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INFLUENCE OF WESTERN MUSIC ON LOCAL MUSIC

BY

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ABSTRACT

The development of the church in Sri Lanka is intimately related to the establishment of Western music in Sri Lanka and its influence on local music.

The spread of Western music in the sphere of education owes its origins as does the influence of the church to foreign domination from the 16th century onwards till the end of British rule. The foundation laid by these foreign rulers in the field of education, developed steadily even after Sri Lanka gained her independence.

Some of the more popular forms of music e.g. Baila / Kafferinna music also go back to the same origins and they have over the years been absorbed into the local musical culture. There are also interesting variations, adaptations of Western forms, rhythms and words into local music and as found in lullabies, folk songs and popular songs.

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This aspect has been further enhanced by local musicians who have studied in English, or studied in English schools and Universities abroad, who on their return to the country have introduced strong Western influences into local music.

Many local institutions and organizations, individuals and groups have also contributed to the development of music. The Bands of the Services, Police and Schools, Orchestras and Chamber music groups as well as the Broadcasting Corporation have played important roles in making Western music popular throughout the country and thereby spreading its influence on local music.