

Post-Soviet Youth: Engagement in Civil Society—Belarus and Beyond

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In much of the current literature on social and political transformation in Belarus, once the most prosperous republic of the former Soviet Union (FSU), the focus tends to be on the snail's pace of market reforms and development of civil society.¹ Social analysis of the role youth may play in this process of transformation seems to have been largely neglected. However, there is hardly a more crucial indicator of the future of a society than the patterns of behavior and orientations of its youth, whatever the political regime happens to be at the moment. In this article, I focus on the first post-Soviet generation of youth—those young people whose civil socialization began during Gorbachev's perestroika, who have never lived under any social conditions except those of the transition period and have not inherited the civil habits of the previous system.

Belarus, located between Russia and Poland at the crossroads of Europe, is a strategically important country today and will remain one for many years to come. But what is in the cards for the future of the country is a question for the people of Belarus. There are also questions about the increasing social expectations of the younger generation and the country's decreasing ability to meet them.

I also present specific characteristics of present-day Belarus society that make it different from Russia and that are likely to become predominant in the future. I then examine the rising expectations of the post-Soviet generation of youth and explain why Belarus society cannot meet them. Next, I show social conditions that make this generation feel dissatisfied and deprived in their native land. These challenges, important as they are for Belarus, are also important for other countries of the FSU. These countries, still in the process of transition to democracy and free markets, initially believed they could obtain positive results for their peoples rapidly. They dreamed that the free market would inevitably bring them prosperity and civil society. Now they have realized that the process of transition is not as easy and brief as was initially believed, that the final results might differ from initial expectations, and that even democracy can mean many different

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things to different people. For some, it is the ability to express their opinions freely and protest openly; for others, it is the opportunity to choose their rulers in free elections; and for yet others, it is the chance to live in a criminal society and economic anarchy. It appears that democratic models cannot be routinely transplanted from other countries: they need some local preconditions and can fail if they do not deliver the goods for the people.

Taking into consideration the deep contradiction between the painful process of transition and the expected rosy results, it is easy to understand why the countries of the FSU (including Belarus) cannot meet the high expectations of youth and create appropriate conditions for the younger generation to play a dominant role in this process. If the rest of the population tries simply to survive the current deepening crisis, post-Soviet youth wants to enjoy being able to live in an advanced Western-type society now.

Belarus Civil Society: Reality or Illusion?

The civil societies in Russia and Belarus are currently developing in different ways, despite the fact that the countries have a common Soviet heritage and attempted to form a new union.² The differences between them are in some ways similar to the differences between the United States and Canada. Although to an untrained observer the North American neighbors are similar or nearly the same, the two differ significantly, particularly in their institutions and value systems.³ It is surprising for many outside observers to realize that Belarus and Russia are also quite different. Paradoxically, even with the lack of openness of the political processes in Belarus, the young generation is oriented primarily toward civil society and democracy. The key question, then, is how to interpret the terms “civil society” and “democracy.”

Western Concepts of Civil Society

Rarely has there been a concept in the field of post-communist development that has attracted people's attention so quickly and become so widely used in different, even idiosyncratic ways as the concept of “civil society.” Indeed, there are different political and social theories of civil society starting from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel and Marx and then to contemporary authors.⁴ For Arato and Cohen, “civil society refers to the structures of socialization, association, and organized forms of communication of the lifeworld to the extent that these are institutionalized or are in the process of being institutionalized.”⁵

From this approach, it is clear that there was a civil society in the USSR as well as some other structural elements (such as economic and political societies) that interacted with the state. The difference between Soviet-type and Western-type civil societies included the norms—first, the Soviet regime did not allow plurality or free enterprise in any form, and second, they accepted individual rights, voluntary associations, privacy, and formal legality in their “socialist” (extremely limited) interpretation.

As for other approaches, some authors do not exclude economic and political relations in their concept of civil society. The key issue for Putnam's interpreta-

tion of civil society is to stress the active participation of citizens in horizontal networks of voluntary associations, equal rights for all the citizens, and their obedience to the law.⁶

On the basis of this approach, it also makes sense to accept the idea of civil society for the Soviet society (especially for the years of Gorbachev rule), although it is necessary to stress the low level of practical responsibility of the party leaders and the government to the people; instead, they always were responsible to the Central Committee of the CPSU. Also, we can talk about formal rights and rather formal participation of citizens in the public sphere in parallel with some voluntary associations and active voluntary participation in these associations.

There are quite different interpretations of the Western concept of civil society in post-Soviet countries, varying between their total negation as inapplicable for Eastern Europe and their populist identification with markets and democracy. The main division is whether someone can talk about civil society under communism, or whether this is just a Western

construction not applicable to post-Soviet countries. The definition of civil society given in the recent Russian academic dictionary stresses its self-organization, voluntarism, and opposition to the state.⁷

Thus, the notion of civil society is polemic and closely tied to the individual context.⁸ We do not pretend to describe the post-Soviet version of civil society in a way that satisfies all analysts. On the basis of the above-mentioned concepts, we assume that civil society means, first of all, a network of nongovernment associations of citizens to promote their diverse interests; or the realm of intermediate institutions, including political, religious, business, professional, neighborhood, cultural, and other organizations and their relationships with one another.⁹ From this point of view, some forms of civil society existed under socialism (at least under Brezhnev and Gorbachev).

Specific Features of Belarus Society

Some aspects of Soviet-type civil activities differed from one region to the next, based on historical traditions and national habits of the multinational population, so we can talk about different subtypes of Soviet-style civil society. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 these often minor and latent differences frequently formed the basis for specific forms of civil societies in various former Soviet republics, for example, Belarus.

Belarus's civil society, rooted in historical and national traditions, followed Russia in its development after the collapse of the USSR in 1991. During the period of parliamentary republic (1991–94) Belarus made several important steps

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toward becoming an open society. In 1994, in the midst of a presidential election campaign in Belarus, Russia imposed restrictions on the union of the two countries, forcing Belarus to go its own way. After Belarus evolved into a presidential republic, its society became less open for social movements and other voluntary activities.¹⁰ Belarus slowed down its market reforms and lost much of its international financial support. At present, democratic trends are still weak and fragile. In August 1998, Russia failed in its market reforms and created a “semi-criminal capitalist society.”¹¹ Belarus had hardly begun to implement Russian-style economic reforms. In Belarus, the old command-administrative system still functions and “market socialism” prevails. It has open elections, political pluralism, some independent organizations and media, but does not have strong democratic institutions or a free market.

I will discuss six specific features of Belarus society that help to show how it differs from Russia and that highlight the multidimensional character of the society’s post-Soviet transition. Because these selected features reflect the present stage of Belarus transition, they might dissipate or intensify in the future. In either case, they might make the accelerated union with Russia questionable.¹²

Minsk Is Not Moscow

In Soviet days Minsk, the capital of Belarus, was viewed as provincial in comparison with Moscow. All important decisions were made under Moscow’s omniscient supervision. Soviet centralism resulted in concentration of political and intellectual power in Moscow, and Minsk remained a provincial city with the local Belarusian party managers acting on Moscow’s instructions. After Belarus became an independent state, there was an acute shortage of managers in many critical areas. During the presidential period, many important administrative officials came to Minsk from Moscow, including both the former and the current ministers of foreign affairs, Ivan Antonovich and Ural Latypov, and KGB chief Leonid Yerin.¹³ The present Belarus ruling establishment consists mainly of the former local, mid-level and junior nomenklatura.

There are key differences between Russia and Belarus in the caliber of political parties. In Russia, the democratic movements have had a significant impact on political life and sharing of power. In Belarus, the democratic camp is still in its infancy. Although there are more than thirty new political parties, the population hardly knows their platforms and their leaders. Democratic parties practically lost access to power in 1996 when the parliament failed in its attempt to impeach the Belarusian president and was disbanded. Since then, almost all of the political parties (including those of the left, center, and right) have become the opposition. The personal ratings of the leaders are in single percent digits. Polls reveal that an almost equal number of people trust and distrust the leaders, but that more than 50 percent of respondents simply do not care.¹⁴

It should come as no surprise that a significant segment of Belarus’s society (particularly the older generation) supports the reunification of Minsk and Moscow; they retain the previous political stereotypes and cannot adjust to the transition. In turn, some Russian politicians who sponsored the union, particu-

larly nationalists and communists, hope to preserve the image of Russia as a great power. Other groups of Russian politicians oppose unification on the grounds that it might harm democratic and market reforms in both countries.¹⁵

Religion

The geography of Belarus, on the border between East and West, contributes to its cultural and religious diversity. From 1795 on, Belarus was the Severno-Zapadnyi krai of the tsarist Russian empire, and it subsequently became the most “sovietized” republic of the USSR. For more than two centuries before 1795, large regions of Belarus were part of Poland. Polish culture and the Roman Catholic Church, along with the Russian Orthodox and Greek Catholic (Uniats) churches, have deep roots in Belarus society. During the nineteenth century, religious identity prevailed among the predominantly peasant population of Belarus. Even today, when two-thirds of Belarus’s ten million people are urban, many still preserve the old traditions and customs.

Catholic identity gained significant popular support after 1991 when freedom of religion became a reality. Catholic churches were built, clergy arrived from Poland, and religious observances were revived. Presently, about 10 percent of the population consider themselves Catholics. Although in Russia the Orthodox Church loses believers mostly to ecumenical Christianity, in Belarus Catholic Church membership is growing, as is the number of believers in general. For instance, in a 1997 survey, half of the respondents said that they believed in God. Among them, 55.6 percent identified themselves as Russian Orthodox, 10.4 percent as Catholics, 0.4 percent as Protestants, and 10.7 percent simply as Christians.¹⁶ Obviously, religious ties with Poland are becoming closer, and Western influence will grow concomitantly among the population.

In addition to historical reasons, there are several social reasons for the Catholic Church’s influence, especially among intelligentsia and youth. One is that the Catholic Church was persecuted by the Soviet regime while the Russian Orthodox Church collaborated with the KGB.¹⁷ This is an important factor for the people whose relatives were killed during the Stalin era. Moreover, the Russian Orthodox Church is associated with the policy of colonization that the Russian empire practiced toward Belarus in the nineteenth century. Catholic social doctrine also supports human rights and democracy, whereas the Russian Orthodox Church avoids such issues. For many citizens, religious activity is a substitute for other kinds of nongovernment voluntary activities. The religious pluralism in Belarus contributes to more Catholics showing support for Western-style democracy, although the government opposes Western influence.

Nationalism and Protest Movements

Although the level of protest movements in Belarus during perestroika and afterward was not higher than in Russia,¹⁸ it is worth noting that a large number of Catholics took part in such protests. The first mass anti-Communist protests in Minsk were organized as Catholic religious observances in the late 1980s, when the traditional commemoration of deceased ancestors (*Dzyady*) was turned into a

commemoration of the victims of Stalin's regime. The tendency to turn religious and cultural activities into political protests continues to the present time and is actively encouraged and supported by the Belarusian nationalists.

Because Belarus was almost totally Russified for two centuries, in late Soviet times only a small part of the population, and only a few young people, still spoke Byelorussian.¹⁹ This situation generated cultural opposition movements among the nationalist intelligentsia. Much anti-Soviet protest during late perestroika had nationalistic overtones. In the late 1980s, under the influence of the Polish Solidarity movement, the Belarus Popular Front (BNF) became the first such movement in the Belarusian political and civil arena. BNF dominated the most important protests against the Soviet system. In the days of independence, BNF initiated many protests against the Russia-Belarus political union, considering it a threat to Belarus's national identity and even its existence. BNF remains a strong opponent of the Lukashenko administration and tries to play the leading role in turning Belarus toward the West. According to some surveys, BNF is still the most popular political movement in the country.²⁰ At the same time, BNF does not respond to the interests of the majority of the population, because its leaders put cultural and linguistic issues ahead of pressing social and economic ones in their political creed. As a former U.S. ambassador to Belarus noted, lack of an effective economic program was one of the main reasons BNF leader Zenon Paznyak lost the presidential election in 1994.²¹

Unlike Russia, where nationalistic parties usually represent the most anti-Western and anti-democratic forces, Belarus nationalists advocate Western-style democracy and consider Belarus a part of Central Europe, rather than Eastern Europe. For them, the Polish and Lithuanian models of democracy are more appealing than the Russian. Unlike Russian nationalists, who cultivate the idea of "great nation" (*velikoderzhavnost'*), Belarus nationalists nurture traditional national consciousness and national identity among citizens. Instead of orientation toward Russia, they prefer the Ukrainian-style balance of East-West ties.²² The BNF political creed could create a political impasse if a quick unification of Russia and Belarus were to take place in the near future; BNF supporters will undoubtedly vote against the union and organize protests from local to international levels.

As far as youth involvement in such activities is concerned, a 1997 Belarus national survey of youth revealed that only 6 percent of respondents actually took part in protests, but 18 percent had positive attitudes toward protests; almost 45 percent felt that they could potentially participate in future protests.²³ It is widely accepted that youth participation can be crucial to any mass protest in Belarus, because Belarusian national identity has prevailed among youth since the mid-1990s.²⁴

Belarus, the Tolerant Nation

Multifaceted tolerance is necessary for any civil society. For that reason, it is important to note that tolerance is a historical characteristic of the people of Belarus. Again for geographic reasons, Belarus became home for various minorities from neighboring lands and for Muslims who had been living there since the

sixteenth century. Belarus was also part of the Jewish pale in tsarist Russia. At the beginning of the twentieth century, half of the urban population in Belarus was Jewish, almost 40 percent consisted of other nationalities, and less than 10 percent were “native” Belarusians.²⁵ Belarus is thus a multiethnic, multicultural nation with pluralistic traditions. During Soviet times, interethnic marriages in Belarus were common. During World War II, Belarus peasants saved many of their Jewish neighbors. When Belarus became independent in the 1990s, ethnic tolerance helped to start such important initiatives as minorities’ cultural centers, restoration of religious buildings of different faiths, and so on. The coexistence of Russian and Byelorussian as two state languages, although not beneficial for national culture, makes everyday life for many Russian speakers much easier and eliminates the grounds for interethnic political clashes. It is important to note that there is less anti-Semitism in Belarus than in Russia, as neither Belarus nationalists nor the authorities support Makashovian views.

The heritage of multifaceted tolerance also has negative effects, including the tendency of people to go along with any administration. Many people do not actively protest against violations of their rights. Political tolerance often deters people from political activism or from expressing solidarity with those who struggle for human rights. Surveys show that almost one-third of the population does not support any political figure and feels alienated from political life.²⁶ However, according to some recent research, Belarusian tolerance has its limits, which may or may not play a significant role in the future.²⁷

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Chernobyl: The Wound That Will Never Heal

Belarusian life has been dramatically affected by the Chernobyl catastrophe. Although the atomic reactor that exploded in April 1986 was in the territory of present-day Ukraine, Belarus received 75 percent of the radiation contamination and became its main victim. By various estimates, Chernobyl equaled Hiroshima many times over. Since 1996, Chernobyl has become one of the most troublesome issues for Belarusians. Belarus is unable even to compensate direct economic losses, which were initially estimated to be thirty-two times greater than the republic’s 1985 gross national product, not to mention the pollution, health hazards, replacement costs, and the like.²⁸ The country desperately needs the international community’s help, at least in improving the basic health of the population, which will be in the long-term interests of the FSU and Europe as well. The shadow of Chernobyl clouds the future of Belarus as a nation and contributes to the growth of catastrophic consciousness that is spreading in many former socialist countries, but especially in the FSU.²⁹

It is a bitter irony that the Chernobyl catastrophe turned Belarus into a huge experimental laboratory for carrying out unique medical and ecological research, one in which the victims are asked to pay for the research. Chernobyl destroyed much of the human and natural resources of the country for centuries to come. Because of this, Belarus is behind in the area of human development. Many people left the country after 1986; others live under the constant stress and psychological trauma that make it extremely difficult to develop any activities beyond mere survival.³⁰

The Lukashenko Phenomenon: A Man of the People

In the political atmosphere of present-day Belarus two forces define the social and political landscape—weak civil society and the strong central authority of Lukashenko. It is impossible to understand what is going on in Belarus without taking into account the relationship between civil society and the country's president, a relationship that is poorly understood in the West. Lukashenko won the presidential elections in mid-1994 when people were tired of the growing corruption, economic chaos, and nomenklatura games of the parliament period of independence. Lukashenko promised to improve the living standards of the people. His political ratings are high, ranging between 30 percent and 40 percent.³¹ Lukashenko's appeal derives from his attempt to address the problems of post-Soviet people and to speak a language that common people can easily understand. Lukashenko did not belong to the Communist Party nomenklatura; he ran a state collective farm before entering politics as a parliament deputy. He appealed to a substantial part of the population by providing "more order and control" over the country. One could even say that he practically implemented the "law-and-order" slogan that another post-Soviet charismatic leader, Russian General Lebed, repeated in his 1996 presidential campaign. In spite of the deep economic crisis and the restrictions on political activities that Lukashenko's regime implemented, a portion of Belarusians still believe that the country needs such a decisive and powerful figure.

In a country where almost one-third of the adult population are totally dependent on state pensions (around \$10–15 in the beginning of 1999), Lukashenko capitalized on fears of market insecurity and supported the ideology and rhetoric of social equality and stability. Statistics indicate a relatively low level of crime in Belarus in comparison with Russia and Ukraine where, according to many scholars, organized crime and corruption became the main obstacles to building a democratic society and a "normal" market.³² In that respect, Belarus is in a better position. However, under the Presidential Administration, civil society in Belarus returned to the previous, Soviet level of development, with the state almost totally controlling civic activities. The Soviet heritage is more oppressive in Belarus than it is in Russia. Although free media exist and even enjoy a rather high level of trust among Belarusians, their circulation is limited to a small portion of the population.

Political protests still occur,³³ but it is getting harder and harder for the protesters (as well as for any kind of opposition) to survive presidential pressure.

The number of market supporters among the population has decreased threefold since 1990.³⁴ Many people are afraid to protest because they can be fired or punished for such activities. The balance of power between the state and civic society has shifted toward virtually unlimited growth of state power. Many groups welcome this shift because they need solid state support and welfare programs to survive. Should the current regime prove unable to guarantee welfare programs, these groups are ready to return to socialism, or at least claim that they are.³⁵ At the same time, there are other groups—the younger generation, nationalist intelligentsia, and entrepreneurs—who would under no circumstances agree to a return to the past. They support democratic changes actively and passively, overtly and covertly.

Post-Soviet Youth's Social Role Revised

Among the most promising supporters of civil society in Belarus are the first post-Soviet generation of youth. Today's 15- to 24-year olds represent about 15 percent of the population of Belarus.³⁶ There are many indicators of youth involvement in society and of the relationships binding the young people to the state (employment, job motivation, political behavior, hierarchy of value orientations, voluntary activities, and so on). For the purposes of this article, it is important to show post-Soviet Belarusian youth's expectations about the society and discuss the ways in which they participate in social and political activities.

Youth's View on the Desired Society

Belarus young people have a vision of a desired society quite different from that of other groups. They consider the democratic shift and political changes of 1991 as given and the market as synonymous with new opportunities for self-realization. Like other groups, they were unaware that transition is a long road to the prosperity ahead. Expectations were unrealistic. But unlike other groups, young people do not have any nostalgia for Soviet times and will never turn back to socialism. They are also without the inertia and psychology of the past that encumber the middle-aged and older generations. The younger generation demonstrates a break with previous generations in such important aspects as political attitudes and values, information sources, respected traditions, work experience, and social position; young people will never revive the professional and social structure of the previous stage of society.³⁷ The new social position of young people since the transition from communism is conducive to their supporting reforms. However, a positive attitude by itself does not guarantee positive results; pessimism and nihilism can emerge if most or all of youth's expectations fail.

Although young people recognize that each country has its own history and have quickly developed their national identity as citizens of the independent Republic of Belarus, they would prefer to see the West European model of modern capitalism and lifestyle established in Belarus. Polls indicate that the new generation is more pragmatic than their parents and grandparents and is oriented to live in a society similar to that of West European countries rather than

American or Russian societies.³⁸ For an American observer, the adherence to market and civil society may mean Americanization, but for Belarusian youth it is just modernization.

Young people often misperceive the West as a wonderland without any social problems. They see the foreign world through rose-colored glasses as consumers and visitors (even if many of them see the West only through Russian television). Belarus youth lack the personal experience necessary to understand what “working democracy” or “real market” mean, and their possibilities for traveling and learning about the world are limited. The growing openness of foreign countries could give Belarusian youth more knowledge about civil societies, their institutions,

judicial system, citizens’ habits, and the like. Limited mobility and cross-cultural experience could be a serious problem in the future. Even now, 40 percent of young people between 16 and 29 are ready to emigrate from Belarus to countries that have more opportunities for them.³⁹

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If democracy is to win a real victory in the future it may

well be that the decisive part will be played by the young generation (or at least the most educated part of this generation). For better or for worse, young people look to the future, based on their aspirations and expectations, whereas other groups have some previous experience and evaluate present and future developments through the prism of their own past. When it comes to making a choice between democratic and authoritarian rule, the younger generation (especially college students) is more frequently inclined to choose democracy than is the population as a whole, and certainly more so than the older generation. In a 1997 national survey, more than 54 percent of young respondents spoke in favor of democracy, whereas only 42 percent of the total sample did (see table 1). Young and educated people supported democracy to a greater extent than the population as a whole. Among college students, support for democracy rises to 81 percent of the sample. All students (in high schools and universities) deeply cherish democratic freedom. In the 1997 national survey, the value of freedom was ranked fourth among the list of seventeen personal values—higher than material wealth, professional opportunities, and career.⁴⁰

Only 7 percent of youths (versus 18 percent of the total population) want to go back to a planned economy, while 28 percent prefer quick market reforms and 38 percent prefer gradual reforms (versus 20 percent and 34 percent of the total population, respectively).⁴¹ As far as their involvement in any type of business is concerned, the 1997 national survey data indicate that 44 percent of young people (more than in any other age group) have been involved in business, and almost 35 percent of them would like to run their own business (again, more than any

TABLE 1. Perceived Requirements for Successful Political Development of Belarus (in percentages)

Possible alternatives	Categories of Respondents		
	Total population (over 18 years)	Youth (18–29 years)	College students (17–25 years)
Firm hand and rigid discipline	37.9	24.3	13.4
Complete and rapid democratization	15.3	21.6	17.6
Gradual democratization	27.1	32.6	64.0
Other (find it difficult to answer)	19.7	21.5	5.0
Total	100 (<i>N</i> = 5,000)	100 (<i>N</i> = 1,500)	100 (<i>N</i> = 1,128)

Note: Data are taken from the same question asked in two different surveys: the first was a 1997 Belarus national survey (*N* = 5,000) that included youth aged 18 to 29, and the second was a 1997 survey of college students in Minsk (*N* = 1,128).

other age group); 28 percent would like to work in a private firm. The challenge is to make their expectations a reality.

The overwhelming majority of college students interviewed in another 1997 survey conducted in Minsk believed in the fundamental principles of a democratic society. Both sexes gave similar answers about the basic principles of the society in which they would like to live (see table 2). The social and economic reality of Belarus, however, is far from these aspirations, and it is not surprising that youth has a low level of trust in existing political institutions—much lower than the total population. For instance, only 25 percent of young people trust both the government and the parliament, compared with 40 percent of the general population. However they trust free media much more than the total population.⁴²

Political Involvement of Belarus Youth

Today, among the Belarus population as a whole, political passivity is the norm. The same is true of the FSU as a whole, reflecting the lack of experience with open elections and a pluralistic political system, and the growing variety of interests beyond the political sphere.⁴³ Youth is not an exception; the majority of young people are politically indifferent. These may be the broader consequences of people's disillusionment with the political status quo or with the degradation of their living conditions; they may be protests against formal bureaucratic associations such as party, union, and so forth. However, low citizen involvement in political life is a known phenomenon in advanced democratic countries. The real problems include the basis of people's civic involvement—synthesis of public and private interests, the ability of people to assess their own involvement and evaluate political institutions, and so forth.⁴⁴ Young

TABLE 2. College Students' (N = 1,128) Selection of Ideal Society Desiderata, by Sex (in percentages)

Choices	Male	Female
Rule of law, multiparty system, and division of powers	52.8	48.1
Protection of human rights and freedom	78.3	85.9
Concentration of power and state dominance in public life	6.0	3.1
Priority of state interests over personal ones	7.2	6.6
No answer	4.6	4.8

people are interested in many aspects of life other than politics, such as family, business, pop culture, and the like.

Total membership of youth in all Belarus political parties and organizations (more than 1,700) is only a few percent. Their knowledge of existing political parties is superficial, and political sympathies are quite weak. In 1997 national surveys, when youths were asked with which political party's views they identify, over 70 percent did not choose any of the thirty parties listed in the questionnaire. Of the remaining respondents, 5 percent supported leftist parties, and 2 percent said they support the outspoken nationalists. It is clear that young people are quite distant from political power struggles; they see no opportunity for playing an active role in existing parties and see no political parties that represent the interests of the young. As in Soviet times, youth is alienated from power. Unquestionably, this hinders the realization of youth's potential and reduces its role in ongoing changes.⁴⁵

Young people apparently prefer to be involved in their own para-political organizations than in real political parties. In a 1998 survey, more than 40 percent of young citizens of Minsk (the most important part of Belarus youth from the political point of view) supported youth organizations. At the same time, 43 percent of young people did not support any of the youth organizations and were not interested in politics.⁴⁶ There are two popular youth organizations in contemporary Belarus: the Youth Front (a youth section of BNF) and Belarus Union of Patriotic Youth (BPSM), which is supported by President Lukashenko. The Youth Front is two-and-a-half times more popular among the youth than the BPSM. There are more than ten other republican youth organizations, including Komsomol, pioneer union, Civic Forum, and Youth Gramada, none of which is very popular.

Comparison of Belarus and Russian youth movements over the last few years shows that Belarus youth have become more actively involved in youth political organizations, both pro-government and opposition. A few years ago, it was difficult to recruit university students for BPSM, because the recruiters, mostly country youth, were treated with disdain. However, within two years, faced with the diminution of mobility and with economic stagnation, more career oriented young people joined the BPSM. The ratings of nationalistic political parties among Belarusian youth are much higher than those given by their peers to Rus-

sian nationalistic parties. Polls show that the BNF and its adherents were supported by 13 percent of respondents; leftist parties got much less support among youth.⁴⁷ In Belarus there are no political party leaders who enjoy ratings comparable to those of Lebed, Zyuganov, Luzkov, or Yavlinsky in Russia. When respondents were asked to name Belarusian political leaders who carry the most authority with the young, 55 percent could not name anyone. Apparently young people do not see any luminaries in Belarusian political life.⁴⁸

At the same time, according to a BNF-sponsored 1998 survey, Lukashenko's rating among youth, although two to three times lower than among the population as a whole, is 15 percent in Minsk and higher in the countryside.⁴⁹ In any event, youth is more radical than other segments of the population. According to public opinion polls, 18- to 24-year-olds are the only group whose the level of support for Lukashenko is lower than the level of opposition to him—23.6 percent versus 30.7 percent.⁵⁰ Apparently, present-day Belarus does not have well-known political leaders who are able to compete with Lukashenko. Even with the high percentage of those who support BNF and the opposition as a whole, there are no real opposition leaders to attract the vote of the majority.

“Because Belarusian civil society is weak, perhaps only religion is able to provide a positive basis for the future.”

Growing Attractiveness of Religion for Youth

When the transformation of the Soviet society began, almost no one could predict the role that religion was destined to play in the process. In all of the post-communist countries, religion as an institution was to become the most respected one. The majority of people no longer trust state institutions, such as government (55 percent in Minsk and 47 percent in Belarus as a whole), courts (57 percent in Minsk and 52 percent in Belarus as a whole), and police (62 percent in Minsk and in Belarus as a whole). People have little trust in the parliament (20 percent in Minsk and 31 percent in Belarus as a whole) or local authority (18 percent in Minsk and 32 percent in Belarus as a whole).⁵¹ The majority also mistrusts non-governmental institutions, such as free trade unions, women's organizations, and political parties. But 64 percent of people in Minsk, and 70 percent in Belarus as a whole—former atheists—trust the church as the last source of values and hopes. This is a very interesting development; traditionally religion seems to be important for building civil society. Those who trust the church are likely to trust each other in community activities and business dealings.

In Belarus, the church as a civil institution is enjoying the greatest degree of trust. It is important that the number of believers is increasing among both youth and the older generations. For example, in 1994 believers numbered 25.5 percent

among the people below age thirty; in 1997, 43.1 percent.⁵² In Belarus, the fastest growing group of believers are members of the Catholic Church, and in Russia the fastest growing group are Christians who are not members of the official Russian Orthodox Church and are more ecumenical in their religious practices. It appears that after losing the previous norms and beliefs, including the communist-encouraged atheist universal world vision, youth is now seeking new values in religion. Religion appears to offer the best substitute for the ideals of communism, since both were eschatological in promising the “golden age” somewhere in the future. At the same time, because the church was banned for many years under Stalin, for many young people it is attractive and worth joining, not only to satisfy one’s religious cravings but for other social needs as well. Thus, many opponents of political and military union with Russia find themselves attracted to Roman Catholicism.

In Belarus, the Catholic Church is more attractive to youth because it has existed for a long time, it cares about human rights and democracy, it supports Belarus national identity among believers, and it is not associated with the old or new ruling regime. It creates ties with Poland and the West, and for the young people it is an opportunity to get a Catholic education abroad.

Young Catholics are very active religiously and socially, and this activity as a part of civil activity is growing very quickly. As David Gergen, an adviser for four U.S. presidents, noted in a fall 1998 lecture at the University of Maryland, College Park, civil society can not exist without the institution of religion and will be reinforced by religion.⁵³ The Belarus case proves this statement to be true. Religious pluralism in Belarus also creates better conditions for the coexistence of ethnic Belarusians, Russians, Jews, and Muslims and for avoiding ethnic conflicts between them.

Returning to the question of how to develop civil society and create a law-based state in Belarus or other post-Soviet republics, it is necessary to find a strong moral motivation for people to obey the law and to respect others. Because Belarusian civil society is weak, perhaps only religion is able to provide a positive basis for the future.

Declining Resources of Social and Human Capital for Youth

Belarus youth is oriented primarily toward an open society and further market development. The key question is what Belarus society can do to enable youth to realize their expectations. The difference between Belarus and Russia is also manifested in a shortage of foreign investment and international attention. For different reasons (including Belarus–U.S. relations), Belarus has very limited financial resources; its main resource is human and social capital.

Social capital can be interpreted as a social relational and structural resource characteristic of social networks and organizations.⁵⁴ It usually refers to features such as reciprocity and trust that cannot be measured in sociological surveys. However, they are connected to economic performance.⁵⁵ Decline of social capital, especially relations of trust, has a negative impact on both economic performance and civic cooperation.

The slow and troubled transformation that is taking place in the post-Soviet republics has very high social costs. All of them are experiencing decreases in population and life expectancy and a growth in unemployment. Most tragic, children and the younger generation, being under the protection of the Soviet state (at least officially), became the most vulnerable part of society. As new Russian surveys show, children and teenagers are the poorest groups in Russia, where almost 44 million live below poverty line.⁵⁶ According to France Press, Russia has more than two million homeless children—the same number as during World War II. This is a source for criminals, alcoholics, prostitutes, and drug users. The official level of unemployment in Russia at the end of 1998 was 8.4 million, or 11 percent of its population who were able to work.

Almost two-thirds of Belarusians are poor and one-third live in poverty; the average monthly salary almost equals the Russian poverty line. In a 1997 national survey of youth, 19 percent of the respondents did not have money to buy enough food; 12 percent, to buy necessary medicine; 33 percent, necessary clothes.⁵⁷ The total level of unemployment (registered and hidden) in Belarus is around 9 percent. In the survey in Minsk in December 1997, where the situation is slightly better than in the country as a whole, the highest level of unemployment is among those who graduated from high school or from the university. For example, among young men aged 15 to 19, 60 percent cannot find jobs when they graduate from school; among men aged 20 to 24, 33 percent have not been employed since they graduated from the university, and 22 percent have been unemployed since serving in the army. Thus, both military service and university education diminish the career opportunities of youth. The same is basically true of the young women: 66 percent of the 15- to 19-year olds and 38 percent of the 20- to 24-year olds cannot find a job after completing their education.⁵⁸ Society does not have resources to provide educated youth with appropriate jobs. This situation undermines the capacity of youth to facilitate reforms in society. It should not come as surprise that a 1997 national survey showed that 65 percent of the young people in Belarus were not satisfied with their economic well-being. Many of them think there is no way to realize their career expectations and dreams. This situation can produce social conflicts and undermine social stability.

Paradox of Family Trust

Usually, family life cultivates feelings of social security and trust that are necessary for every person. It appears that the value of family for young people is growing after having declined a few years ago (see table 3). In an international survey conducted by R. Inglehard in 1993, 73 percent of Russian and Belarus youth between the ages of 16 and 29 agreed that family was very important.⁵⁹ Moreover, 94 percent of Belarusian youth said that they trusted their families. These findings showed that youth needs family support very much, although there is a generation gap between young, middle-aged, and old people.

One could anticipate that youth might reject the family because their parents, and especially grandparents, belong to generations with opposing beliefs and values. The main feature that divides youth from their elders, both in opin-

TABLE 3. Preferable Values of Belarus Youth (in percentages)

Values	1987 (<i>N</i> = 2,030)	1991 (<i>N</i> = 2,500)	1993 (<i>N</i> = 1,211)	1997 (<i>N</i> = 2,000)
Love	68.7	55.6	48.4	76.2
Good friends	91.1	81.5	78.3	74.5
Family	41.2	14.3	16.1	70.0
Freedom	n/a	n/a	n/a	61.8
Material stability, money	27.0	43.6	51.4	49.5
Intellect	35.8	17.5	18.9	41.7
Interesting job	71.0	41.1	37.2	36.9

Note: In each survey respondents selected 6 main values out of a list of 17.

ions and behavior, is socialization: youth is the only group being socialized under conditions other than a totalitarian society with total control, a planned economy, totalitarian Marxist ideology, and the leading role of the Communist Party. Elderly people remember Stalinism and the climate of fear; middle-aged people remember Brezhnev's stagnation; but neither knew anything except socialism before Gorbachev started implementing reforms. Unlike their parents and grandparents, youngsters do not worry about the "golden age" behind them; they are oriented only to the future and are more optimistic than other age groups.

Still, youth consider the family to be the necessary source of capital—economic, social, cultural, and symbolic. A family's economic capital can be money and other forms of material support. Because state programs do not cover the majority of young people (except young Chernobyl victims), family capital functions as welfare. Thus, 53 percent of respondents in the 1997 national survey said that they had constant material support from parents, although two-thirds of the respondents had jobs.⁶⁰ This aspect is more important than ideological differences between generations. It means that young people do not mix the micro level of family life and the macro level of social transformation; they do not connect private and public: they can be young businessmen but borrow money from grandfathers—members of the Communist Party.

The importance of family networks increases because of the family's social and cultural capital: the latter helps young people to find a job more often than state job programs or unemployment offices do. It is not surprising that the majority of small and middle-size businesses in Belarus are family businesses, which require trust among members of the family. Successful family business helps people to survive without the state and creates new networks for social and professional contacts.

Another reason for the growing value of family is that there is a higher level of trust among young partners. Although post-Soviet youth are still in some ways more infantile than their Western counterparts, they need family spiritual ties and they value family ties more highly than, for example, young people in Germany.⁶¹

It is still not common for a young couple to live together unmarried, and the very fact of marriage is more important for post-Soviet young people than for Western youth. All of these factors contribute to the increasing value of the family and of the family network as well as to developing family trust and social capital.

If we compare the values of post-Soviet youth with Inglehard's theory, we find that material values still prevail among post-Soviet youth. In Inglehard's 1993 research, 28 percent of youth preferred materialist values, and only 9 percent post-materialist values. It seems that Inglehard's theory works in the Western, more advanced (postmodern or postindustrial) countries that provide a majority of people with political stability and economic security. Another theory is needed to describe and analyze prevailing values and tendencies for the post-Soviet region in the period of transition.

Decreasing Accessibility of Education for Youth

Despite the fact that many Belarusian graduates are not gainfully employed, the right kind of education has always played an important role in industrial and post-industrial societies. It is also a source of human capital. In the years of transition since 1991, a tremendous change has occurred in the attitude of youth toward education: Fewer people consider the value of education to lie in personal development, and more view it as means for career advancement. The next generation of university graduates will no longer be the much-prized Russian-style intelligentsia, but professionals, or intellectuals in the Western sense of the word, and eventually educated Belarus youth will not be overconcerned about "mutual benefits" or "the social good" because they will be focused on "personal benefits" and "personal good." It is impossible for any post-Soviet country to succeed in the transition to democracy and a market economy without services of people trained in modern economics, political science, and other policymaking fields.⁶²

Access to education declined after 1991 because it became necessary for approximately half of the students to pay for college.⁶³ In a 1997 Belarus national survey, half of the young people said they could not afford to pay for further education. Although many young people still strive for a university degree, only 20 percent of those who graduate from secondary school in either Russia or Belarus become college students. They all hope that education can help them to be more successful. Unfortunately, there is no direct correlation between education and well-being or qualification and well-being, because the most influential factor is workplace. People who are employed by private firms always have more than those who are employed by a state enterprise, a university, and such. Therefore, many young people feel dissatisfied. When asked whether education will help attain success in life, 65.8 percent of college students felt that it would, 5.3 percent said it was useless, and 23.1 percent had difficulty answering the question.

Similarly, almost 60 percent of secondary and vocational school students associated education with higher wages and other material benefits. Like the college students, they viewed education as an instrumental value, useful in attaining other goals. For instance, 25 percent associated it with a chance to work overseas, and 22 percent to 26 percent saw education as a way to enhance their social status.⁶⁴

TABLE 4. College Students' Views (N = 1,128) of Necessity of College Education, by Age Group (in percentages)

Alternatives	Ages of Responding College Students		
	17–19 years	20–22 years	23–25 years
Yes, it is necessary	68.5	62.3	50.0
No, it is useless	3.8	7.6	8.3
Don't know	20.2	27.1	37.5
No answer	7.5	3.0	4.2
Total	100	100	100

One should note that age of the respondents has much to do with how they view the usefulness of a college education (see table 4). But in general, under crisis conditions, education cannot solve the problem of social mobility for young people in accordance with their modern expectations.

Currently, Belarus cannot subsidize the educational system at more than 30 to 40 percent of the required level. Because teachers and professors receive low salaries, they try to find better paying jobs with local business firms, or abroad, or simply change their professions. Students' scientific laboratories cannot afford modern equipment. The technical level of private universities that have been opened in Belarus is not much better than that of the state universities. Many university students have part-time jobs even though their tuition is free, because they do not have enough money to survive. In a present-day post-Soviet society, education is becoming more selective and less available for children from low-income families.

Youth Involvement in Criminal Networks

Lack of resources available to involve young people positively in modern society diminishes their social perspective and contributes to their growing involvement in illegal activities, including the black market and organized crime. The more young people are unemployed, the more they are involved in crime. During the last five years in Minsk the number of young criminals who do not work or study increased from 25 percent to 40 percent.⁶⁵ When the legal avenues leading to personal wealth and prestige are blocked, there is a tendency for youth to seek out illegal activities and become involved in criminal or questionable networks, with serious consequences for civil society.⁶⁶ It becomes difficult for young people, once accepted, to free themselves from such networks. In Russia, almost 90 percent of the 3 million *krysha* (guards hired to protect businesses) and *chelnoki* ("shuttle traders" or street vendors) are young people, and it is doubtful that they could find other jobs if they wanted to do so.⁶⁷ From this point of view, it is very important to create positive conditions for involving youth in society.

It is easy for young people to get involved in criminal networks; the networks are everywhere. As normative consciousness is destroyed and crime becomes a

part of everyday life in the FSU, it is unrealistic for anyone to be involved in market relations and not violate the existing laws and norms. Sociological surveys in Belarus and Russia show that the anti-law tendency is spreading. Youth think that they can violate the law because all other groups do so. Thus, in a 1998 VTsIOM Russian national survey of young people aged sixteen to nineteen, 73 percent answered there were situations when it was necessary to act in accordance with common knowledge and ignore the law.⁶⁸ In a 1998 Belarus survey of college students, 55 percent felt that if the laws have fallen behind the times, one must rely on the situation, and only 39 percent felt that everyone has to obey the laws even if they did not like them.⁶⁹ They are not prepared to live in civil law-regulated society, even if they are willing to live in it. That is why the young generation is at high risk of being involved in illegal trade, crime, drugs, and so on. The situation is not only a threat to the future of Belarusian or Russian society; it is an international threat.

There are no statistics on how many young people are involved in criminal networks in Belarus. Nevertheless, with the economic crisis worsening, more and more teenagers are involved in activity such as illegal selling of goods, drug abuse, alcohol use, hooliganism, and so on. It is a consequence of crisis, lack of youth policies, and lack of funds for social support (summer camps, sport clubs, cultural activities, and part-time jobs). At the same time, parental care is weakening. Some parents are too busy trying to find a job; others are too busy at work. A sociological survey in Belarus shows that the majority of teenagers who use drugs began using them because of lack of social interest and the emptiness of their lives.⁷⁰

These data show that without appropriate social conditions and help, either on the state level, from civil networks, or from both sources, democracy has small chance to survive. Although more than half of the population of both Russia and Belarus feel that they can rely on themselves and their personal networks more than on the state, the rest still support the idea of state social programs and youth policies.⁷¹

Conclusion

In this article, I have discussed the first post-Soviet generation in the FSU as an agent of democratic transition. Young people can contribute to the creation of a new style of civil society peculiar to this region and its cultural heritage. Should they realize this goal, they will play a positive part in the transformation of post-Soviet republics. Should they fail, they risk being another “lost generation” or contributing to the criminal networks.

The current tendency of youth development in Belarus and the FSU is based on the conflict between the rising expectations of youth on the one hand, and the deterioration the social status and social conditions of the general population, on the other. This conflict may generate an increase in youth crime in Belarus and the FSU.

If we can learn something from the situation, it is the following: First, imported models of democracy and market do not function in post-Soviet republics.

Post-Soviet countries have to create their own models (including the Belarus model) of democracy, even though they might be different than some Western scholars would desire. Belarus has far to go in the process of transition. It remains to be seen whether the country can find the necessary resources and international help to survive as a democracy.

Second, the years of crisis show that political and economic approaches are not sufficient to explain the underlying processes in this region, and that negative sanctions always work against people (including the people of Belarus), not against governments and their leaders.

Third, the capacity of Belarus to cope with the problems of transition is very limited; its social conditions cannot improve without outside help. The growth of instability both in the FSU and in the European region is still a danger. Alienated post-Soviet youth may go abroad en masse in hope of finding better living conditions, and Schengen borders would not stop them. This is a historic challenge.

NOTES

1. A. N. Danilov, *Perehodnoe Obshchestvo: Problem Ysistemnoi Transformatsii* (Minsk: Universitetskoe, 1997), 431; David Marples, "Ukraine and Belarus: Politics, Social Mobility and the Next Generation," paper presented at the conference "The Next Generation: Is It on the Right Track?" 28 September 1998, Washington, DC; V. I. Karbalevich, V. V. Rovdo, V. Ju. Chernov and V. I. Shabailov, *Problemy Formirovaniya Grazhdanskogo Obshchestva v Belarusi* (Minsk: Vostok-Zapad, 1996), 83.

2. See G. Alimov, "Moskva—Stolitsa Novogo Gosudarstva," *Izvestia*, 26 December 1998, 3; M. Wines, "Belarus's Chief Pursues Dream To Revive the Old Soviet Union," *New York Times*, 27 December 1998, 1, 6.

3. Seymour M. Lipset, *American Exceptionism: A Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 24, 34.

4. See Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); G. W. F. Hegel, "Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts," *Werke*, vol.7 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970); Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Bob Edwards and Michael Foley, "Civil Society and Social Capital Beyond Putnam," *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. 1 (1998); Adam Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), and so forth.

5. Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), X.

6. R. Putnam, R. Leonardi, and R. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 86–90.

7. G. V. Osipov, ed., *Sotsiologicheskii Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar'* (Moscow: INFRA.M-NORMA, 1998), 212.

8. Edwards and Foley, "Civil Society and Social Capital," 125.

9. Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (January 1995): 65–78; Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 4; Larry Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society: Towards Democratic Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 3 (July 1994): 5.

10. As S. N. Eisenstadt showed, during the rapid breakdown of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, countries of this region constructed a civil society each in its own way that links with the epoch of modernity as well as with the difficulties of the institutionalization of democracy in general. S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Breakdown of Communist

Regimes and the Vicitudes of Modernity," *Daedalus* 121, no. 2 (1992).

41. To his view, the very fragility of democratic regimes is their inevitable characteristics. S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Paradox of Democratic Regimes: Fragility and Transformability," *Sociological Theory* 16, no. 3 (1998): 211–34.

11. Andrei Kalganov, "Who Will Be the Next President of Russia—and When?" *Prism* (A Bi-Weekly on the Post-Soviet States), 25: 2, 25 December 1998.

12. We do not intend to discuss the whole issue of unification as it is a different topic, but Russian media took the news about further unification rather cold. See, for example, S. Karpekova, "Prezidenty Gotovyat Bol'shoy Syurpriz," *Izvestia*, 25 December 1998, 3.

13. A. Neverovsky, "Ivan Antonovich—Grazhdanin Rossii," *Naviny*, 18 December 1998.

14. A. P. Vardomatsky, "Nekotorye Osobennosti Postsovetskogo Obshchestvennogo Mneniya," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 61–62. See also *Naviny*, 30 December 1998, 4.

15. G. Alimov, "Moskva—Stolitsa Novogo Gosudarstva," 3; M. Wines, "Belarus's Chief Pursues Dream to Revive the Old Soviet Union."

16. Many respondents who were identified as believers did not identify themselves with any church. See L.v.G. Novikova, "Osnovniye Kharakteristiki Dinamiki Religioznosti naseleniya," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 96.

17. K. Armes, "Chekists in Cassocks: The Orthodox Church and the KGB," *Demokratizatsiya* 1, no. 4 (1993), 72.

18. Mark R. Beissenger, "Event Analysis in Transitional Societies: Protest Mobilization in the Former Soviet Union," in *Acts of Dissent: The Study of Protest in Contemporary Democracies*, D. Rucht, R. Koopmans, and F. Neidhardt, eds. (Berlin: Sigma, 1998), 284–316.

19. Many people spoke either Russian or both languages. See V. Rusetskaya, ed., *Sovremennaya Berolusskaya Molodezh': Sotsialnye Orientatsii, Polozhenie, Tendentsii i Perspektivy Razvitiya* (Minsk: Komitet po Delam Molodezhi, 1993), 87.

20. The results of surveys always differ because of the time of research and the political bias of the scholars. Thus, those who sympathize with BNF usually show the higher rating for this movement, although BNF has one of the highest ratings in public opinion, wavering somewhere between 4 percent at its lowest and 15 percent at its highest. As for BNF's official leader Paznyak, his rating is relatively low, in the single digits. See Vardomatsky, "Nekotorye Osobennosti Postsovetskogo Obshchestvennogo Mneniya" 61; Press Release of survey "Obshchestvenno-politicheskaya i Ekonomicheskaya Situatsiya v Respublike Belarus," Belorusskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, Minsk, 1997, 15; M. Grynevetsky, "Poyavitsya konkurent, I batke mogila," *Naviny*, 30 December 1998, 4.

21. D. Swartz, "The Mess of Belarus, Care of the State Department," *Washington Times*, 5 June 1997.

22. Juri Hadyka, "Ukrainsky Urok Dlya Belarusi," *Naviny*, 9 September 1998, 1.

23. I. Levitskaya, "Socremennaya Molodezh' Belarusi," paper prepared for the sociological conference in Minsk, May 1998.

24. L. G. Titarenko, "Ethno-National Relations in Belarus as Reflecting in Youth Consciousness," unpublished paper presented at the international sociological conference "The Young Man in the Crisis," St. Petersburg, Russia, 1994.

25. L. G. Titarenko, "Nationalism and Ethnic Relations in Belarus," unpublished paper prepared for the International Conference on Nationalism in the CIS in Preston, UK, September 1996.

26. Zh. M. Grishchenko, "Ontologiya Uspekha i Porazheniya," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 55.

27. As O. T. Manaev showed in a 1998 national survey, tolerance of the population decreased. For instance, 38 percent of the respondents wanted to ban the activities of all social groups whom they did not like (38 percent do not like nationalists; 37 percent, homosexuals; 25 percent, Lukashenko's opponents; 24 percent, Stalinists; 21 percent,

Communists, and so forth), see O. Manaev, "Kto Kogo Terpet' ne Mozhet," *Naviny*, 28 October 1998, 3.

28. Ye. Babosov, "Katastropha Kak ob'yekt Sotsiologicheskogo Analiza," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 22. The level of radioactive contamination is still growing: the Russian media recently reported that Chernobyl nuclear remnants contaminated the Black Sea waters and bottom of the sea. And at the same time, the Baltic Sea is under threat of chemical contamination because of chemical weapons on its bottom from World War II. See E. Glebova, "Chernaya byl' Chernogo Morya Radionukleidov," *Izvestia*, 22 December 1998, 1.

29. P.-E. Mitev, V. A. Ivanova, and V. N. Shubkin, "Katastrofishcheskoe Soznaniye v Bolgarii i Rossii," *Sociological Studies* 10 (1998): 111–17.

30. See Yea. Burlakova, ed., *Chernobyl'skaya katastropha: Prichiny i Posledstviya* (Minsk, 1993); "Rak Presleduyet po Pyatam," *7 Dney*, 1993, #17, 3; "Chernaya byl' Beloy Rusi," *7 Dney*, 1994, #34, 4; Ye. Babosov, "Bol' Chernobylya," *Sociological Studies* 6 (1992): 14–20.

31. See A. P. Vardomatsky, "Nekotorye Osobennosti Postsovetskogo obshchestvennogo mneniya"; 62; M. Grinevitsky, "Poyavitsya konkurent, I batke mogila," *Naviny*, 30 December 1998.

32. See, for example, Louise I. Shelley, "Organized Crime and Corruption in Ukraine: Impediments to the Development of a Free market Economy," *Demokratizatsiya*, 6, no. 4 (1998): 648–63; Veniamin Sokolov, "Privatization, Corruption, and Reform in Present Day Russia," *Demokratizatsiya*, 6, no. 4 (1998): 664–79.

33. O. T. Manaev, "Mass-media v belorusskom interyere," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 98–105.

34. V. V. Bushchik, "Sotsialnaya baza podderzhki rynochnykh preobrazovaniy," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 70.

35. This tendency takes place in other republics. For example, in an all-Russian survey in October 1998, carried out by VTsIOM, 55 percent of people preferred deficit of goods with moderate prices than abundance of goods with high prices. See *Itogi*, 27 October 1998, 5.

36. *Respublika Belarus v tsifrakh*. Kratkiy statisticheskiy sbornik (Minsk: Statistika, 1997). In this article, almost all the Belarus data are from several youth surveys conducted by the author and/or other Belarus scholars. When the age of respondents is different from 15–24, or only selected groups of youth were interviewed, there are direct notes in the text.

37. V. I. Chuprov, "Molodezh' v obshchestvennom vosproizvodstve," *Sociological Studies* 3 (1998): 94.

38. In accordance with sociological surveys, only a small part of young people would like to move to Russia. As for their economic orientations, only 6 percent would like to choose the United States while 70 percent would choose Western Europe. See G. Pronevich, "Youth of Belarus: Preconditions, Tendencies, and Priorities of Political Choice," *Analytical Reports for Briefing of the Belarusian Association of Think Tank (BATT)*, 6 February 1998, 36.

39. Levitskaya, "Socremennaya molodezh' Belarusi."

40. Tsentr sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy BGU, "Tsennostniye orientatsii sovremennogo studenshestva," *Sotsiologiya* 1 (1997): 95.

41. Press-Release of survey "Obshchestvenno-politicheskaya i ekonomicheskaya situatsiya v Respublike Belarus," (Minsk: Belorusskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, 1997): 5–6. See also Larissa G. Titarenko and David G. Rotman, "Social Portrait of Youth in a Transitional Society: the Case of Belarus," paper prepared for the Research Committee Sociology of Youth, the Fourteenth Congress of the International Sociological Association, Montreal, 25 July–1 August 1998.

42. *Ibid.*

43. S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Breakdown of Communist Regimes and the Vicitudes of Modernity," *Daedalus* 121, no. 2 (1992): 21–41; P. Sztompka, "Trust and Emerging Democracy," *International Sociology* 11, no. 1 (1996): 37–62.
44. Adam Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 185.
45. Titarenko and Rotman, "Social Portrait of Youth in a Transitional Society."
46. "Chto dumaet molodezh v vozraste ot 14 do 25 let?" *Narodnaya Volya*, 29 October 1998, 3.
47. Press Release of survey "Obshchestvenno-politicheskaya i ekonomicheskaya situatsiya v Respublike Belarus" (Minsk: Belorusskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, 1997), 7–12.
48. Ibid.
49. "Chto dumaet molodezh v vozraste ot 14 do 25 let?" *Narodnaya Volya*, 29 October 1998, 3.
50. Vardomatsky, "Nekotorye Osobennosti Postsovetskogo Obshchestvennogo Mneniya," 62.
51. A. P. Vardomatsky, "Osobennosti Massovogo Politicheskogo Soznaniya v Post-totalitarnom Obshchestve," *Analytical Reports for Briefing of the Belarusian Association of Think Tanks (BATT)*, 6 February 1998 (Minsk: BATT, 1998), 38–53.
52. L. G. Novikova, "Osnovnie kharakteristiki dinamiki religioznosti naseleniya," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 95.
53. David Gergen, "Building a Civil Society," lecture presented at University of Maryland, College Park, 5 October 1998.
54. See, for example, Putnam, "Bowling Alone," 65; Edwards and Foley, "Civil Society and Social Capital," 124; James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).
55. Putnam, "Bowling Alone," 65–78; Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 355–58; J. S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 1 (1988): 120.
56. Jeni Klugman, ed., *Poverty in Russia: Public Policy and Private Responses* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1997), 65.
57. Levitskaya, "Socremennaya Molodezh' Belarusi."
58. O. Tereshchenko, "Vozrastnaya Dinamika Zanyatosti Stolishnogo Naseleniya," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 86.
59. Ronald Inglehart, Miguel Basanez, and Alejandro Moreno, *Human Values and Beliefs: A Cross-Cultural Sourcebook* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 66. All the other data from this research are also from this book.
60. Levitskaya, "Socremennaya molodezh' Belarusi."
61. V. A. Sibirev, N. A. Golovin, "Shtrikhi k Portretu Pokoleniya 90-h godov," *Sociological Studies* 3 (1998): 108.
62. Constance Holden, "Eastern Europe's Social Science Renaissance," *Science*, 12 March 1999, 1620.
63. There are 568 state universities and 320 private universities in Russia, but the state universities have from 25 percent to 70 percent paid students. See S. Leskov, "Sokrat nam ne Uchitel'," *Izvestia*, 23 December 1998, 1.
64. All the data are from Titarenko and Rotman, "Social Portrait of Youth in a Transitional Society."
65. O. G. Lukashova and A. I. Lukashov, "Kriminalnoye Litso Bezrabotitsy," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 111.
66. Edwards and Foley, "Civil Society and Social Capital," 125; Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," 120.
67. V. I. Chuprov, "Molodezh' v Obshchestvennom Vosproizvodstve," *Sociological Studies* 3 (1998): 103.
68. *Itogi*, 8 September 1998, 7.

69. Titarenko and Rotman, "Social Portrait of Youth in a Transitional Society," 12.
70. N. Ya. Golubkova and L. G. Novikova, "Osobennosti Usloviy Pervichnoy Sotsializatsii i Tsennostnoy Struktury Soznaniya u Podrostkov s Otklonyayushchimsya Povedeniyem," *Sotsiologiya* 1 (1997): 59; L. G. Titarenko, "SPID Kak Ugroza Sotsialnoy Katastrofy," *Sociological Studies* 9 (1998): 49.
71. Jeni Klugman, ed. *Poverty in Russia: Public Policy and Private Responses* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1997), 302; B. A. Rushkin, ed., *Molodezh'-97* (Moscow: Sotsium, 1997), 55.