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Contrapuntal and Percussive Forms: A Comparative Analysis of Motet and Fújì Music

Olufemi Akanji Olaleye, PhD¹*

¹ Federal University of Technology, Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria.

* Author for Correspondence ORCID ID; <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1153-3907>; Email: olufemiolaleyedr@gmail.com

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This paper explores how contrapuntal motet and percussive fújì forms independently developed but similar structures and responded to variant social contexts. Motet originated from Medieval Christian liturgy known as Gregorian chant, while fújì originated from Islamic Religious Liturgy known as *Wéré* chant. Interestingly, fújì demonstrates a comparable and parallel evolutionary process with motet form. Therefore, this novel study represents the motet evolutionary form alongside the fújì developmental process. Leveraging on contrapuntal-percussive stratification theory that posits that both the Western polyphony motet and the Yorùbá percussive fújì achieve structural complexity not through tonal harmony, but through the vertical layering (stratification) of independent lines; vocal in the motet and instrumental/rhythmic in fújì. The new comparative musicology theory was adopted to structure the comparison of the motet and fújì music forms. Findings reveal that both genres exhibit layered evolutionary forms, vocal textures, adaptive formal structures, and a shift from religious contexts to broader social music functions. I conclude that netting of globalised motet musical techniques alongside fújì music facilitated the deeper understanding of fújì, its theoretical concepts, and the exposition of fújì techniques to a global audience. Therefore, this study contributes to comparative musicology by highlighting convergent evolutionary patterns of motet and fújì.

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INTRODUCTION

Musical forms across cultures often evolve in response to shared human needs such as worship, social cohesion, and artistic expression. The Western motet and the Yorùbá Fújì music tradition, despite originating from different cultural and historical contexts, reveal striking parallels in their evolutionary trajectories. The motet developed within medieval European sacred music, characterised initially by polytextual and rhythmically independent vocal lines, before achieving stylistic coherence in the Renaissance period. Similarly, Fújì music originated from Islamic devotional practices among the Yorùbá of southwestern Nigeria and later evolved into Fújì popular secular form marked by vocal improvisation and rhythmic density. Therefore, the conceptual background and the preoccupation of this study are to trace the evolution of motet with a view to exhume its stylistic and structural devices to pitch against the evolution of Fújì, the Yorùbá popular musical form. Questions on the origin and the evolution of musical form were of particular interest to the early comparative musicologists, as well as contemporary research. Research on the evolution of musical forms is formidable and important because an understanding of the stylistic devices of music will go a long way in the appreciation and verbalisation of the musical technique observed. Therefore, this current study tracks three central questions: What is the evolutionary development of motet and fújì musical forms? Through what pathways are the Motet and Fújì analogous to each other? And what are the interrelated theoretical concepts of Motet and Fújì music?

By synthesising interrelated evidence, this paper aims to investigate the evolution of the motet

musical form as analogous to the Yoruba Fújì music tradition. Rather than suggesting direct historical influence, the study adopts an analogical framework that highlights structural, functional, and contextual similarities. By placing these traditions in dialogue, the paper aims to expand scholarly understanding of how musical forms across cultures evolve toward complexity, adaptability, and expressive depth. Motet emerged as the most important form of early polyphonic music and remained a central musical genre in the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages were an important period in the history of music and spanned from 450 AD to 1450 AD. This period harbours monumental achievements in music history, and many of the subsequent theoretical postulations and musical forms had their origin in the Middle Ages.

Despite the popularity of Fújì music in the global world, a critical gap exists in its evolutionary forms documentation, accurate rhythmic alignments, text underlay, and lack of systematic field theory. The universality of this problem in African music was x-rayed by Ekwueme (2002) that scholars of African music have had problems attempting to sort out the scales of traditional vocal, forms, and instrumental music, and a lack of awareness that many of these tunes have their own special, perhaps peculiar ‘modes’. In another instance, however, an attempt was made to proffer a solution to the above-cited problems in which Ekwueme (2002) submitted that a study of modal counterpoint and medieval musical forms will lead to a better appreciation of the special nature of African melodic lines and tonal structure. This was rightly observed by Vidal (2007) that after several decades of music scholarship in Nigeria, we now have in existence a dictionary of musical terms with which we can connote or denote certain phenomena, like the concept of beauty. How do we

describe it? Do we have a field theory to back this up? Furthermore, Vidal (2007) opined that the solution to the observed problems is that a new spirit of inductive reasoning, critical examination, and re-evaluation of prevailing data, and a meta-lingual mode of communication should be cultivated and nurtured if we as musicologists and music educators are to achieve excellence. Therefore, Ekwueme (2002) posited that a better appreciation of the special nature of African melodic lines, tonal structure, and form structure is necessary. In line with the reviewed literature and opinions, the analysis of motet technique is analogous to Fújì musical form. Besides, useful concepts of the sociological factors shall be considered in motet and Fújì musical forms, as far as they elucidate the anatomy of the musical forms.

Origin of Fújì

Fújì music is a type of musical genre that is very popular among the Yorùbá of Southwest Nigeria. The Yorùbás constitute one of the three main ethnic tribes in Nigeria with several devices of music, both vocal and instrumental. However, the most popular music among the Yorùbá is fújì, jùjú, sákàrà, and àpàlà. According to Ekwueme (2008), Islamic music has greatly influenced the music of Hausa and Yorùbá. These chants have an Arabic origin; they are sung in the Arabic language with Arabic text, set in syllabic and melismatic styles. There are offshoots from the Islamic chants, which are wákà, sákàrà, and fújì music. Presently, we shall only focus our attention on fújì music and its practitioners. Fújì music originated from the Quranic chant of the Muslims, just like the motet originated from the plainchant of Christians. The metamorphosis of fújì from Quran chant through to ‘Wéré’ (Quick) and eventually becoming fújì multipart music is a phenomenon.

Fújì music developed from the Quran chant of Muslims, which was used for the training of the young ones and indoctrination into the Islamic religion, especially to be able to read and interpret the Quran. The Quranic chant is a common practice

during the month of Ramadan (an annual fasting period of Muslims). The young Quran chanters engage in the activities of using the Quran chants to ‘wake-up’ the faithful to eat the fasting food in the early morning between 4 am and 5 am. This act of ‘waking early’ gave birth to the name of the music being used for the exercise as ‘Wéré’ (Quick- Wake up quickly). Islamic chant, a form of song, is associated with Islamic ritualistic service used during worship in mosques and elsewhere. The chants are intoned and sung in the Arabic language with texts from the Quran. They are usually not accompanied by any musical instrument. The chants are sung by one soloist, the chief Imam, and reechoed by the *Muadh dhin*, who is apparently a great vocalist, and who can sing about two octaves comfortably, producing such forceful, commanding, and compelling music alternating between melismatic lines and pauses (silent points). There is no congregational participation in the chanting, but calling people to prayer each day is solely done by the *Muadh dhin*.

‘Wéré’ (in Yorùbá mythology, means ‘quick’, fast, or early) originated from the actions being performed by the chant (to wake up quickly). Its practitioners, popularly called ‘*ajísàrì*’ or ‘*ajíwéré*’ (somebody who wakes up early to wake others) during the month of Ramadan, roamed the streets, moving from one house to another, rousing fasting Muslims from sleep, reminding them about the time to eat the “fasting food”. However, to serve as encouragement to the chanting youths, the ‘*ajísàrì*’ or the ‘*ajíwéré*’ were often rewarded with gifts; cash, cooked food, and foodstuffs. At the end of the month of Ramadan or during ‘*id’el kabir*’ (Muslim festival that ends fasting known as ‘*iléyá*’- let's go home), music/song festival competitions were usually held to choose the best ‘*wéré*’ musicians in most Muslim communities. These songs, ‘*wéré*’, were mostly based on traditional folklore and stories, in the form of preaching, usually incorporated into the chant, and the accompaniment of ‘*wéré*’ were indigenous instruments like *àgídígbo*, *agogo*, *sèkèrè*, *sákàrà*, and the local flute.

At the end of the keenly contested musical competition, winners were usually selected and given a gift, usually collected from the chief imam or a rich member of the nearby mosque. Winning this competition was not only a thing of pride to most “*wéré*” songsters, but it was also a source of joy for their parents as well. It was from the stated tradition that the popular music called ‘Fújì’ originated, which is a refined form of ‘*wéré*’.

During Fújì’s gestation period, in between the evolution of ‘*wéré*’ into fújì music in the 70s, Dauda Epo Akara, an Ibadan-based bricklayer and a successful ‘*wéré*’ songster, modified the contents of ‘*wéré*’ from mere folklore music to real contemporary topical issues. Epo àkàrà dubbed his own kind of ‘*wéré*’-àwùrèbè. The name ‘fújì’ originated from the sort of lyrics that the tag fújì gained. Original fújì instruments include sákàrà, conga, omele, àgídìgbo, agogo, sèkèrè, igbá. It was Monsuru Akande, a veteran ‘*wéré*’ singer, who first made a wax record in the 70s. Later, both Barrister and Kollington waxed their own fújì record in 1976. Kollington and Barrister radicalised the composition and rendition of the erstwhile conservative music. Some prominent fújì musicians include: Wasiu Ayinde Talazo, Lone Azeez, Aremu Commissioner, Adewale Konta, Rasaki Agbadaowo, Easy Kabaka, Iyanda Sawaba, Fancy Aye Alamu, Maitama Sule, Adisa Alashela, Shina Akanni, Adewale Ayuba-Bonsue fújì, and Shefiu Alao. (alias *omo oko to gbo kirakira*). It was Kollington that introduced instruments like bàtá drum and the xylophone into fújì, while Barrister incorporated bènchè, gangan, jazz band, keyboard, trumpet and Agbádáowó; however, he introduced the guitar. Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, known as fújì garbage, exemplifies early modern fújì with extended vocal improvisation and dense rhythmic layering. Ayinde Kollington, alias Alatika, demonstrates structured call-and-response patterns and ensemble cohesion. Adewale Ayuba (Koloba Koloba) reflects the modernisation of Fújì with clearer sectional divisions and rhythmic drive. Pasuma Wonder (Recognition) illustrates

contemporary Fújì narrative style and flexible formal design. Saheed Osupa (Mr. Barrybration) highlights sustained vocal declamation and chorus interjections akin to antiphonal practices.

Recent studies like Awodun and Kamaluddeen-Aiyelabegan (2024) and Owoaje and Sofola (2025) have examined the structural and evolutionary development of fújì music, with emphasis on innovation and stylistic practices. Studies have also examined fújì within the context of political and developmental communication, Yoruba aesthetics, as well as the use of literary devices (Samuel & Ogunrinola, 2018; Sofola & Mapaya, 2025; James et al., 2025). Additionally, while a number of research studies have carried out an analysis of structural elements in Yoruba music (Sofola, 2025), much of the existing research into Yoruba musical forms (Olaleye, 2012; Owoaje, 2016; Owoaje & Adegbola, 2022; Olaleye, 2023) have largely focused on thematic and lyrical content, and performance contexts. Despite these academic endeavours, not much has been done in the area of comparative musicology, with the focus on intercultural exploration. It is this gap that this study intended to fill.

Theoretical Foundation

The incorporation of comparative analyses of motet and fújì enhances the understanding of its musicological features and the evolution of its forms. Scholarly discourse on the motet emphasises its transformation from a medieval musical genre defined by isorhythm and polytextuality into a unified sacred form characterised by imitative polyphony and harmonic balance (Apel, 1969; Atlas, 2014). Renaissance motets prioritised textual clarity and expressive musical settings, aligning with liturgical reforms and aesthetic ideals of the period (Taruskin, 2010). Studies consistently highlight the motet’s adaptability, noting its survival across stylistic periods due to its flexible formal design.

Musicology is one of the fields of academic musical investigation that examines the fundamental materials of music, such as forms, scale, interval, melody, rhythm, harmony, and texture. However, Vidal (2007) observed that the historical studies of music in Nigeria continued till the end of the 20th century into the beginning of the 21st century with less energy on the musicological contents. Given the observed challenges in Yorùbá Fújì music and to raise the status of Fújì musicological studies, this paper takes a voyage into the medieval period to exhume the motet techniques as an analogy of its stylistic idioms in the analysis of Yorùbá Fújì music to enhance the globalism of its scholarship.

A close parallel observation was noted in the evolution of Fújì musical form as an outcome of religious, cultural, and socio-political synthesis. Researchers trace its roots to *wéré* and *ajísari* Islamic chant traditions performed during Ramadan (Waterman, 1990; Omojola, 2012). Besides, Adegbite (2006) identifies Fújì as a genre that transformed devotional vocal practices into extended performance forms through the inclusion of indigenous percussion ensembles and improvisatory vocal techniques. Comparative musicology provides the theoretical foundation for this study, in Nketia (1974), who argues that African musical forms should be analysed using principles that recognise function, process, and performance context rather than Western formalism alone. This perspective supports analogical comparison between the motet and Fújì music based on shared evolutionary processes rather than stylistic equivalence.

The motet was predominantly a style at the initial stage, and not a form; its metamorphosis from the primitive organum to an independent musical form was accidental. The motet techniques are amazingly interdependent and appear to cling together. The question now is: how did motet become a full-blown multipart music distinct from the organum, conductus, and discant? There are similar or at least analogous stylistic devices observed in Yorùbá Fújì

traditional multipart music and motet techniques. In view of these similarities, is it possible to propose the motet technique to the musicological study and analysis of Yorùbá music? The scope of this study is to trace the developmental processes of motet musical composition that came into artistic vogue during the Middle Ages. The styles and features observed in the motet technique will be used to discuss the Yorùbá musical forms. Particularly, the evolution of motet is similar to the evolution of fújì musical form; these would also be considered, because fújì music has been adjudged to be the most popular Yorùbá musical genre.

The objectives of this study are to point out the stylistic devices of motet techniques in the analysis of fújì music, provide data on the evolution of Fújì multipart music, and contribute to the study of the stylistic features of fújì popular music. The historical documentation of Fújì music aims to evolve a common language that is not ethnically and linguistically bound and could be utilised globally for effective music scholarship and comparative study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs qualitative comparative methods that combine historical inquiry, structural analysis, and contextual interpretation. The choice of this method reflects the interdisciplinary nature of the inquiry, which analyses and compares musical systems across different cultures to identify universal evolutionary traits. Comparative musicology models musical transmission to examine how variations arise, providing insights into cultural contact. The method of data gathering involves searching through DOAJ, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Scopus, and specialised musicological archives. These platforms were selected for their relevance and breadth in historical comparative musicology. Proximity operators and filter results were used to examine how close specific keywords were within comparative musical texts. Content analysis was used systematically to extract and describe the features of the motet present in Fújì.

The study relies on a contrapuntal-percussive stratification theoretical framework to analyse intercultural music and to understand complex textures where multiple independent musical lines operate simultaneously.

FINDINGS

Music is a universal phenomenon; the interrelationship of styles, forms, and general aesthetics across cultures is evident. Specifically, the historical development of the motet is analogous to the development of Fújì music among the Yorùbá people. Table 1 outlines these parallel evolutionary features.

Table 1: Compendiums of Motet and Fújì Music Voice Metamorphoses

Parallel Features	Evolutionary Voice	Motet Voice Features	Fújì Voice Features
Origin of motet and fújì music forms		The motet originates from the Medieval Christian Liturgy (Gregorian Religious Chant)	Fújì originated from the Traditional Yorùbá Chant (Islamic Ramadan chant)
Evolutionary metamorphoses of Gregorian and <i>Wéré</i> Chant		Gregorian Religious Chant metamorphosed into Organum	Islamic Ramadan chant metamorphosed to <i>Wéré</i>
Monophonic structures		Clausulae monophonic split from Organum	<i>Wéré</i> monophonic split from <i>Asalatu</i>
Splitting and dropping out of a full-fledged music		Clausulae dropped out from Organum	<i>Awùrèbe</i> dropped out from <i>Asalatu /wéré</i>
Polyphonic forms of both Forms		Sacred motet, secular motet, and mixed motet	Fújì megastar, gospel fújì, and mixed fújì
Focus of the Lyrics of both Music		Motet focuses on politics, economy, sexuality, love and contemporary issues.	Fújì focuses on politics, economy, sexuality, love and contemporary issues.
Mixture of language is common to both music		Latin/French/English Languages	Arabic/Yorùbá/English languages

Table one illustrates the conceptual flow of Medieval Christian Liturgy to motet and Islamic Ramadan Yorùbá chant to fújì music styles. The motet and fújì were predominantly musical styles at the initial stage, and not a form; their metamorphosis from the primitive organum and primitive *Wéré* to an independent Motet and Fújì musical form was accidental. Therefore, the table one was guided by the five core pillars of NCN theory, which focus on classification of musical styles, cultural evolution, human history, musical universals, and biological evolution. Therefore, the table one offers a holistic and succinct comparative musicology that integrates the motet as a well-established musical form to highlight and expose the hidden potential embedded in the evolution of fújì musical form. A musical form is a finite array of interdependent melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic,

timbre, textural, and formal relationships and processes. However, styles do not come into existence fully articulated and defined, but emerge gradually; it is usually impossible to describe precisely how and when new styles come into being. However, it is not possible to specify why, even exactly when a new style comes into being, the pattern of trended, internal style change which it subsequently follows is clear, at least in broad outline. The metamorphosis of motet as a musical composition may be represented in broad outline diagrammatically, from the standpoint of styles and sociological events, which is the arrowhead by which this paper is discussed. Motet emerged as the most important form of early polyphonic music from around 1250 AD. “Motet” was derived from the French word ‘mot’ (meaning ‘word’), referring to the words that were joined to the added parts. In

fact, the early form of the motet was nothing more complex than words added to a clausula (clausula is a text with a less melodic line attached to a plainsong, which now assumes the name motet when it is supplied with a text or 'words'). The early motet illustrates the craft of medieval composers,

with their work based on what had been handed down from the past. The practice was the selection of a passage of Gregorian chant, and fashioning two or three phrases separated by rest, the composer added one, two, or three counter melodies of his own.

Table 2: Motet and Fújì Technical and Social Contexts

Technical And Social Context Features	Motet Features	Fújì Features
Form texts in honour of gods or an individual	Motet honours the Virgin Mary	Fújì honours Allah and important personalities
Both practitioners of the chants are scholars in their own right	The Monk chanters	The Imam chanters
Harmonic and Rhythmic Structure (both use independent layered voices)	Simple and complex counterpoint progression; polyphonic and imitative progression	Simple and complex rhythmic patterns progression; polyrhythmic and improvisation progression
Counterpoint	Melodic tonal counterpoint: independent, yet harmonious	Rhythmic tonal counterpoint: independent drums, yet harmonious.
Text and rhythm	Cantus Firmus in different species (First to fifth species)	Lead vocal improvisation accompanied by a rapid polyphonic rhythm.
Harmony	Punctus-contrapunctum; note-against-note, with independent melodic movement creating harmonic harmony	Call-and-response; vocal/vocal, vocal/drum, drum/vocal, creating polyrhythm. Additive or percussive layering.
Religious doctrinal restrictions of motet and fújì music.	Despite full-blast orchestra accompaniment to the motet and orchestration, some churches frowned and restricted instrumental uses.	Controversies abound in the use of fújì music in some denominational mosques and general restrictions on music in mosques.

Table two illustrates the technical and social contexts of the flow of motet and fújì music. Both the motet and fújì were predominantly musical styles at their initial stages, rather than fixed forms. Their metamorphosis from primitive organum and early *Wéré* chant into independent musical forms occurred as a gradual process. Table 1 was guided by the five core pillars of NCN theory that focus on the classification of musical styles, cultural evolution, human history, musical universals, and biological evolution. Therefore, table two offers a holistic and succinct comparative musicology that integrates the motet as a well-established musical

form to highlight and expose the hidden potential embedded in the evolution of fújì musical form. An exposition of the various types of motets will throw more light on their various characteristics. The conductus motets are the duplum and triplum with parallel phrasing and can therefore deliver the added text like two voices of a polyphonic conductus. Such motets (for three voices) are therefore commonly referred to as conductus motets. Double motet involves two different texts for duplum and triplum, while **the** Latin double motet exhibits a continuing affinity with the conductus. Their texts retain a traditional trope relationship to the cantus

firmus and are therefore topically affiliated to each other. Besides, cantus firmus motets were written in the early 14th century and are constructed in a fashion that has come to be called 'isoperiodic'. In

these, the phrases are usually of the same length but are laid out so as to produce overlaps between voices.

Table 3: Instrumental Accompaniment to Motet and Fújì

Instrumental Accompaniment Features	Motet Features	Fújì Features
Early Period	During the Medieval period, the motet was almost a cappella (voice)	Though Islam came around the 15th century with limited foreigners, a cappella <i>wéré</i> was a mere folklore
Mid-early Period	In the Renaissance era, motet was mostly a cappella; however, the late 16th century adds colla voce doubling.	Large-scale adoption in the 18th/19th century brought the introduction of simple percussion instruments like: sakara, agidigbo, and sekere.
Later Period	The Baroque period witnessed the introduction of <i>basso continuo</i> and instrumental obbligato (instruments for independent lines).	The 70s brought the enlargement of instrumental accompaniments to fújì, such as <i>bata</i> , xylophone, gangan, <i>àgidigbo</i> , <i>agogo</i> , <i>sekèrè</i> , <i>sákàrà</i> ,
Modern Period	Organ or orchestral accompaniment becomes common.	In the 80s, more Western instruments were added to fújì, such as trumpet, keyboard, guitar, and

Table three presents the evolution of instrumental accompaniment to motet from vocal-only polyphony to the instrumental richness of the modern period. While rooted in a *cappella* (unaccompanied) traditions, motets increasingly incorporated instruments starting in the late 16th century, moving from simple doubling of vocal lines to full orchestral accompaniment. While primarily vocal, instrumental doubling was possible. Towards the end of the 16th century, instruments began doubling voice parts (*colla voce*) to support singing, particularly in courtly settings. The late 16th and 17th centuries marked a significant shift with the introduction of *basso continuo* (organ or other chordal instruments supporting the bass line). After 1750, the form became less prominent, but Mozart wrote motets

with instrumental accompaniment (e.g., *Ave verum corpus* or *Exsultate, jubilate*).

Romantic composers like Bruckner, Brahms, and Mendelssohn continued to compose motets, often utilising organ accompaniment, particularly in line with the 19th-century "Cecilian Movement" aiming to restore sacred music standards. 20th-century composers (Poulenc, Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky) returned to the motet form. Accompaniment varied from a *cappella* to organ, brass, and full orchestral accompaniment. Ralph Vaughan Williams' "O clap your hands" (1920) is accompanied by organ, brass, and percussion.

Furthermore, Fújì music evolved from traditional Islamic *wéré* (Ajisari) vocal chants by incorporating a heavy, polyphonic percussion

ensemble and, eventually, modern Western instruments. Pioneered by Sikiru Ayinde Barrister in the 1970s, it rapidly added *gudugudu*, *dùndún* (talking drums), *bata*, *şèkèrè*, and *agogo*, later introducing electric guitars, bass, and keyboards for a faster dance tempo. The Transformation (Mid-1970s-

1980s) witnessed Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister and General Kollington Ayinla spearheading the introduction of a sophisticated rhythm section, with jazz drums, keyboard, electronics, and heavy percussion, turning it into a popular, high-tempo dance genre.

Figure 1: Development of Motet from Gregorian Chant (Monophony)

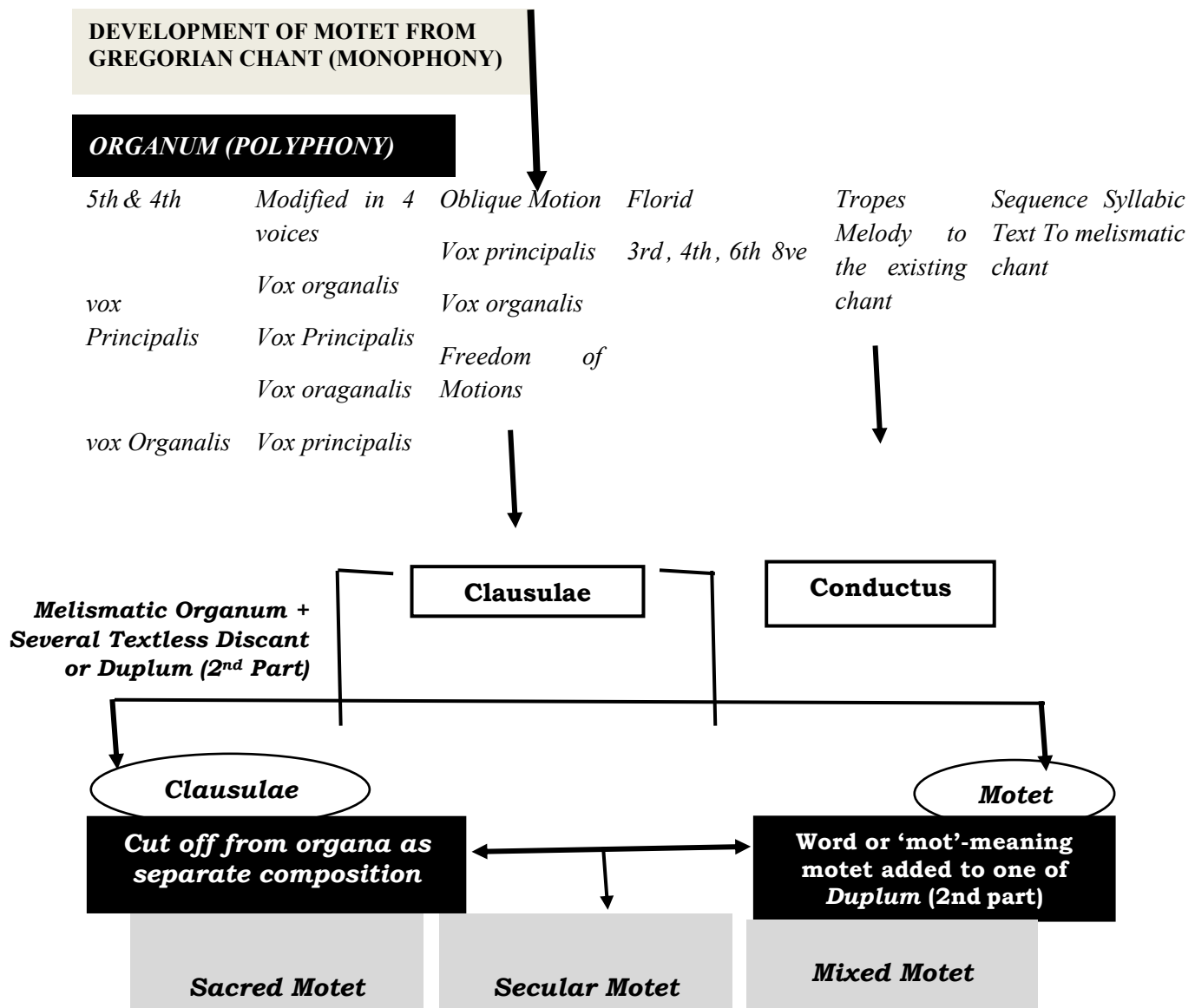


Figure 1 shows the evolutionary development of monophonic Gregorian chant to the motet musical form. The diagrammatic representation of motet

development simplifies complex information and enhances understanding of the explanation. The Figure 1 diagram visually facilitates comparison,

quick identification of treads, patterns, and relationships between motet and fúji forms. Figure 1 leverages the Memetics theory that treats musical ideas as memes that replicate similarly to biological genes and reveals the interesting, similar evolution

of Motet and Fúji forms. Memetics is a theory of cultural evolution, proposed by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, which models the spread of ideas, behaviours, and cultural information as a Darwinian process.

Figure 2: Development of Fúji from Quranic Chant (Monophony)

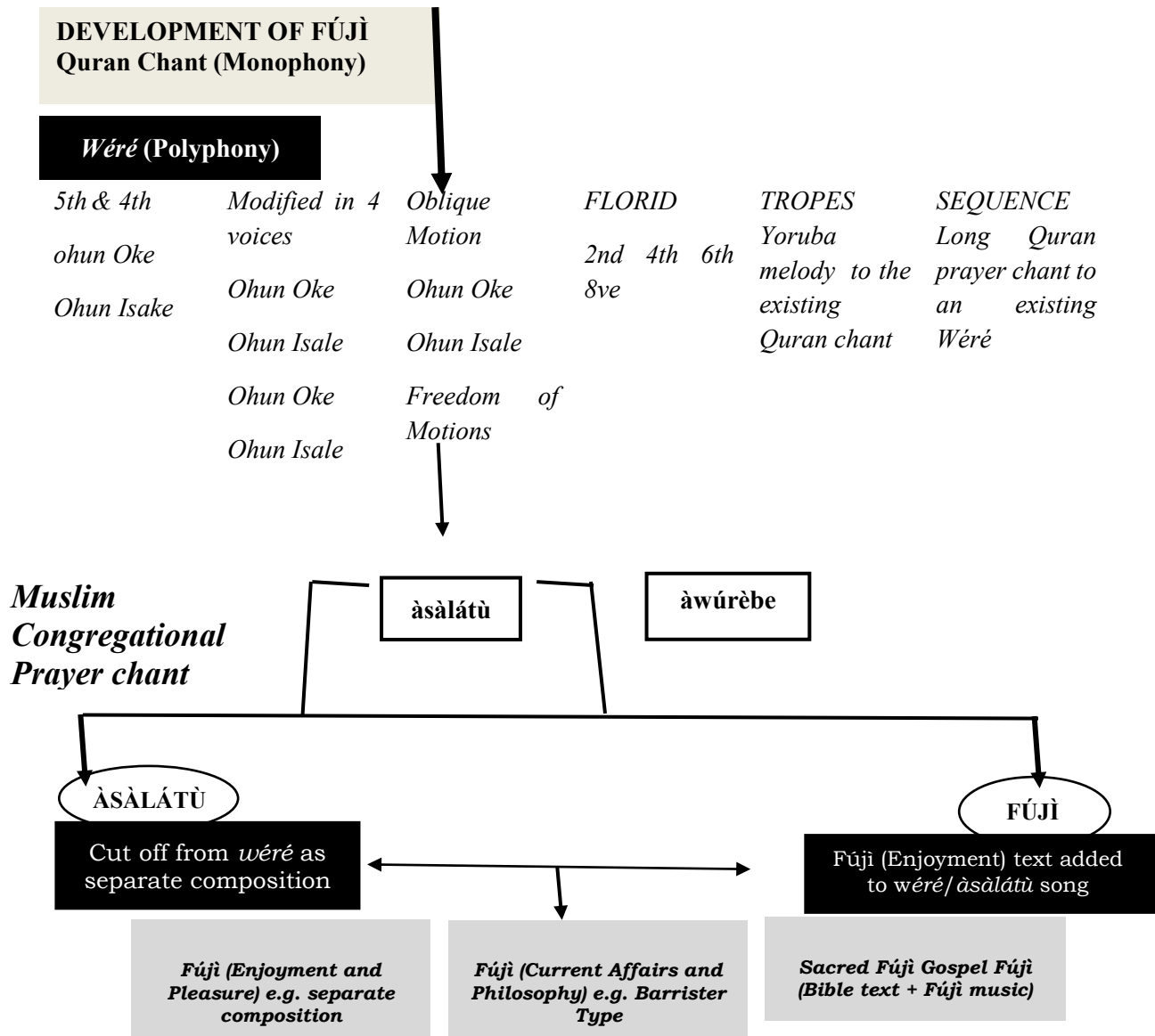


Figure 2 shows the evolutionary development of monophonic Quranic chant to Fúji Musical Form. The diagrammatic representation of Fúji development simplifies complex information and enhances understanding of the explanation. Figure

2 visually illustrates the comparison, quick identification of treads, patterns, and relationships between motet and fúji forms.

Motet Techniques in Fújì Music Arrangement

Modern comparative musicology uses large-scale, cross-cultural databases (e.g., "The Global Jukebox") to quantify musical similarities and differences rather than relying solely on subjective descriptions. Therefore, this section theoretically analysed motet music techniques in fújì musical arrangement (appendix 1), arranged in March, 2002 by Stephen Olusoji (the researcher used the Fújì score with the permission of the composer, Professor Stephen Olusoji). Motet music techniques are historical polyphonic composition methods, primarily featuring imitative counterpoint, isorhythm, and polytextuality, where multiple, often sacred Latin, melodic lines are interwoven. Therefore, this unit focuses on fújì contrapuntal texture; fújì polyphonic vocal nature; fújì polytextuality; fújì imitative counterpoint; and fújì isorhythm.

The music excerpt in Appendix 1 is the latest fújì musical arrangement for the piano, by Stephen Olusoji. According to Olusoji (2010), fújì stylistic features are recitative/declamation, magadizing in vocal arrangement, utilising microtones and ornaments such as *fioritura*, turns, shakes, trills, quotation from the Quran, polyrhythms/polymeter, *ostinato*, praise, cadential polyphony, tonal shifts, call and response, and nonsensical words such as *òròbò kùbo*, *omo rápálá*, okay now, *kibo* n rocking, *oshòdì òkè*, and I will tell your mummy. Therefore, the motet styles that were exhumed and analysed in this study are (i) contrapuntal texture or polyphony, (ii) polytextuality, (iii) imitative counterpoint, (iv) isorhythmic, and (v) multilingualism.

Fújì contrapuntal texture or polyphony: With reference to the fújì score in figure three, the musical structure combined distinct independent melodic lines simultaneously from bars 31 to 37 with counterpoint and imitation between the parts. The display of horizontal interplay of melodies rather than just vertical chords was noted. These melodies interact harmoniously while maintaining individual rhythmic and melodic identities;

however, bars 15 and 16 feature octave doubling of the melody.

Polytextuality in bars 39 to 44 of Appendix 1 displays a literary technique where two different texts, the Yoruba and Arabic texts, are sung simultaneously in different voice parts. In bars 39 to 44, the upper Yoruba text focuses on an independent poetic prayer text, while the lower Arabic texts are fragments of a liturgical chant. Simultaneous text feature is the layering of multiple, independent verbal texts at the same time, just like the imposition of Latin and French texts in a motet.

Isorhythmic motet style is also seen in the fújì arrangement in Appendix 1. The isorhythmic is a polyphonic vocal work characterised by the repetition of a complex rhythmic pattern known as the 'talea' through one or more voices as 'colour'. The complex drum rhythm in bars 1 to 3 is the motif that was used to accompany the fújì text and fújì-arabic text song. The notated drum rhythm often overlaps with the melodies to structure the composition. The importance of this rhythm is that it was taken from the record that came out at the peak of political rivalry between the National Party of Nigeria and the Unity Party of Nigeria, it constitutes the focus of political rivalry.

Imitative counterpoint is another motet musical technique that is found in fújì music. The multiple melodic lines are combined, with subsequent voices imitating a melody previously introduced. The bars 1 to 7 with the left hand contain the variant motifs, while bars 8 to 11 with the right hands imitates the variant motif. The leading musical ideal was laid out in bars 1 to 7 (antecedent) and imitated at different points (consequent), with imitations that are free, strict, or inversions displayed at various points in fújì music arrangement. This imitative counterpoint technique is very common in the motet madrigal. During the Renaissance, a melodic phrase introduced by one voice echoed by a subsequent voice, creating a rich and densely textured polyphonic structure, which is the same in fújì music.

Multilingualism is another resounding motet technique found in fújì music. The fújì multilingualism feature was a result of its contagious nature. Etymology of the word fújì is pleasure; faaji, which later metamorphosed to fújì. Therefore, it is rendered with Yorùbá, Arabic, English, and Broken English. The genres of fújì music are fújì magarster, talazo fújì, fújì kabaka, and gospel fújì.

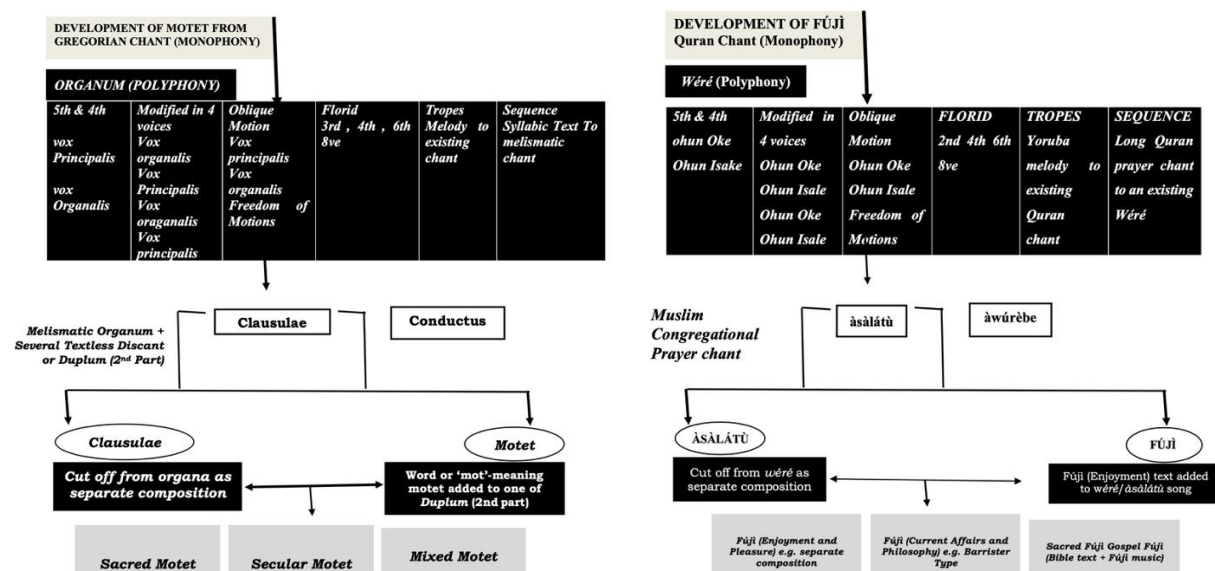
Polarity is another variation found parallel in both medieval motet and fújì music. It is the duplication of melodies in octaves. Polarity was achieved in the medieval era when men and women were chanting; also, in Yorùbá music, it was a common practice. Polarity occurs in Islamic musical form when the lead singer (usually Imam) sings the main theme and his assistant (*Ajánásì*; a man of embellishment) sings the same melody an octave lower in the form of a descendent. Polarity, according to Mereni (2004: 26), often happens that when women and men [i.e., a non-homogenous group] are singing a melodic line together, the voices are polarised in the octave and polarisation is a deliberate stylistic feature, which is purposely sought for, and achieved, even where the performing voices are homogenous.

It is interesting to note the reflection of the practice of Gregorian chant fashion in two or three phrases in fújì music practice. The fújì text is usually in the Yorùbá language; however, Arabic language may form an added upper part, with an extra third part of nonsense syllables. This arrangement is reflected in figure 3, bars 19, 21, 23, 27-29, 32, 34, 36, 46 to 48.

These fújì features are a resemblance of a French motet in which words are in both motetus and triplum, with no connection between the texts of the upper voices and the Gregorian tenor. The basic theme, sung by the tenor, was known as cantus firmus (fixed melody) and served as a point of departure for his own creativity. Therefore, the clausula part is a textless melodic line attached to plainsong; this then assumes the name motet when it is supplied to plainsong.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This analysis reveals notable analogies between the motet and Fújì music. Both genres evolved from religious foundations into broader social contexts while retaining their core expressive functions. The comparative diagrammatic representation in Figure 3 simplifies these complex developments, allowing for the quick identification of patterns and relationships between the two forms. Specifically, Figure 3 illustrates the parallel evolutionary development of Gregorian monophonic music and Quranic monophonic chant into their respective polyphonic forms. The layered vocal organisation in motets heavily parallels Fújì's call-and-response and rhythmic stratification. Although Fújì does not employ harmonic counterpoint, its rhythmic polyphony fulfils a similar structural role. Furthermore, the evolution of Fújì music exhibits a clear architectural parallelism with the motet. Both genres demonstrate how musical ideas replicate and evolve, functioning as both a cultural creation and a result of cognitive processes.

Figure 3: Parallelism of Moted and Fuji Musical Forms

The popularity of Fújì among the Yorùbá people stems primarily from its lyrics, which integrate genres such as oríkì, ògèdè, and itàn (Adegbite, 2007). Singers often weave passages of the Quran into their songs to display improvisational skills, a technique originating from Islamic chants. This practice closely mirrors the medieval sequence, invented by Notker Balbulus, which involved setting text syllabically to long melodic passages to aid memorisation. For example, Sikiru Ayinde Barrister frequently quoted long melismatic Quranic verses and set Yorùbá texts to them, a style prominent in his albums *Orìṣà mi èwò ni se* (1976), *Aye Disney* (1980), and *Fújì Garbage* (1988). The application of the New Comparative Musicology theory, with its focus on cultural evolution and musical universals, provides a holistic framework to expose these evolutionary parallels.

The findings suggest that musical evolution across cultures often follows comparable pathways shaped by communal participation, ritual function, and aesthetic refinement. The identification of these 'motetistic' techniques in Yorùbá multipart singing confirms Mereni's (2007) assertion that restricting the investigative field of musicology to European classical music is a false premise. Comparative

musicology offers significant advantages by combining ethnographic insights with quantitative methods to map musical diversity. By tracing the historical development of musical traits, similar to studying language families, researchers can better understand the functions of music in human society and help preserve endangered traditions like Fújì through rigorous documentation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the evolution of the motet musical form is analogous to the development of Yoruba Fújì music in terms of structure, function, and performance practice. Both genres illustrate how musical traditions adapt to changing cultural contexts while maintaining expressive relevance. By situating Fújì music within a comparative analytical framework, the study contributes to a more inclusive understanding of global music history and affirms the scholarly value of African popular music traditions. Besides, most of the features of motet were also similar to the features of Yorùbá multipart music. The peculiarity of the work is so unique in that it incorporates ethnological discussions into an understanding of musicological facts. There is no doubt that, as a result of modernisation, value systems, worldviews,

lifestyles, and a changing attitude, our traditional multipart music faces a danger of extinction. However, our present exercise opens a new vista of documenting Yorùbá multipart music. Bukofzer, M.F. (1957) said that ‘the description of the origin and development of styles, their interrelations, their transfer from one medium to another, is the central task of musicology’. Our present exercise, as its prime objects, focuses on the motet and appraises it through those qualities and features it shares with Yorùbá multipart music. Having arrived at the aim of tracing the motet historically, and apprehending the cohesive elements, the paper also looked thoroughly into ‘the spirit of the age’ (the *zeitgeist*) as it affects the music, both the motet of the medieval period as well as fùjì multipart singing.

Through imaginative creativity, the paper established a parallel graph between the historical developmental process of motet and fùjì music, as a good example of Yorùbá multipart music, and arrived at an established relationship that cut across the traditional subject boundaries (musicological facts). The paper also imposed relationships between the two considered musical genres. The study reflects the convenient sameness of motet and fùjì music definition as a complex composition with interweaving vocal lines, utilising various languages with complex harmonic and rhythmic structures.

Finally, we may need to take a cursory look at the initial worries of this paper as well as the objectives of this study. The study highlighted the ‘motetistic’ techniques in Yorùbá traditional multipart music, and a new vista for documentation of Yorùbá Fùjì music opened. To wrap up this conclusion, it may be interesting to recap Professor Lazarus Ekwueme’s (2006) advice that African musicological studies, it seems to us, have to go back to the original idea of comparative musicology, what Kunst (1950) termed ‘*Vergleichend Musikwissenschaft*’, two main branches of musical investigation – its history and its theory.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical Approval Statement

The author declared that the study was reviewed and approved for ethical compliance by the Research Institutional Ethics and Review Board of Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Nigeria.

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Discography

Ayinde Barrister (original name - Ayinde Agbaje Balogun) Albums “*Ori mi Ewo ni N se* (1996), *Aye Disney* (1980), *Fùjì Garbage* (1988).

APPENDIX 1

Fuji

To: Victor & Gideon Olusoji

Olusoji Stephen

March, 2002

In stately Dance Tempo

Piano

mf

Dolce

4

7

10

13

The musical score consists of five systems of piano notation, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

- System 1 (Measures 16-18):** Measure 16 starts with the tempo marking *Leggiero* and the dynamic *mf*. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 18 includes a *Cresc.* (Crescendo) marking with a dashed line.
- System 2 (Measures 19-21):** Measure 19 features a *f* (forte) dynamic. The right hand has a complex chordal texture, and the left hand continues with eighth notes.
- System 3 (Measures 22-24):** Measure 22 starts with a *f* dynamic. Measure 24 includes a *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic and the marking *L.H* (Left Hand).
- System 4 (Measures 25-27):** Measure 25 features a *f* dynamic. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- System 5 (Measures 28-30):** Measure 28 starts with a *f* dynamic and the marking *with Rhythm*. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. The first system begins at measure 31, marked with a treble and bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble staff features eighth-note patterns, while the bass staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 34, showing a continuation of the melodic and harmonic themes with some dynamic markings like accents (>) and a mezzo-piano (mp) instruction. The third system begins at measure 37, where the left hand (L.H.) is specifically noted. The final system starts at measure 40, concluding the excerpt with sustained chords in the treble and moving lines in the bass. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, bar lines, and dynamic markings.

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system, labeled with measure 43, features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a series of chords, with the first measure marked with a '43' and a '4' above it. The bass staff contains a series of eighth notes. The second system, labeled with measure 46, also features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a series of chords, with the first measure marked with a '46' and a '4' above it. The bass staff contains a series of eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present in the first measure of the second system. A bracketed upper note in the first measure of the second system is marked with an asterisk (*). Below the score, a note reads: ** Bracketed upper note to be omitted in 2nd time repeat*.