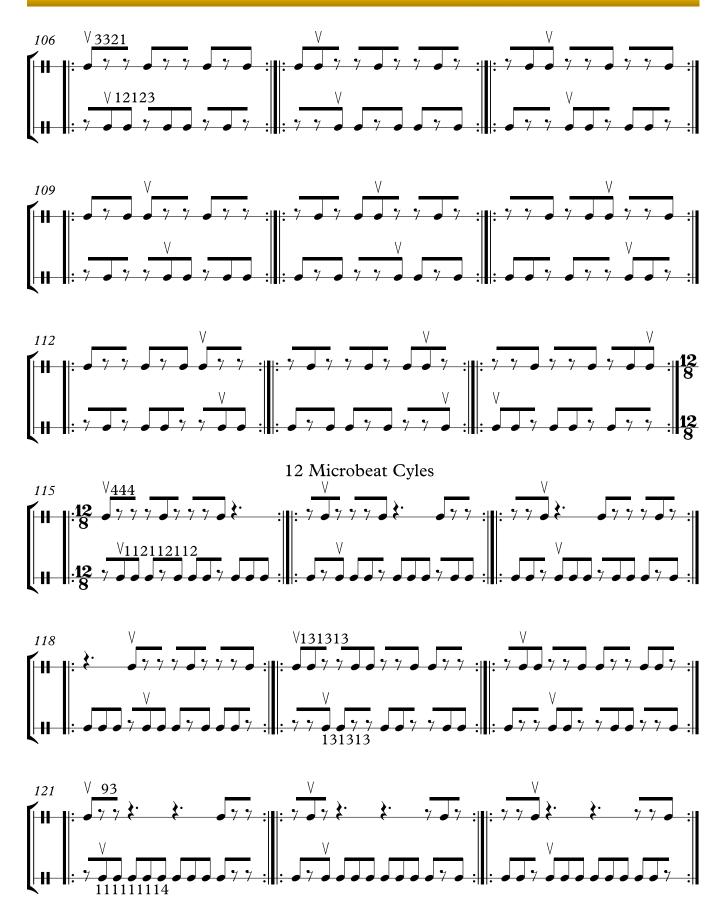


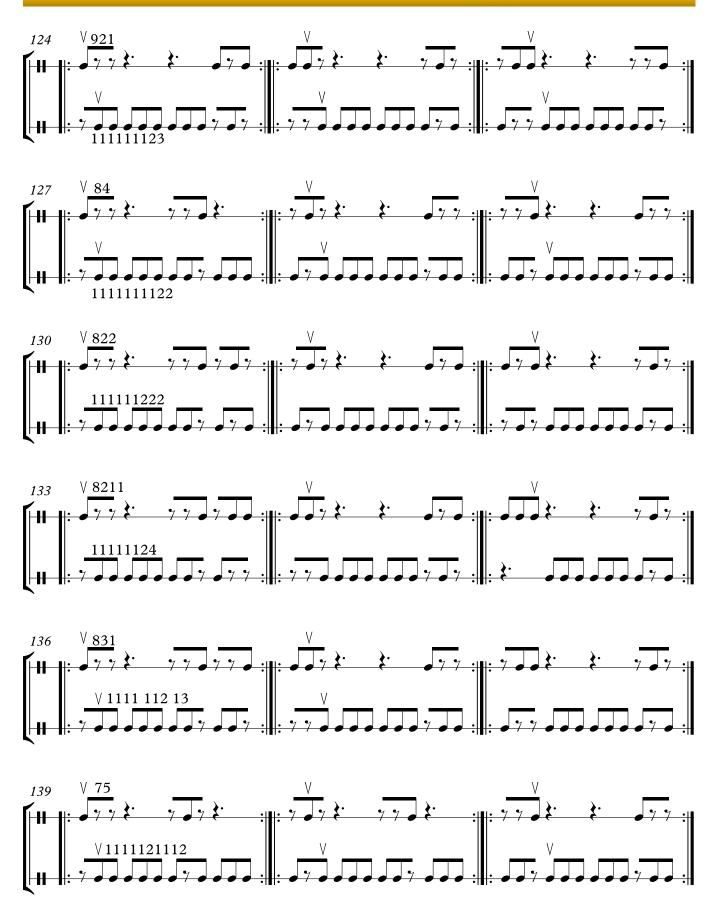


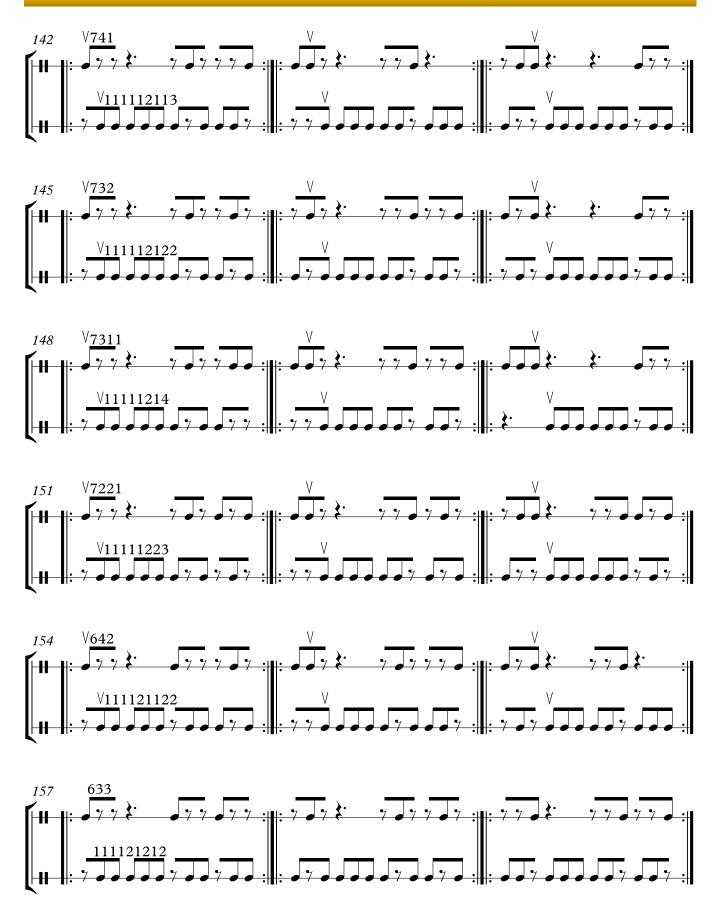


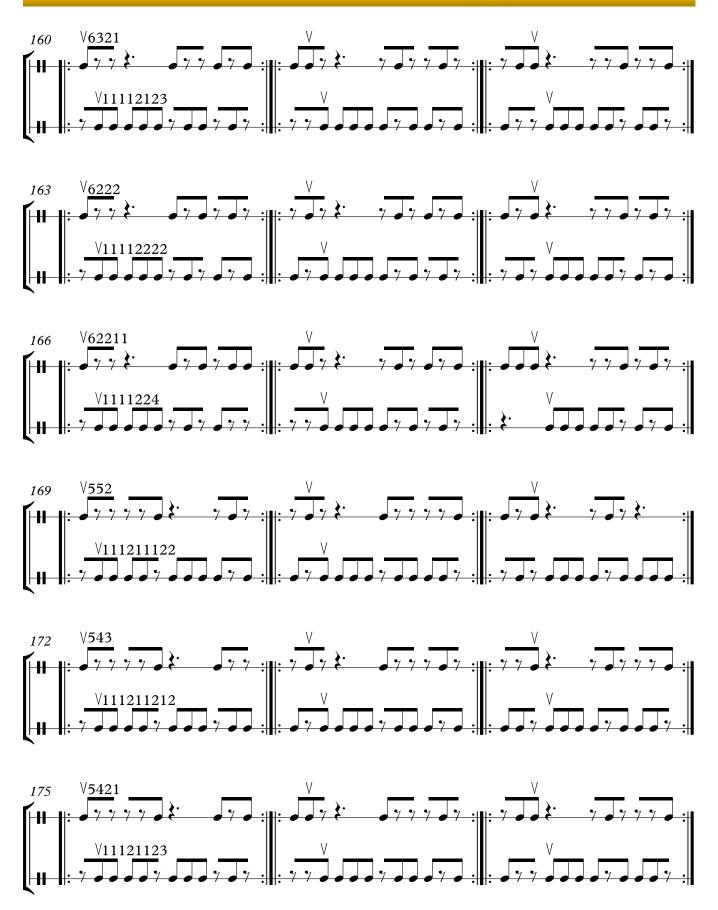




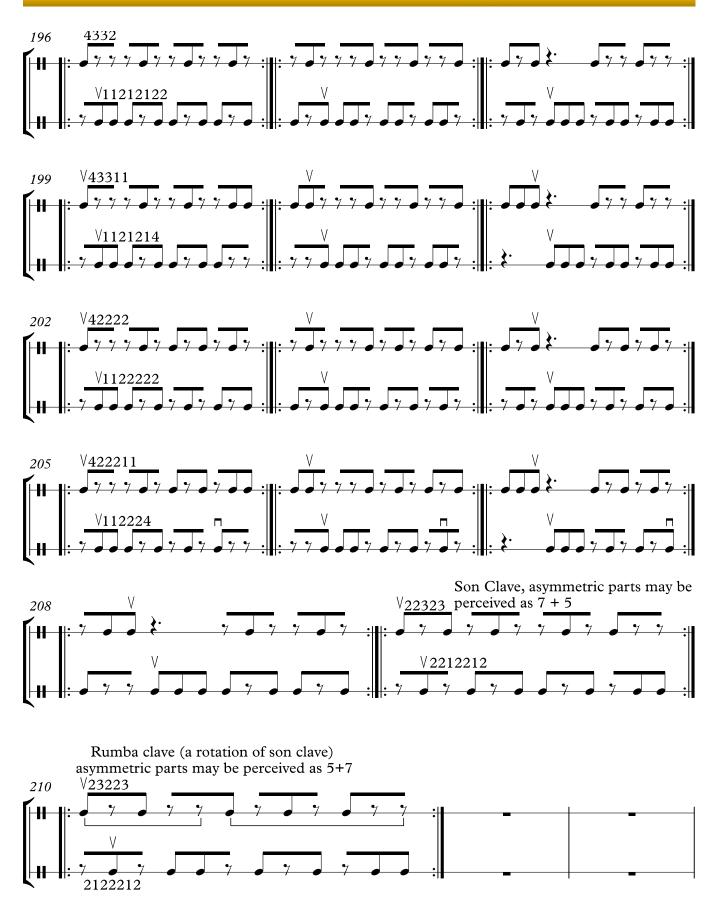












West African, Afro-Cuban, & Brazilian Rhythms

Glenn Schaft (2021)

Afro-Cuban Rhythms



Glenn Schaft (2019) West African Rhythms Ewe-Ghana-gankogui (bell) 18 bell var. 5 onset key pattern 17 boba dm. solo var. 19 Mode 3 tresillo, Dogarti-Ghana, bawa, 3 onsets = 2,3,3Soukous - Republic of Congo ||| ||: Cinquillo-Cuba, Shiko-Nigeria, 23 5 onsets=21212 5 onsets=42424 22 **₩** Son Clave-Cuba, Kpanlogo-Ghana, Timini-Senegal, Milonga-Argentina 5 onsets=33424 = mode 7 cinquillo, 5 onsets=12122 |||||| Brazilian Clave, Rumba Clave-Cuba, 5 onsets=33433 27 5 onsets=34324 Kpacha-Ghana, Waka Waka Sam Mangwana, 7 onsets=3232222 Gankogui, bell-Gahu-Ghana, 5 onsets=33442 28 |||| Sikyi-Ashanti-Ghana, Highlife, similar to mode 13 partido alto,

31

30

||| ||:

9 onsets=222212212

2

Brazilian Rhythms





3



