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Abstract

This article explores various aspects of modern Belarusian national identity through an analysis of two connected case studies, the development of the flagship national university, Belarusian State University (BSU) in Minsk and of the European Humanities University (EHU), a private institution founded in Minsk in 1992 with international funding. EHU was then forced into exile by the Belarusian regime in 2004, and has operated since that time in nearby Vilnius, Lithuania. These case studies will be used to illuminate various dimensions of Belarusian national identity, from a neo-Soviet and authoritarian populism, to a more primordial or organic conception of nationalism, to a more European and cosmopolitan ethos of liberal education. At this point, 10 years into the exile of EHU and the de facto rupture of Belarusian intellectual and cultural life that this displacement symbolizes, the intellectual orientation of post-Soviet Belarusian higher education remains contested and the prospects for reconciliation remain uncertain. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)