

Nuuk underground – Musical change and cosmopolitan nationalism in Greenland

In Nuuk, the capital of Greenland, there have been a significant number of musical events in recent years that have been called 'underground'. These have formed an underground scene that offered a cosmopolitan alternative to established 'greenlandified' popular music. This paper accounts for the building of this underground scene by Nuuk youth, and asks why these young people valued musical change informed by a cosmopolitan outlook, while at the same time holding firmly to the conviction that their activities were a part of the dominant Greenlandic nation-building project. Social agents, which played key roles in building the Nuuk underground scene, described their activities as attempts to come to terms with a history in which Greenland has been perceived as a subaltern nation. This enquiry explains the nationalist logic behind a concern with performing similarity with Western nations in the Nuuk underground scene, as opposed to the more widespread romantic nationalist logic concerned with expressing a distinguishable national character. This further leads to an expansion of a position of cosmopolitan nationalism.

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