



# **Cultural Appropriation and RoR**

# **Cultural Appropriation and RoR**

## **1. History of Samba and Carnival**

**Samba** is a general term for different types of music, for example Samba-enredo, Pagode, Samba de Roda and Samba-canção. While many types of Samba also include other instruments and singing, **Batucada** is a substyle of Samba and refers to an African-influenced Brazilian percussive style using a selection of drums similar to that of RoR. A group playing these rhythms is called a Batucada or a **Bateria**.

### **1.1 Origins in Western Africa**

Samba is a Brazilian music genre that originated in the afro-Brazilian communities of Rio de Janeiro in the early 20th century. It has its roots in Angola and the Brazilian folk tradition, especially those to the rural samba of the colonial and imperial periods.

From the 16th to the early 19th century, Brazil was a colony and a part of the Portuguese empire.

The word Samba is related to West African religious tradition. It is probable that the word Samba originated in Angola, where the Kimbundu word “semba” designated a circle dance similar in choreography to the West African batuque that Bantu slaves brought to Brazil, especially to the region Bahia. While the exact number of Black people entering Brazil during its period of slavery is unknown, it is commonly estimated that at least 18 million Africans were enslaved and brought to Brazil between 1538 and 1828.

Samba music and dance survived in Bahia through private celebration. After the abolishment of slavery, former slaves moved to the poorer neighbourhoods of Rio de Janeiro surrounding the city. It was here that communities developed Samba from a fusion of influences including Maxixe.

## 1.2 Mainstreamization of samba

Over time, Samba music got appropriated by the white privileged Brazilian society and became part of the mainstream music, with the development of samba schools, commercialization, etc. In this way it lost its original message, but some groups are struggling to make the roots of this music visible.

## 1.3 Reappropriation of a Black movement / repolitization

Rhythms of Resistance take some of their inspiration from the “blocos-afros” bands (e.g. Olodum or Ilê Aiyê) that emerged in the mid-1970s in Salvadore, in the Bahia region of Brazil. These bands were formed as expressions of Black awareness, in defiance of a military dictatorship which viewed any “cultural” group as potentially “communist” and ruthlessly suppressed them. Blocos-afros bands were responsible for blending traditional samba rhythms with Reggae, Salsa and Merengue to create the Samba style now known as Samba Reggae. Today many of these bands still campaign for freedom, human rights and equal opportunities, and fight against social injustice and racism.

## 2. History of Pink&Silver and RoR

Rhythms of Resistance formed out of a merger between Reclaim the Streets (RTS), a movement aimed at undermining capitalism and car culture by organizing street parties, and the Barking Bateria, an activist Samba band based in the Barking campus of the University of East London. The Barking Bateria was formed after one of the lecturers met up with the Liverpool School of Samba who were performing as part of a picket line and occupation organized by striking Liverpool Dockers on September 28, 1996.

On a trip to Chicago the previous year, Chris Knight<sup>1</sup>, an anthropology lecturer at University of East London, discovered a shop filled with Native American drums. At the time, Chris had been conducting research into the role of drums in indigenous peoples’ movements of resistance against colonialism. He decided to buy two Lakota Sioux elk-skin drums, one for himself and the other for his colleague Lionel Sims.

---

1 <http://www.chrisknight.co.uk/>,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris\\_Knight\\_\(anthropologist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Knight_(anthropologist)),  
<http://scienceandrevolution.org/new-page>

Back in London, Chris's students invited him to participate in a series of Reclaim the Streets (RTS) or 'Kill the Car' street parties. RTS has been described as part rave, part festival, part street theatre and part demonstration. Since 1995, the movement has succeeded in creating acts of resistance which are both powerful poetic gestures and effective political strategies. Street parties reclaim streets from the tedious workings of capitalism, consumerism and private transport and replace them with 'temporary autonomous zones' – living, vibrant spaces that were previously forbidden to pedestrians. In the years since 1995, RTS held parties – or actions – in cities including London, Tel Aviv, Sydney, New York and Helsinki. On May 14, 1995, Chris took part in the first major RTS street party which took over a busy London street and closed it to motor traffic for an afternoon.

On July 13, 1996, Chris and Lionel – now equipped with their big Native American drums – helped take over the M41 Motorway in West London. The RTS organisers asked them to beat the drums continuously, which turned out to be a very effective way to lead the masses through a complex route underneath a railway line onto the motorway. During this action, Chris met Ian Fillingham, who had been heavily involved in RTS. Through Ian, they later convinced RTS to join the one-year anniversary of the Liverpool dockers' strike<sup>2</sup>, on September 28, 1996. On the picket line, Chris met members of the Liverpool School of Samba<sup>3</sup> and realized that Samba was a much more effective tool of resistance than randomly banging their two elk-skin drums.

Back in London, Chris and Lionel looked up the London School of Samba<sup>4</sup> and invited their mestre Dave Willets<sup>5</sup> to teach Samba to them and to a small group of their students. The new band was created in September 1996 and called itself the Barking Bateria, named after the London district of Barking, where the largest campus of the university was located back then. The name also resonated with the expression "barking mad" (which means something like "totally crazy"). Some tunes (such as Samba Reggae No. 3) were taken directly from London School of Samba, some others (such as Hedgehog) were newly invented with Dave, while yet others (such as James Brown) were introduced later by other mestres who were invited to teach samba. Barking Bateria's first big action occurred in May 1998, when the University of East

---

2 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool\\_dockers%27\\_dispute\\_%281995%E2%80%931998%29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool_dockers%27_dispute_%281995%E2%80%931998%29)

3 <http://www.liverpoolsamba.co.uk/>

4 <https://londonschoolofsamba.co.uk/>

5 <https://www.paraisosamba.co.uk/about/CVs/DaveWillets.php>

London wanted to close several departments, causing numerous employees to lose their jobs. Barking Bateria entered the administrative building and drummed inside, causing management to flee the building, leaving all the keys behind. The staff and students' unions managed to occupy the building for two weeks, eventually forcing UEL's management to back down.

Through Ian Fillingham, Barking Bateria convinced RTS to rely more on drums for future actions than on electronic sound systems. Until then, RTS had always brought trucks with big sound systems to their actions, which had the big weakness that the police could easily stop them by simply pulling the plugs. Barking Bateria taught Samba to Ian and other RTS activists, creating a new group called Rhythms of Resistance, named after the book "Rhythms of Resistance: The African Musical Heritage of Brazil" by Peter Fryer<sup>6</sup>. The first big action occurred when the Barking Bateria and an embryonic RoR combined for the June 18, 1999 'Carnival Against Capitalism'<sup>7</sup> which successfully closed down the London Futures Exchange. The first of many RoR rehearsals happened in Victoria Park in London a few weeks later. Subsequently, RoR joined the protests against closing down Stonehenge during the summer solstice to prevent pagan rituals there<sup>8</sup> and the UK Earth First action against the IMF / World Bank summit in Prague. Ian Fillingham was the mestre of RoR for the first three years including the events in Prague and is sometimes described as the "founder of RoR".

During the UK Earth First action against the IMF / World Bank summit in Prague in September 2000, a Pink & Silver carnival bloc was organised for the first time, utilising a set of colours to differentiate from other groups such as the Black Bloc, the confrontational but less creative tactics of the White Overalls, the non-participatory marches of the NGOs, the ineffective strategies of the socialist and leftists groups (whose banners and logos are predominantly red) and from the drab and militaristic uniforms of the police. On the protest, the Pink & Silver bloc focused around a 55 piece band, detached itself from a march of 67000 and outmaneuvered police resources defending the IMF annual summit. With an international "black bloc" and a large contingent from the Italian movement "Ya Basta", three diverse forms of direct action worked towards a common goal and resulted in the shut down of the IMF summit. In the Pink & Silver bloc, tactical frivolity was used to irritate

---

6 Source: <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2004-12/msg00007.html>

7 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnival\\_Against\\_Capital](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnival_Against_Capital)

8 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur\\_Uther\\_Pendragon#Stonehenge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Uther_Pendragon#Stonehenge)

police and other law enforcers. With this and other tactics, police chains were successfully broken up.

After this a RoR band was founded in Amsterdam to use the positive experience of pink and silver, mobile Samba music, radical cheerleading and tactical frivolity. By that, the transnational network using the same political tools emerged. The bands in the different cities act autonomously and are differently organised and connected.

The principles of the RoR are oriented on the PGA Hallmarks (Peoples' Global Action), which were created in the context of the protests in Prague. Over the years, RoR bands have emerged in more than 120 cities across Europe and beyond, and there are probably hundreds more bands outside of the Rhythms of Resistance network that play the RoR tunes on protests around the world.

Liverpool School of Samba and the London School of Samba are active to this day. Over the years, London School of Samba, Paraiso School of Samba<sup>9</sup> (which later formed out of London School of Samba) and Barking Bateria became more intertwined. Started as a student band, Barking Bateria got more and more non-student members over time and regularly played both on demonstrations for social justice and for entertainment on events until 2014. A new band called Sambattalion<sup>10</sup> has formed out of Barking Bateria and is active to this day<sup>11</sup>.

### 3. Cultural Appropriation

Cultural appropriation is the adoption of elements of one culture by members of a different cultural group. Specifically, the use by cultural outsiders of a minority, oppressed culture's symbols or other cultural elements. It differs from acculturation or assimilation in that cultural "appropriation" or "misappropriation" refers to the adoption of these cultural elements, taken from minority cultures by members of the dominant culture, and then using these elements outside of their original cultural context. This cultural property may be forms of dress or personal adornment, music or art, religion,

---

9 <https://www.paraisosamba.co.uk/>

10 <https://www.facebook.com/sambattalionlondon>

11 More info:  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20080820154355/http://www.barkingbateria.co.uk/>,  
<https://www.facebook.com/barkingbateria/>

language, intellectual property or social behavior, all of which may have deep cultural meaning to the original culture, but may be used as fashion (or ways to make money that would not be available for members of the original culture) by those from outside that culture. The appropriation often occurs without any real understanding of why the original culture took part in these activities or the meanings behind these activities, often converting culturally significant artifacts, practices, and beliefs into “meaningless” pop culture or giving them a significance that is completely different or less nuanced than they would originally have had.

In practice, cultural appropriation involves the appropriation of ideas, symbols, artifacts, image, sound, objects, forms or styles from other cultures, from art history, from popular culture, or other aspects of human-made visual or non-visual culture. Anthropologists have studied the process of cultural appropriation, or cultural borrowing (which includes art and urbanism), as part of cultural change and contact between different cultures.

Cultural appropriation is a by-product of imperialism, capitalism, oppression, and assimilation. Imperialism is the creation and maintenance of an unequal cultural, economic, and territorial relationship, usually between states and often in the form of an empire, based on domination and subordination. Imperialism functions by subordinating groups of people and territories and extracting everything of value from the colonized people and territories. In the case of cultural appropriation, culture is treated as a “natural resource” to extract from People of Color.

Cultural appropriation is profitable. Objects and traditions (but not the people) of marginalized cultures are seen by the dominant culture as exotic, edgy, and desirable, which translates to profits<sup>12</sup>.

## 4. Information about the tunes

### 4.1 Afoxé

**Name:** This word can either mean a rhythm from Brazilian carnival, a certain kind of rattle from Brazilian music, or a dance- and music formation in the Carnival.

---

12 <https://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/2011/09/16/cultural-appreciation-or-cultural-appropriation/>

All three meanings developed out of Candomblé, a creol religion which evolved through slaves from West-Africa, who were forcefully brought to South-America by white slave traders. The enslaved black people in Brazil passed on the religious rites through generations. Candomblé is still practiced by some afro-brazilians today.

**Musical background:** Our tune sounds very similar to some Afoxé rhythms from Brazil<sup>13</sup>.

**Sign:** The sign comes from the name sounding similar to “After-shave” (when pronounced with an English accent).

**History:** Part of the first round of tunes that was introduced by Barking Bateria in 2000.

## 4.2 Angela Davis

**Name:** Angela Davis is an Afro-American activist from the USA. She experienced a lot of oppression as a university professor due to her political views and involvement in the black liberation, communist and radical feminist movement. She became a major figure of the prison abolishment movement after being imprisoned for a murder that she did not commit.

**Musical background:** Break 1 sounds like from “Sex machine” by James Brown, Low Surdo is based on the drumset rhythm of this song. *More info needed whether the the rest of the tune is also based on his music.*

**Sign:** The sign represents prison bars, because Angela Davis is a major figure in the prison abolishment movement.

**History:** Part of the first set of tunes taken from Barking Bateria in 2000. The name used to be “James Brown” (famous musician from the USA) and the sign was to depict an afro haircut. James Brown didn’t have an afro haircut for most of his life, but later got one as it became a symbol of Black pride. The tune was renamed because of domestic violence and rape accusations against James Brown, and Angela Davis was chosen because she fit the tune sign. Later the tune sign was changed. We consider both the old tune sign itself and the fact that Angela Davis was chosen because of her afro hair as racist.

---

13 <https://youtu.be/WCah-JgDktA?t=301>



## 4.3 Angry Dwarfs

**Name:** The original name of this tune was German „Wütende Heinzelmenschen“, which has been translated as “angry dwarfs”. „Heinzelmenschen“ (officially but gendered: „Heinzelmännchen“) are small human creatures in a local tale in Cologne, who, according to the tale, secretly did all the work for the people of Cologne at night, so that the people could be lazy during the day. One day, someone got curious to see them and set up a trap, so they got really angry and left. From that day on the people had to do all the work themselves.<sup>14</sup>

**Sign:** The hand signal refers to the pointed cap that Heinzelmenschen are wearing on their heads.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**History:** Local tune from RoR Cologne, published in 2006. Was removed from the tune sheet in 2012.

## 4.4 Bhaṅṛā

**Name:** Bhaṅṛā is a traditional folk dance from Punjab (a region in northern India and eastern Pakistan). It was typically danced by farmers during the harvesting season, to the beat of a Dhol. Dhols are double-sided drums where one side is hit with a heavy wooden stick, creating a deep sound, and the other side with a light stick, creating a high sound.<sup>15</sup>

Nowadays, Bhaṅṛā also refers to a style of pop music that was invented by Punjabi immigrants in Great Britain and North America. Its beat somewhat resembles a faster version of the Dhol rhythm in traditional Bhaṅṛā drumming.<sup>16</sup>

**Musical background:** The Surdo and Tamborim lines very closely resemble the rhythm that the low and high side of the Dhol is playing to the traditional Bhaṅṛā folk dance. Several examples can be found on YouTube when searching for “Bhangra drumming” or “Punjabi drumming” (searching for just

---

14 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinzelm%C3%A4nnchen>

15 More info: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhangra\\_\(dance\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhangra_(dance))

16 More info: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhangra\\_\(music\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhangra_(music))

“Bhangra” will bring up mostly modern Bhaṅgrā pop music, where the similarity to our tune is very small)<sup>17</sup>.

**Sign:** The sign is a common gesture to greet or honour someone in India and Southeast Asia. In Hindu, the gesture is called Namaste.

**History:** Part of the second round of tunes that was introduced by Barking Bateria in 2004/2005.

## 4.5 Cochabamba

**Name:** Cochabamba is a major city in Bolivia. The 3rd PGA conference in 2001 was there. Social movements and direct action groups there revoked the privatization of drinking water.

**Musical background:** Break 1 and Bra Break are based on the song “Iron Lion Zion” by Bob Marley<sup>18</sup>. *More info needed on the origin of the tune.*

**Sign:** Symbolizes drinking out of cup, referring to the privatization of water against which the protests happened in Cochabamba.

**History:** *More info needed.*

## 4.6 Coupé-Décalé

**Name:** Coupé-Décalé is a type of club dance music popular in Côte d’Ivoire. It was developed in Paris by Ivorian DJs and eventually brought back to Côte d’Ivoire, where it became very popular. Some say that it represents the desire of a young generation to bring more party, carefreeness and openness to the world into a country shaped by its unstable political situation and dominated by patriotic and military music. “Coupé-Décalé” means something like “cheated somebody and then ran away”, which is generally interpreted to stand for famous Coupé-Décalé artists “tricking” France and Western Europe to become successful and famous there and then returning to Côte d’Ivoire, bringing back the fame, wealth and success.

**Musical background:** According to RoR Montpellier, the music is based on Coupé-Décalé. It does not seem to sound the same as Coupé-Décalé though. *More info needed.*

---

<sup>17</sup> For example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAYbvULODh4>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBWFofJSm-c>

**Sign:** The tune does not have a sign so far.

**History:** The tune was invented by RoR Montpellier in 2018.

## 4.7 Crazy Monkey

**Name:** The name is inspired by a group of monkeys who frequently visited the garden of the inventor of the tune to steal things. The name of the Bongo Breaks comes from the popular Tanzanian type of music “Bongo Flava”.

**Musical background:** Uses rhythms from popular music in Tanzania.

**Sign:** The sign is related to the tune name and depicts a monkey.

**History:** Composed by someone from RoR Vienna during his time in Tanzania in 2011.

## 4.8 Custard

**Name:** Custard is the English word for a sweet, creamy, puddingy vanilla sauce. The name was chosen because of the memory hook “I’ve got custard in my underpants” for the tamborim stroke.

**Musical background:** A typical Samba Reggae style tune.

**Sign:** The sign used to depict a “W” for Welfare State<sup>19</sup> (the former name of the tune). It changed into the current sign and can also be interpreted as “holding a bowl of custard”.

**History:** Part of the first set of tunes taken from Barking Bateria in 2000. Used to be called Welfare State, but was renamed because people don’t like the state.

## 4.9 Drum&Bass

**Name:** Drum&Bass is a style of electronic music that developed in the 1990s in the UK. Characteristic for it is its really fast and strong base.

---

<sup>19</sup> Can be seen in this video by RoR London:  
<https://tube.rhythms-of-resistance.org/w/3LnZ6d58J1jd5GNzK1mQqp>

**Musical background:** The baseline of the tune somewhat resembles Drum&Bass, although Drum&Bass is usually played much faster at 165–185 bpm, while RoR Tunes are usually played at around 100–120 bpm. At this speed, the tune more sounds like Hip Hop, and a very similar base line can be heard in several hip hop songs<sup>20</sup>.

**Sign:** The sign depicts a DJ.

**History:** First mentioned in 2010 by RoR Bremen<sup>21</sup>. Has been developed on a transnational basis between 2009 & 2010. Barking Bateria also mentions a tune with this name on their website in 2006<sup>22</sup>, although it is not clear whether it is the same tune.

## 4.10 Drunken Sailor

**Name:** “What shall we do with the drunken sailor” is a traditional sea shanty, probably originating from the US in the 1800s. The song is probably based on the traditional Irish folk song “Óró sé do bheatha abhaile” (Oh-ro welcome home), which has the same melody and was historically used by the Irish movement against the British rule.

**Musical background:** The tune is based on the folk song. The Agogô line plays “What shall we do with the drunken sailor”, while the 4th bar of the Surdos plays the “early in the morning”.

**Sign:** The eye-patch depicts a pirate.

**History:** Introduced as a tune by someone from RoR Köln/Cologne in 2010<sup>23</sup>.

## 4.11 Funk

**Name:** Internationally, *Funk* usually refers to a style of music that was created in the 1960s by African Americans. As most/all African American music, it originates from African music traditions and has also been used heavily in black rights movements throughout history. The pioneer of Funk is James Brown.

---

20 such as this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UePtoxDhJSw>

21 <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2010-06/msg00031.html>

22 <https://web.archive.org/web/20061023061031/http://www.barkingbateria.co.uk/samba.htm>

23 <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2010-10/msg00025.html>

In Brazil, *Funk* refers to a different style of music, also known as Funk Carioca, Favela Funk, Baile Funk or Brazilian Funk. This genre is a type of Hip Hop that originated in the 1980s in the favelas (slums with a mostly Afro-Brazilian population) of Rio de Janeiro. It has its roots in US-American Hip Hop, but also in Samba and traditional African rhythms. The lyrics usually talk about social issues within poor Afro-Brazilian communities, often using violent language. Originally very local to Afro-Brazilian communities in Rio de Janeiro, Funk Carioca has become mainstream in Brazil and also popular in Europe during the 2000s.

**Musical background:** The tune somewhat resembles the beat of Funk Carioca.

**Sign:** *More info needed.*

**History:** Has been around since at least 2007. A slightly different version called “Lego Funk” was played by Barking Bateria<sup>24</sup>.

## 4.12 Hafla

**Name:** “Hafla” (حفلة) means “Party/Festivity” in Arabic.

**Musical background:** Based on Masmoudi, one of the 6 major Middle Eastern rhythms that are typically played on hand drums such as the Dumbek.

**Sign:** More info needed

**History:** Introduced by RoR Tel Aviv on TNM 2011<sup>25</sup>. The tune was written when the group was active in Al-Masara, a Palestinian village known for its resistance against the apartheid wall. Local people were joining the drumming, but had trouble to learn the Samba grooves, so RoR wrote this tune based on local rhythms to make it easier for them to join.

## 4.13 Hedgehog

**Name:** A hedgehog is a medium-size spiky mammal. *More info needed about why the the tune has this name.*

---

24 <https://soundcloud.com/barking-bateria/lego-funk>

25 <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2011-05/msg00020.html>

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The sign depicts the spikes of a hedgehog.

**History:** One of the first tunes that Barking Bateria played. Was composed by Barking Bateria together with London School Of Samba.

## 4.14 Hip Hop

**Name:** Hip hop is an art movement that originated in the 1970s from Black and Latino communities in New York. Often only associated with rap, the hip hop culture includes many more elements such as breakdance, graffiti and beatboxing. Originally an underground movement and a tool to protest against the oppressive state institutions, it was discovered in the 1990s by the music industry, who started making huge profits by marketing it towards a white male audience. Over the years, Hip hop has become one of the most popular genres of music worldwide, and not much is left of its original purpose. Some white pop musicians have been criticized for cultural appropriation and commercializing hip hop culture.

**Musical background:** The tune is based on Hip hop beats.

**Sign:** A common hand gesture that Hip hop artists like to make<sup>26</sup>.

**History:** Invented by someone from RoR Berlin in 2005, but never published. Was rediscovered in 2021.

## 4.15 Jungle

**Name:** Jungle is a genre of dance music that developed in the UK rave scene in the 1990s. It is the main successor of Drum&Bass.

**Musical background:** The tune is based on Jungle.

**Sign:** The sign represents dancing to electronic music.

**History:** Invented by someone from RoR Berlin in 2005, inspired by the jungle parties in a squat in London. Was only played occasionally because it was never in the official tune sheets. Was rediscovered in 2021.

---

<sup>26</sup> Example on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/010KylQjkTk>

## 4.16 Kaerajaan

**Name:** Kaerajaan is an Estonian folk dance that is danced to a folk song called Kaera-Jaan<sup>27</sup>. The name roughly translates to “John of Oats”. Estonians probably used to sing this song while harvesting oat crops.

**Musical background:** The tune is based on the folk music that is played while dancing Kaerajaan.

**Sign:** The sign is a move in Estonian folk dances<sup>28</sup>.

**History:** Invented by RoR Tallinn in 2021.

## 4.17 Karla Shnikov

**Name:** Based on a fictional character invented by RoR called Karla Shnikov, a Russian activist who was one of Trotsky’s secret lovers and was first a communist, but later became an anarchist. There was a big discussion about taking a fictive name, but it can be seen as our ability to create our own histories – in the end, there might have been many “Karla Shnikov”s, individuals fighting for rights or liberation, that historians never wrote about since history has always been written by the powerful and the exceptional, and especially hiding the contribution of women.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The fictional character Karla Shnikov was also an animal rights activist, and one of her actions was to liberate the biggest rabbit farm in Russia. The sign depicts rabbit ears.

**History:** The tune was invented in London. It appeared on the website of RoR London in 2002<sup>29</sup>. Used to be called Kalashnikov, the sign a finger pistol, but was changed because some bands got in trouble for showing a gun, and other bands didn’t want to have a tune named after a weapon. The story of Karla Shnikov was made up by the working group thinking about a new name+sign for the tune.

---

27 Example on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BKoS9CfQPA>

28 Example on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/-udR34x2aTM?t=4>

29 [https://web.archive.org/web/20020906032028fw\\_/http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk/tunes/kalash.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20020906032028fw_/http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk/tunes/kalash.html)

## 4.18 March for Biodiversity

**Name:** Biodiversity refers to the variety of species in the ecosystem. The loss of biodiversity is one of the most drastic consequences of environmental pollution.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** *None yet.*

**History:** Introduced by RoR Helsinki on the TNM in 2019 in Lithuania.

## 4.19 Menaiek

**Name:** “Menaiek” is Hebrew for “cop” (insulting word for police officer).

**Musical background:** The Surdo and Agogô lines are based on some Afro-Cuban Samba rhythms. The Kick Back break is based on Mozambique, a Cuban style of music.

**Sign:** The sign depicts a cop covering their badge

**History:** Introduced in 2015 by RoR Jerusalem.

## 4.20 No Border Bossa

**Name:** Bossa Nova is a Brazilian style of music that developed out of Samba, which usually involves a guitar and a singer on top of the characteristic Bossa Nova beat.

**Musical background:** The Surdo line is very similar to the Bossa Nova beat. The Bossa clave is the clave that we use at RoR.<sup>30</sup>

**Sign:** The sign probably depicts a border fence that is opened.

**History:** From RoR Maastricht. “A former Amsterdam band member was cleaning her room and found an old notation of a ‘no border bossa’. The paper points to Maastricht.”<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ\\_mEmaJu98](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ_mEmaJu98)

<sup>31</sup> <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2011-02/msg00014.html>



## 4.21 Norppa

**Name:** Saimaannorppa or Saimaa ringed seal is an endangered animal species that only lives in one lake in Finland. They like to chill out on warm rocks. Norppas were nearly hunted to extinction in the 20th century, as it was considered an enemy to the fishing industry. Conservation began in 1979 and saved it from extinction. Since then, it has become the symbol of nature conservation in Finland. Climate change poses a direct threat to the Norppa.

**Musical background:** Song takes inspiration from the electronic music, but does not imitate any particular genre or song.

**Sign:** *None yet.*

**History:** Rediscovered from old notes by RoR Helsinki in 2021

## 4.22 Nova Balança

**Name:** “Nova balança” means ‘new wave’ in brazilian. It’s part of a belief that the new wave will come and bring the deported slaves back home.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** *More info needed.*

**History:** Was played in London already in 2001<sup>32</sup>. Other sources say it came from RoR Maastricht.

## 4.23 Orangutan

**Name:** Orangutan is a critically endangered species of apes native to south-east Asia.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The sign depicts a monkey

**History:** Introduced by RoR London in 2012<sup>33</sup>.

---

32 [https://web.archive.org/web/20010819045404fw\\_/http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk/tunes/index.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20010819045404fw_/http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk/tunes/index.html)

33 <https://we.riseup.net/jogjugtrob/minutes-from-sheetbooks-review-during-eastern-netw#post-673515>

## 4.24 Pekurinen

**Name:** Arndt Pekurinen (1905–1941) was a Finnish pacifist and antimilitarist, who opposed all forms of violence, and refused to join the war. He was imprisoned after he became a famous peace symbol, and his hunger strike was supported by an extensive international campaign. Pekurinen was executed without a trial. His actions forced the government to change laws to allow peaceful, non-military civil service.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** *None yet.*

**History:** Introduced by RoR Helsinki on the TNM in 2019 in Lithuania.

## 4.25 Ragga

**Name:** Ragga (short for Raggamuffin) is a type of electronic Jamaican pop music based on Reggae.

**Musical background:** The Snare and Surdo beats can be heard in many Ragga songs.

**Sign:** *More info needed.*

**History:** Has been around since at least 2004. *More info needed.*

## 4.26 Rope Skipping

**Name:** “Rope skipping” in British English means to jump over a rope that oneself or others are swinging around one’s body. The name was chosen by RoR Mainz because they liked rope skipping and it resembled the dynamic nature of the tune.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** Depicts the activity of rope skipping.

**History:** Introduced in 2010 by RoR Mainz<sup>34</sup>.

---

34 <https://lists.riseup.net/www/arc/jogjugtrob/2010-06/msg00014.html>

## 4.27 Samba Reggae

**Name:** Samba reggae is a sub-genre of Samba, which arose in the context of afro-brazilian people fighting for their right to play samba music and partake in Carnival parades in the late 1960s. At that time only white people were allowed to play in the parades for Carnival and in Samba schools of Rio de Janeiro. Samba reggae is a Samba style, that developed because black people in Brazil wanted to have a samba style to call their own. The music of the afro blocos aimed to recreate and strengthen the afro-brazilian community.

In “real” Samba, ‘samba reggae’ is a specific sub-genre, it’s not only in terms of the rhythm, but also of the instruments, which are played (and how they are played), different from other kinds of Samba. For example the Repi, which is otherwise mostly hanging quite high and is played with a short wooden stick and the hand, is hanging really low and is played with two long plastic beaters.

**Musical background:** The tune is a mix of Samba Reggae 1 & 3. RoR Samba Reggae is played with mid surdo hitting in 1 and 3 beats and low one in 2 and 4 (mid-low-mid-low,low), while most of the samba bands used to play with low surdo in 1 and 3 and mid one in 2 and 4 (low-mid-low-mid,mid). Repi and snare grooves use to be swapped too.

**Sign:** The sign depicts someone smoking a joint. Smoking joints is a main ritual in the Rastafari religion, which is closely linked to Reggae music.

**History:** Part of the first set of tunes taken from Barking Bateria in 2000.

## 4.28 Sambasso

**Name:** Probably a combination of the words “Samba” and “basso” (Italian for “low” or “base”).

**Musical background:** The Snare and Repi line and the Intro seem to be Samba Reggae style. *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The sign shows two Vulcan Salutes<sup>35</sup>, a hand gesture from the TV series Star Trek that stands for “live long and prosper”.

---

35 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan\\_salute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan_salute)

**History:** Introduced by RoR London in 2012<sup>36</sup>.

## 4.29 Sheffield Samba Reggae

**Name:** See Samba Reggae. Sheffield is a city in the UK that used to have a very active RoR band.

**Musical background:** A typical Samba Reggae tune.

**Sign:** The sign is a mix between drinking tea and smoking a joint. Drinking tea is a common activity in the UK (*not sure if there is a specific connection to Sheffield*). Smoking joints is a main ritual in the Rastafari religion, which is closely linked to Reggae music.

**History:** Introduced to the network by RoR London in 2012, was probably played there before. *More info needed*.

## 4.30 Tequila

**Name:** Tequila is an alcoholic drink made from blue agave in the region around the city of Tequila, Mexico. It was first made in the 16th century by Spanish colonisers, inspired by Pulque, a traditional alcoholic drink made from fermented agave.

**Musical background:** Based on the song “Tequila” by The Champs. The Surdos make together make the melody of the saxophone in the song.

**Sign:** Outside of Mexico, it is common to lick salt and lemon from one’s hand before drinking Tequila. The tune sign represents using a salt shaker.

**History:** Invented by RoR Berlin in 2017.

## 4.31 The Roof Is On Fire

**Name:** “The roof if on fire” is part of the chorus in the song “Fire Water Burn” by the Bloodhound Gang, which covers the chorus of the song “The Roof Is on Fire” by Rock Master Scott & the Dynamic Three. Also, the roof of the sauna was literally on fire during the TNM 2019 in Lithuania.

---

36 <https://we.riseup.net/jogjugtrob/minutes-from-sheetbooks-review-during-eastern-netw#post-673515>

**Musical background:** Based on the song “Fire Water Burn” by the Bloodhound Gang, which covers the chorus of the song “The Roof Is on Fire” by Rock Master Scott & the Dynamic Three.

**Sign:** The sign represents a roof in flames.

**History:** Spontaneously invented by RoR Kaunas during the TNM 2019 after the roof of the sauna caught fire.

## 4.32 Trans Europa Express

**Name:** Trans Europ Express (TEE) was an international high-speed luxury train in Western Europe between 1957 and 1995, aiming to provide an alternative to flying to business people<sup>37</sup>. The train was the theme of an electronic music album called Trans-Europe Express (German: Trans Europa Express) by the German band Kraftwerk, released in 1977<sup>38</sup>. Kraftwerk were one of the pioneers of electronic music and are considered a major influence to many modern styles of electronic music.

**Musical background:** The tune is based on the song Trans Europa Express by Kraftwerk<sup>39</sup>.

**Sign:** The sign represents waving good-bye to a leaving train.

**History:** Invented by RoR Berlin in 2021.

## 4.33 Van Harte Pardon

**Name:** “Van Harte Pardon” is Dutch and means something like “I’m really sorry” (literal translation: sorry from the heart). It has been used in a Netherlands as a slogan to protest against the deportation of refugees, demanding a general “pardon” (amnesty) for all asylum seekers.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The literal translation for “Van Harte Pardon” is “sorry from the heart”, hence the heart.

---

37 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trans\\_Europ\\_Express](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trans_Europ_Express)

38 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trans-Europe\\_Express\\_\(album\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trans-Europe_Express_(album))

39 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMVokT5e0zs>

**History:** From RoR Maastricht. Has been around since at least 2004.

#### 4.34 Voodoo

**Name:** The so-called African diaspora religions are religions that evolved from traditional African beliefs and rituals, sometimes with a Christian influence, among African slaves in America. They often had to be practiced in secret. Some of these religions are called Voodoo (sometimes spelled Vodum, Vodou, Vodú). While these religions originate in Africa, some of them (in particular Louisiana Voodoo) are also practiced by white people. African diaspora religions usually include drumming in their rituals.

**Musical background:** It is not clear whether our tune is based on traditional Voodoo rhythms. *More info needed.*

**Sign:** The tune sign stands for a halo, which has been depicted above godly persons' heads in the art of many different religions throughout history.

**History:** Part of the first set of tunes taken from Barking Bateria in 2000.

#### 4.35 Walc(z)

**Name:** Waltz (German: Walzer) is a European style of classical music originating in German and Austrian folk dances of the middle age. Characteristic for it is its slow  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature and its specific dance. The particular spelling of our tune comes from Polish "walc" for Waltz and "walcz" for "fight!" (imperative).

**Musical background:** All instruments play the typical Waltz rhythm.

**Sign:** The triangle stands for the characteristic  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature.

**History:** Introduced by RoR Kraków in 2016.

#### 4.36 Wolf

**Name:** A wolf is a large mammal native to Eurasia and North America and the ancestor of domestic dogs.

**Musical background:** *More info needed.*

**Sign:** *More info needed.*

**History:** From the website of RoR Kraków (*more info needed*).

## 4.37 Xango

**Name:** Xangô (pronounced Shango) is an Orisha, a spirit in the Yoruba religion (originating from Central Africa, but making its way to South America through slavery)<sup>40</sup>.

Its origin is the religion of the Yoruba, a Westafrican people / ethnic group connected mainly via language. It's believed that there is a Supreme Being known as Olorun or Olodumaré. Several gods called "powers" are worshipped (intermediary spiritual beings, also called orixas in other religions. Every orixa is connected to a natural phenomenon, colors, food, ...). Drumming, dancing and singing are used for rituals, in which for example one deity is called down to manifest by possessing a person. People seek guidance and protection by the orixas through dance, song and sacrifice, the powers are appeased and worshipped.

Xangô is the most popular orixa in the Yoruba-religion and the religions that derive from it. He is the god of thunder and lightning, represents justice and wisdom, very powerful and known for his anger, his power is the main symbol of African resistance against slavery.

During colonization, enslaved people recognized that some of the Catholic saints shared symbols and characteristics with their orixas. They began to identify some of the orixas with these saints, as a method to secretly worship their actual gods while pretending to embrace the faith of their masters. Depending on the region, orixas correspond to different saints. Xangô corresponds to Saint Barbara (she is also associated with lightning and thunder) or Saint Jerome.

In 1983, there was a conference on the orixa tradition and culture in Salvador (Bahia), when some Candomblé priest\*esses proposed to do away with the Catholic elements in Candomblé (especially imagery of saints). Today it's hotly debated whether to do this or not.

---

40 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shango>, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoruba\\_religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoruba_religion)

Traditional Xango ceremonial drumming are one of the influences to Afro-Brazilian music. There are quite a lot of groups and songs that have the word Xango in their name.

**Musical background:** A group called Xangó Batucada seems to play something similar to our tune<sup>41</sup>. *More info needed*.

**Sign:** The tune sign is supposed to symbolize the rain in the thunder storm the rhythm is supposed to represent. The tune is to remind of the thunder, the rain and the lightning of the god (or spirit).

**History:** Part of the second round of tunes taken from Barking Bateria in 2004/2005. Appeared on the website of RoR London in that year, but they say the tune came from RoR Amsterdam<sup>42</sup>.

## 4.38 Żurav Love

**Name:** A word play on Żuravlów, the village where the TNM 2015 happened.

**Musical background:** Based on the song “Truant” by British electronic musician Burial<sup>43</sup>.

**Sign:** “Żurav” is Polish for “crane” (a type of large bird). The sign represents the beak of the bird.

**History:** Introduced by RoR Kraków and Ror Trójmiasto on the TNM 2015 in Żuravlów.

## 5. Glossary

**Tactical frivolity:** Tactical frivolity is a form of public protest involving humour; often including peaceful non-compliance with authorities, carnival

---

41 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KU\\_GkAxMCWU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KU_GkAxMCWU),  
<https://www.facebook.com/xangosambareggae>

42 See  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20051222000724/http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk/?lid=486> at the bottom

43 <https://youtu.be/8u4D0wAc2AA>, Surdo+Tamb+Snare at 1:48, Agogô + Kick Back at 6:27



**Radical cheerleading:** Radical cheerleading is a form of cheerleading performed at demonstrations that combines elements of non-violent direct action and street theater. Radical cheerleaders reappropriate the aesthetics of cheerleading, sometimes in an ironic fashion, and use cheers that promote feminism and left-wing causes. Radical cheerleaders subvert gender norms through costuming and may be male, transgender or non-gender identified.

**Pink&silver:** radical left strategy which has a cheerful and colourful effect and other options for intervention. Aims of the pink&silver movement are the subversion of the oppressive authorities, the infiltration and deconstruction of hegemonic gender constructions and the display of male dominance at apparent gender neutral spaces – like for example at demonstrations.

**Peoples' Global Action:** PGA is the name of a worldwide coordination of radical social movements, grassroots campaigns and direct actions with a zapatista understanding of politics and solidarity for strengthening each other in local and regional resistance to capitalism and for social and environmental justice. PGA is part of the anti-globalization movement. With the rejection of fixed organisational structures, lobbying and representative democracy, and a focus on principles of emancipatory self-organisation and direct action, the zapatista ideas met groups which rejected a civil concept of politics in line with ideology, media and national states.

**Colonialism:** Colonialism is usually used to describe a passed time period in which European powers seized the land and the people in Africa, Asia and Latin America. However, colonialism can describe much more, because the domination of people and land is based on a mindset in which Europeans placed themselves above other people, among other things through racial hierarchies or levels of civilisation they devised. This resulted in expulsion and extermination. There was resistance by the colonised against the conquerors in all parts of the world. But colonialism still has an impact on politics, society, interpersonal relationships and individuals today.

**Imperialism:** The word 'imperialism' comes from the latin term 'imperium'. It means to command. Imperialism is the policy or act of extending a countrys power into other territories, or gaining control over another countries politics or economics.

## 6. Advised literature

bell hooks: Eating the other, desire and resistance<sup>44</sup>

---

44 A dense discussion/explanation of some aspects of the book:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-WUKfMfUfY&xt=364s>



# RHYTHMS



**Content:**

Cultural Appropriation (booklet)

2

# OF RESISTANCE