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No Democracy Without Economic Democracy: Learning from Impoverished Ukrainians and Russians.

Abstract

Many influential scholars in democratic studies continue to exclude the economic realm from democratic analysis. But this is not the case when we examine lay conceptualizations of democracy, particularly in developing or democratizing countries. Lay Russians and Ukrainians have something to teach us about democracy by focusing our attention on the economic matters and injustices. They teach us that in achieving democracy we cannot bracket gaining power and collective control over crucial social institutions and forces in the economy that affect people's lives. Democracy must mean securing people economic rights such as a right to employment, living wage, pension, healthcare, education, and a minimum standard of living, as well as equalizing power between wage workers and owners of productive resources through workplace democracy. Such ideas are also better reclaimed as democratic when we put them in context of post-Soviet hyper-capitalism, real power inequalities, exclusion, and displacement. However, I critique those aspects of lay views that express apathy, quiescence, and self-deprecation as not conducive for goals of democratic empowerment in the economic realm. But I also stress that such tendencies are a response to the oppressive and undemocratic structures of their societies, and as such, they represent a powerful critique of the social context that has a democratic significance.

a) Introduction

Leaving economic life out of the scope of democratic politics and analysis is a pervasive feature in contemporary scholarship on democracy.¹ Influential democratic theorists² and

¹ See on-going overviews and critiques of these pervasive trends in Walker, Jack L., 1966, "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy," *American Political Science Review*, 60, 2 (June), p. 286, 288; Ricci, David M, 1970. "Democracy Attenuated: Schumpeter, the Process Theory, and American Democratic Thought," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 2. (May), pp. 239-267; Pateman, Carole, 1976, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 13-4; Pateman, Carole, 1989, *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism, and Political Theory*. Polity Press, pp. 142-3, 145, 172; Wood, Ellen Meiksins, 1995, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*. Cambridge. University Press, pp. 204-38; Cammack, Paul, 1997, *Capitalism and Democracy in the Third World: The Doctrine for the Political Development*, Leicester University Press, pp. 218-31; Baker, Gideon, 2007, "The Taming of the Idea of Civil Society", *Democratization*, Vol. 14, No. 4, Aug; Kaufman-Osborn, Timothy V., 2009, "Political Theory as a Profession?" Presented at a UCLA Political Theory Workshop, January 9, 2009, pp. 13-9

² Schumpeter, J.A. 1976. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. Harper and Row, pp. 214, 269, 270, 282-5; Dahl, Robert, 1956, *A Preface to Democratic Theory*. The University of Chicago Press, p. 131; Dahl, Robert, 1971, *Polyarchy*, Yale University Press, pp.9-11, 14, 17, 60-81. But note that Dahl's non-economic conceptualization of democracy in *Polyarchy* is quite different from his statements on the subject in Dahl, Robert, 1970, *After the Revolution: Authority in a Good Society*, Yale University Press, and Dahl, Robert, 1985. *A Preface to Economic Democracy*, Prentice-Hall. Yet, of course the latter work is rarely cited by scholars who draw on Dahl's democratic theory.

scholars of democratic transitions³ continually exclude economic structure, institutions, relations and practices from democratic exploration. Their foundational conceptions of democracy are incorporated into studies and analyses of post-Soviet public opinion about democracy. Survey and interview scholars conceptualize democracy in terms of such essential elements as free and fair elections, rule of law, tolerance, freedom of the press, government responsiveness, and accountability.⁴

However, in the democratizing societies there exist more expansive and more relevant democratic discourses at the grassroots level as compared to those advocated by scholars.

Ukrainian and Russian non-elites view democracy as what we may call ‘political’ components,

³ Lipset, Seymour Martin, 1959. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy,” *American Political Science Review*, 53 (1), p. 71; Huntington, Samuel, 1993, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. University of Oklahoma Press, p. 6; Diamond, Larry, 2003, “Defining and Developing Democracy,” in ed. R.A. Dahl, I. Shapiro, and J.A. Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*. p. 31; Przeworski, Adam, 2003, “Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense,” in ed. R.A. Dahl, I. Shapiro, and J.A. Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*, p. 12; Diamond, Larry, J. Linz and S. Lipset, ed., 1988, *Democracy in Developing Countries*. Vol. 2, Africa. London: Adamantine Press, p. xvi; Linz, Juan, 1978, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press p. 48, 94; Almond, Gabriel, A., 1980, “The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept,” In *The Civic Culture Revisited*, ed. G.A. Almond and S. Verba, Little, Brown, p. 21; Diamond, Larry and Marc F. Plattner, ed., 1993, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy Revisited*. John Hopkins University Press, p. ix; Diamond, Larry, 2003, “Defining and Developing Democracy,” in ed. R.A. Dahl, I. Shapiro, and J.A. Cheibub, *The Democracy Sourcebook*. p. 31; Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl, 1996, “What Democracy Is...and Is Not.” In L. Diamond and M.F. Plattner, eds. *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Second Edition, Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 60, 61, n. 3

⁴ For such examples, see Rose, Richard, William Mishler, and Neil Munro, 2006, *Russia Transformed: Developing Popular Support for a New Regime*. Cambridge University Press, p. 34, 35-6; Rose, Richard, William Mishler, and Christian Haerpfer., 1998, *Democracy and Its Alternatives*. John Hopkins University Press, p. 20, 33; McIntosh et al. 1994, “Public Meets Democracy in Central and East Europe 1991-1993,” *Slavic Review*, 53, Fall, p. 495-6; Gibson, James L., 1998 “Putting Up with Fellow Russians: An Analysis of Political Tolerance in the Fledgling Russian Democracy,” *Political Research Quarterly*, 51, March, pp. 37-68; Bahry, Donna, 1999, “Comrades into Citizens? Russian Political Culture and Public Support for the Transition,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 58, No. 4, Special Issue: Ten years after 1989: What Have We Learned? Winter, p. 848; Carnaghan, Ellen, 2007, *Out of Order: Russian Political Values in an Imperfect World*. The Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 15-6, n. 7; Hopf, Ted, 2002. “Making the Future Inevitable: Legitimizing, Naturalizing and Stabilizing. The Transition in Estonia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan,” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 405; Reisinger, et al., 1994. “Political Values in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania: Sources and Implications for Democracy.” *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 24, No. 2, April, p. 205

such as freedom of speech, elections, and legislative representation.⁵ But post-Soviet non-elites also conceptualize democracy in terms of gaining economic and social rights, such as the right to employment, the right to a living wage, the right to healthcare, the right to education, the right to housing, the right to sustainable retirement, the right to a minimum standard of living, and the right to a voice in the decision making in the workplace.⁶ Russian and Ukrainian non-elite discourses on democracy have gone underappreciated, unexplored, and largely misrepresented by survey scholars as simply ‘economic’, materialistic, apolitical, outdated, and having little to do with questions of democracy’s meaning.⁷ However, I argue that lay focus on what is termed the ‘economic’ realm illuminates important questions of democracy such as rights, efficacy, freedom, accountability, participation, deliberation, and distribution of power in the decision making that affects the direction of society and the individual lives.

Democratic governance rests on distributing equal citizenship rights to all members of the community, which in the classical meaning of the term are the rights to control, participate, and share in the society’s institutions, resources, and protections. Many contemporary discussions of

⁵ Simon, Janos, 1998, “Popular conceptions of democracy in postcommunist Europe,” in *The Postcommunist Citizen*, ed. by S.H. Barnes and J. Simon pp. 81, 100; Alexander, James, 2000, *Political Culture in Post-Communist Russia: Formlessness and Recreation in a Traumatic Transition*, p. 127; Miller et al, 1997. “Conceptions of Democracy among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies,” pp. 157-190.

⁶ Carson, Thomas, 2000, “Attitudes Toward Change, the Current Situation, and Civic Action in Ukraine – 2000,” p. 11; Sharma, et al, 2007, “Public Opinion in Ukraine Prior to the 2007 Rada Elections.”; Simon, Janos, 1998, “Popular conceptions”, p. 84; Miller and Wolchik “Introduction”, p. 8; Alexander, *Political Culture*, p. 127-136; Diligenskii, “Rossiiski gorozhanin”, pp. 91, 68-69, 85.

⁷ Miller et al point out that the goal for survey scholars is not to explore how lay actors understand democracy, but rather to see whether they conform to what scholars have defined as democracy, see Miller et al., 1997. “Conceptions of Democracy among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies,” p. 159. For references to apolitical attitudes in post-Soviet countries, see: Mason, D.S., 1995, “Justice, Socialism, and Participation in the Postcommunist States,” p. 74; Gibson, “Political and Economic Markets,” p. 957; Kluegel et al., 1995., “Accounting for the Rich and the Poor”; Clarke et al., 1993, “The Political Economy of Attitudes toward Polity and Society in Western European Democracies,” pp. 998-1021; McIntosh et al., “Public Meets Democracy in Central and East Europe 1991-1993”, pp. 483-512; Evans and Whitefield, “The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies,” pp. 485-514. Also, Diligenskii, *Rossiskii Gorozhanin*; Alexander, *Political Culture*; and Simon, *Labor and Political Transformation*.

citizenship take as their source T.H. Marshall's classic *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. Citizenship in this view encompasses civil, political, and socio-economic rights. Civil and political rights include equal protection under the law, equal access to the judicial system, due process, suffrage, freedom of expression, and freedom to organize politically. Citizenship based on civil and political rights only is incomplete, and full citizenship must encompass rights to economic welfare and security.⁸ For Marshall, extension of citizenship into the economic sphere is not just about extending civil and political rights into the economic realm, but it is also about modifying "the whole pattern of social inequality" in the market society.⁹

Lay Russian and Ukrainian economic demands are democratic because they encompass attempts to gain full citizenship in their societies, and with it power, rights, autonomy, influence, and voice in the economic realm. Lay discourses arise in response to the exclusive economic citizenship that exists in their societies. Through asserting economic and social rights, lay actors seek to reclaim power over their economic fate. Rather than being a subject to external social forces, actors, and institutions that escape their control, lay Russians and Ukrainians attempt to assert their power, interests, and voice in the economic realm through the discourse of social and economic rights. By making what appear to be just demands for 'economic welfare', lay actors lay claim to collective control over the economic institutions, relations, and resources controlled privately and undemocratically in their societies.

In a critical realist vein¹⁰, I engage lay ideas beyond a purely discursive analysis to point out not only what non-elites think about democracy, but that what they think is valid. Lay

⁸ Marshall, T.H., 1964. *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, pp. 65-122.

⁹ Marshall, T.H., 1964. *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, p. 96.

¹⁰ Bellah, Robert N, 1983. "Social Science as Practical Reason," in *Ethics, the Social Sciences, and Policy Analysis*. Ed. D. Callahan and B. Jennings, pp. 59-62; Sayer, Andrew R., 1992, *Method in Social Science: A Realist*

formulations of democracy can be illuminated and reclaimed when we put them in the larger context of the post-communist transition, hyper-capitalism, real power inequalities, and large scale economic dislocation.

b) Reclaiming an Argument About Democracy in the Economic Demands of Lay Russians and Ukrainians

1) Socio-Economic Context: the Creation of New Classes, Deterioration of Living Standards, Poverty, and Wealth Concentration

In order to evaluate and reclaim lay emphasis on economic matters in their democratic thinking, we need to begin by establishing some of the most conspicuous features of the socio-economic context of post-communist transitions to which lay actors are responding. In this section I highlight two contradictory but simultaneous trends: economic displacement and poverty on the one hand, and rapid enrichment and concentration of wealth and economic resources on the other. Also, I bring attention to a pattern of policies designed to take away whatever few social and economic protections that non-elites in Russia and Ukraine did have.

The very early years of transition from state-run to market economy in Russia and Ukraine are defined by a wave of swift economic reforms known as “shock therapy”. Among other things, these reforms encompassed curtailing government regulation of industries, privatization of state assets, price liberalization, and drastic cuts in social programs and safety

Approach. Routledge, p. 39; Brown, Andrew, Steve Fleetwood and John M. Roberts. 2002. “The Marriage of Critical Realism and Marxism: Happy, Unhappy, or on the Rocks,” in *Critical Realism and Marxism*, ed. by A. Brown et al., Routledge, p. 18, and Bhaskar, Roy. 1979/1998. *The Possibility of Naturalism*. 3d ed, London: Routledge, p. 114.

nets.¹¹ Shock therapy was accompanied with alarming demographic and economic indicators. Frequent change in ownership, closure, and restructuring of state enterprises led to massive rates of unemployment, low or unpaid wages, yearlong wage arrears, and loss of benefits. In 1998 in Russia, over \$10 billion was owed to about 20 million workers.¹² Price liberalization brought hyperinflation and instability of a nascent financial system caused millions of people to lose their life savings they held at Soviet banks through bank bankruptcies and fraud. The first decade of the transition is also associated with an unprecedented human and labor flight. For example, Ukraine's total population decreased from 53 million in 1993 to 48.5 million by 2001.¹³ Those who emigrate to work abroad list low wages, unemployment, and the need to repay loans as the primary reasons for leaving, and about two thirds of them have small children and families waiting at home.¹⁴

¹¹ Aslund, Anders, Peter Boone and Simon Johnson, "How to Stabilize: Lessons from Post-Communist Countries," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1, 1997; *World Development Report 1996: From Plan to Market*. 1996. Oxford University Press, part I and II; Sachs, Jeffrey. 1993. *Poland's Jump to the Market Economy*. Cambridge: Massachusetts; *The Ukrainian Economy: Achievements, Problems, Challenges*. Ed. I.S. Koropeskyj. Harvard University Press, 1992; Haavisto, Tarmo (ed.) 1997. *The Transition to a Market Economy: Transformation and Reform in the Baltic States*. Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 6; Havrylyshyn, Oleh; Marcus Miller; William Perraudin; et al. 1994. "Deficits, Inflation and the Political Economy of Ukraine," *Economic Policy*, Vol. 9, No. 19, Oct., pp. 353-401.

¹² See Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 610. Also, see reports on how wage arrears have been responsible for alarming rise in alcoholism and suicide among non-paid workers in Mandel, David. 2004. *Labour After Communism: Auto Workers and Their Unions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus*. Black Rose Books.

¹³ "The social economic situation in the countries of the FSU: case studies of Ukraine, Russia, and Moldova". Prepared by JDC-Brookdale Institute, August 20, 2003
Available at: [http://www.claimscon.org/forms/allocations/The%20Social%20and FSU%20JDC .pdf](http://www.claimscon.org/forms/allocations/The%20Social%20and%20FSU%20JDC.pdf); http://www.undp.org.ua/files/en_80896eng_full.pdf, pp. 74-77.

¹⁴ "Status of Observance of Ukrainian Migrant Workers' Rights in the Receiving Countries." Special Report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.
Available at: http://www.ombudsman.kiev.ua/S_Report1/g12_5.htm and http://www.ombudsman.kiev.ua/S_Report1/zm.htm; "Labor Migration in Eastern Europe and Central Asia." Available at: www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001395/139530e.pdf, *International Labor Migration*. Edited by Singh Bolaria and Rosemary Von Elling Bolaria. Oxford University Press, 1997, Tiuriukanova, Elena. "Female Labor Migration Trends and Human Trafficking: Policy Recommendations." *Human Traffic And Transnational*

In the Soviet era, many state-owned enterprises and industries supplied housing, childcare, vacation packages, soup kitchens, and other social benefits to their workers. Work compensation was understood not only in terms of wages, but also essential goods and services that workers received.¹⁵ However, with the dismantling of the socially administered economy and a push to modernize plants by reducing operating costs, many of these workers' benefits were eliminated. Moreover, as enterprises and industries became privatized, national budgets that depended on state ownership of productive wealth thinned. Nation-wide social programs and services in post-communist years got drastically reduced and underfinanced. Privatization of education and healthcare, and unloading the operation cost of these services on the population ensured that for many they became inaccessible. Studies of poverty in post-communist countries point out that essential medical care became out of reach for many poor who had to make formal and informal payments for it. Moreover, access to those services that remained is often inhibited by complicated and humiliating application procedures. Deteriorating public health services, under-nutrition, lack of heat, poor hygiene, and stress contributed to increased illness, while access to affordable and quality health care was disappearing. "As a result, the poor increasingly

Crime: Eurasian And American Perspectives. Edited by S. Stoecker and L. Shelley. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005, Malarek, Victor. The Natashas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade. Arcade Publishing: New York, 2003.

¹⁵ Although there were many problems with the timely and efficient provision of these essential material goods, the point is that was common for Soviet workers to count on guaranteed access to them and to other services as compensation for their work. When workers started organizing and calling for more efficiency in the system of distribution in the late 1980s, by no means did they image dismantling of the system of social guarantees as an aspects of their empowerment and economic improvement. See Christensen, Paul T. 1999. *Russia's Workers in Transition: Labor, Management, and the State under Gorbachev and Yeltsin*. Northern Illinois University Press, 1999, pp. 42-88, 94.

resorted to self-treatment, home remedies, or faith healers, avoiding the formal health care system until illness or injury became life-threatening or chronic.”¹⁶

Extreme economic dislocation is not peculiar to the era of shock therapy and to the wave of initial economic reforms. As economic liberalization reforms materialized, many studies still point to alarming demographic developments such as high levels of poverty, increased unemployment, high mortality, declining birth rates, the AIDS epidemic, sex trafficking, increased rates of abortion, and unprecedented levels of emigration.¹⁷ Sharp poverty that befell many Russians and Ukrainians is new, and it cuts across various social and professional groups, with the exception of the top political and economic elite, who were able to convert power over resource allocation into ownership of important assets.¹⁸ The impoverished are labeled as the

¹⁶ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C, p. 25.

¹⁷ Iatridis, Demetrius S. ed., 2000. *Social Justice and the Welfare State in Central and Eastern Europe; the Impact of Privatization*. Greenwood Publishing Group; Clarke, Simon, 2002. *Making Ends Meet in Contemporary Russia: Secondary Employment, Subsidiary Agriculture, and Social Networks*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA : E. Elgar; Clarke, Simon. “Poverty in Ukraine,” available at: http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/complabstuds/russia/Poverty_Ukraine.doc

“The social economic situation in the countries of the FSU: case studies of Ukraine, Russia, and Moldova”. Prepared by JDC-Brookdale Institute, August 20, 2003; Available at: http://www.claimscon.org/forms/allocations/The%20Social%20and_FSU%20JDC_.pdf; “Ukraine’s Social and Economic Background,” Human Rights Watch Report. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/ukraine0803/3.htm>; April 16, 2008, “UNDP Conference on Poverty in Kyiv and Ukraine’s European choices” available at: http://www.undp.org.ua/files/en_80896eng_full.pdf, pp. 74-77; Revernko, Andrey. “Poverty in Ukraine”, *Institute of Economic Forecasting, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences*; Ochkina, Anna. “Present-day Russia needs a renewal of the feminist movement.” *Links International Journal of Socialist Renewal*, <http://links.org.au/node/829>; Wanner, Catherine and Nora Dudwick, 2003. “Children Have Become a Luxury’: Everyday Dilemmas of Poverty in Ukraine,” in ed. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank.

¹⁸ Silverman, Bertram and Yanowitch, Murray. 1997. *New Rich New Poor New Russia: Winners and Losers on the Russian road to Capitalism*. ME Sharpe; “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C., p. 22.

“new poor” to connote a *newly* created social class that is unaccustomed to such high levels of destitution and reacted to it with outspoken resistance and indignation.¹⁹ Some of the attempts to cope with the crisis encompassed sharp reduction in household consumption, selling furniture, appliances, clothing, jewelry, cars, and personal artifacts of value. In some cases people sold centrally located apartments, bought cheaper housing outside of the city, and lived off the difference. In some cases people borrowed from professional moneylenders and were forced either to surrender apartments they had unwisely offered as collateral or to go into hiding. Moreover, subsistence gardening and farming became important survival strategies, even in the city.²⁰

Today, a very large portion of the population in both Russia and Ukraine live in poverty, while more new wealth is generated and concentrated in a few hands. The GDP per capita indicators show slow but steady increases for the two decades after the disintegration. There have also been increases in consumption, industrial production, construction activity, and service industry investment, both domestic and foreign.²¹ However, according to World Bank data, poverty in Russia and Ukraine has more than doubled since the onset of disintegration of

¹⁹ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C., pp.21-2.

²⁰ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C, p. 24. Also, see Clarke, Simon, 2002. *Making Ends Meet in Contemporary Russia : Secondary Employment, Subsidiary Agriculture, and Social Networks*. Cheltenham, UK ; Northampton, MA: E. Elgar.

²¹ Statistical data on economic activity, GDP/capital, wages, and other economic indicators. State Statistics Committee of Ukraine. Available at: <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> ; Also, see April 16, 2008, “UNDP Conference on Poverty in Kyiv and Ukraine’s European choices” available at: http://www.undp.org.ua/files/en_80896eng_full.pdf, pp. 73.

USSR.²² Despite the expectations encouraged by economic growth, the poverty rates in these countries have been dangerously high throughout the past few years. Tremendous economic dislocation, along with coping mechanisms initially thought to be temporary or pathological, had become a normal aspect of everyday life for millions of people.²³ According to government official data and human rights reports, the average poverty rate in Ukraine in 2001 was at 30%, varying by region, while in the Transcarpathian region the poverty rate that year was at 46.6%. This means that on average every fourth Ukrainian does not have enough resources to meet the minimal requirements for her physiological survival.²⁴ In 2011, every fourth working family in Ukraine lives below the poverty line, and the national poverty rate remained stable at around 30%.²⁵

At the same time, the transition to a market economy created a class of “new rich” who now own and have the power to direct and manage industries and enterprises, as well as the labor force entangled in it. Privatization, i.e. distribution of national capital, occurred largely behind closed doors via dubious deals among people who already occupied positions of political and social power.²⁶ For example, during the privatization process in the transition to a market

²² “How Has Poverty Responded to Growth?” *World Bank Report*, 2003, pp. 80-1 Available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECA/Resources/ch2-poverty.pdf>

²³ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C., pp. 21-2.

²⁴ “Status of Observance of Ukrainian Migrant Workers’ Rights in the Receiving Countries.” Special Report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. Available at: http://www.ombudsman.kiev.ua/S_Report1/gl2_5.htm and http://www.ombudsman.kiev.ua/S_Report1/zm.htm

²⁵ See “Expert: A Quarter of Ukrainian Working Families Below the Poverty Line” at <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/expert-a-quarter-of-ukrainian-working-families-are-116981.html> and “Ukraine in 2015: Millenium Goals Adapted for Ukraine” at <http://www.undp.org.ua/en/millennium-development-goals/mdgs-in-ukraine>

²⁶ “Ukraine’s Timoshenko denies government plans to review 29 privatizations”. May 16, 2005

economy, most of the workers who were granted privatization vouchers from the state were misinformed, pressured, and often outright deceived into selling their privatization vouchers to their directors, who became sole owners of enterprises.²⁷ Also, many enterprises and energy resources were secretly distributed among the political elites and their family members.

It is difficult to demarcate the boundaries between the economic and political elites in post-communist Russia and Ukraine. Studies about the role of oligarchs in Russia's democratic consolidation point to an astounding power exerted by financial elites on the political leaders, which suggests they are two different social groups. At the same time, political leaders themselves are often the persons who have direct stakes in finance, energy, and a variety of other industries developing out of previously state-owned ventures.²⁸ In post-communist Russia and Ukraine, economic and political elites are either one or the same, or they are closely connected.²⁹ Political leaders and/or their family members control social resources by virtue of their political

Available at: <http://www.forbes.com/afxnews/limited/feeds/afx/2005/05/16/afx2030153.html>; Schroder, Hans-Henning, and Claudia Bell. "El'tsin and the Oligarchs: The Role of Financial Groups in Russian Politics between 1993 and July 1998." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 6. (Sep., 1999), pp. 957-988; Matsuzato, Kimitaka. "Elites and the Party System of Zakarpattia Oblast": Relations among Levels of Party Systems in Ukraine." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 8, Dec, 2002, pp. 1267-1299; Matsuzato, Kimitaka. "Semipresidentialism in Ukraine: Institutional Centristism in Rampant Clan Politics," Hokkaido University Slavic Research Center Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Kyrgyzstan, and Russian ethnic republics. Matsuzato, Kimitaka. 2001. "All Kuchma's Men: The Reshuffling of Ukrainian Governors and the Presidential Election of 1999," *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics*; Kubicek, Paul. 2000. *Unbroken Ties: The State, Interest Associations, and Corporatism in Post-Soviet Ukraine*. University of Michigan Press.

²⁷ Pickles, John. 1998. *Theorizing Transition: The Political Economy of Transition in Post-Communist countries*. New York: Routledge, introduction; Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratization: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 611, and Blasi, Joseph R., Maya Kroumova, Douglas Kruse. *Kremlin Capitalism: Privatizing the Russian Economy*. Cornell University Press, 1997.

²⁸ Schroder, Hans-Henning, and Claudia Bell. "El'tsin and the Oligarchs: The Role of Financial Groups in Russian Politics between 1993 and July 1998." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 6. (Sep., 1999), pp. 957-988.

²⁹ See a report about the family relationship between Ukraine's most powerful industrial billionaire Ahmetov and president Kuchma in Gow, David. "Mittal Buys Ukraine's Steel Mill in Reality TV Auction." *Guardian Unlimited*, October 25, 2005. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/ukraine/story/0,15569,1599972,00.html>

position, but they also control social resources by virtue of becoming a capital owning-class. Of course, not all political leaders are capital owners, and not all capital owners are political leaders, but there is a considerable overlap between the two.

2) Democratic Vision in Lay Economic Demands and Critiques

Lay discourses on democracy comprise responses to the conditions of extreme socio-economic dislocation and disempowerment. Non-elites advance a set of economic demands that they identify with democracy and a set of economic critiques which show in what ways they do not have democracy in their societies. Lay Russians and Ukrainians associate democracy with economic security, social protections and safety nets, public intervention in the economy, social equality, and economic and social rights. These economic demands are about gaining collective control and power over important aspects of their lives, such as job security, work compensation, pensions, and access to essential goods and services, to mention some, and these demands are democratic. Through their economic critiques, lay Russians and Ukrainians point out how disempowered they are, that they lack a meaningful voice and influence over their livelihoods, but are at the mercy of social forces and actors external to them.

As scholars of democracy, we are interested in studying and understanding power because democracy has to do with leveling out the power field between groups and classes in the society.³⁰ At a very basic level, we know that achieving genuine democracy means eliminating various forms of domination and inequality between groups and classes.³¹ For example, if people are economically beholden to another class or a group of people, they are not in the

³⁰ G.D.H. Cole, *Guild Socialism: A Plan for Economic Democracy*, p. 14.

³¹ G.D.H. Cole, p. 16.

position of dignity that allows them to negotiate and bargain equally in the activities that affect their lives. Democracy is about creating possibilities for all persons to influence their lives in a meaningful way and not be a subject to the will and interests of a dominant class or a social group. That is why when we speak about democracy, we generally emphasize such ideals as equality of classes, genders, and races; equality of rights and freedoms; inclusion, acceptance, and respect; empowerment, participation in decision making, and a sense of political efficacy. These democratic ideals can be contrasted with undemocratic ones such as inequality of power, rights, and freedoms among groups; classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of exclusion and oppression; dictatorship, tyranny, monopolization of power, a sense of political impotence, and people's inability to influence the course of events in society and in their individual lives.

In their economic critiques, lay Russians and Ukrainians respond to inequality of power they observe in the economic realm. Privatization of the economy brought about not only inequality of wealth, but also inequality of power and rights with respect to decision making about worker's compensation, benefits, working hours, and pricing of products of necessity. Capitalism is much more than simply a market economy; it is also a particular arrangement of power in the society.³² Lay Russians and Ukrainians advance a discourse of economic democracy in response to privilege, exclusive economic citizenship, and exclusivity of economic rights in their societies. They offer a democratic critique of political economy in their societies by pointing out that the labor force, resources, and wealth are controlled and managed privately and for private gain, excluding from consideration the voices and economic interests of the non-elites.

³² Amin, Samir. 2003. *Obsolescent Capitalism: Contemporary Politics and Global Disorder*. Zed Books: New York, p. 96-97.

It is common to hear lay references to “new masters”, i.e. employers, who have the power and a legal right to control, shape, and influence the livelihood of those who work for them. In such discourses we find concerns about the inequality between the wealthy and powerful “top” and the impoverished and powerless “bottom”. In conversational Russian and Ukrainian, the word ‘bottom’ [Rus. *Nizu*, Ukr. *Nuzu*] is often synonymous with ‘people’, ‘masses’. The word ‘top’ [Rus. *verhushka*, Ukr. *verhushka*] is also often used with a rhyming neologism *kormushka*. *Kormushka* translates as a bird house – in application to the social realm it signifies a group at the top of the social ladder (as birdhouses are at the top of the trees) who have access to all the resources (as birdhouses have food in them). Most often, by the “top” lay people mean government officials, the state, or industrialists and the financial circles, or a combination of all of the above.³³

Through these critiques, lay Russians and Ukrainians express their understanding of how their societies are structured. They point to inequalities in power that result in inequalities in wealth, because those social groups that have a say in the decision making are looking out for their private interests. “Privatizatsia” (Rus.: privatization) is often bitterly referred to by the rhyming neologism “*prikhvatizatsia*” which plays on the verb “*prikhvativat*” (to grab, grip, or clutch).³⁴ One respondent characteristically combines a view of the present social order, power, monopolization of economic resources, and injustice: “They [officials and business elites] pilfered and plundered the whole economy. The common people call privatization *prikhvatizatsia*. Whoever was nothing became everything. They completely plundered the

³³ Ries, “Honest bandits,” p. 295, 308, and p. 312, ft. 11; Kluegel et al, “Accounting for the Rich and the Poor,” p. 190.

³⁴ Ries, “Honest Bandits,” ft. 11, p. 312. But note that Ries refers readers to studies by neoliberal scholars McFAul and Perlmutter (1995) “for realistic [by which she means neoliberal] assessments of the privatization process.”, p. 312, ft. 11.

government, the whole economy.”³⁵ Democracy, in contrast, is understood as a form of society that exists for the sake of itself and invests in all of its members, not for the sake of a privileged class or a group of people: “Democracy is for the majority...But we don’t have democracy and never will. Those at the top live by their own rules and those at the bottom live by theirs. Each has its own goal.”³⁶

Through their economic demands and critiques, non-elites show they want to share and participate in the economic life of their countries in which their own lives are deeply embroiled. Lay Ukrainians and Russians insist on having social safety nets and protections, economic rights, or a guaranteed access to certain material necessities because they seek to gain some footing in an otherwise unequal social environment where their interests get ignored and their efforts to survive economically get undercut by the interests and priorities of powerful groups. It is an attempt to elevate themselves from the position of hopelessness and powerlessness to a position where in fact they can count on having some voice in their economic well-being. Through economic demands lay Russians and Ukrainians seek to gain a sense of efficacy and control. When a certain level of material well-being is collectively guaranteed through rights and provisions, it helps people previously deprived feel more empowered in their economic fates. Lay emphasis on economic welfare is a call for democratization of the society such that basic needs and interests of people are actually met and not ignored.

Scholars often trivialize economic life, while lay actors emphasize that it constitutes the bulk of their everyday experiences in which they have little voice and power. Surveys, interviews, and ethnographic studies reveal persistence of economic anxieties, fears,

³⁵ Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 166.

³⁶ Alexander, James, 2000, *Political Culture in Post-Communist Russia: Formlessness and Recreation in a Traumatic Transition*, p. 131.

disappointments, hopes, and demands among many lay Russians and Ukrainians.³⁷ Matters of economic life are not trivial as they constitute such a large portion of lay people's daily experiences and problems. In a representative study by the New Democracies Barometer, in 2004, in response to the question "what kind of problem needs immediate attention?" 76 percent of respondents state low level of salary/pension, 53 percent of respondents – unemployment, 41 percent of respondents - increasing prices for public utilities, 38 percent of respondents - corruption and bribery, and 38 percent of respondents - cost of medical care and bad medical care system. In response to the question "please, evaluate the material condition your family lives in", 30 percent of subjects state that "money is not enough for our nutrition". In response to the question "how would you describe the economic situation of your family", 55 percent say "bad or very bad". In response to the question to "describe how your family's economic situation changed during the past 10 years", 40.4 percent say "definitely worsened". In response to the question "how much are you satisfied with the social security system (medical care, pensions, employment)" 51.9 percent state "very dissatisfied".³⁸ Lay Russians and Ukrainians want to be a part of deciding the stakes, and they want their interests and grievances to be considered. Instead, they are forced into the realities and decisions controlled by private actors – new owners and managers of economic life - who are not accountable to them.

³⁷ Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin*, p. 30; Rose et al. 1998, *Democracy and Its Alternatives*. John Hopkins University Press, pp. 167-72; Carnaghan, *Out of order*, p. 33. Also, similar questions are explored in Romanovich, Nelli A., 2003, "Demokraticheskie tsennosti i svoboda 'po-russki,'" pp. 42-8

³⁸ Nikolayevskiy, Valeriy N. "Presidential Elections in Ukraine, 2004: Sociological Dimensions." Report prepared by the School of Sociology at Kharkiv National University, Ukraine, pp. 30-6
Available at:
<http://www.intas.be/documents/news/F7%20Workshop%20Jan%202005/presentations/Presidential%20Elections%20in%20Ukraine-2004%20by%20Nikolaevskiy.pdf> Also, see an extended survey overview of similar reports for Russia and Ukraine in ch. 1.

Due to the progressive weakening of the social net protections, elimination of social guarantees inherited from the Soviet past, and lack of labor protections³⁹, more people than not find themselves reporting a sense of dislocation, inefficacy, and general disempowerment in post-communist Ukraine and Russia.⁴⁰ Lay discourses about economic dislocation that are so common in post-communist Russia and Ukraine are discourses about the reality of disempowerment. They show how many ordinary people confront realities of powerlessness, oppression, lack of rights, and exclusion from social life. Economic rights, such as a right to employment, living wage, social services, and social protections are considered essential in gaining full citizenship in the society. Without them, personhood is seen as reduced to nothing:

The most important rights are opportunities for having a job, to realize oneself, to receive a decent pay for this work, to be able to build a home with this money, to eat well, and to be able to buy all necessary clothes. It is about social protection. Of course, while at it, it would be good to have freedom of conscience, thought, will, and so forth, but if a human being is hungry, if he is socially unprotected, if he has no profession, no work, no money, then all the other rights are simply a zero and a letter on a paper that means nothing.⁴¹

Qualitative studies of the poor show that respondents report depression, even suicidal feelings, resulting from “loss of employment and social position; loss of confidence and self-respect; loss of opportunities to participate in social, cultural, and intellectual life; and, most profoundly, a lost sense of stability and predictability that had previously allowed them to plan their future.”⁴² Economic dispossession is closely connected to disempowerment – a very real

³⁹ See a discussion of pressure from IMF and World Bank on Ukrainian and Russian authorities to reduce social spending, Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate Publishing LTD: England; “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C, p. 24.

⁴⁰ Hopf, “Making Future Inevitable,” p. 418-9. On post-communist disillusionment in Russia, see another interview study by Howard, 2003, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*, pp. 136-145.

⁴¹ Diligenskii, “Rossiskii gorozhanin”, pp. 84-5.

⁴² “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of*

loss of control and influence over one's life. In 2006, one worker at a Kherson engineering plant, where ownership changed frequently and wage arrears continued, could not tolerate oppressive working conditions and hung himself in the middle of the factory.⁴³

Bemoaning loss of employment security and loss of decent and stable incomes is not simply a sign of economic misfortunes that befell certain members of the community. Rather, the reactions and self-understandings of the new poor show us that the problem of economic dislocation cuts through the democratic questions of human worth, social exclusion, disempowerment, and oppression. Furthermore, disempowerment has grave psychological consequences: "Poor men and women expressed feelings of shame and guilt for failing to fulfill ritual and social obligations, and of depression at their exclusion from social and ceremonial life."⁴⁴ Even advocates of economic liberalization in post-communist countries acknowledge the disturbing consequences of economic reforms: "reforms have had very strong distributional effects, greatly increasing open inequality in incomes and consumption together with unemployment and the disruption of social status and meaning".⁴⁵

Lay Russians and Ukrainians bemoan the economic displacement that they experience. They are telling us that it is a form of social exclusion of a whole segment of population from meaningful control of their economic fate. As a former participant in workers' strikes in the early years of transition states:

Poverty in the Former Soviet Union. The World Bank, Washington D.C, p. 23. Also see Mandel, David. 2004. *Labour After Communism: Auto Workers and Their Unions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.* Black Rose Books.

⁴³ "Kherson Factory Occupied" from Oct. 2, 2009, available at: <http://www.socialistworld.net/print/3444>

⁴⁴ "From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition," Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union.* The World Bank, Washington D.C, p. 23.

⁴⁵ Aslund, Anders, Peter Boone and Simon Johnson, "How to Stabilize: Lessons from Post-Communist Countries," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1, 1997.

The situation hasn't improved. *There is still no democracy. Individual freedom without economic well-being is a deception.* And since [Ukrainian] independence, our economic situation has continued to deteriorate in connection with the breakdown of economic relations... If we didn't live too well before, now it's much worse... Everything is now directed toward speculation.⁴⁶ Especially since the collapse of the Union, the government's goal has been to foster a new bourgeois stratum that would serve as its social base. In agriculture, workers make 6000-9000 coupons a month. A kilo of meat costs 10 000. So the more you work, the poorer you get. And it's all the more demoralizing when you see the new bourgeois raking in millions through speculation.⁴⁷

We may only imagine what it is like to have worked for a month and your month worth of pay is not enough to buy a kilo of meat at a grocery store. This is not just about millions of families experiencing hunger and malnutrition. It is also about having to cope with a psychologically traumatizing realization that one is insignificant and unworthy as a human being and as a member of that society, without economic rights, without a voice, and without consideration.

In their economic critiques, lay actors stress that they are cornered into the mode of survival where every day is defined by long hours of necessary and mundane work not conducive to their development, growth, and happiness, and where their relationships with family and fellow community members are severed. They reject reducing their life to mechanical motions, and instead, they long for a free life beyond satisfying basic bodily functions:

In principle, we are not free. We go to work from bell to bell. We spend the whole day at work. We see our kids when we come home tired, sometimes not at all. It's necessary to prepare something to eat. It's necessary all the same to think how we can get out of this situation, how to buy something when there is not enough money to live on. We also have to think how to clean after we've had to economize on soap and detergent. That is, it turns out we have practically no freedom. In what other ways can they take away our freedom?⁴⁸

⁴⁶ The term used to describe business activity, before 'entrepreneurship' and 'business' replaced the term 'speculation' in the late 1990s.

⁴⁷ Mandel, *Rabotyagi*, pp. 264-6. Note that this respondent references the very first years of Ukraine's independence, marked by hyper-inflation and price liberalization.

⁴⁸ Carnaghan, *Out of order*, p. 180.

Lay people resist having many of their life activities constrained by their purchasing power, which strips them of the sense of choice, freedom, and self-sufficiency. They point out that they have no control about whether their families will be able to survive through the next day, month, or year, whether they will be able to afford clothes for their children, proper diet, education, or medical assistance. They dream about emotional and psychological freedom from anxiety and uncertainty about their economic future. While longing for material security, they dream about life not consumed by material concerns:

To breathe freely... to breathe, in that sense that one should be able to enter any store... to buy some kind of food or clothing and not have to choose that which is cheaper instead of that which you like. I think that a person who has finished their work in good faith, should be able to come home with a clear conscience and be able to peacefully relax. And, not have to think about what is waiting for you the next day.⁴⁹

Thus, when lay actors in Ukraine and Russia identify economic welfare as an important aspect of democracy, they are bringing our attention to ways in which economic dislocation represents their disempowerment and lack of control over their lives. It is not a democracy when so many persons live their daily lives confined to a voiceless struggle for physical survival, when their life choices are severely constrained, and when they feel their worth as human beings is not recognized as they have no rights, protections, or say in the economy.

Proponents of economic liberalization and privatization of productive resources believe the root of the problem of extreme social dislocation is in the inadequately implemented reforms. They believed that post-communist dislocation is temporary and once the shock of initial economic reforms is overcome, the economy stabilizes, political institutions begin to function

⁴⁹ Alexander, James, 2000, *Political Culture in Post-Communist Russia: Formlessness and Recreation in a Traumatic Transition*, p. 97.

properly for sustaining market relations, and inequity would lessen.⁵⁰ Some even suggest that economic impoverishment is a result of lack of individual responsibility and initiative on the part of lay actors who have economic grievances. Such scholars suggest that non-elites who are dispossessed may have to learn to take risks and work harder in order to succeed economically.⁵¹ In contrast, lay Russians and Ukrainians show us that the root of the problem of economic disparities and impoverishment is in the undemocratically organized economy, where economies are managed privately for selfish gain, without consideration or concern for the non-elites. Millions of people who are impoverished, struggling, and without meaningful access to basic goods and services are in such a position because they do not have a say and their bread and butter interests are not represented in the economic decision making. They are excluded from social citizenship and they are at the mercy of the new ‘owners’ of their lives.

Many scholars consider judicial equality an important component of democracy.

However, they do not extend this equality to the economic realm which is insulated from

⁵⁰ Aslund, Anders, Peter Boone and Simon Johnson, “How to Stabilize: Lessons from Post-Communist Countries,” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1, 1997; *World Development Report 1996: From Plan to Market*. 1996. Oxford University Press, part I; Sachs, Jeffrey. 1993. *Poland’s Jump to the Market Economy*. Cambridge: Massachusetts; *The Ukrainian Economy: Achievements, Problems, Challenges*. Ed. I.S. Koropeskyj. Harvard University Press, 1992; Haavisto, Tarmo (ed.) 1997. *The Transition to a Market Economy: Transformation and Reform in the Baltic States*. Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 6, also see an emphasis on relevant political reforms outlined in World Bank report *World Development Report 1996: From Plan to Market*, part II; Havrylyshyn, Oleh; Marcus Miller; William Perraudin; et al. 1994. “Deficits, Inflation and the Political Economy of Ukraine,” *Economic Policy*, Vol. 9, No. 19, Oct., pp. 353-401.

⁵¹ More explicit statements in Alexander, *Political culture*, p. 121, and for more veiled references to individual responsibility and an idea that the state should not be responsible for individual economic failure, see Gibson, 1992, “Democratic values,” p. 341; Reisinger et al., 1995, “Public Behavior and Political Change,” pp. 944-5; and McIntosh et al., 1994, “Public Meets Democracy,” p. 485, 492; Finifter, Ada W., and Ellen Mickiewicz, 1992, “Redefining the Political System of the USSR: Mass Support for Political Change.” *American Political Science Review*, 86:857-74; Finifter, Ada W., 1996, “Attitudes toward Individual Responsibility and Political Reform in the Former Soviet Union,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1, March, pp. 138-52; Rose, Richard, William Mishler, and Christian Haerpfer, 1998, *Democracy and Its Alternatives*. John Hopkins University Press, p. 172. A less direct prescription can be found among those scholars who insist that post-Soviet public must learn to compartmentalize economic and political lives, applying different sets of values in these two social realms: see Mishler, William and Richard Rose, 1997, “Trust, distrust, and skepticism: popular evaluations of civil and political institutions in post-communist societies.” p. 436, ft. 12.

democratic analysis in their frameworks. As a result, lay Russian and Ukrainian emphasis on equality of power in the economic life is misunderstood and dismissed as having little to do with democracy.⁵² Of course, we can see that lay views of democracy are superior to scholarly views, because lay actors do not arbitrarily presume that economic life must be protected from democratic influence and oversight. Lay actors advocate more democracy, while scholars insist on limiting and curtailing democracy, overlooking a variety of ways in which non-elites are disempowered and excluded from participating and sharing in rights, decisions, freedoms, and prosperity in their societies.

Interpreting lay beliefs as a response to the post-communist social context can also help explain the democratic ambivalence that so many public opinion scholars have reported but have been unsuccessful in understanding and explaining.⁵³ I suggest that simultaneous bitterness and disappointment with “democracy”, as well as democratic movements, calls for democratic reforms, and enthusiasm about what democracy can bring do not represent lay confusion about democracy or their undemocratic proclivities. Rather, ambivalence is a response to undemocratic and oppressive political and economic conditions in Russia and Ukraine.

There are many studies that point to wide-spread disillusionment with the new democracy in post-communist countries. For example, in 2009, the Pew Global Attitudes Project reports

⁵² See a summary in Smolar, A., 1996, “From Opposition to Atomization”, p. 37. McIver et al, “Public meets market democracy,” for pp. 495-6, 511.

⁵³ Usually, scholars tend to interpret ambivalence as evidence that non-elite Russians and Ukrainians reject democracy, are confused, or insufficiently educated: Holovaha, Evgen. “Contradictory Attitudes Towards Democratic Values in Ukraine”; Rose et al, *Democracy and Its Alternatives*; Kullberg and Zimmerman, “Liberal Elites, Socialist Masses,” pp. 323-58; Mishler and Rose, “Trust, distrust, and skepticism,” pp. 418-451; Whitefield and Evans, 1994, “The Russian Election of 1993,” p. 41; Evans and Whitefield, “The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment,” pp. 485-514; Hopf, “Making the Future Inevitable,” p. 405; Howard, 2003, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*; Kaase, “Political Culture and Political Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe,” Miller and Wolchik, “Introduction”; Mishler and Rose, “Trust, distrust, and skepticism,” pp. 418-451; Rose, *Understanding Post-Communist Transformation*; Simon, “Popular conceptions.”

that in Ukraine 30 percent of people approve of the change to democracy [defined as multiparty politics] (compared to 72 percent in 1991) and in Russia – 53 percent (compared to 61 percent in 1991).⁵⁴ In 2005, a survey was conducted to evaluate citizen satisfaction with democracy and the overall political and socio-economic situation in Ukraine. According to the survey results, a little more than 80 percent of Ukrainians were dissatisfied with the economic and political situation in the country, and close to 60 percent believed they cannot influence government decision making.⁵⁵

Lay skepticism about “democracy” and attempts to dismiss it as either irrelevant or devious constitutes a critique of political economy, and democratic critique at that. In their skepticism about the new democracy, lay actors refer to a social arrangement in which they feel powerless and cornered. Respondents see the new democracy as “whatever was good for people in power, which meant that government officials were free to escape responsibility for their actions and enterprise managers could lavish high salaries on themselves while workers barely earned enough to feed their families.”⁵⁶ According to Yavlinsky, in post-Soviet societies “democratic reforms have become associated in too many minds with robbing the people and imposing hardship on the many for the benefit of the few.”⁵⁷ Here is an excerpt from an interview where a respondent expresses a common attitude of deep disillusionment with post-communist changes and a sense of economic disempowerment:

⁵⁴ “The End of Communism is Cheered, but Now with More Reservations: The Pulse of Europe 2009, Twenty Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall.” According to this report, in 2009 85 percent of East Germans approve of change to democracy, i.e. ‘multiparty politics’, as well as 80 percent of Czechs, 71 percent of Slovaks, 70 percent of Poles, 56 percent of Hungarians, 55 percent of Lithuanians, and 52 percent of Bulgarians approve.

⁵⁵ “Public Opinion in Ukraine: November 2005,” pp. 9, 12-3, and for comparison, see Buerkle, Karen et al, “Public Opinion in Ukraine After the Orange Revolution, April 2005.”

⁵⁶ Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 171.

⁵⁷ Yavlinsky, Grigory A., 1995. “To Russian Democrats: Don’t Unite”, *The New York Times*, 14, Sept., p. A27.

Oy, I don't know what democracy is, but I understand that we got what we wanted. We want to read books, watch movies, go abroad. We got all that. It is possible to say more now on the television, in newspapers, and on the radio. You can say everything. Only there's no work, no money, and soon there won't be anything. Therefore, the word democracy – that's when everything is possible, but in the end it turns out you can't do anything.⁵⁸

Taking into account the realities of post-Soviet widespread socio-economic dislocation, it is not a surprise that many lay people want to conclude that post-Soviet citizens hardly have any power, rights and freedoms.⁵⁹ If we look at the balance of power and ability to control social resources and wealth, many ordinary people indeed have no democratic rights and no say in this decision making.

But it is precisely this social arrangement that is labeled as “democracy” according to the new cultural and ideological trends. Lay actors wonder, what is the use of freedom of speech and voting *alone*, when power over economic decisions and resources is not distributed equally? It is not so much the rejection of freedom of speech and voting per se, but of “democracy” when so limited, incomplete, and nearly meaningless in the context of problems that lay actors struggle with. That is why interview scholars report so many lay people's bitter remarks and much disgust with the duplicity of officials and those in power, who use “democracy” as a cover-up and who orate about people's rights to create an appearance of legitimacy.⁶⁰ Lay people's critique of post-communist political economy is a demand for more democracy; it is an attempt to introduce democratic ethos into the economic matters. But since the vocabulary of the officially endorsed democracy provides no language to articulate such demands and critique, it appears as though lay actors are displaying undemocratic sentiments because they are preoccupied with ‘economic’ concerns. Lay Russians and Ukrainians do not mistakenly reject democracy; rather, they teach

⁵⁸ Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 171, emphasis added.

⁵⁹ See Diligenskii, “Rossiskii gorozhanin”, p. 83

⁶⁰ See Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 171, Alexander, *Political Culture*, pp. 127-33

scholarship on democracy about the importance of overcoming the minimalist bias in conceptualizing democracy and about the importance of applying a democratic ethos to the economic life.

3) Labor Movements and Workplace Democracy

Ideas about workplace democracy gained currency under Gorbachev during the *perestroika* years in response to excesses of state, bureaucratic, and managerial control over working collectives, and later in response to privatization and capital owners' control. To many participants in the Ukrainian and Russian labor movements of 1989-1998 and those who were specifically introduced to the discourse of industrial democracy, democracy has to do with a democratic balance of power between the state, workers, supervisors, managers, and owners of means of production. In these formulations, democracy means respect for human dignity in the workplace, freedom of speech in the workplace, workers' ability to elect managers, and workers' participation in the decision-making about production policies, wage rates, benefits packages, pensions, and work shifts.⁶¹ Democracy encompasses workers' ability to press their concerns to their supervisors and freedom of speech "within the confines of labor responsibilities", "standing up for one's point of view...including in the factory meetings."⁶² Here, ability to have a say in matters of economic life, namely in the realm of work, is seen as democratic:

In the Soviet times we were taught to listen and accept *the views of those above us – managers, party leaders, [enterprise] directors*. It was part of the social norm to respect and listen to and internalize

⁶¹ See Siegelbaum, L. H. and D.J. Walkowitz, ed., 1995, *Workers of the Donbass Speak: Survival and Identity in the New Ukraine, 1989-1992*; Crowley, *Hot Coal, Cold Steel*, Mandel, David, 1994, *Rabotyagi: Perestroika and After Viewed From Below. Interviews with Workers in the Former Soviet Union*; Clark, Simon, et al., 1993, *What about the workers?*; Christensen, *Russia's Workers in Transition*; Simon, Rick, 2000, *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*.

⁶² Alexander, "Political culture," p. 128.

the decisions and opinions of those above us. This is what prevents democracy from happening...*democratization cannot be about silencing voices and idealizing leaders' decisions and realization of leaders' interests and priorities.*⁶³

For example, studies of 1989 strikes in Russia show that workers' frustration with low wages, low pensions, inadequate health and social insurance, food shortages, and concerns with deteriorating local infrastructures such as poor public transportation systems, decaying streets, and public housing disrepair found their way into arguments for greater self-management. They called for implementation of Gorbachev's policy of enterprise democratization which they believed would give them greater autonomy from dysfunctional and out of touch state bureaucrats to manage their productive activities and communities (as I already mentioned, many Soviet enterprises were responsible for maintaining community services, workers' housing, and etc.)⁶⁴

Similarly, workers' deep concerns with their deteriorating living standards following unprecedented economic crises in the 1990s found their way into arguments that accompanied the 1991 strikes in Russia and Ukraine which questioned the economic and political elite's aptitude to make to make sound economic decisions. The strikes again called for granting the enterprises rights to self-management, but this time they came to be viewed as best guaranteed by Gorbachev's resignation, dismantling of the Soviet Union, and regional economic autonomy from the national center.⁶⁵ Finally, in the 1998 miners' strikes and parallel strikes in other industries in Russia and Ukraine, the demands again encompassed economic issues such as

⁶³ Diligenskii, "Rossiskii gorozhanin," p. 74, emphasis added.

⁶⁴ Christensen, Paul T. 1999. *Russia's Workers in Transition: Labor, Management, and the State under Gorbachev and Yeltsin*. Northern Illinois University Press, 1999, pp. 42-88, 94.

⁶⁵ Christensen, Paul T. 1999. *Russia's Workers in Transition: Labor, Management, and the State under Gorbachev and Yeltsin*. Northern Illinois University Press, 1999, pp. 88-94 and also see Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate.

unpaid wages, inflation, low pensions, and workers' deteriorating living standards. These concerns made their way into arguments for resignation of the presidents, votes of no confidence in legislative bodies, and in general arguments denouncing post-Soviet political and economic reform programs.⁶⁶

Democracy involves equitable distribution of power and rights between groups and classes and equality in the decision making is one of the ways to realize this ideal. However, in organizations that are structured undemocratically, leaders and owners have legal (albeit exclusive) rights to decide and control their worker's livelihoods, be that in terms of their wages, working hours, benefits, or leaves. Such unequal and undemocratic rights are obtained by virtue of their structural position in society – they are owners of resources and they get a legal privilege in decision making concerning their workers' lives and the disposal of wealth created in the process of work.⁶⁷ Privatization of capital and economic institutions creates a social arrangement where one class or group of people is beholden to another, their interests, and priorities.

Lay Russian and Ukrainian discourses on workplace democracy bring our attention to the importance of democratizing such social institutions and relations by giving more power and voice to workers over their economic fate, daily routines, and life initiatives. From this standpoint, democracy entails a struggle to transform hierarchical social structures and social power associated with it.⁶⁸ As expressed in the following statement, workplace democracy

⁶⁶ Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate.

⁶⁷ G.D.H. Cole, 1929. *Guild Socialism*. pp18-19.

⁶⁸ See G.D.H. Cole on this, p. 25; Isaac, Jeffrey C. 1987. *Power and Marxist Theory: A Realist View*. Cornell University Press, pp. 5, 38, 80, 97; and see C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959, p. 174, 194.

involves giving workers greater power over their lives, rather than enslaving them to the will and interests of their employers and supervisors:

He ran things with terror...the director was like a tsar...Sometimes it ran to moral humiliation...When my mother died, the director refused to sign my application for a leave without pay, which I needed in order to attend her funeral...There were many cases like that. When, in 1989, the situation became heated [referring to strikes], there was an outburst of emotion in our collective. *After that it was next to impossible to turn back to absolute obedience. People wanted to live as human beings, they wanted democracy, they wanted to settle their problems themselves; they did not want anyone to interfere...People have just begun to regard themselves as human beings. In the past they were like slaves, but now they have started to respect themselves.*⁶⁹

Similar views are highlighted in a study of transformations at one mine in Russia's Southern Kuzbass which began in 1988, where an ethnographer examined a women's collective, the lampovaya, which became the first collective in the mine to remove its line manager through democratic vote. Reflecting on the event, a miner proudly remarks: "Democracy came first to the lampovaya."⁷⁰ Electing their own managers was not the only aspect of democratic practices at the mine – through collective action women miners have been able to succeed in a campaign for a change in their shifts – grafik - to reflect their interests and priorities. Changes in managers and grafik gave women workers an opportunity to combine their home and work lives more conveniently and to exert some influence on their daily routines.⁷¹

The economic realm comprises social relations, institutions, forces, and actors that directly affect people's lives. It is the realm where the majority of people spend their time through work.⁷² The type, availability, compensation, and duration of work directly affect people's financial livelihoods and their daily routines in and outside of work. It is also the realm where all economic wealth is produced. By directing our attention to post-communist political

⁶⁹ Siegelbaum and Walkowitz, *Workers of the Donbass Speak*, pp. 148-9, emphasis added.

⁷⁰ Ashwin, "Redefining the Collective," pp.245-73.

⁷¹ Ashwin, "Redefining the Collective," p. 255.

⁷² Pateman, Carole, 1976, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

economy, lay Russians and Ukrainians teach us how to recognize its undemocratic features and what has to be done in order to achieve democracy in their societies. They point to their lack of voice, autonomy, power, and rights in controlling economic institutions and forces. From their democratic ideas and critiques we learn that any meaningful democratic project must necessarily include democratization of economics.

In October 2009, a big solidarity march took place in response to on-going wage arrears and poor working conditions at a Kherson engineering plant owned by Alexander Oleinik, who is also a leader of the Ukraine's Party of Regions. Over one thousand turned out, with many local youth, residents and trade union members from other cities joining in. At the front of the march were the leaders of the workers' council, left activists, and students from Simferopol University. Reacting to their disempowerment and exploitation, workers carried placards such as, "Make the oligarchs pay for the crisis", "Give the workers wages and control of the factory", "We no longer expect miracles, we'll take over the factory ourselves", "Today Kherson, tomorrow the whole Ukraine". In reply to those politicians from the Communist Party who offer little real support to Ukraine's workers, the main slogan of the march was "Don't settle for crumbs, carry on with the strike".⁷³ Such slogans carry a democratic message that is urgent in the context of real power inequality and dispossession.

The discourse on workplace democracy is not exclusive to lay actors and the question of democratizing industrial life is explored in academic democratic theory.⁷⁴ However, applying democratic values to the economic realm is largely avoided in the bulk of contemporary

⁷³ "Kherson Factory Occupied" from Oct. 2, 2009, available at: <http://www.socialistworld.net/print/3444>

⁷⁴ For example, see seminal Dahl, Robert. 1985. *Preface to Economic Democracy*; Pateman, Carole, 1976, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press; and Cole G.D.H. 1920. *Guild Socialism: A Plan for Economic Democracy*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co.

democratic studies. Lay discourses on workplace democracy help to reevaluate scholarly dodging of democracy in economics. Given the undemocratic relations of power, unequal economic rights, and lack of real labor protections in post-communist Russia and Ukraine, it is astounding that so many scholars disregard or overlook the democratic demands of lay actors that they study. Lay Russians and Ukrainians teach us that democracy, among other things, should entail reducing inequality of power between social classes. Such inequality allows the privileged groups to control nothing less than their workers' lives, as well as to control social resources and wealth. Lay Russians and Ukrainians call for a democratic intervention in the economy and in their working life over which they have little control.

Lay arguments about economic democracy have a lot of muscle, and much contemporary relevance and urgency. Democratic theory stands to gain much by re-introducing these concepts into contemporary scholarly conversations. Let these insights be voiced not only by prominent democratic theorists but also by millions of people whose lives are enmeshed in and often defined by ideas that we scholars may be taking with such ease as simply something we write about. Let these insights be voiced by those who should themselves be the locus of democratic power. By engaging with lay voices from Russia and Ukraine, democratic theorists can see that important pieces of the democratic puzzle have been left out. It should strike us that we lost sight of some priorities that should be crucial for anyone interested in democracy and democratization.

c) Critiquing Some Aspects of Lay Thinking about Democracy: Beliefs in a Problematic Social Context

While democratic scholars have much to learn from Ukrainian and Russian non-elites about the place of economic concerns in a democracy, not everything in lay perspectives

connects well to the impetus of democratization. Any theory or body of knowledge has certain flaws and errors, and lay thinking about democracy in Ukraine and Russia is not an exception. I argue that apathy, political alienation, and retreating economic demands are not conducive to democratic empowerment of non-elites and democratic theorists should be critical of such views. I also argue that when lay actors locate the locus of social power to which they feel beholden exclusively at the level of the state, it provides an incomplete representation of social reality and thwarts their democratic aspirations. I do not examine lay beliefs in a vacuum, but as before, in the context of power relations and larger social and economic processes that surround them. But while these lay views are debilitating from a democratic perspective, they are understandable, given the highly repressive and unresponsive social conditions and institutions that define Russia and Ukraine.

There are several, albeit contending, explanations for why lay thinking and attitudes toward politics in Russia and Ukraine appear to be problematic. Many argue that quiescence, apathy, acceptance of paternalism, and political alienation are inherent civilizational and cultural characteristics of non-elites in Russia and Ukraine.⁷⁵ Others assert that such a public mentality is a product of the oppressive political system that existed during the seventy years of Soviet rule.⁷⁶ Moreover, decades of experience under the Soviet authoritarian system precluded the masses from forming coherent, stable, and meaningful opinions on political issues, not to mention

⁷⁵ For example, see White, Stephen, 1984, "Political Culture in Communist States: Some Problems of Theory and Method," *Comparative Politics* 16, April, pp. 351-65, and McDaniel, Tim, 1996, *The Agony of the Russian Idea*; Romanovich, Nelli A., 2003, "Demokraticheskie Tsennosti I Svoboda 'Po-Russki,'" pp. 35-9; and Huntington, Samuel, 1996, *The Clash of Civilizations*, pp. 158-70.

⁷⁶ Gozman, Leonid and Alexander Etkind, 1992, *The Psychology of Post-totalitarianism in Russia*; Kuzio, Taras, 1998, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, and Polokhalo, Volodymyr, 1997, *The Political Analysis of Postcommunism: Understanding Post-Communist Ukraine*, pp. 41-65.

developing a sense of democratic politics.⁷⁷ In other words, the scholarly consensus in such studies is that the masses in Russia and Ukraine are politically inept, inherently undemocratic, and culturally backwards. In contrast, I suggest that it is implausible to blame Orthodox cultural characteristics or the Soviet political system for lack of political consciousness among the masses. Contrary to these mainstream contentions, I argue that a contextual reading of lay beliefs helps us see that their views are a response to the deeply undemocratic environment in which lay actors live, be that Soviet communism *or* post-Soviet liberalism. I argue that long term political oppression combined with extreme socio economic dislocation and a rollback of democratic movements in Russia and Ukraine in the late 1980s and 1990s contribute to lay actors' curbed democratic enthusiasm and self-defeating beliefs.

We should not overlook the effects of power, inequality, oppression, lack of information, and dispossession on lay political views. Scholars are wrong to assume that the free market era is marked by openness, plenty of opportunities for political participation, pluralism, and freedom. Scholars are also wrong to assume that lack of interest in political participation, counter-intuitive preferences, and poorly developed political consciousness is the fault of lay actors themselves. I explore and highlight the oppressive conditions of the social environment in Russia and Ukraine to show that such assumptions are unfounded. Rather than seeking to justify a moderated

⁷⁷ For arguments about a relationship between soviet authoritarianism and poorly developed political consciousness, see Gozman and Etkind, *The Psychology of Post-totalitarianism*, p. 21; Jowitt, Kenneth, 1996, "The New World Disorder," p. 28; Migranian also argues that living under the authoritarian system for seventy years, Russians have lost the capacity to think and act independently, Migranian, Andranik, 1990, *Rossia v Poiskakh Identichnosti: 1985-1995*. A similar argument is made by social critic and editor of *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, Polyakov: "today this intellectual infantilism or idiocy remains", Polyakov, Yuriy, 1997, *Ot Imperii Lzhu – k Respyblike Vranya*, p. 11. On less rigid assessments of how undeveloped mass political belief systems in post-communist countries are, see Miller et al, 1995, "Comparing Citizen and Elite Beliefs Systems in Post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine"; Miller and Wolchik, ed, 1994, *The Social Legacy of Communism*; Reisinger et al, 1994, "Political Values in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania: Sources and Implications for Democracy," p. 185. Also, see Simon "Popular conceptions," pp. 84, 115-116, McIntosh et al, 1994, "Public Meets Democracy in Central and East Europe 1991-1993", pp. 483-512; Moodie, Eleanor, 2005, "Different Meanings of Democracy in Post-Communist Europe.," Gibson, 1998, "A Sober Second Thought", is rather blunt in insisting that there exists an unquestionable 'immaturity' in the political consciousness of Russians as a result of their Soviet past, p. 821.

exclusion of ordinary people from the political process for holding ‘problematic’ views, democratic theorists should instead emphasize changing oppressive and undemocratic social structures that give rise to such beliefs.

There is a certain degree of ambivalence in Russia and Ukraine, where democratic resistance gets replaced with apathy, retraction of democratic demands, succumbing to power, and authoritarian reversals. In the critical literature, scholars explain such patterns in the political thinking of disenfranchised groups as a result of oppressive and closed social conditions. For example, Pateman stresses that apathy and a low sense of efficacy are expected responses to the environment in which non-elites experience disempowerment. Lay actors withdraw themselves politically because they realize that they have no real voice and influence in the decision making that affects their lives. Apathy and political withdrawal are responses to undemocratic features of the social world in which lay actors live.⁷⁸ Lay Russians and Ukrainians take what many scholars insist on calling democracy, such as the emergence of a multi-party system, parliamentary politics, voting, free media, and a right to free expression, with a dose of cynicism. Lay actors criticize these institutions for not helping them to solve the very real problems in their lives that have to do with economic unfreedom, social dislocation, and impoverishment. Non-elites withdraw themselves and settle for being politically alienated because they are interpreting their world correctly.

Pateman stresses that political consciousness grows and develops in conditions of political participation. Involvement in the political process and in decision making serves as a learning environment, whereby political actors learn to identify, formulate, and defend their political

⁷⁸ Pateman, Carole, 1976, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

interests, preferences, demand and agendas.⁷⁹ When conditions for political participation and influence are limited, opportunities for learning get foreclosed. As a result, aspects of non-elite political thinking may be easily retractable, self-defeating, ambivalent, or too modest. Lack of meaningful political participation, which curtails political learning, creates an environment of ignorance and insecurity. This is why research on groups in unequal and non-participatory political contexts shows that such groups may lack a coherent set of demands or lack an ambitious set of political interests and preferences. Moreover, when relations of power relax and social institutions open up to non-elite influence (such as in times of social movements and democratic transformations), the non-elite's initial demands and interests may be vague, partial, ambiguous, volatile, easily retractable, poorly articulated, or susceptible to manipulation by the dominant groups.⁸⁰ Thus, ambiguities and self-defeatism in lay political thinking must be explained and evaluated in the context of continuous political repression. I argue that the apparent quiescence of labor in Russia and Ukraine in the face of disempowerment is a response to long-term political oppression, exclusion, and continual defeats of their attempt to mobilize and affect change.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Pateman, Carole, 1976, *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

⁸⁰ For some examples of applied studies on this subject, see McAdam, Doug. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. University of Chicago Press, 1982; Estrich, Susan, 2001. "Real Rape" in *Understanding inequality: the intersection of race/ethnicity, class, and gender*. Ed. by Barbara A. Arrighi, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Garson, David, 1973. "Automobile Workers and the American Dream", *Politics and Society*, 3, pp. 163-79; Gaventa, John. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

⁸¹ For articulation of these methodological insights, see Gaventa, John. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

1) Apathy, Political Withdrawal, and Alienation as a Response to Undemocratic Economic Environments

While placing expectations on equity in the distribution of resources and on democratic intervention in economic matters, many lay actors simultaneously suggest that it may be better to succumb to the reality of life and give up on these ideals altogether. Non-elites in Russia and Ukraine offer a discourse that it is fruitless to expect much economic protection and fairness in the existing political order.⁸² This discourse espouses democratic hopelessness and a view that at the end of the day, realistically speaking, people are left to their own devices when it comes to their economic survival. Counting on the state to guarantee a democratic distribution of resources, wealth, and services in the society is seen as too wishful thinking. Thus, some people give up expectations of collective control and intervention in the economy, and instead adopt an individualistic approach to economic life “imposed on the majority by life”.⁸³ They come to believe that they have no one to rely on other than themselves, family, friends, and luck in their struggle for survival.⁸⁴ Some now begin to view economic welfare as a matter of individual responsibility rather than collective control.⁸⁵ Widespread poverty is becoming a more socially accepted phenomenon even to the poor families themselves, and some even begin to blame it on individual failure rather than on dysfunctional and unfair economic system.⁸⁶

⁸² Romanovich, “Demokraticeskie tsennosti,” p. 44; VTSIoM, May 1995, cited in Clark, Goss, and Kosova, 2003, *Changing Attitudes Toward Economic Reform*, p. 32.

⁸³ Romanovich, “Demokraticeskie tsennosti,” p. 44.

⁸⁴ Romanovich, “Demokraticeskie tsennosti,” p. 44; Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin* p. 92.

⁸⁵ Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin*, p. 56; Rose, Richard, William Mishler, and Christian Haerpfer., 1998, *Democracy and Its Alternatives*. John Hopkins University Press, p. 172.

⁸⁶ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C., pp. 21-2.

Individuation of economic life is closely connected to political apathy and withdrawal. Such sentiments are reported in several studies that show how lay Russians and Ukrainians find political institutions irrelevant to helping them solve the real problems in their lives.⁸⁷ In the words of one respondent, the Russian government “is nothing but a giant mafia up there. We must simply try to live on our own down here and get by without politics.”⁸⁸ They adopt a stance of political withdrawal and alienation, because politics is now seen as a distant and remote activity that has little connection to their everyday bread and butter concerns. Carnaghan points out: “Many of my respondents...suffered from passivity in the face of power. As a group, they were highly skeptical about the possibilities of positive change [in their lives].”⁸⁹ Political apathy is expressed not only in general skepticism towards political institutions but also towards political participation. Many people discard the possibility and effectiveness of organizing, mobilizing, protesting, or pressuring the government in one way or another:

I am disappointed, disappointed, not satisfied with anything. I know that abroad, of course, many people join these types of [civic] organizations. But I think they have different problems. When, in general, *there is only one problem here now, and that's to survive*, to survive so that you don't feel humiliated. When you go to some store and see expensive products and food, and you can't afford it yourself. I don't know. I never experienced that until now...⁹⁰

The direction and dynamics of the transition seem inevitable and insurmountable for many lay Russians and Ukrainians. Their political withdrawal is connected to fatalism: “protesting against the inevitable simply makes no sense...to the extent that change is expected by electing a new

⁸⁷ Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin* p. 92; Rose, Richard and Ellen Carnaghan, 1995, “Generational Effects on Attitudes to Communist Regimes: A comparative Analysis”, pp. 28-56.

⁸⁸ Ries, “Honest Bandits,” p. 308.

⁸⁹ Carnaghan, *Out of order*, p. 8; also see Siegelbaum and Walkowitz, *Workers of the Donbass Speak*, p. 206 and Alexander, *Political Culture*, p. 131.

⁹⁰ Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society*, p. 140, emphasis added. Also see interviews with former participants in workers' movements in Mandel, David, 1994, *Rabotyagi: Perestroika and After Viewed From Below. Interviews with Workers in the Former Soviet Union*. Monthly Review Press, New York.

government, it is only tactical emendation of the transitional program. The continuation of the real misery is expected regardless of who wins.”⁹¹ But this fatalism is not some inherent cultural feature of people in the region. Rather, this fatalism is an expression of coping with the social system that is uncontrollable and insurmountable, and the only way to carve a meaningful place in this oppressive and overwhelming social universe is to accept powerlessness.

Of course, such lay views manifest a debilitating stance from a democratic perspective and they do not represent a democratic program. Yet, we need to understand that they are not free choices but impositions; they are dictated by undemocratic circumstances that compel disenfranchised groups to adapt and cope by adopting undemocratic and defeatist attitudes. Survival in unresponsive and disempowering social systems entails a process of blocking or muting the oppressiveness of the situation in order to regain some sense of balance in one’s life. Accepting what seems to be unfair, rather than fighting it, is one of the coping mechanisms that allow members in disempowering and unequal environments to maintain sanity.⁹²

But most importantly, political alienation and cynicism are plausible interpretations of power relations in Russia and Ukraine. They are interpretations of social conditions in which lay actors have no citizenship rights, real power, or meaningful voice. The structure of the new economy in Russia and Ukraine is such that it escapes the control and influence of ordinary people. While the economic realm with its institutions, resources, and forces constitutes such an important part of their life, they have no control over it, but rather are controlled by it. Their economic fate is influenced, managed, and defined by the will of others. They experience real

⁹¹ Hopf, Ted, 2002. “Making the Future Inevitable: Legitimizing, Naturalizing and Stabilizing the Transition in Estonia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan,” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 429.

⁹² For example, see Genovese, Eugene D., 1976. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World The Slaves Made*. Vintage Books; Gaventa, John. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, and McAdam, Doug. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. University of Chicago Press, 1982.

economic dispossession - unemployment, inadequate wages and pensions, and cutbacks and cancellation of social programs and services – none of which they can stop. Those social institutions over which lay actors do have control via elections, such as parliament and the office of presidency, fail to address the economic concerns of non-elites because the officials themselves represent the new economic elite, and also because the logic of the market economy precludes public control. Lay Russians and Ukrainians are correct to respond with apathy and political alienation to a degree that these attitudes present an accurate description of their social environment, which is closed to popular influence, unresponsive, and unequal.

And yet, I suggest, this mode of thinking, although understandable, is not beneficial to them or empowering in the long run. Rather, it is debilitating because it requires settling for less, settling for an inferior, vulnerable, and powerless position in the society. It requires accepting the injustices, inequality, and wretchedness of the present situation. Ironically, in this disempowering environment the most vulnerable groups now begin to attribute their economic misfortunes to their personal failure rather than to the failure of the social system to provide opportunities for everyone to prosper.⁹³ Democratic theorists, by way of participating in this conversation, cannot settle for fatalism and withdrawal as a feature of democratic politics. Neither can democratic theory accept personal failure as an explanation of wide-spread economic dislocation. There are lay discourses that rightfully implicate undemocratic relations of power in such economic outcomes and it is this kind of lay discourse that scholars of democracy should promote and develop, not the attitudes of self-blame and self-deprecation. Moreover, democratic theory should not be an advocacy of retreat, but advocacy of a need to overcome fatalism. Lay

⁹³ “From Soviet Expectations to Post-Soviet Realities: Poverty During the Transition,” Dudwick, Nora, Elizabeth Gomart, Alexandre Marc, and Kathleen Kuehnast, ed. 2003. *When Things Fall Apart: Qualitative Studies of Poverty in the Former Soviet Union*. The World Bank, Washington D.C., pp.21-2.

actors must continue demanding a more democratic distribution of resources, build up political militancy, stick to their expectations, and mount pressure on political leaders and economic elites in Russia and Ukraine.

There is also a lesson here for democratic theory about how power and inequality can be maintained. In addition to force and coercion that prevent a meaningful opposition to the status quo, pushing masses into the survival mode and taking away means for change creates a sense that establishment is simply insurmountable, impervious to change, and thus should be accepted. Quiescence does not prove consent to the direction of the post-communist transition and inequality as some observers suggest⁹⁴, but rather show how subtle the operation of power can be. In social environments characterized by inequality between groups based on class, gender, race, or ethnicity, the political thinking of the disenfranchised groups is illuminating and has important democratic insights, but it may also reflect the interests and preferences of dominant groups, as well as the realities of long-term political exclusion and taming. It is in this sense that beliefs of disenfranchised groups can both challenge and sustain oppressive social structures.⁹⁵ It

⁹⁴ Hopf, 2002, "Making the Future Inevitable," pp. 429-30.

⁹⁵ For theoretical treatment of these questions, see Giddens, Anthony, 1976. *New Rules for Sociological Method: A Critique of Interpretative Sociologies*, New York: Basic Books, p. 121, Isaac, Jeffrey C. 1987. *Power and Marxist Theory: A Realist View*. Cornell University Press, pp. 7, 30-40, 59, Bhaskar, Roy. 1979. *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences*. Humanities Press, p. 44, and Topper, Keith. 2005. *The Disorder of Political Inquiry*. Harvard University Press, p. 129. Also, see: Gramsci, Antonio, 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. by Quinton Hare and G. Nowell-Smith, Lawrence and Wishart, London, pp. 206-78; De Beauvoir, Simone. 1989. *The Second Sex*. Transl. and ed. by H.M. Parshley, New York: Vintage Books; Fiere, Paulo, 1973. *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Seabury Press, New York, pp. 21-31; Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990. "Fieldwork in Philosophy," in P. Bourdieu, *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. For empirical exploration of how beliefs become a product of and also enable hierarchical social structures, see Genovese, Eugene D., 1976. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World The Slaves Made*. Vintage Books, and Gaventa, John. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Clarendon Press, Oxford; Lukes, Steven. 1974. *Power: a Radical View*. Macmillan Press, and Estrich, Susan, 2001. "Real Rape", *Understanding inequality: the intersection of race/ethnicity, class, and gender*. ed. by Barbara A. Arrighi, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

is important to separate the empowering discourses of lay actors from the self-defeating and undemocratic ones.

For example, from the preceding discussion we can learn how authoritarian relationships can be maintained and reproduced through beliefs of both subjects and masters, specifically, their adherence to and buying into the economic paternalism and exclusive citizenship that define market relations. At the same time, in these conditions of subordination and deep inequality lay actors still manage to carve out a space for challenging the institutions of inequality, projecting their rights and affirming their human dignity and value, as I have shown in the first part of the chapter.⁹⁶ This insight can help those interested in democracy and democratization to appreciate education, transparency, and dissemination of information about politics as important tools in social transformation. Democratization does not only entail transformation of society, but a transformation of people's beliefs as well. Democratic theory should have lay actors as their primary audience and interlocutor, and it should be a body of knowledge and ideas that can serve to empower the disenfranchised groups.

2) Quiescence and Defeatism of Organized Labor as a Response to Political Repression

We can find quiescence and curbed radicalism even among those segments of population that are relatively more mobilized and organized, such as workers who carried out labor strikes and movements from the late 1980s into the 1990s in Russia and Ukraine. Studies of labor movements in Russia and Ukraine in late 20th century point out militant outbursts that coexist with workers' authoritarian attitudes and obedient acceptance of oppressive management and

⁹⁶ For this methodological insight I relied on Genovese, Eugene D., 1976. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World The Slaves Made*. Vintage Books.

owners, and their radicalism tends to be short-lived.⁹⁷ Despite instances of labor mobilization in Ukraine and Russia during the perestroika era and in the early years of post-communist transformation, labor is relatively marginalized in these societies.⁹⁸ But it is important to understand that this marginalization is a product of the political environment in those societies. The disenfranchised position of labor helps in part to explain their often volatile democratic aspirations, retraction of political militancy, and relative quiescence.

As many scholars of labor movements in these societies stress, historically labor has been put in a subservient role to both the elite political and economic class, and there has been continuous repression, defeat, and rollback of labor movements. This is true about the fate of the mining workers mobilization in early 20th century in Russia and Ukraine, when attempts to democratize work conditions were always met with hostility, arrests, and repression by the local authorities who were in co-hoots with industrial owners.⁹⁹ Repression is part of the labor story

⁹⁷ The most poignant study of apathy and silence in the face of injustice and suffering is by Mandel, David. 2004. *Labour After Communism: Auto Workers and Their Unions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus*. Black Rose Books. Also see Crowley, Stephen, 1997. *Hot Coal, Cold Steel: Russian and Ukrainian Workers from the End of the Soviet Union to the Post-Communist Transformations*. The University of Michigan Press; Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate; Siegelbaum Lewis H. "We'll Remain in This Cesspool for a Long Time": The Miners of Donetsk Speak out", *The Oral History Review*, Vol. 20, No. ½, Apr. 1, 1992, pp. 67-86. For studies that point to similar tendencies in labor movements of the late 19th and early 20th century, see Zelnik, Reginald E., 1994, "On the Eve: Life Histories and Identities of Some Revolutionary Workers, 1870-1905." In Siegelbaum, L. H. and R.G. Suny, ed. *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity*. Cornell University Press; Kuromiya, Hiroaki, 1994, "Donbas Miners in War, Revolution, and Civil War." Siegelbaum, L. H. and R.G. Suny, ed. *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity*. Cornell University Press, pp. 138-158; Graziosi, Andrea. "At the Roots of Soviet Industrial Relations and Practices. Piatakov's Donbass in 1921." *Cahiers du Monde russe*, vol. 36, No. ½, Cultures économiques et politiques économiques dans l'Empire tsariste et en URSS, 1861-1950 (Jan. – Jun, 1995), pp. 95-138; Friedgut, Theodore H. *Iuzovka and Revolution. Vol 2: Politics and Revolution in Russia's Donbass, 1869-1924*.

⁹⁸ Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratization: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 604, 610.

⁹⁹ Zelnik, Reginald E., 1994, "On the Eve: Life Histories and Identities of Some Revolutionary Workers, 1870-1905." In Siegelbaum, L. H. and R.G. Suny, ed. *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity*. Cornell University Press and Kuromiya, Hiroaki, 1994, "Donbas Miners in War, Revolution, and Civil War." Siegelbaum,

in the Soviet era, exemplified by the Novocherkassk massacre in 1962, when workers who launched a strike were met with tanks, arrests, and imprisonment by the Soviet regime.¹⁰⁰ And the fate of continual defeat, repression, and rollback continues to haunt workers' movements in the late 1980s and the 1990s. It is in these conditions that post-communist labor attempted to assert itself, but their eventual withdrawal and quiescence was a reaction to political repression and defeat.

Gorbachev's 1987 law on state enterprises planted the seeds for workplace democracy in Soviet enterprises and briefly created prospects for workers' empowerment.¹⁰¹ However, subsequent political and economic transformation in the wake of the dissolution of the USSR led to stripping worker's councils of many of their rights. Moreover, the new labor code in 1998 and 2001 weakened the rights of unions in general.¹⁰² For instance, El'tsin considered banning the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) which broke away from the communist party but also emerged as a critic of El'tsin's government. FNPR lobbied for wage increases and provisions for 'insider privatisation' through buy-outs by managers and workers. But fear of outright political repression tempered FNPR and over the years it avoided an explicitly political role; the organization "has eschewed radicalism".¹⁰³

L. H. and R.G. Suny, ed. *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity*. Cornell University Press, pp. 138-158.

¹⁰⁰ Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 607.

¹⁰¹ See Christensen, Paul T. 1999. *Russia's Workers in Transition: Labor, Management, and the State under Gorbachev and Yeltsin*. Northern Illinois University Press, 1999, pp. 42-88, 94 and Ashwin, "Redefining the Collective: Russian Mineworkers in Transition," p. 254.

¹⁰² Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 610.

¹⁰³ Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 609.

Post-communist economies are defined by ballooning of the service industry, such as banking, marketing, retail, petty trade, and sweatshops where often fewer than fifty people are employed. Pursuing labor mobilization or unionization in such enterprises is a difficult task as union laws are unfriendly and the few provisions that do exist are poorly protected, work stability is low, and employers are very hostile.¹⁰⁴ Workers who seek organizing independently are under attack both from employers and authorities; they can be fired (which is illegal), or in extreme cases incarcerated at mental institutions to deter others from doing the same.¹⁰⁵ Scholars of labor in Russia and Ukraine regrettably report that workers seem to internalize passive and slave-like mentality and accept the status quo.¹⁰⁶ However, it is important to understand such beliefs in the larger context of political repression. Quiescence is not inherent to members of the disenfranchised groups, and it is incorrect to ascribe passivity to their individual preferences and some natural lack of political motivation. There is a lesson for democratic theory that the source of political apathy and withdrawal lay in the undemocratic social structures within which lay people try to act, not in lay people's inherent dispositions.

3) Critiquing Ambiguities in Lay Conceptions of Power

¹⁰⁴ Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 612.

¹⁰⁵ See "Forced Psychiatric Assessment of a Ukraine Union Activist" from Nov. 4, 2010 available at: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=19069 and Kubicek, Paul. 2002. "Civil Society, Trade Unions and Post-Soviet Democratisation: Evidence from Russia and Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Jun. p. 617.

¹⁰⁶ Mandel, David. 2004. *Labour After Communism: Auto Workers and Their Unions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus*. Black Rose Books. Also see Crowley, Stephen, 1997. *Hot Coal, Cold Steel: Russian and Ukrainian Workers from the End of the Soviet Union to the Post-Communist Transformations*. The University of Michigan Press; Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate; Siegelbaum Lewis H. "We'll Remain in This Cesspool for a Long Time": The Miners of Donetsk Speak out", *The Oral History Review*, Vol. 20, No. ½, Apr. 1, 1992, pp. 67-86.

Lay discourses about power in Russia and Ukraine are not always consistent, and I established at least three pronounced conceptions of power that simultaneously permeate lay political thinking. In the first conception, lay actors collapse together government officials, financial elites, owners of major social resources, enterprise directors, and bankers as representing a power block.¹⁰⁷ In the second conception, they differentiate between economic and political elites, claiming that politicians are really pawns in the hands of the new owning class and that both elite conglomerates have different functions and powers in these newly transformed societies.¹⁰⁸ And in the last conception, lay actors perceive power to reside exclusively at the government level and they consider politicians and policymakers the true masters of society.¹⁰⁹ In this last discourse, the state is seen as “an instrument for managing and ruling the people, often against the people” and government is seen as social group that manages social resources to the detriment of ordinary people.¹¹⁰

Given that post-communist social transformations clearly produced two classes of elites and power holders – government and the ownership class - it is this last view of power that is problematic. It is incorrect to claim that the locus of power over people’s lives in post-communist Russia and Ukraine resides only at the level of government. Such lay interpretations mystify the emergence of the whole class of people who now legally (but without transparency or accountability) possess tremendous power in managing economic resources, social wealth,

¹⁰⁷ Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin*, p. 79, 93; Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 172; Humphrey, Caroline, 1999, “Traders, ‘Disorder’, and Citizenship Regimes in Provincial Russia.”; and Ries, “Honest Bandits,” p. 295.

¹⁰⁸ Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, p. 171.

¹⁰⁹ Zdravomuslov, A.G. “Power and Society”, in Diligenskii, G.G., ed. 2000. *Rossia v ysloviakh transformatsii*. Moskva: Fond Razvitiia Politicheskogo Centrism, pp. 62-73, and Ries, “Honest Bandits,” p. 293.

¹¹⁰ Ries, “Honest Bandits,” p. 308; Carnaghan, *Out of Order*, pp. 168-70; also see Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin*, p. 74.

and the labor force. And while in both Russia and Ukraine it is quite common for political elites to also be members of the ownership class and own plants, factories, supermarket chains, and etc., not all capital owners are politicians. It is easy to mix up and focus on state and political tyranny with respect to ordinary people's lives. However, lay critiques that clearly demarcate the economic realm from politics and focus on usurpation of power and rights in the economic realm as well are more powerful and more conducive to democratization in those societies.

In the example of 1998 miners' strikes in Russia's Kuzbass region, many of the interviewed miners had a lot of familiarity with the financial machinations in the administration of the mines, among the local officials, and middle man firms. These local elites and agencies were referred to as thieves stealing people's money through wage arrears, hiding profits, and sharply unequal distribution of the produced wealth. However, dissatisfaction expressed by the miners' movement was directed not against the enterprise and local centers of power, but against the federal state, especially the president.¹¹¹

Similarly, a focus-group-based study of (de)legitimization discourses in transitional states reports that Ukraine's respondents delegitimized the transition by blaming the state for country-wide and personal socio-economic failures.¹¹² In summarizing lay Russian discourses of disillusionment about the course of the transition, Howard reports that politicians are seen as the target for blame as they are seen to have "stolen" much of Russia's property and wealth, and even its dignity."¹¹³ But it is precisely such lay conceptions of power that lose their critical

¹¹¹ Diligenskii, *Rossiskii gorozhanin*, p. 92. Also, see very similar observations made in Simon's study of labor movement in Eastern Ukraine in the late 1990s: Simon, Rick. 2000. *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*. Ashgate.

¹¹² Hopf, 2002, "Making the Future Inevitable," p. 425.

¹¹³ Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society*, p. 140.

democratic edge, as they overlook the importance of holding the economic elites accountable to the rest of the society as well. They miss the point that as a result of socio-economic transformation and transition to market economy, power now *also* resides at a class level. Therefore, it is important to mount grievances not only against their government, but also against major financial and economic elites in their societies. It is important to question their privilege and their vision in the economic decision making over wages, benefits packages, prices, production policies, working hours, taxes, and etc.

Scholars of labor movements point out that while workers struggle to establish channels for their empowerment and increase their collective voice, their ideological orientations may have been inconsistent and at times self-defeating. For instance, along with the rhetoric of workplace democracy and worker empowerment, they may have stayed away from explicitly socialist rhetoric. The language of class has been and is looked at with suspicion as something from the failed past. Crowley points out: “the ironic tragedy for workers in post-communist societies is that just when class antagonisms have, in all likelihood, grown more pronounced than any they have experienced, the explicit use of class-based ideologies has become taboo.”¹¹⁴

However, bringing class and socialist vocabulary into democratic thinking helps to reveal very disturbing and undemocratic tendencies in those societies. It is precisely the “socialist” focus on the economic realm and analysis of power, rights, freedom, and citizenship in the economic realm that helps to identify sources of economic dislocation, misery, and oppression. Lay discourses that I presented in the first paper show why class and socialist vocabulary must be reaffirmed, not expelled from democratic theory. Lay views of democracy that are grounded in economic demands and critiques show that a meaningful democratic project must include

¹¹⁴ Crowley, Stephen, 1997. *Hot Coal, Cold Steel: Russian and Ukrainian Workers from the End of the Soviet Union to the Post-Communist Transformations*. The University of Michigan Press.

democratization of economic life. Such democratization would encompass granting non-elites economic rights, guaranteeing access to social programs and services, a guaranteed living wage, adequate compensation and benefits, and etc. Of course, such changes and policies would upset the unequal balance of power between the classes in the economy and would curtail monopolization of wealth in the hands of a few, but that is precisely the point.