

An understanding of the underlying currents and structures woven through our universe at the most fundamental level awards us the capacity to become better architects of our own reality. Whether viewing the vibrational patterning that differentiates one thing in existence from another as sound or geometry, proportion and number lie at the roots. As Z'EV states in his work, Rhythmajik, "Proportion literally translates as 'for one's portion' and portion can have a definition of 'destiny'. When you are sounding a proportion you are invoking a course of events, the intention of which is to realize[in all its possible meanings, i.e. make real, understand, convert and obtain] the balance inherent in the relationships of the proportion." If we discover the numerical proportion underlying any given phenomena, we are then able to use that signature to call forth its energy to initiate change. Given this information, we are faced with two primary choices: a source for our numbers and a medium through which the numbers can be expressed. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on rhythmic percussion as a medium and then include the practice of gematria as a number source.

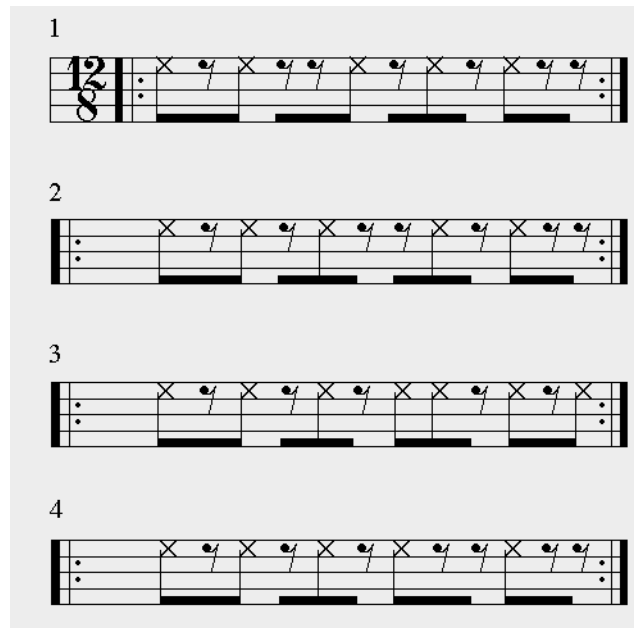
In the world of sound healing, a great deal of emphasis is placed upon frequency, yet it could be said that frequency and rhythm are quite literally the same thing. Through the law of octaves, any frequency can be slowed down to a consistent pulse that maintains its numerological essence(imagine ice becoming water). Adding another layer, any harmonic interval slowed down will yield two steady pulses that maintain the ratio of the harmonic(i.e. A perfect fifth has a ratio of 3:2, which will slow to become a 3:2 polyrhythm; one pulse[the fundamental] sounding two times in the duration that the second pulse[the fifth] sounds three times)(<https://www.vimeo.com/32408748>)

Let us explore the 3:2 ratio as an archetypal proportion expressed within a cultural context. This will serve not only to emphasize the fact that the numerological proportions transcend the mediums through which they are expressed, but to provide a framework through which different ways of expressing rhythm can be organized. The perfect fifth(3:2) is widely seen as a very expansive and healing interval. Fabien Maman states "the fifth interval expands in all directions and provokes the widest movement of energy in space". The pervasiveness of the perfect fifth is heard across cultures and time. The expansive and powerful nature of the perfect fifth proportion in its rhythmic form can be heard as the backbone of Sub-Saharan African music. According to Eugene Novotney, "The 3:2 relationship (and [its] permutations) is the foundation of most typical polyrhythmic textures found in West African musics." In a 3:2 polyrhythm, the three and two are being sounded simultaneously, which

could be seen as “harmonic” rhythmic expression:

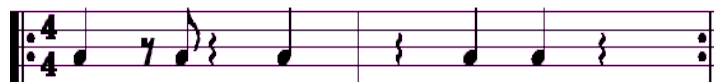


Another permutation of the 2 to 3 relationship within Sub-Saharan African music is commonly referred to as the the “standard bell pattern”. This pattern is often felt in a 6/8 or 12/8 pulse with syncopated notes woven over top. To me, there is a definite “2 side” and a “3 side” felt to this pattern. (Heard in



the cowbell pattern here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxaLzUVvDdo>) Several variations:

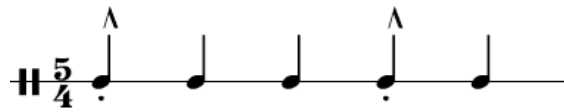
With the slave trade to the Caribbean, the African bell patterns such as these would eventually become what we know as the Afro-Cuban clave patterns, which are expressed in terms of either “2-3” or “3-2”,



albeit in 4/4. A 3-2 clave:

Where the 3:2 polyrhythm could be seen as a harmonically expressed rhythmic proportion, the African bell and Afro-Cuban clave patterns could be seen as melodically expressed rhythmic proportions. However, while a sort of symbolic representation of the proportion is met through the melodically expressed rhythms, the true proportion is lost due to the fact that the duration of the notes change. A melodic expression in which the relationship between the 2 and 3 might remain slightly truer can be

achieved with accents:



That leaves us with three different methods for rhythmically expressing numeric proportions: “harmonic”(polyrhythmic), “melodic” type A(in which the idea of the proportion is expressed, but not the true proportion), and “melodic” type B(in which the numeric relationship remains more intact). This provides a nice array of options, as different number combinations lend themselves better to different methods(expressing the relationship 3:7:5 harmonically might not sound the greatest, let alone be physically possible).

Now with a framework with which to express numbers, we will use a system developed by sound artist and healer, Z'EV, as a number source. This system deals with Qabalistic gematria, that is, assigning each letter of the Hebrew alphabet a numerological value. This works particularly well because Hebrew is seemingly a holographic language, in which each word contains the numerological proportion that it means to express. To use an example, in Hebrew, God is expressed as IHVH, with a value of 26(I=10, H=5, V=6. So, 10+5+6+5=26). Love is expressed as AHBH(1+5+2+5=13) and unity is AchD(1+8+4=13). Love(13)+unity(13)=God(26). Lucky for those of us that don't speak Hebrew, Z'EV's system ties the number values directly to English translations. Going back to our 2:3 relationship, 2-3 can have a Qabalistic definition of “that which nourishes”, and 2-3o(expressed the same rhythmically) can have a definition of “expansion or extension”.

We will take the expression 5-4, which can have a definition of light, sound, echo or thank, offering. Expressed in “harmonic” form, we end up with a 5 over 4 polyrhythm, 5 beats simultaneously



sounded in the same duration as 4:

Expressed in melodic form A, we end up with 5 beats sounded in succession, a rest, then 4 beats sounded in succession:



Expressed in melodic form B, we end up with this:



Z'EV includes a dictionary of healing expressions in his system. For example, carotid arteries have a value of 90-6-6-1-200. This would be a case in which the harmonically sounded rhythm might not be applicable. The melodic rhythm type A might look like this:



And the melodic type B might look like this:



Z'EV points out that the number of permutations in the Hebrew alphabet end up being about a sextillion (10 to the 21st power). Between the numerical codes to be expressed and the methods used to express them, the possibilities for using proportion to initiate change are virtually endless.

Sources:

Rhythmajik Z'EV

The Role of Music in the 21st Century Fabien Maman

<http://www.masoncode.com/> Peter Bull 2004-2015

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_pattern

<https://www.unlockingclave.com> Eugene Novotney