

Readers will certainly enthusiastically welcome the reviewed work, similar to all of the books previously written by Zygmunt Bauman. It remains to be seen whether the publication will spark discussions about the indispensability of changes and the desired shape of modern education among important figures in politics, sociology, and pedagogy. Will it be inspiring enough to trigger changes though?

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Sylvia Maria Zakrzewska (rev.): Ryszard Radzik, *Białorusini – między Wschodem a Zachodem* [Belarusians – Between the East and the West], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2012, pp. 262.

Is There a Belarusian Nation?

There are few researchers in Poland who have chosen the development of the Belarusian nation and its identity as their object of inquiry¹. Increasingly, readers may acquaint themselves with scientific studies concern-

ing the Belarusian minority in Poland, including the identity of its members². Considering this, introducing the book *Białorusini – między Wschodem a Zachodem* by Prof. Ryszard Radzik is particularly valuable.

The author of *Białorusini – między Wschodem a Zachodem* chose the analysis of the process of nation building and the national identity of the contemporary Belarusian society as the purpose of his research. Prof. Ryszard Radzik is an academic whose research interests mainly include ethnic problems, nation-building processes in the region of the East-Central Europe, and the problems of multicultural societies. The fact that the author had been dealing with the subject of nation-building processes for many years, especially in the borderlines of the former Republic of Poland, as well as with the subject matter of national identity, shows his high competence in this respect. He is the author of many articles and studies in which the issues concerning the aforementioned area of research are brought up³.

¹ It is worth to mention books such as: R. Wyszyński, *Narodziny czy śmierć narodu. Narodotwórcze działania elit białoruskich i buriackich po upadku ZSRR* [The Birth or the Death of a Nation. Nation-Building Endeavors of the Belarusian and Buryat Elites after the Collapse of the USSR], Warszawa 2010, pp. 288; M. Nocuń, A. Brzeziecki, *Ograbiony naród. Rozmowy z intelektualistami białoruskimi* [Robbed Nation. Talks with Belarusian Intellectuals], Wrocław 2007, pp. 212.

² E. Czykwini, *Białoruska mniejszość narodowa jako grupa stygmatyzowana* [Belarusian Minority as a Stigmatized Group], Białystok 2000, pp. 360; A. Sadowski, *Pogranicze polsko-białoruskie. Tożsamość mieszkańców* [Polish-Belarusian Borderlands. Identity of the Inhabitants], Białystok 1995, pp. 270. M. Bieńkowska-Ptasznik, *Polacy – Litwini – Białorusini. Przemiany stosunków etnicznych na północno-wschodnim pograniczu Polski* [Poles – Lithuanians – Belarusians. Transformations of Ethnic Relations in the North-East Borderlines of Poland], Białystok 2007, pp. 175.

³ It is necessary to mention the following book: *Kim są Białorusini?* [Who Are the Belarusians?], Toruń 2002 (also 2003 and 2004), pp. 243.

The book is a compilation of previously published and unpublished articles selected by Ryszard Radzik. The book is divided into three parts, which contain a number of articles on the issues connected with the main theme. The role of the introduction is played by the text *Nieznany Sąsiad* [The Unknown Neighbour], wherein the author considers the causes for the low level of knowledge about the Belarusian society among Poles. According to the researcher, it is possible to mention such factors as the lack of the identification of the Belarusians with any state that existed prior to the 20th century (e.g. the Poles, for the most part, do not identify the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Belarusians); the lack of national elites; treating Belarus as a territory between Poland and Russia (an element of dispute between the two states); identifying Belarusians and Belarus with its president – Alexander Lukashenko; perceiving Belarus as an area of influence of the Russian Federation; the activity of the clergymen of the Orthodox Church; and the lack of attachment to the mother tongue. The author also analyses the stereotype of Belarus and the Belarusians that functions in the contemporary Poland.

In the first part, entitled *Czynniki narodowego zaistnienia* [Factors of National Emergence], the author concentrates on the nation-building process in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. He shows this process in the context of the analogous processes taking place in the selected countries of the East-Central Europe (Bohemia, Slovakia, and Ukraine). The author undertook the analysis of the civiliza-

tional, cultural, and political conditions. In his deliberations on the course of the nation-building process of the Belarusian nation, the author indicates the belated emergence of the nation-building processes, including evolutionary changes in the society. The reasons for this state of affairs he gives, among others, are the invasion of the Moscow Empire in the middle of the 17th century into the territory inhabited by the Belarusians and the slaughter and deportation of over half of the population; the anti-national politics of the tsarist authorities in the 19th century⁴; the social structure (a large portion of the Belarusian society were uneducated peasants, who were not familiar with the notion of a nation and identified themselves with their domicile, calling themselves “the locals”); the lack of elites that could cope with the burden of nation-building⁵; Soviet propaganda, which aimed at effacing the individuality of the Belarusian nation and making the society of the Belarusian Socialist Soviet Republic identify itself with the one, great nation composed of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians.

In the second part, entitled *Białoruskość w literaturze i publicystyce* [Belarusian

⁴ Including imposing the orthodox faith on the society on a mass scale; anti-national endeavours of the orthodox clergymen, who spread the idea of the Pan-Slavism; and not celebrating Mass in the national language.

⁵ Belarusian national elites emerged in the beginning of the 20th century. They were few and initially they were limited in their actions by the tsarist authorities and were later slaughtered by the Soviet authorities. The period when they were free to act was very short (the 1920s).

Quality in Literature and Journalism], there are four articles. The author brings up the issue of the emergence of the modern shape of the Belarusian identity in the sphere of literature and journalism. He makes a content analysis of the Belarusian magazine "Nasha Niva", as well as *New Land* by Yakub Kolas and *Locals* by Yanka Kupala, which are two of the most important works in Belarusian literature. The analysis of the books that constitute an important part of the canon enables the author to present the way the image of the Belarusian society was created by Belarusian writers, who were members of the elite which were involved in the national-building process. From the point of view of the reader, the comparison between the *New Land* by Yakub Kolas and *Pan Tadeusz* by Adam Mickiewicz is especially interesting. The author points out that in the case of the epic poem of A. Mickiewicz, we deal with the myth-building function that shapes the nation, whereas in the case of Y. Kolas's poem, there are no national issues, but only social ones. Freedom in the work of Y. Kolas is defined through social class, rather than nation, and there is a lack of a vision that would include the entirety of the Belarusian society. In the analysis of the articles found in "Nasha Niva", Prof. R. Radzik focuses on the way the notion of a nation is understood by the Belarusian columnists, the national vision of the Belarusian quality, and the manner that these visions by the contemporary Belarusian society are implemented. The author also searches for the reasons behind the lack of national content, or the lack of national themes in the works of the au-

thors, who were, after all, the representatives of the pro-national and pro-independence environment.

In the third part entitled *Wielość tożsamości* [Multitude of Identities], the author included six articles, in which he brought up the subjects connected with the issue of the national identity of the Belarusians in the period following the regaining of independence by their state. He points out that historical memory in Belarus has a local, rather than national character, which, to a large extent, makes the emergence of a modern nation difficult. In his view, it is possible to single out a few national identities in the Belarusian society; this thesis is confirmed in individual articles. Individual articles quote the findings of sociological studies carried out in the Belarusian society over a period of twenty years, the interpretation of which allows one to form conclusions that confirm the research assumptions made by the author.

The author's considerable contribution of work into the creation of this book is fairly visible. The three parts that this work is composed of significantly differ in volume; however, the structure reflects the research aims pursued by the author. Quoting the findings of the Polish and foreign researchers to date, including those carried out by independent research centers in Belarus (e.g. Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies – IISEPS), is the advantage of this publication. Using this data allowed the author to present the evolution of how national issues in the Belarusian society are perceived.

The language of the book is comprehensible and characteristic for the research issues discussed. The author does not use rhetorical devices that could distort the findings of his study. Those readers who are unfamiliar with the issues associated with nation-building processes and national identity, may consider the lack of a strictly theoretical chapter with broader deliberations on this theoretical category a fault of this book. Repetitiveness, which is primarily caused by the manner in which the results of the study are presented (i.e. as a collection of articles), is one of the flaws of the book.

The author employed research methods characteristic for the field of humanities and social science, particularly those for sociology and cultural anthropology. He used critical content analysis for the analysis of source materials. The author also made use of the comparative method, which he employed to highlight in a comprehensible manner the distinctive features of the nation-building process in Belarus and the Belarusian society. He also based his deliberations on the survey results. However, the book lacks a chapter on the main research assumptions, the main hypothesis, detailed hypotheses, and the way source material was selected. Readers learn about the research assumptions as they proceed to read the subsequent articles.

Another fault of this book is the lack of a sufficient presentation of the literature on the subject. The author limited himself to presenting only a short bibliographical note informing the reader of which articles were previously published in other peri-

odicals and which were “new”. On the other hand, the book has the advantage of having updated research results included in the articles that were reprinted in this publication.

To sum up the deliberations concerning the book by Prof. Ryszard Radzik, it is necessary to state that it is an interesting read, which – in spite of a few remarks – is an excellent introduction to further studies on its subject matter.

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Beata Popiołek, Krzysztof Dziurzyński:
The XXII National Conference of Developmental Psychology Titled “Social Context of the Development from the Child to the Adult”, Gdańsk 26–29 May 2013.

The XXII National Conference of the Developmental Psychology, which was entitled, “The Social Context of the Development – From the Child to the Adult” was dedicated to the reflection about the psychological development of the human being within the context of social-cultural conditioning and within the categories of continuity, stability, and the changes happening over a man’s entire lifetime.

The conference was held between 26-29 May 2013 at the Social Sciences Faculty at Gdańsk University. The organizers of the conference were the Developmental Psychology Section of the Polish Psychological Association and the Psychology Institute of Gdańsk University.