

1: Damien Sagrillo Music History of Luxembourg

Innovation entails learning from historical precedents to develop readiness for future challenges!

Echternach

Echternach plays a pivotal role in Luxembourg's music scene, notably through the annual "International Festival of Echternach." Since its inception in 1975, this festival has evolved into a significant cultural event, attracting musicians and music enthusiasts from Luxembourg and around the globe. In 2018, the initiative was compelled to cease operations due to challenges, including insufficient financial resources, diminished allure, limited visibility, and a decline in audience engagement. This was mainly due to the establishment of the *Philharmonie* in Luxembourg City, which precipitated an abrupt termination of the endeavour. The Echternach festival showcased various musical performances, including concerts, recitals, and workshops, covering a broad spectrum of music genres. However, Echternach's contribution to the musical heritage of the Grand Duchy encompasses additional pivotal dimensions. In addition to its festival tradition, Echternach is renowned for its Dancing Procession, a religious ceremony intertwined with music and dance. The Dancing Procession, awarded as an intangible heritage of humankind by UNESCO, boasts a long history back to the Middle Ages.

The Abbey was a centre of spiritual life and music in the Middle Ages, housing a medieval *scriptorium* with musical manuscripts.

The Echternach Sacramentary and Antiphony

The Echternach Sacramentary and Antiphony are unique in their historical importance and cultural relevance. These medieval manuscripts, created around 1030, serve as evidence of the liturgical practices and musical traditions. The Sacramentary includes a collection of prayers used for liturgical purposes, while the Antiphony contains melodies and texts for the Divine Office, including antiphons sung in responsive chant. Thus, these manuscripts are not only cultural treasures but also vital resources for studying medieval music and liturgy in Echternach and beyond.

St. Vitus Dance

The Dance of Saint Vitus has evolved over centuries. Initially practised as a leaping dance in the 11th century, the Dance of Saint Vitus gradually transformed into a ritual procession in Echternach, held annually on the Tuesday after Whitsun. This dancing procession is closely linked with music as an accompaniment to a highly strenuous and tiring movement over several kilometers through Echternach. Moreover, the Dance is also associated with Huntington's disease, a hereditary disease first described in 1872. Thus, the history and development of the Dance of Saint Vitus are intricately connected with music, culture, medical aspects and mediaeval history, making it a fascinating phenomenon.

The Dancing melody

The aspect concerning dance melodies and the significance of music in modern-era dance melodies has to be musicologically explored. It is often forgotten, but the dance music is an integral component of the European folksong type and has played a crucial role since the late 17th century. The typology of Central European folk songs is based on the (well-)tempered tuning of art music from this period. Consequently, folk singers and collectors of folk songs adopt the singing and notation forms of art music, indicating a close connection between folk music and art music. This connection and the development of modern-era dance melodies reflect the cultural evolution and the impact of music on society.

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Popularisation of the Dancing Melody

The popularisation of the dance melody, in polka tempo, pertains to its spread and recognition among the public. In the context of the Dance of Saint Vitus and other modern-era dance melodies, the popularisation is driven by various cultural actors. For instance, works like "Scènes luxembourgeoises" by Fernand Mertens and "Der Geiger von Echternach" by Lou Koster are cited as examples of the popularization of the Echternach polka. These pieces help to make it accessible to a broader audience and establish them within the cultural landscape. Through performances, recordings, and publications, the dance melody becomes more well-known, contributing to this cultural heritage's preservation. Therefore, popularising the dance melody is a decisive aspect of appreciating and maintaining the significance and beauty of these musical traditions.

The music during the National Socialist occupation period (1940–1944)

Der Stillhaltekommissar: Association life and his Missions

The Commissary for Standstill and the association life became a poisoned duo in Luxembourgish society during the National Socialist occupation of Luxembourg from 1940 to 1944. The Commissary (StiKo) was subordinate to the Chief of Civil Administration (CdZ) and oversaw the association life. Under his authority, associations had to obtain permissions, especially in the case of financial changes or structural adjustments. The StiKo had the power to carry out reorganisations in the organisational life on the instruction of the CdZ. This control over the association's life served to consolidate National Socialist ideology and policy in Luxembourg and to ensure that all organisations complied with the directives and goals of the regime. The role of the StiKo and the regulation of association life were part of the comprehensive cultural and societal control exercised during the period.

The missions of the StiKo during the National Socialist occupation of Luxembourg included various tasks related to the National Socialist alignment and control of the association life. The main tasks included:

1. The enforcement of National Socialist ideology: The Stiko had the authority to issue uncontested orders excluded from jurisdiction. This meant he could make legal decisions to establish and enforce National Socialist ideology within the associations.
2. The Stiko was responsible for coordinating or liquidating associations in the occupied or annexed territories, including Luxembourg and other countries and regions such as the Netherlands, Austria, Bohemia and Moravia, Alsace, and Lorraine. Often, associations were transferred into organisations ideologically close to National Socialism, such as GEDELIT (Gesellschaft für deutsche Literatur) in Luxembourg. Coordination meant acknowledging National Socialist ideology within the associations.
3. Monitoring of association activities: The Sitko monitored association activities to ensure they were following National Socialist directives. When necessary, he could confiscate associations' assets, which had to be reported to the Stiko.
4. The associations were offered Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* and were forced to read some of its pages publicly at the beginning of the rehearsals.

These missions of the Stiko demonstrated the comprehensive control and influence of the National Socialist regime over the association life during the occupation period in Luxembourg.

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The organisation of music education between 1940 and 1944

The National Socialist occupiers also influenced musical education in Luxembourg between 1940 and 1945. Under their rule, music schools in Esch, Diekirch, and Wiltz were restructured into folk music schools, focusing on promoting folk music. The Conservatoire of the City of Luxembourg benefitted from a higher status and was renamed *Landesmusikschule*. The teaching staff was fired or re-educated to emphasise National Socialist viewpoints in musical education. It was stressed that the social aspect of music should be considered and that music societies in Luxembourg should deliver musical offspring. The education system underwent a transformation from the French tradition to the German tradition. But the new head of schools still emphasised the benefits of the French system.

It acknowledges the significant value of solfège. Mastery of reading notes and clefs is essential for anyone wishing to understand music's secrets deeply. Skills like sight-reading, transposing, and quickly grasping the complexities of intervals in harmony and counterpoint are crucial. On the other hand, they can be challenging for advanced students if not learned early in their music education. The new German heads of school were impressed by the students' remarkable ability to manage complex rhythms and sing notes in various clefs with precision. However, the text also presents a counterargument: the extensive focus on technical solfège training might be considered overly time-consuming and detrimental to developing general musicality. The repetitive nature of solfège exercises may lack artistic depth and could potentially lead to disenchantment with music over time.

Music Education

Tageblatt series starting in 1923 until 1943

My study also analyses, in general, the challenges faced by music education in Luxembourg. From 1923 until the beginning of the Second World War, it was criticised that the unrest and rush left little time for making music, and technological advancements, especially the influence of records, radio, and sound films, altered private music-making practices. Moreover, the discussion covers how sports overshadowed music during this time. Musical talents often went untapped, and public musical education faced the challenge of countering this trend and continuing to promote active music-making. Overall, the importance of public musical education, the challenges it encountered during this period and the necessity to counter the trend of passive music consumption to encourage active music-making and musical education are underscored. Note that these discussions occurred decades ago. Today, almost one century later, these critics sound more than familiar: There is a noticeable decline in active musical engagement among children, and the use of pre-recorded music not only unveils new possibilities but also presents significant challenges.

From singing lessons to music education

In 1964, there was a new tendency in which singing lessons were transformed towards music education. Repeatedly, the learning of solfège has been called into question. Music education should instead shape the listener and the singer before the reader. It is also noted that many students do not take the subject of music seriously, as they are often under-challenged despite an overabundance of thematic content in terms of music. It is also suggested that the findings of musical developmental psychology be considered to improve musical education. This highlights the importance of a holistic musical education that encompasses not only singing but also understanding and appreciation of music.

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Creating a national music school in Luxembourg is expected to improve professional musicians' musical training and qualifications. The proposed inspector for music education in Luxembourg would have the following tasks and responsibilities:

1. Exploring the procurement and configurations of music instruction nationally.
2. Facilitating conditions for coordination between municipal institutions and the state.
3. Analyzing the training of professional musicians employed in Luxembourg, likely in the context of their pedagogical suitability.
4. Collaborating with associations and organisations in the field of musical education.

Thus, the inspector would play a crucial role in the development and monitoring of music instruction in Luxembourg to ensure an effective and coordinated approach.

Three conservatoires in Luxembourg

Heinrich-Joseph Cornély's establishment of Luxembourg's first private music school in 1823 laid the foundation for the country's music education system, which saw significant developments such as the city's takeover in 1849. Due to internal disputes, however, the music school was closed in 1882. It was only revitalised through Eugénie Dutreux's legacy in 1906 (a family member of the prodigious industrial family Pescatore). After World War II, the establishment and evolution of conservatoires in Esch and Diekirch-Ettelbrück, contributed to the enlarging of music educational offers in the landscape of Luxembourg.

Music education since 1998

Since the music Law of 1998, the aim has been to standardise teaching content and teacher career paths through the harmonisation of music instruction and the provision of considerable state funds. A government commissioner oversees compliance with legal frameworks and coordinates a national program commission to define the teaching content. This step aims to standardise and professionalise musical education, which should positively affect the qualifications of professional musicians. Nowadays, the aforementioned and inquired inspector (commissaire de gouvernement) is in position, but Luxembourg still doesn't have a national music school at the academic level.

Popular music starting in the early '20s

After World War I, the attitude of Luxembourgers towards popular music has undergone typical changes over the decades. Initially, new musical genres like jazz were viewed critically, whereas today, there is the most open approach to them. Initially discredited as "disreputable noise music," Luxembourg began to understand the negatively perceived American music, especially jazz. This genre was initially viewed critically and even defamed as "Negro music." There were prejudices and rejections against this new way of making music, perceived as loud, disorderly, and immoral. Large parts of society initially distanced themselves from this unfamiliar genre before it gradually gained acceptance and eventually became popular in Luxembourg, and Luxembourgers were impressed by American jazz music. American bands playing jazz sparked interest and enthusiasm in Luxembourg. People became familiar with listening to this music, leading to dance halls mushrooming throughout Luxembourg, especially Luxembourg-City of course. This development laid the groundwork for new music genres, not only jazz and swing, but dance genres like the foxtrot, one-step, two-step, and tango. Luxembourgish musicians had the opportunity to

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break away from traditional music styles, exploring new directions and giving the music life in Luxembourg new impulses over decades.

The introduction of new music venues enabled Luxembourgers to discover and dance to previously unfamiliar music genres. Luxembourgers began to enjoy a broader range of popular music and broke away from traditional music styles. The disruptions caused by WWII led to a change and expansion in musical tastes in Luxembourg. Popular music was unexpectedly highly valued in Luxembourg. The changes in the music scene initiated by the war contributed to Luxembourg developing a diverse and vibrant popular music scene that was successful and received continuing new impulses over decades. However, in the 1940s, popular music in Luxembourg was re-interpreted through a National Socialist lens.

In popular music, autodidacts played a vital role in the Luxembourgish popular music scene. The list of musicians from this time shows the diversity and talents in the Luxembourgish popular music scene active between 1926 and 1970.

After 1945, popular music in Luxembourg experienced a phase of renewal and further development. Despite the turmoil of World War II and the National Socialist interference, popular music managed to assert itself and even flourish. Even with initial criticism and prejudices against this kind of music styles, popular music in Luxembourg established itself as an influential cultural component of the country. Therefore, ignoring popular music in the music history of Luxembourg would omit a significant portion of it.

The decline of popular music in Luxembourg in the late fifties was due to various factors. The increasing availability of consumer goods such as cars, washing machines, and refrigerators meant that people spent more money on these goods and had less available for going out and entertainment. This resulted in orchestras being hired less frequently and many dance halls eventually having to close. Additionally, some former dance halls were converted into banks, changing the cultural landscape. The rise of discotheques and the popularity of beat as a new music style also contributed to the loss of significance of traditional popular music, which now has become outdated. Many musicians had to face new challenges as cabarets no longer hired musicians, and the era of discotheques began. Changes in music tastes and societal changes ultimately led to classical popular music in Luxembourg losing influence and new music genres dominating the scene.

After this decline, popular music in Luxembourg was not done. No, it reinvented itself. Since my book sets a temporal endpoint around 1970, it would be up to subsequent research projects to revisit this topic.