Hanna Söderbaum

From Oligarch to Benefactor?
Legitimation Strategies among the Wealthy Elite in Post-Soviet Ukraine
Dissertation presented at Uppsala University to be publicly examined in Hörsal 2, Ekonomikum, Kyrkogårdsgatan 10, Uppsala, Saturday, 15 September 2018 at 13:00 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The examination will be conducted in English. Faculty examiner: Associate Professor Olga Onuch (University of Manchester).

Abstract

This thesis explores how wealthy actors in post-Soviet Ukraine seek to legitimize their extraordinary positions in society. It argues that they attempt to create legitimacy by setting up private philanthropic foundations, in this thesis also termed giving organizations. This act of social responsibility needs visibility, which is obtained through conspicuous projects and promotion in media. The period studied stretches from the 1990s up until 2016, post-Maidan, allowing for an investigation of the dynamics of legitimation strategies during relative stability and political turmoil. How do they organize their giving initiatives? What image are they trying to build and how do they control it? Furthermore, what are the studied actors’ and their giving organizations’ attitudes toward the state and what role do they claim to have in society? These questions guide the four studies in this compilation thesis. The first essay analyses the institutionalization of the giving initiatives, while the second is a study of how the wealthy elite control their image via media. The third article investigates the self-presented justification logics for engaging in such matters as giving. The final essay looks at the action of the giving organizations during political turmoil and the perception of these among civil society activists.

The thesis contributes to the understanding of legitimation strategies of oligarchs and the role of elite giving in transition economies as well as in social change movements. Elucidating the concept of the oligarch, the findings show how the giving organizations of different subdivisions of the wealthy elite demonstrate diverse combinations of compensating the state, competing with the state and changing the state. Distinct socially and geographically defined audiences are targeted depending on political ambition and a shifting political context, in which the waves of democratization have had an influence on legitimation efforts. The invisibility of oligarchs during the nation-wide protests in 2013–2014, together with their conformation to norms in society, suggests that they are not drivers of change but rather adapters to public opinion. Moreover, the political dependency of elite giving confirms that the phenomenon is a part of the intertwined relations between politics and business.

Keywords: Wealthy elites, oligarchs, legitimacy, philanthropy, media ownership, social change, justification logics, interviews

Hanna Söderbaum, Department of Economic History, Box 513, Uppsala University, SE-75120 Uppsala, Sweden.

© Hanna Söderbaum 2018

ISSN 0346-6493
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-355296 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=nbn:se:uu:diva-355296)
Till Kai och Milla
List of Papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

I  Söderbaum, H. Elite Giving in Ukraine: State Relations and Legitimacy. Accepted for publication in *Ukraina Moderna.*

II  Alyukov, M., Rechitsky, R., Söderbaum, H. News Media Ownership and Social Change: Shifting Representations of Oligarchs in the Ukrainian and Russian Press. Received decision of revise and resubmit for journal publication.


*Reprints were made with permission from the publisher.*
## Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................... 15  
Defining oligarchs and oligarchy ................................................................. 17  
Wealth concentration .................................................................................. 20  
The Orange Revolution and the role of the oligarchs ......................... 22  
The Maidan and the quest for de-oligarchization .................................... 24  
History of giving in Ukraine ....................................................................... 25  
The role of elite giving in post-Soviet Ukraine ........................................ 28  
Purpose, research questions, and outline .................................................. 30  

Analytical framework .................................................................................... 33  
Why elite giving? .......................................................................................... 33  
Legitimacy ................................................................................................... 36  
  Social responsibility .................................................................................. 39  
  Visibility ................................................................................................... 42  
Social legitimacy and the state ................................................................. 44  

Studying legitimation strategies of the wealthy elite: Methods and materials .......................................................... 48  
Study objects ............................................................................................... 49  
Interviews ..................................................................................................... 52  
Documents and websites .......................................................................... 57  
Press material ............................................................................................. 58  
Analyzing the material .............................................................................. 59  
A final note on method ............................................................................... 59  

The Essays .................................................................................................... 60  
Essay I: Elite Giving in Ukraine: State Relations and Legitimacy .......... 60  
Essay II: News Media Ownership and Social Change: Shifting Representations of Oligarchs in the Ukrainian and Russian Press ............... 62  
Essay III: The Business-superman: Oligarchs Justifying Giving in Post-Soviet Ukraine ................................................................. 64  
Conclusions in context.......................................................................................68
   Pluralistic legitimation strategies.................................................................69
   Dynamic legitimation strategies ..................................................................72
Reformulation of legitimation strategies during times of political turmoil...73
   Agents or responders of change? .................................................................73
   The Ukrainian context.................................................................................76

References........................................................................................................77
Acknowledgements

The last eight years have been enriching but also involved a lot of challenges and I owe my gratitude to many people who have supported me throughout this process in various ways. First of all, I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisors Orsi Husz and Li Bennich-Björkman at Uppsala University and Mychailo Wynnyckyj at Kyiv Mohyla Academy. Orsi, you have shown great enthusiasm towards the topic and have been very helpful throughout my time as a Ph.D. student. Your precise reading improved the final product very much. Li, you have always inspired me by being so energetic and sharp, and your ability to see my advantages has helped me to complete this thesis. Thank you both for all of the extra hours you put into reading and discussing my numerous drafts. Mychailo, I am very grateful for your immense help in establishing the necessary contacts at the beginning of the research and for reading my drafts during some crucial phases. I also want to express my gratitude to Ann-Mari Sätre, who was my helpful supervisor during the first year.

My research has benefited from two academic environments at Uppsala University. I owe my gratitude to all the faculty and staff at the Economic History Department, who have provided me with fruitful feedback throughout the years and a friendly environment. I would especially like to thank Ylva Hasselberg and Therese Nordlund Edvinsson who commented on my final draft. I was always able to ventilate my problems and thoughts with Rosalía Guerrero Cantarell, who helped me to survive during difficult times, and to improve my analytical framework (it goes hand in hand). I am also indebted to Magnus Eklund who not only asked important questions related to methodology, but also showed a special interest in Ukraine and the Maidan and post-Maidan developments. Thank you for your early and later comments; they were truly useful. I want to thank Sarah Linden Pasay who has proofread the text thoroughly and been very helpful during the final stages of production. Maths Isacson gave good advice, especially during the first difficult year; Pamela Tipmanoworn was so kind to help me with complex administrative issues.

To make the process of writing more fun and operative, we organized writing workshops with colleagues from the Department of History during the last years of writing. Thank you for these extremely beneficial sessions. A special thanks goes to Karolina Wiell and all the brilliant women of “Lavelle’s Angels”.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the guest researchers and staff at the Uppsala Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies. Claes Levinsson and Lena Lubenow supplied me with a desk in the best room at the office—the one together with the guest researchers. To have contact with those who study the area while writing on Ukraine from Sweden was invaluable. Having given birth to two children during the period gave me less opportunity to spend time in “the field” than I had planned from the beginning. To be able to discuss relevant issues with experts on the post-Soviet space and researchers originating from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus greatly contributed to my inspiration to carry on. A special thanks to Ausra Padskocimaite, Volodymyr Kulikov, Martin Kragh, Vaida Obelenë, Marina Henriksson, Johanna Olsson, Elias Götz, and Leonid Polishchuk.

Throughout the years, I had many more offices than these two: the Department of Sociology at Kyiv Mohyla Academy, the Royal Library in Stockholm, “offices”, and close-to-home offices. This is very much a mobile product and all human interactions have made the work worthwhile.

I want to express my gratitude to all scholars who have commented on my work at conferences, workshops, and seminars. Special thanks to Yuliya Yurchuk, Angela Eikenberry, Stefan Einarsson, Alina Zubkovych, and Niklas Stenlås.

My acknowledgments to Erik Peterson and Henrik Hallgren who believed in me more than I did and encouraged me to write articles for the Swedish news press and magazines during the Maidan protests. Special thanks to Henrik who co-authored several pieces with me; your dedication to the issue and your ability to see the wider picture has been a great source of inspiration for me. To Raphi Rechitsky and Maxim Alyukov: one of the reasons why I chose to write a compilation thesis was because it opened the door to be able to cooperate with other researchers. I learned a lot through the process of working with you, which I am grateful for. It’s much more fun to write together!

In Ukraine, I am immensely thankful to all the interviewees who agreed to meet with me and share their views. I am also very grateful to my favourite, Tetiana Kostiuchenko. Thank you for your never-ending enthusiasm for papers and conferences; your scholarly qualities and friendship have meant so much to me. Dmytro Ostroushko, thank you for your encouragement and help especially during my last field trips. I am extremely grateful to all my friends and acquaintances in Ukraine. I am happy that I had the opportunity to get to know Ukraine already in 2004 when Clara Bodin introduced me to the village of Zabriddya in western Ukraine, where I conducted my very first field study. Clara made it possible for me to live and work in Ukraine 2007–2008, when all the seeds of friendship that I still have today started to grow. The creativity, hospitality, and spontaneity of friends I made in Kyiv have inspired me to the maximum. Peace and love to Ilya Starkov, Ksenya Semenova, Ania Gaidai, Julia Yatsenko, Vasyl Lozynsky, Vadym Kulykov, Serhiy Kravchuk, Robert Frost, Tamara Martsenyuk, Anton Semyzhenko, etc, etc.
I thank my friends in Stockholm and Uppsala for in different ways supporting me and helping out. Malin Holm, I would never have come this far without you, your willingness to discuss problems and your ability to find solutions has been of immense help. Åsa Elmerot, thank you for your reading and commenting and our long-lasting friendship. Anna-Maria Norman, besos to the Ukrainophilia and Kontraktova spirit. Ida Knudsen, always a great discussion partner. My Svensson, thanks for your cheering and endless enthusiasm. Hanne Martinek, thank you for translating an abstract into German, I owe you a night out. I also would like to mention Per Ekman, Alina Östling, Daniel Bodén, Olga Buchenko, Frida Eik, Inna Innacenta, Elin Jönsson, Kasper Andersson, Anders Mattsson, Elina Tikkanieme, Helene Biller, etc.

Working for my beloved Östgruppen while wrapping up my thesis really made me wrap up my thesis. Thank you so much for your perennial great work for democracy and human rights, and for your enthusiasm for coffee-break/flying-high workout sessions. Acknowledgements go also to all the board members.

Next, I would like to thank my professors at Slavic Language – Department of Modern Languages at Uppsala University, as well as at Herzen University in St Petersburg. But, most importantly, I need to thank Sven Jonsson, the most enthusiastic teacher in elementary school I can imagine; he enticed me to keep developing this interest early on—knowing Russian has enriched my life in general and it did open the door for this research project.

My several research and conference trips were funded by the Swedish Institute, Helge Ax:son Johnsons Stiftelse, Håkanssons Resestipendium, Stiftelsen Olle Engkvist Byggmästare, and Wolodymyr George Danyliw Foundation. The generous support of these foundations is gratefully acknowledged.

Lastly, I will turn to my family. My dad, Peter, whose interest and kindness gave me strength to carry on even in difficult times. Thank you for all of the time you put into reading and commenting on my drafts, and for encouraging my interest in complex social issues already at an early age. My gratitude also goes to my mom, Eva, for having Russian language textbooks on our bookshelves with Cyrillic letters that I was mesmerized by. Thank you for your enthusiastic support, for your dedication to the children while I had to work, and for making sure I was all right. To my children Kai and Milla, who never experienced a mom who didn’t have a thesis hanging over her. I can’t wait to spend more time with you. To Alex, thanks for your support, delicious dinners, and everything you do for the family. My acknowledgements also to the positive energy of my dear brothers Ville, Simon, and Jakob, and my aunts, uncles, and cousins. Many thanks also to my brother’s sister, Lisa Stålspets, who so kindly and skillfully painted the cover picture for this thesis.

Hanna Söderbaum

Stockholm, July 2018
Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the attempts of wealthy elites to create legitimacy in a society characterized by inequality, weak state structures, and a new capitalistic order. Post-Soviet Ukraine is the case being studied and the point of departure is that philanthropy (or “giving”) and media influence both constitute instruments for legitimation. My ambition is to explore these strategies. The thesis further investigates the self-presented role of elite giving in society, specifically attitudes toward and relations with the state. Thus, it contributes to the understanding of wealthy elites’ legitimation strategies and the role of elite giving in transition economies. The wealthy elites in Ukraine are almost by default oligarchs, since the political and economic spheres are so tightly interwoven. Ukrainian oligarchs are sparsely studied in academic work; this thesis contributes to correcting this lack by exploring one angle of this under-studied phenomenon.

The transition from a Soviet economy entailed radical changes in ownership of business operations as well as welfare services. While Ukraine had a strong industrial and agricultural sector within the Soviet Union, the disintegration caused an end to supplies of cheap gas and a decrease in Ukrainian exports. A weak legal system and dysfunctional institutions paved the way for widespread corruption, including political corruption with tendencies to absorb public funds at the cost of social welfare.¹ Public enterprises ended up in the hands of a few and the lack of the rule of law² created room for illegal corporate takeovers, or so-called raidings.³ The economic sectors that the business elite gained their capital accumulation from were metallurgy, agriculture, chemicals, food processing industry, oil extraction, retail, and finance. Oligarchs are also the key owners of mass media in Ukraine. According to estimates made in 2016, the TV channels owned by the four oligarchs, Ihor Kolomoisky, Dmytro Firtash, Viktor Pinchuk and Rinat Akhmetov, together control 77 per cent of the Ukrainian market.⁴

Large segments of the public perceive the redistribution of property from the state to individuals that has taken place as illegitimate, which increases the

---

¹ See Kuzio (2005); Wilson (2005); Riabchuk (2012).
² The separation of juridical and political powers has been a principle without substance. Judges have been subject to pressure by political and business interest.
³ Rojansky (2014).
likelihood of nationalization and re-privatization. Meanwhile, the economic elite gradually started to engage in philanthropy. During the 1990s, their most common philanthropic gifts were directed towards orphanages or the rebuilding of churches and were of spontaneous nature. Soon, these wealthy elite actors founded their own orphanages and developed a more long-term financing model. In contemporary Ukraine, these activities have been institutionalized into “foundations”, or “giving organizations”, often with the names of the initiators ascribed in their labels.

Dealing with elite giving, the topic of the thesis is not only post-Soviet specific but relates also to international trends. On a global scale, inequality is rising and the accumulation of wealth by a few individuals is striking. In terms of income and property, Oxfam has confirmed that eight individuals are worth as much as 50 per cent of the world population combined. Within this trend, there is a growing expectation of private initiatives, which are supposed to take on some of the tasks that the public sector had over a large part of the 20th century. The concept “philanthrocapitalism” is argued by Bishop & Green to be a new kind of philanthropy that is prioritizing business-oriented approaches and is assuming tasks previously undertaken by the welfare state. However, philanthropy by the wealthy can have far-reaching consequences for society; development of this kind of governance tends to move political power from the public to the private.

The share of total net worth spent on private philanthropic foundations in post-Soviet countries is relatively small when compared to the philanthropic spending of American giants like Bill Gates or Warren Buffet. Nevertheless, the relative magnitude of the private foundations in relation to the public sector is comparable, and there is an understanding that the potential force of

---

5 See Guriev & Rachinsky (2005), p. 140; Kesarchuk (2008), pp. 11–12, 15; Melnykovska (2015), p. 6. The most frequent answer (26.3% of respondents) to the question “what should be done with oligarchs’ property?” was “it must be nationalized completely,” according to a survey by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology conducted in December 2014, referenced in Markus & Charnysh (2017) p. 1662.

6 Henceforth, I prefer to use the more neutral term “giving” instead of “philanthropy”, since the meaning of philanthropy is “love of human kind” which is not suitable as the sole purpose for these organizations. Philanthropy is referenced to when theories of philanthropy are discussed.

7 See Kostiuchenko & Söderbaum (2016).


9 Bishop & Green (2008).

10 Bill and Melinda Gates donated via their foundation 16 billion USD over fifteen years, while Rinat Akhmetov donates around 13–16 million USD per year since 2007.

11 In 2015, Gates was described as the real secretary of education in an op-ed in the New York Times (McGoey 2015), p. 117, and in the 1990s the Arts Promotion Foundation in Ukraine went under the nickname “the ministry of culture”, according to their own depiction (Interview, March 19, 2012).
the giving by Ukrainian business magnates is vast if the increase in these types of engagements continues.

My point of departure is that one of a plurality of aims of these giving organizations is to construct social legitimacy for their initiators, many of whom experienced tainted reputations in the Ukrainian society. To further improve and control their images, oligarchs own mass media, including TV channels and newspapers. Hence, I will specifically study the philanthropic initiatives and media strategies of these actors. By doing this, I shed some light on the empirically under-researched topic of elite giving in a post-Soviet context, and the influence of ownership on media.

This thesis focuses on the years between and after two social uprisings: the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Maidan in 2014. Ukraine serves an appropriate case for studying oligarchy and the role of elite giving, which is something that is globally relevant both from an actor and structural perspective.

Defining oligarchs and oligarchy

In Ukrainian society, the figure of “the oligarch” is, on the one hand, overwhelmingly negatively loaded but, on the other hand, also somewhat appealing. In an interview with one of my respondents, I asked if her giving organization’s donor calls himself an oligarch. She replied:

Respondent: No, I don’t think so. He calls himself a businessman.
Interviewer: Yes, but he is also a politician. How would he react if you called him an oligarch?
Respondent: If you said “hello oligarch” to him he would be happy. He would think “cool”. It starts to be popular this word, and in Russia as well. All women would like to have an oligarch for husband. It’s like selling the dream.12

Who falls within the frames of such a figure and who does not is typically contested. The commercial press, independent of specific oligarchs, often holds a critical view of these actors. The Ukrainian weekly English language newspaper Kyiv Post launched a series of reports called “Oligarch Watch” in 2016, covering a number of wealthy businessmen: Rinat Akhmetov, Victor Pinchuk, Dmitry Firtash, Petro Poroshenko, Ihor Kolomoiskyi, and Yuriy Kosiuk, among others. The reports deal with their backgrounds, networks, and corruption schemes in which they are involved. It can concern nepotism, grand corruption involving the judicial system, money laundering, corporate raidings, etc.13 This image of the oligarchs being “crooks” is widespread in everyday life in Ukraine, making their own news channels particularly important in

12 Interview, representative, Borys Kolesnikov Foundation (2014).
trying to alter this image. Victor Pinchuk, one of the actors studied in this thesis, agrees that the term oligarch is negatively loaded. In an interview in *Le Figaro* in 2013, he spelled out his aversion of the term:

In this term, I feel a certain irony. In the West, businessmen are called businessmen, while businessmen from Eastern Europe automatically become oligarchs! Isn’t it strange? What is the difference between businessmen, entrepreneurs, and oligarchs? Do I fit into this cliché?14

In another interview, he said:

Maybe I am influential, but it is the power of influence, not the influence of power… I don’t hold any governmental position.15

However, this quote is in line with how oligarchs and wealthy elites usually are defined: they have the power to, not necessarily always power over.16 Jeffrey Winters, the author behind the book *Oligarchy*, points to how oligarchs may move in and out of official politics, depending on the nature of institutions:

Oligarchs do not disappear just because they do not govern personally or participate directly in the coercion that defends their fortunes. Instead, the political involvement of oligarchs become more indirect as it becomes less focused on property defense—this burden having been shifted to an impersonal bureaucratic state. However, their political involvement becomes more direct again when external actors or institutions fail to defend property reliably.17

Some Ukrainian oligarchs have moved from influencing politics directly to doing it through indirect channels. For example, they use placemen, dubbed *smotryashchyi* (which literally means watchers)18, who are parliamentarians who they pay to vote in their favor.19 They are deemed largely loyal to their oligarchs.20 Since parliamentary seats and places on party lists are trading commodities21, this system is easy to uphold.

There are two specifics that differentiate oligarchic power from other elite powers. First, their material wealth is unusually resistant to dispersion and

---


20 Mylovanov (2017).

equalization; second, the power structure is systemic. Elite theory does not sufficiently grasp the essence of those who control high concentrations of wealth: “[Oligarchs] remain powerful whether or not they are the best at what they do … or they hold any formal offices”. Winters’s definition of oligarchs is fixed across different historical periods and geographical spaces, although oligarchies assume different forms: “Oligarchs are actors who command and control massive concentrations of material resources that can be deployed to defend or enhance their personal wealth and exclusive social position.” Scholars of contemporary Ukrainian oligarchs point to “political influence” without recognizing their “exclusive social position”.

The definition of an oligarch used in this thesis is a wealthy actor with political influence whose original wealth base can be either political or economic. Specifically, oligarchs are defined here as either elected officials or appointed office-holders who earned their position through connections and use their position for personal enrichment, or business owners, whose economic wealth gives them political influence. In order to maintain their personal wealth and legitimize their exclusive social position, oligarchs may control mass media and engage in giving.

Having defined the oligarch, a short note on oligarchy should be stated. Contrary to the common understanding that oligarchy is the rule of the few and democracy is the rule of the people, Winters argues that Aristotle actually rejected a focus on the number of rulers as a “misapprehension of the difference” between democracy and oligarchy; the real difference lies in whether men rule by reason of their wealth (oligarchy), or ideology (democracy). Although oligarchy and democracy again appear incompatible in this description, this is not the case:

Oligarchy does not refer to a system of rule by a particular set of actors. It describes the political processes and arrangements associated with a small number of wealthy individuals who are not only uniquely empowered by their material resources, but set apart in a manner that necessarily places them in conflict with large segments of the population (often including with each other).

In this quote, it appears that oligarchs are often in conflict with the population. This is something that could potentially be mitigated by building a positive image. Winters has four categories of oligarchies: ruling, civil, warring and

---

22 Winters (2011), p. 4 f. See also p. 31 f.
sultanistic. Each category depends on the nature of rule (collective institutional or personalistic fragmented) and the oligarchs’ role in provision of coercion (high, armed, personal or low, disarmed, external). The extremes of the core of his theory of oligarchy are that warring oligarchies are focused on property defense while civil oligarchies are focused on income defense. The only types of oligarchies that can be democracies, although not always, are the civil oligarchies. Unlike the common understanding that democracy and oligarchy are mutually exclusive, they can be compatible since democracy is not absolute. Great wealth can provide both the resources and the motivation to exert powerful political influence in democracies as well. For example, the contemporary USA would be a civil oligarchy, in which property rights are secured and oligarchs are not ruling directly. Russia moved from a ruling oligarchy towards a sultanistic oligarchy, running parallel to Putin’s entrance to the Kremlin, while Ukraine is somewhere in the middle. It is perhaps closer to civil oligarchy than anything else, but also has elements of personalistic rule.

Wealth concentration

Subsequent to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the political elite stayed rather intact due to the persistence of network politics or “patronal politics.” Thus, the legacy of the Soviet Union had a strong hold over the bureaucracy in independent Ukraine, which facilitated conditions for corruption. The population decreased from 52 million to 45 million between 1992 and 2014, with economic hardship being one important factor. In a survey conducted 2011, over 60 per cent of the population claimed a lack of money for clothes and shoes. Twenty-six per cent overall had enough money, although not enough for large purchases, e.g. furniture, refrigerator, etc. Only 6 per cent claimed to have either “no financial difficulties, except for when making especially large purchases” and 1.7 per cent had “enough money for everything”.

While large segments of the population faced economic problems, a few started to make significant amounts of money. Regionally competing political

---

29 “In the US context, as elsewhere, the central question is whether and how the wealthiest citizens deploy unique and concentrated power resources to defend their unique minority interests. In the United States (as elsewhere), to the extent that such minority power is exercised, the political system can be considered an oligarchy.” Winters & Page (2009), p. 734
30 Hale (2015).
31 See Engvall (2016), etc.
economic groups, or “oligarchic clans”\textsuperscript{33}, formed during President Leonid Kuchma’s first term in office, 1994–1999. Business-state relations closely intertwined in a system of “collaborative profitability”\textsuperscript{34}, in which the rise of an oligarchic regime was strongly linked to the modes of the political and economic transformations and centered on the mutual interdependence between political and economic elites.\textsuperscript{35} Privatization in Ukraine was more “a ‘
\textit{prikhvatizatsiia}’ (grabbing) and a politicized process, meaning who you know is crucial in order to be able to ‘grab’ assets from the state.”\textsuperscript{36}

Towards the end of Kuchma’s second term (1999–2004), however, conflicts within these clans emerged and one by one they started to disintegrate.\textsuperscript{37} Nevertheless, on an individual level, the influence of these actors increased. Contrary to the development in Russia, in which the state became more authoritarian and big business was subordinated in the first decade of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, in Ukraine the president became more and more dependent on the representatives of big business. The “political embeddedness” of business elites has remained, although its character changed between the different presidencies.\textsuperscript{38}

According to 2016 estimates, the top-100 wealthiest individuals in Ukraine represent 21 per cent of gross national income. This can be compared to Russia, in which the top wealthy 100 represent 24 per cent of GNI, which is slightly higher than Ukraine. In Sweden, by contrast, the top-100 wealthy represent 4 per cent of GNI. These figures suggest that wealth concentration in Ukraine is slightly lower than in Russia, but much higher than in Sweden.\textsuperscript{39}

Table 1. \textit{Capital concentration estimation year 2016}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GNI (million USD)</th>
<th>Top 100 Total Wealth (million USD)</th>
<th>Capital Concentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>92,334</td>
<td>20,017</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1,248,550</td>
<td>303,650</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>519,899</td>
<td>23,387</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Protests against corruption and the lack of democracy has shaped the political life in post-Soviet Ukraine since 2000, when the “Kuchmagate” scandal brought masses to the street for the first time in post-Soviet Ukrainian history.

\textsuperscript{33} In the mid-1990s, the sociologist Olga Kryshtanovskaya (1996) popularized the term “oligarchy” as a definition for the Russian business elite. The privatization process, or the “sell-out” in Chrystia Freeland’s terms, allowed a few becoming very rich (2000).

\textsuperscript{34} Bellin (2000).

\textsuperscript{35} Puglisi (2003); Kuzio (2007); Melnykovska (2015).

\textsuperscript{36} Kubiczk (2001), p. 132.

\textsuperscript{37} See for example: Matuszak (2012).

\textsuperscript{38} See Melnykovska (2015).

\textsuperscript{39} For comparison with other countries, see Figure 2 in Novokmet, Piketty & Zucman (2017).
It was initiated by the release of illicitly recorded tapes of Leonid Kuchma in 2000, which provided evidence of many illegal acts. Among them were the rigging of elections in 1998 and 1999, abuse of office and misuse of public funds, violence against politicians and journalists, and indicators of involvement in the murder of Georgiy Gongadze, a journalist at the independent newspaper Ukrainska Pravda.\textsuperscript{40} The rise of Ukraine’s oligarchs, the questioning of these elites during the Kuchmagate crisis, the subsequent Orange Revolution in 2004–2005, which followed an election declared as neither free nor fair, and the Maidan in 2013–2014 are a series of linked events.\textsuperscript{41} In the next two sections, I will introduce the background and sequences of the two uprisings of the Orange Revolution and the Maidan and highlight the roles of the public and the oligarchs.

The Orange Revolution and the role of the oligarchs

People took to the streets to protest as the authorities announced that Victor Yanukovych was the winner in the presidential runoff in November 2004, despite a clear lead for opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko in the exit polls, with reports of large-scale election fraud. The peaceful protests that peaked at half a million participants led to the supreme court invalidation of the results of the second round on December 3, calling for a repeat runoff to be held on December 26. The Orange camp leader Yushchenko defeated Yanukovych by 52 to 44 per cent and was inaugurated president in January 2005.\textsuperscript{42}

The public outrage was spurred by the disrespect for the rights of individual citizens, disappointment with the country’s leadership, and the level of corruption in general and among public officials in particular. In a survey conducted in 2004 “a majority thought corruption had ‘increased significantly’ since Soviet times (55 per cent); 20 per cent thought it had ‘somewhat’ increased, and only 3 per cent thought there was less of it.”\textsuperscript{43} One important reason for this was the increased frustration among the public towards the president and towards the oligarchs benefitting from the system. Actors in

\textsuperscript{41} Kuzio (2007), p. 54.
\textsuperscript{42} Kuzio (2005), p. 117.
\textsuperscript{43} “A majority thought ‘almost all’ public officials were corrupt (54 per cent; another 30 per cent thought ‘most of them’ were).” “Only 11 per cent thought there was ‘great respect’ or at least ‘some respect’ for the rights of individual citizens; 32 per cent thought there was ‘not very much’ and 54 per cent ‘none at all’. There was overwhelming agreement that it was ‘difficult’ (23 per cent) or ‘very difficult’ (64 per cent) for ordinary people to exercise their rights; just 11 per cent took a more positive view. And there were savage judgments about the extent of official corruption.” Source: National survey conducted in 2004 by White & McAllister (2009), p. 230. See also Kostiuchenko & Wynnyckyj (2009).
society had seen how oligarchs were obtaining industries for only a portion of their worth, while the public sector became very weak.44

However, the Orange Revolution soon turned into a disappointment in the eyes of the public. Yushchenko faced difficulties already in 2005 as his former campaign manager accused high-ranking officials within the presidential administration (including Poroshenko, a close ally of Yushchenko) and the Our Ukraine party of various forms of corruption. Yulia Tymoshenko was accused of siding with certain oligarchic groups in re-privatization schemes in order to eliminate her own debts, resulting in the September 2005 “Orange Divorce” in which Tymoshenko was dismissed by Yushchenko.45 Yuri Yekhanurov, who replaced Tymoshenko as prime minister, oversaw the mass privatization in Ukraine and referred positively to the oligarchs as the “national bourgeoisie”.46

In the parliamentary election a year later, the Party of Regions won the most seats and Victor Yanukovych became the new prime minister. The reform that transformed Ukraine from a presidential-parliamentary into a parliamentary-presidential republic came into effect after the 2006 elections, giving Yanukovych more power and further hampering the influence of the Orange Revolution.47

Since the democratization effects of the Orange Revolution did not go further than fair and free elections and improved conditions for freedom of speech, it was seen in the eyes of many to be a failure. The internal conflicts of the Orange Revolution and corruption scandals among the top leaders supported the stronghold of patronal politics on the system.48 Any form of “de-oligarchization” did not happen.

The role of the wealthy elite in the Orange Revolution is disputed. While initially it seemed like a public protest of students, disillusioned voters, and party activists, the outcome of the revolution was soon a disappointment for those believing in democratization, and the belief that the wealthy elites and the oligarchs themselves supported the regime change increased. Contrary to researchers like Åslund & McFaul, who saw the events as a revolution of the masses49, Lane concludes that “[c]ertainly, they [civil society organizations] played a part in social mobilization, but this was a top-down movement inspired by the leadership of non-governmental organizations (such as the youth group Pora), not a spontaneous upsurge of ‘people’s’ power.”50 Kudelia, on the other hand, argues that the outcome of the Orange Revolution was much in the hands of the elite, but does not undervalue the power of the masses.

44 See Kuzio (2005).
50 Lane (2008), p. 546.
Societal actors cleared space for a democratic opposition and acted as a critical counter-weight to the authorities’ resources: “In the end, however, it was the elite who decided the essence of the outcome”.  

The Maidan and the quest for de-oligarchization

After a series of setbacks, Victor Yanukovych was seen as a strong leader and in 2010 he was elected president. Representing Kuchma-era politics and backed by the political machine of the Party of Regions, “[Yanukovych] provided at least hope that jobs and welfare would be priorities, instead of fluffy talk about freedom and democratic values.”

In February 2014, almost a decade after the Orange Revolution, there had been three months of large-scale protests in Kyiv and in many other cities nationwide. The Ukrainian civil society ousted then-president Victor Yanukovych with slogans for democracy and human rights and against kleptocracy and corruption. According to a multiple-options survey by the Gorshenyn Institute, the most common reason for coming to the Maidan was the resignation of the president and the government (55.9%), while the second-most common motivation was the association agreement with the EU (27.9%). Eighteen per cent claimed that the cause was “to protect the right to a decent life in a normal country”, while 11.7 per cent wanted “to protect my children against violence and lawlessness”.

Onuch & Sasse’s findings are in line with the Gorshenyn poll: Yanukovych was unpopular. It was his leadership, and the levels of corruption, that were the main grievances of the protests; they were not partisan, ideological, or regional: “The protesters were not easily distinguishable in terms of traditional east–west cleavages or a division between Russian and Ukrainian speakers. The level of protest diffusion across Ukraine and specifically to regions beyond the centre–west was a novelty in post-communist Ukraine.”

The events that unfolded on Independence Square in Kyiv the winter of 2013–2014 have later been labeled as “The Revolution of Dignity”, de-emphasizing the focus on relations with the EU and stressing the demand for law

---

53 Within a few months, Russia annexed Crimea and started to heavily support the separatist movement in Eastern Ukraine. The subsequent devastating war has left over 10,000 casualties and is not over yet. All of these developments greatly impacted on my research project. However, while I chose to write two of my articles on the socio-political change that the Maidan involved, neither the annexation nor the war is particularly addressed, as it is outside of scope of the aim of the thesis.
enforcement, justice, and political pluralism. Integral to this claim was “de-oligarchization” or, in other words, controlling the political and economic elites who had pursued their private interests through very favorable privatization schemes and by monopolizing sectors with the help of public instruments.

Hoping that politician, philanthropist, the seventh-richest Ukrainian Petro Poroshenko was “a better oligarch”, the Ukrainian citizens elected him to the presidency in May 2014. Three years after the Maidan protests, President Poroshenko, with an estimated worth of around 800 million USD (with a 100 million USD increase in 2016), has neither sold off his chocolate corporation, Roshen (from his name PoROSHENko), nor his TV channel. During his presidency, more importantly, reforms that would put pressure on business’ close relationship with politics are progressing very slowly. The persistence of the oligarchic system is also obvious in the informal alliances between the post-Maidan elite and the oligarchs.\(^{57}\)

Thus, the wealthy elite are still largely influential in post-Maidan Ukraine. Doing charity work and assuming an image of social responsibility is a way to stay legitimate in the eyes of the public. Needless to say, giving may also have other parallel motifs.

### History of giving in Ukraine

The radical change the concept ‘philanthropy’ has experienced in Ukrainian history parallel with the introduction of market economy after the dissolution of the Soviet Union motivates a special attention to the increase of private philanthropic foundations in post-Soviet Ukraine.

In order to see any remnants of the past in the actions of today, the history of elite giving in Ukraine needs to be examined. In 1862, Kyiv became the center for social work in the Russian Empire.\(^{58}\) Private philanthropy took on the role as the provider of social welfare, and in the second half of the 19\(^{th}\) century until the beginning of the 20\(^{th}\) century, the charity of industrial guilds flourished. They established hospitals, refugee shelters, printing houses, education institutions, churches and museums. Mykola Tereshchenko, Bogdan Khanenko, and Evgen Chikalenko, to give a few examples, improved the social level of life among the Ukrainian citizenry to a noticeable degree.\(^{59}\)

The charity tradition paused in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. In 1921, the majority of the Ukrainian territory was incorporated into what became the Soviet Union in 1922, while the western parts were integrated after

---

\(^{57}\) For analysis of, for example, Poroshenko’s relations with Firtash and Kolomoisky, and Yatsenyuk’s relations with Akhmetov, see Kononczuk (2016), p. 34.


\(^{59}\) Vorobey (2005), p. 220.
the Second World War. The Soviet period was characterized by a negative attitude towards philanthropy and social work in general. Charitable initiatives were deemed unnecessary, and the concept of philanthropy was something disgraceful. A law against religious cults in 1929 made charitable activities by religious organizations illegal, and these were replaced by the state system for health and social security. In the 1950, the Soviet Concise Dictionary of Foreign Words defines “philanthropy” as “a means the bourgeoisie uses to deceive workers and disguise the parasitism and its exploiter’s face by rendering hypocritical aid to the poor in order to distract the latter from class struggle.” In contrast, in contemporary dictionaries of Ukrainian language, charity (filantropia) is defined as “giving material help to needy”, and philanthropy (blagodinstvo) as “a voluntary, unselfish donation by physical and legal entities of material, financial, organizational and other charitable support to recipients; specific forms of philanthropy are patronage, sponsorship and volunteering activity.”

The negative sentiment towards private philanthropy in the Soviet era existed parallel to the social initiatives of directors. The role of directors at factories and kolkhozes in the Soviet Union was not only to manage but also make sure that the social needs of workers and their families were met, as well as to provide support of infrastructure on a local level. The centralized hierarchical power structure that the Soviet Union was based on, together with the eradication of property rights, wiped out all private initiatives, rights, and contracts.

Svitlana Kuts has extensively researched Ukrainian civil society and its philanthropic dimension. She describes the historical background of philanthropy in Ukraine and marks the old tradition of hospitality that made philanthropy excessive, and the formalized version of it in the mandatory Soviet subbotnik (community volunteer work, or “working Saturday”), which lost its

---

61 Kochnova (2009), p. 117.
65 http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/531/97-%D0%B2%D1%80
«благодійництво - доброярська безкорисна пожертва фізичних та юридичних осіб у поданні набувачам матеріальної, фінансової, організаційної та іншої благодійної допомоги; специфічними формами благодійництва є меценатство, спонсорство і волонтерська діяльність.»
67 Different definitions of civil society are flourishing. In the USA it is almost the equivalent of charitable organizations and private philanthropy, while in Sweden for example, most of civil society organizations receive state support and are not aiming at charity within the social sector. Yet another concept of interest here is philanthropy. According to figures from 1999 referred to by Kuts (2002), only 12 per cent of Ukrainian business philanthropy was given to charitable organizations with socially oriented goals.
philanthropic essence in that form." However, a “shadow social economy” was created in the social system of public welfare, and along with urbanization during the 1960s and 1970s, this tradition was realized through the family and informal networks, creating a wide social layer of informal service provision in Ukraine.

High levels of reciprocal interaction have been especially visible in the rural areas, where the state financed social service system could not appropriately function. The cities experienced better access to the services but the need for reciprocity did not decline at the same pace as the welfare services, because of urbanization and the dissolution of social bonds and the emerging gap between rich and poor. According to Kuts, a sociological survey made by Kharkiv University shows that 90 per cent of social service seekers search for aid within the private community. Only 10 per cent seek it in the organized public sector.

If the European understanding of the tradition of charity is to feel sorry for the poor, in the Slavic Orthodox tradition there is no difference between the understandings of “to feel sympathy for” and “to feel sorry for”, and it rather means “to love”. “That is why engaging in charity for Slavs is not to eradicate poverty, but rather a moral panacea for the soul”, the Ukrainian sociologist Kochnova argues. However, this meaning of charity has faded somewhat; charity in Ukraine today has lost its roots, she maintains. It does not resemble these traditional Maecenas and voluntary help to the deprived.

Big business developed their social programs, which they place under the banner Corporate Social Responsibility. But as the understanding of organizational and individual social responsibility for our compatriots is still alien, and our businessmen’s omnipotent thirst for wealth fits badly into both the European and the Slavic tradition of charity, this development gives instead a negative tone to charity.

The suspicious attitudes toward charity are also connected to the non-transparent character that it sometimes has in contemporary Ukraine. It functions as a way of laundering money or as a way of collecting compulsory “voluntary” gifts, a widespread practice in service-providing public sector

---

70 Kochnova (2009), p. 120. Translated by author. “Таким образом, помощь ближнему для славян не исчезновение бедность/бедноты, а скорее нравственная панацея для собственной души.”
71 Kochnova (2009) p. 120. Translated by author. “Крупные предприятия выработали свои социальные программы, которые вписываются в концепцию социальной ответственности бизнеса. А так как понятие социальной ответственности организаций и частных лиц для большинства наших соотечественников еще чуждо, да и всепоглощающая жаждобогатения отдельных коммерсантов не соседствует ни с европейской благотворительностью, ни с христианской милостыней, все это вместе сводит к нулю моральный облик благотворительности и дает повод к ее негативному пониманию.”
institutions. In addition, it can be a form of fake philanthropy that is words without substance. With a critical perspective towards philanthropy, I understand elite giving as having multifaceted functions. Apart from being beneficial to the donor and to the public, philanthropy entails a political influence on society, and can involve an impact on trust in society.

The role of elite giving in post-Soviet Ukraine

Expectations for the business elite can be understood as a legacy of the Soviet system, in which the higher-level managers had the resources and were expected to care of the workers and their families if they showed loyalty. Wynnyckyj, in his dissertation on entrepreneurs in Ukraine, has shown that “the expectation in society that those in positions of elevated status are obliged to dole out favors in return for loyalty seemed to have survived the structural changes brought on by marketization”. Despite hostile sentiments towards big business due to the privatization schemes in the beginning of 2000s, an opinion poll from 2008 showed that Ukrainians believed business possessed more resources for conducting reforms than the state and NGOs. Moreover, rich people are expected to fund political parties. In a multiple options survey, 41 per cent think “rich people” should support the political parties, while 61 per cent think it should be party members themselves that funded the parties.

Today, philanthropic organizations function next to state-maintained institutions and inter-community self-support networks as providers of social services. The following words are authored by an art group participating in a project, transcending the boundaries between the health sector and art, funded by Rinat Akhmetov who the richest man in Ukraine is according to newspapers ratings since around 2006 and the highest taxpayer since 2011:

The public sphere is in bad shape; it is in greater need of help than it is able to help those in need. But a private foundation sends fluorographs to hospitals. The same foundation—not the state—has given us the opportunity to cut into the walls of the National Art Museum. […] All over, crumbling state monopolism capitulates to private initiatives. Anarcho-capitalism rules.

Irrespective of how much this printed statement is under the control of the richest man himself—one of the most influential actors in this “anarcho-

74 Kesarchuk (2008), p. 15.
75 GFK Ukraine (2014).
76 Kuts (2002). In 2015, almost 10 thousand charity organizations spent on charitable purposes totally over 9 billion UAH, equivalent to 389 million USD (Gulevska Chernysh 2017). Comparing this figure with the public budget expenditures of 103 billion hryvnia (4,241 billion USD) the same year, makes it almost one-tenth the size of public expenditures.
77 REP Group and Ostrovska-Liuta (2010).
capitalism”—it is nevertheless confirmed by the artists, which exposes both societal criticism and support for these initiatives.

These economic actors have great potential, but their lack of accountability makes them capricious. In their political and economic roles in Ukrainian society, they have been ambivalent at best or, at worst, interfering and manipulative. This group may become a constructive force for change, but it “remains to be seen if they will overcome the temptation to play the role of ‘kingmakers’”, policy analyst Yael Ohana wrote in 2007. These potential philanthropists have large sums to spend, but a number of ethical questions are raised by the involvement of such actors in philanthropy.

Motivation and accountability come to the fore in discussions of the validity of their active involvement. To the extent that the state claims not to be “in a position to say no” and independent actors are simply not consulted, the Oligarchs are de facto implied in the determination of public policy and gain even deeper footholds in the political decision-making sphere (whether formalized or not).  

Accountability is not the only problematic aspect of giving. Giving also tends to create bonds of loyalty that can be harmful from a recipient’s perspective. Marcel Mauss highlights the negative aspects of the gift culture: “…to receive from kings is honey at first but ends as poison”, Or as Al Pacino’s character in the mafia movie Carlito’s Way put it: “Favor gonna kill you faster than a bullet”. Mauss also argues, “To give is to show ones superiority, to show that one is something more and higher, that one is magister. To accept without returning or repaying more is to face subordination, to become client and subservient, to become minister.”

Scholars have highlighted similarities between Ukrainian capitalists and their American counterparts in the 19th century. However, while private property and wealth accumulation have been similarly emerging in the two societies, the Soviet legacy differs from the American pre-industrial era. Whereas in America the welfare state was developing simultaneously with the private industries, the post-Soviet societies emerged from an era of industrialization and a large public sector permeating the whole society. Max Weber observed that people were not content to have merely a good fortune, but wanted to feel that their fortune was deserved, which is often the same as being earned: “Good fortune thus wants to be ‘legitimate’ fortune”. Ostrower, in her study of elite giving in the United States, finds that donors often claim

82 Åslund (2005); Rawlingson (2002).
83 For the argument that certain social services were implemented already by the late 19th century, see Skocpol (1992).
they have no guilt because they earned their fortune through their own efforts. She argues that they seek status among their social peers rather than legitimating their fortune in the eyes of the less well off in society. Others argue that there is a question of legitimacy behind all philanthropy foundations, of all times. Possibly the post-Soviet elites are in greater need of legitimacy than their American counterparts?

Research by Wynnyckyj and Frye point in that direction. Wynnyckyj argues that growth-oriented post-Soviet Ukrainian entrepreneurs seek to legitimize their status in the new market environment through charity and high profile investments. Concerning oligarchs and big business, Frye advances the “original sin” argument in which the propertied class tries to legitimize itself in the eyes of society through “good works” and provision of “public goods.” According to this perception, we can expect some of these giving organizations to aim not only at redistributing some wealth, but also at legitimizing property rights seen as illegitimate by parts of the population.

Recent quantitative research by Markus & Charnysh on Ukrainian oligarchs shows how unofficial funding of parties and parliamentarians together with media ownership is a more efficient way of wealth defense than an official political position, which can be sensitive to political changes. I will build on this research by studying legitimation strategy differences between the various sub-groups of oligarchs, and by paying attention to access to media channels as a crucial role in legitimation strategies.

Purpose, research questions, and outline

Against this background, it is time to review the purpose and research questions of the thesis. The thesis focuses on the creation of social legitimacy by the economic elite in Ukraine. Legitimacy is an integral value of accepted power and authority, but in a context in which radical transformations occur, legitimacy is often under attack or is in demand. Legitimacy is intimately related to elites; in order to govern, and to effectively exercise authority or hold an extraordinary position in society, elites need to have legitimacy. The case being studied involves the wealthy elite in the Ukrainian society, where authority needs to be defended perhaps to a greater extent than in stable democracies. By constructing their image, members of the wealthy elite—among them oligarchs—seek legitimacy. In stable democracies, elites are constrained by the institutions. However, in societies undergoing reform and transformation, where institutions are in flux, elites consequently have wider avenues

---

86 Hammack (2016).
89 Markus & Charnysh (2017).
of choice and action. Individual elites need to be contextualized and balanced with the institutional structures of a given period. 

With the point of departure that both agency and institutions matter, this is an actor-focused study of the economic and political transformation in post-Soviet Ukraine. A great deal of transition research focuses on structures on a macro level, while this study instead highlights the micro level. It contributes to the understanding of the strategies of some highly influential actors throughout this transformative period, with emphasis on the time between and after two popular uprisings: the Orange Revolution 2004–2005 and the Maidan 2013–2014.

Legitimation strategies are here operationalized as image construction composed of content and exposure. Content is operationalized in social responsibility (here as giving), and exposure is operationalized in the visibility of social responsibility. My objective is not only to investigate these activities in relation to the founders/donors, but also the claimed wider social ambition of these activities, which I will do by examining foundation representatives’ and donors’ attitudes toward the state.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the social welfare provision has suffered severely from great holes in the public budget. Do the wealthy elite now want to change or support the state or, rather, complement it? Are they compensating for state failure or rather maintaining state failure? Do they want to compete with the state and ultimately replace it, because it is malfunctioning or because of individual power ambitions? These giving organizations claim they are apolitical while their founders are at the same time politicians, which makes these questions particularly relevant.

My research questions are: how do the wealthy Ukrainian elite organize their giving initiatives? What is the image they are trying to build? And, what are their relations and attitudes toward the state? I also address the dynamics of legitimation strategies during both relative stability and political turmoil. Thus, the thesis contributes to the understanding of oligarchs’ legitimation strategies as well as the role of elite giving in transition economies and in social change movements.

The four essays in this dissertation provide various perspectives on this general problem. The institutionalization of giving is the topic of Essay I, addressing how the wealthy elite in post-Soviet Ukraine have chosen to organize their giving activities, and which purposes these organizations may serve. In Essay II, with co-authors Maxim Alyukov and Raphi Rechitsky, I study how two oligarchs control their image via newspapers before, during and after the protests 2013–2014, and how the legitimacy of the figure of the oligarch altered. Essay III investigates the self-presented justification of giving and image promotion of the same two oligarchs studied in Essay II. Essay IV

---

examines how the Maidan affected the legitimation strategies of five members of the wealthy elite, looking at their behavior as well as the reception of these legitimation attempts among a selection of grassroots organizations.

Table 2. *Paper Overview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay</th>
<th>Study focus</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Main sources</th>
<th>Focus period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Institutionalization of giving: <em>Social Responsibility and Visibility</em></td>
<td>Mapping organizations and focus areas</td>
<td>Original interviews (with foundation representatives)</td>
<td>2011–2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Media: <em>Visibility</em></td>
<td>Framing analysis of the image of the “oligarch” and legitimation strategies of business magnates during social protests</td>
<td>Press material (Coverage of six Ukrainian and Russian newspapers)</td>
<td>2013–2014 (Maidan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Justification of Giving: <em>Social Responsibility and Visibility</em></td>
<td>Exploring giving rationales through an analytical framework of worth logics</td>
<td>Press material (Published interviews with oligarchs)</td>
<td>2004–2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Giving Organizations and elite individuals during political turmoil: <em>(In)visibility.</em></td>
<td>Analyzing foundations and business magnates action during social protests</td>
<td>Original interviews with foundation representatives and grassroots social movements representatives</td>
<td>2013–2016 (post Maidan)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analytical framework

Why elite giving?^92^?

What is the rationale behind elite giving in post-Soviet Ukraine? Are the elite now trying to become recognized and respected “post-oligarchs”? A plurality of motives is always present behind actor decisions, but some may be more distinguished than others. In the literature on philanthropy and elite giving, two types of driving forces are crystallized. The first one refers to motives of power, survival, credibility, control and superiority, and the second points to recognition, status, and legitimacy.~94~ The logics are that when material satisfaction already is in place “the really expensive desires are not dictated by a love of material comfort [...] [they] are sought for the sake of power or glory”, to quote Bertrand Russell.~95~ As the studied actors in this dissertation operate in a state of transformation, where business, politics and the civic life intersect, I will additionally make use of theories aimed to serve the analysis of historical political rulers and corporations.

The first fraction, the power-oriented strand of literature, is rooted in the theory of cultural hegemony that Marxist Antonio Gramsci developed while imprisoned by Benito Mussolini’s fascist regime in Italy. The theory describes how states use cultural institutions to maintain power in capitalist societies. In the current scholarship, Nicolas Guilhot employs this hegemonic and Gramscian perspective as he analyses the role of elite giving, interpreting it as mainly the reproduction of capital in different forms: securing future stability through ideology production; fostering a favorable international environment; maintaining state relations as power relations; and fishing for political mandates.~96~ An example of ideology production would be that philanthropic initiatives directed at higher education may be regarded as a strategy to disseminate knowledge favorable to market economy. To expose young leaders to mainstream economic doctrines and thus to form future elites would promote the values and socioeconomic order favorable for the business elite. This

---

~92~ The choice of term is discussed in the introduction above and in Essay I.
~93~ Guilhot (2007); Lin (2004).
~94~ Ostrower (1995); Adam (2009); Fukuyama (2011), etc.
~95~ Russell (1938/2004).
would ensure that economy and social reforms would be congruent with their own interests. Guilhot points to the Rockefeller Foundation as the best example of this strategy that consisted of “separating research from activism, and in banning any form of normative orientation in the social sciences in favor of an objectivist and pragmatic empiricism, pitted against the historical sciences.”  

The Rockefellers were criticizing the “traditional philanthropists”, arguing for the need of modern management techniques and technical solutions over political ones.

While Guilhot holds an instrumentalist perspective, the historian Alfred H. Y. Lin promotes an integrative perspective in his study of governing elites’ clientelistic ties during a period of warlordism China in the early 20th century. He identifies two reasons for why it was important to the warlord to engage in pro-social behavior. Firstly, satisfying the social needs of the population was vital to the credibility and survival of his regime. Secondly, the administration of social welfare and philanthropy by a warlord was integral to his drive toward total control of state and society. 

While Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was coined due to the consequences of globalization, corporate executives and certain businesspeople have sought political influence as a response to the empowered nation states in the mid-20th century. The management researcher Michael Useem has shown how, in both Britain and the USA in the 1960s and 1970s, a network of corporate executives in a so-called “inner circle” influenced politics by, among other things, assisting in the governance of non-profit organizations and donating considerable amounts to universities. This increased interest of private corporations to care about society was justified with an idea that “what is good for society is also good for business”. It was according to Useem, however, ultimately due to increased power of government and labor, creating a need for business to influence politics in order to survive.

The second fraction of the literature emphasizes recognition, status, and legitimacy. Ostrower purports the importance of status. Wealth, just like poverty, is relative. Those who are unable to satisfy status-related ends will feel poor. She argues that variations in philanthropic giving grow out of differences rooted in the social organization of the elite groups to which donors themselves belong. Elite groups must be close with respect to ideological alignments, as the social elite are characterized by a common set of values and a distinct cultural identity within the group. “Historically, such elites have

99 Useem (1984), see, for example, p 76.
often managed to exert an influence in the cultural sphere after their authority in other arenas, such as politics, has been eclipsed.”\textsuperscript{103}

Francis Fukuyama argues in his work on the historical development of political order that recognition is part of the biological foundation of human interaction and thus also of politics: “Recognition when granted becomes the basis of legitimacy, and legitimacy then permits the exercise of political authority.”\textsuperscript{104} He goes on to say that political power depends not only on the resources and population that a society can command but also on “the degree to which the legitimacy of leaders and institutions is recognized.”\textsuperscript{105} Similarly, in her study on the Swedish government Garme claims that the ruler’s motive is dependent on the emotions of individuals in his/her/their surroundings. It relates to a goal that is immaterial or “soft” support (i.e., recognition, esteem, praise, affection), although she acknowledges that this also contains an instrumental aspect in that it bolsters rule and furthers the chances of re-election.\textsuperscript{106}

Having dealt with the literature on elite giving and elite authority, let us turn to theories on why and how corporations engage in “corporate social responsibility” or “pro-social behavior”, a scholarship that has developed greatly since the late 1980s. The theory of corporate legitimacy holds that the company uses alternative strategies to gain, maintain, or repair their legitimacy, normally through CSR. In 1982, Hogner hypothesized that social disclosure was both motivated by, but also and symptomatic of, corporate needs for legitimacy.\textsuperscript{107} A few years later, this hypothesis was rejected on the basis that there was no systemic reaction between corporate disclosure peaks and relevant social, political, and economic events.\textsuperscript{108} However, this rejection has since been refuted by prominent researchers.\textsuperscript{109} Legitimation can be a long-term project and co-exist with other motives.

Theories that are more complex have emerged, including more actor (manager) dependent variations of motives,\textsuperscript{110} and variations in rhetorical rationales.\textsuperscript{111} The instrumental perspective was dominant throughout the 1980s and 1990s, meaning that “pro-social activities” are instrument for another end, commonly understood as profit maximization. The integrative perspective focuses on the public responsibility of these strategies in terms of greater social acceptance and prestige, i.e. social legitimacy.\textsuperscript{112} The political perspective

\textsuperscript{103} Ostrower (1995), p. 25.
\textsuperscript{104} Fukuyama (2011), p. 43.
\textsuperscript{105} Fukuyama (2011), p. 43.
\textsuperscript{106} Garme (2001).
\textsuperscript{107} Hogner (1982).
\textsuperscript{108} Guthrie & Parker (1989).
\textsuperscript{109} See for example, Deegan (2002); Tilling (2004); Galang & Castelló (2014).
\textsuperscript{110} See for example Garriga & Mele (2014), p. 52 f.
\textsuperscript{111} See for example Vaara & Tienari (2008).
\textsuperscript{112} Garriga & Mele (2004), p. 52 f.
sees the corporation’s involvement in social activities as political, making how corporations understand their changing role in enabling, providing, and channeling societal needs crucial. From this perspective, the role of socially responsible activities in society and especially the relations to the state can be studied.

Returning to elite giving organizations, neither profit nor power can be understood as short-term goals, but rather long-term. However, a necessary first step in order to reach these aims is recognition or legitimacy among other societal actors. Since I study giving by those who are among the wealthiest in the country, they already possess power and material resources. Moreover, those being studied have suffering reputations, suggesting a need for improved images.

The theoretical research discussed here will function as a backdrop for my choice of analytical perspective. The legitimacy perspective is a combination of the integrative and the political perspective on corporate pro-social behavior. It directly relates to both strands of literatures on motives of elite giving. In other words, the legitimation perspective focuses on giving as a social phenomenon that creates legitimacy for the donor, while also recognizing the political role of these activities in the wider society.

Legitimacy

Historically, there have been economic elites who have transformed their position in society. The Belgian historian Henri Pirenne described the social history of capitalism in terms of regular social mechanisms in which the bourgeoisie and merchants had a tendency to eventually, after two or three generations, advance and become gentry (the upper division of the French bourgeoisie) or nobility. To become landholding gentry was something to strive for, and when reached, they looked upon their bourgeoisie past with dishonor. However, this move was not optional, as once they had made their fortunes, their deeds belonged to the past and they would not be able to adapt to the new epoch of capitalists. In order to survive, they had to climb the ladder. Fernand Braudel asks how the sustainability of power concentration can be explained, despite all revolutions. How do the privileged put

115 Braudel (1979/1986), p. 455 in Swedish translation. See also Mills (1956/2000) p. 12: The American society differs from the European as they never passed through a feudal epoch, meaning that no nobility or aristocracy, established before the capitalist era, stood in tense opposition to the higher bourgeoisie.
themselves in respect to the people beneath them? In order to maintain power, legitimacy is needed and can possibly be gained via recognition among the audience. Striving for legitimacy may be a driving force in its own right, but it may also be a way to maintain a competitive power position.

Here, I will define the key term “legitimacy” and present my understanding of its key components. The concept is used in various ways within different disciplines and fields, but one clear distinction can be made between sociological and normative legitimacy. Normative, or prescriptive, legitimacy most often refers to institutions’ right to rule if they satisfy conditions and criteria that institutions should possess if they in fact have the moral right to rule, referring to the formal, legal right. This thesis presents the concept of legitimacy as social legitimacy, i.e., people’s perceptions of institutions or actors as legitimate if they are perceived to have the moral right to rule or hold authority; in this case, to legitimize their extraordinary position in society. The thesis uses the understanding of legitimacy defined by Suchman as a generalized assumption that the actions of an entity (actor or organization) are “desirable, proper or appropriate within one socially constructed system of norms, values and beliefs, and definitions”.

In recognizing the political, social and economic context, legitimacy theory is part of political economy theory. Stakeholder theory also has its roots in political economy theory and can be seen as a sister theory to legitimacy theory. While legitimacy theory focuses on the social contract, with a wide definition of society, stakeholder theory acknowledges various groups in society. I will also pay attention to this when I look at different audiences of the giving initiatives. Therefore, my work should be understood as part of the field of political economy theory.

Legitimacy is also essential to institutional theory but there is one important difference. Legitimacy theory centers on actors; these actors can actually alter what is seen as legitimate or, in other words, the “state” of legitimacy. Institutional theory, on the other hand, mainly sees a one-way street of influence: from institutions to agents, where agents are anticipated to adapt to norms that are largely imposed on them.

Hence, there are two layers of legitimacy: institutional and organizational/actor-based. This can be explained by the fact that:

---

120 A theory that developed as a critique to shareholder theory. While shareholder theory holds that the sole interest of business is to increase the profits for its shareholders, stakeholder theory acknowledges various groups such as employees, suppliers, and the society as a whole as affected by decisions and should therefore be taken into consideration.
121 Deegan (2002).
[O]rganizations seek to establish congruence between the social values associated with or implied by their activities and the norms of acceptable behaviour in the larger social system in which they are part. In so far as these two value systems are congruent we can speak of organizational legitimacy. When an actual or potential disparity exists between the two value systems there will exist a threat to organizational legitimacy.¹²²

Now that the legitimacy theory has been established as point of departure for the study at hand, how has the literature dealt with how legitimation may be achieved? In 1970, Perrow pointed at three ways to legitimate an organization: To adapt to conform to prevailing definitions of legitimacy, to alter the definition of social legitimacy so that it conforms to the organization’s values and practices, or to become identified with symbols, values, institutions which have a strong base of social legitimacy.¹²³ *Image* is closely related to legitimacy, and in this thesis, I use image as an operationalization of legitimacy. Image is “the perception of a person (or group, or organization) held by the audience, shaped by the words and actions of that person, as well as by the discourse and behavior of other relevant actors”.¹²⁴ I am empirically investigating the words and actions of the actor, as well as relations to other social actors and movements. How do the wealthy elite work to improve and control their image?

Improving an image is a matter of content and exposure. I choose to interpret content as social responsibility by breaking it up in organization and activities. By organization, I mean how an actor chooses to organize activities aimed at legitimation. The organization I am looking at is the giving organization, while other organizations like their companies and their CSR agendas are not included. By activities, I mean program focus and action. I interpret exposure as the visibility of the good deeds defined under “content” a necessary feature for legitimation. Visibility is analyzed in audiences, and arenas for exposure. All aspects will be analyzed within the institutional and social context within which they operate.¹²⁵ The context will be particularly emphasized in the state-relation analysis. The following part of the analytical framework section is structured according to this map.

---
Social responsibility
There are a number of questions related to understanding this analytical topic. How do the wealthy elite act and organize their activities in order to legitimate their extraordinary position in society? What are the individual decisions of giving: what is supported and what is not? Furthermore, how sensitive are the wealthy elite to dynamic norms? Are they agents of change or respondents of change?

Organization
Studying the institutionalization of giving, which is the subject for Essay I, from the wider perspective of political CSR, legitimation theory and recognition of Soviet legacy helps enhance the understanding of the role of elite giving in society. In the Soviet economy, blat was a widespread practice. It is defined as a form of corruption or as exchanges of goods and services in a shortage economy. Ledeneva coins the concept “regime of status”, which illuminates the hierarchy between, for example, enterprise directors and subordinates.126 Occupational status included significant social responsibilities. In theory, goods and services were equitably provided by the state to all members of the workers’ collective. However, in practice, it was the director of an enterprise that controlled the distribution, “a fact that inevitably introduced a measure of subjectivity with respect to who got what”.127 Naturally, expectations on these individuals with prestigious positions were high:

---

Individuals who held prestigious positions in society were expected to provide their subordinates with access to goods and services that were perennially in shortage, and in return, subordinates offered loyalty and token gifts (e.g. chocolates, alcoholic beverages, flowers) as expressions of gratitude—particularly when the favors provided by high-status individuals were impossible to repay.\(^{128}\)

Status is used as in patron-client relations when the superiors are supposed to know the ways, to control them, and to take responsibility, while the subordinates are to be loyal and respectful.\(^{129}\)

In oligarchic structures, the economic and political spheres are particularly intertwined. I am interested in the boundaries between the spheres of giving, politics, the corporation, and the civil society. Furthermore, I am studying how socially responsible activities are organized, specifically, organizational control, donor dependency, funding structure, and the institutional framework.

Activities
The types of gifts involved in the blat practice are typically forms of social welfare assistance. Other forms of elite giving in contemporary Ukraine can entail empowerment of citizens in order to develop a society towards democratization. Yet other gifts are extraordinarily visible and aim at, among other things, exposing the name of the donor. These different fields of giving will be investigated in Essay I.

Next, how do the wealthy elite and their giving organizations act in relation to social and political change? In the way sociological legitimacy considers the dynamics of norms and as such, it adds to the corporate legitimacy perspective, which understands the importance of “logics of appropriateness” but does not elaborate on how that might change.\(^{130}\) Finnemore & Sikkink maps norms dynamics and political change by identifying processes and actors required for “norm emergence”, “norm cascade”, and “internalizations”, as three stages of norms dynamics. Motives for engaging in the second stage—norm cascade—are legitimacy, esteem, and reputation.\(^{131}\) While Finnemore & Sikkink have states and international organizations in mind as actors, I argue that it is fruitful to see also individual elite actors, especially in transitional states where their influence are deemed immense as drivers or, for that matter, decelerators of changing norms. As a way to stay legitimate in their extraordinary societal position, adapting to new norms may be a way of maintaining a position in society. Braudel, regarding the social hierarchies in continental Europe 1400–1800, argues that the dominating class sometimes changes ideology or mentality; they accept or appear to accept ideas that the newcomers or

rather the socio-economic environment hold, that they deny themselves, at least ostensibly. The gentry became liberal, wanted to limit the king’s power, and worked for a revolution without vandalism or disturbances.  

Transition theories about how autocracies transformed into democracies focus largely on the role of the elite as agents of change. They were a reaction to modernization theory that had been the leading theory in the 1960s and 1970s. Lane, instead, prefers the more critical perspective in line with Wright Mills; he believes that there has been too much emphasis on elites as drivers of the transformation process in post-Soviet: “Elite theorists are correct in pointing to the separations of elites from classes, but they have ignored the ways in which elites respond to, and are shaped by class interests.” At the same time, he criticizes the theories of the nomenclatura elite and the ideocratic elite, as these tend to ignore renewal and the role of individual agency, ideology, and action. This, he means, illustrates a failure in elite studies. A “reproduction” of elites does not necessarily lead to a reconstitution of the former system.

Is it possible to democratize Ukraine at all? Hale argues that the heritage of patronal politics in post-Soviet is so deeply rooted that it is very difficult to break. Patronal politics refers to politics in societies:

[O]rganized around the personalized exchange of concrete rewards and punishments through chains of actual acquaintance, and not primarily around abstract, impersonal principles such as ideological belief or categorizations like economic class that include many people one has not actually met in person.

In Hale’s terms, patronal politics connotes a broad social equilibrium, encompassing relations both inside and outside the realm of politics and the state. We have already established that elites have wider opportunity for action in states in transition than in developed democracies. In the literature, Radnitz has analyzed this in his study of Kyrgyzstan: “Embedded autonomous elites […] can activate latent vertical and horizontal network ties for protest if they are challenged by the regime.” Further, he means that civic organizations may indeed play an important role, but they still need the help of elites:

---

133 Transition theory was developed by theorists such as Adam Przeworski, P.C. Schmitter, G. O’Donnell, J. J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, and John Higley. See Lane (2011), p. 34.
140 Radnitz (2010), pp. 10, 17: “Independent elites in turn may see regimes, which control the instruments of coercion, as a threat to their liberty and property, and seek strategies of self-protection.”
In many cases, the final blow has come from the loss of support of critical elite actors, such as businessmen, independent members of the legislature, and informal leader in the society. These actors, which I identify as independent elites, are potential kingmakers.\textsuperscript{141}

Radnitz emphasizes the importance of defining the interests, which are supported and promoted by elite pacts, as well as those groups who are excluded.\textsuperscript{142}

That the elite and their institutions must change in order to survive is a fundamental insight of elite theory since the basis for elite status differs across time and space.\textsuperscript{143} However, Ostrower argues that philanthropy remains a constant feature, even if its shape slightly changes. For example, the American 1980s context experienced a change; donors from outside the status class now had access to the boards and sometimes outnumbered the old elite.\textsuperscript{144} Ostrower contends that philanthropy provides a case study in the evolution of status processes within the elite.\textsuperscript{145} Based on how they frame themselves and how they behave, the question is what happens in the reformulation of elite socio-economic positions? What happens to legitimacy strategies during political turmoil? This is the subject for Essay IV.

Visibility

Historical analyses of philanthropy have recognized it as a stage for status competition among the elite; they have also purported the importance of studying the variations and tensions that occur within the general boundaries of elite philanthropy.\textsuperscript{146} Thomas Adam’s approach is that philanthropy was a key element of elite identity. Conflicts between different factions of elites were fought out not using money but taste. The newly rich industrialists in 19\textsuperscript{th} century New York and Toronto needed more than just money to gain recognition from the established social elites; philanthropy, building impressive mansions, or traveling to Europe were ways to achieve it.\textsuperscript{147} There is no doubt that many philanthropists acted out of religious feelings and humanistic values, however, elite philanthropy was always a public and much publicized event. The wealthy and rich gave not only out of feelings of responsibility but also out of a desire to be recognized by their peers, and not only by peers. Elite philanthropy shares many elements with Veblen’s concept of conspicuous

\textsuperscript{141} Radnitz (2010), p. 17.
\textsuperscript{142} Lane (2011), p. 3.
\textsuperscript{143} Ostrower (1995), p. 10.
\textsuperscript{144} Ostrower (1995), p. 140.
\textsuperscript{145} Ostrower (1995), p. 11.
\textsuperscript{146} Ostrower (1995), p. 28; Adam (2009).
\textsuperscript{147} Adam (2009), pp. 11, 90, 99–100.
consumption. The idea behind conspicuous consumption is that you consume in order to improve your status within the class and show differences in relation to lower classes. To donate something conspicuous with your signature strengthens your status; this can be a form of conspicuous donation, with the same aims as conspicuous consumption. Since philanthropists decided about exhibitions in museums and which books to buy to libraries, it can be argued that the feudal model of social stratification was cemented into the modern era. Adam claims that although the success of these norms is questionable: “philanthropic institutions provided their founders with a cultural power structure that runs parallel to the political power structure”.

Audiences
Literature on elite giving and legitimation strategies does not say much about the variation of audiences. In most cases, a general public is assumed and not further elaborated. Garme, however, points to the existence of “all sorts of audiences” when she stresses that this motive to gain soft support is directed to all sorts of audiences, including future onlookers, the surrounding world, the writers of history, etc. Ostrower highlights social peers, while Suchman in his definition of legitimacy views “society” as a homogenous mass. As I have mentioned, stakeholder theory takes the variations in society into account. This is something that I will use particularly in Essay I where I identify geographically and socially diverse audiences.

Arenas
To gain legitimacy, socially responsible initiatives needs to be visible. So-called hyper projects are characteristically conspicuous, and the use of mass media is a central instrument for reaching out to broader audiences. I will look closer into the media strategies of two of the studied oligarchs in Essay II and III. Western corporate media ownership is usually internal; owners’ financial goals are limited to capital accumulation from their media business. In post-Soviet societies, corporate media ownership is usually “external”, with oligarchs that own media outlets “interested first of all in their political capital or in development of other kinds of business for which they need the advertising-propaganda resource”. Similarly, Ryabinska notes that Ukrainian media

---

148 Veblen (1899).
owners do not see media as an important source of capital. Rather, they con-
sider media as an instrument to “accumulate political influence and “convert”
it into opportunities to develop or support their main businesses”. Hence,
scholars of post-Soviet societies have identified media ownership as a key in-
dicator of the oligarchic power of actors in post-Soviet countries like Ukraine
that continue to undergo social and political change. While studies of oli-
garch owned media during the Ukrainian recent revolutionary movement have
focused on the protest coverage in TV, the study at hand adds to existing
research by examining printed and online news press over a longer time pe-
riod.

Social legitimacy and the state
In the way that philanthropy is commonly described as private wealth directed
at producing public benefits, it has a built-in tension between public and pri-
vate. It is easy to say that private funds are none of anyone else’s business,
but also simultaneously easy to be critical to the undemocratic nature of phi-
lanthropy, the lack of accountability, and the almighty power of interpreting
the public needs.

The role of giving initiatives in relation to the state and the public sector is
particularly relevant in a transition state. Since the actors studied are also in-
fluential in politics, it is impossible to study the two spheres separately. What
does the way an actor chooses to organize image-building activities say about
the relation to the state and the ambition of the private actor?

As argued by prominent researchers in the field, empirical research on the
relation between philanthropy foundations and government is limited, and
the field is, to my knowledge, very sparsely studied in Ukraine and exclusively
with a broader civil society focus. Ostrower and Shimoni have found in their
studies of elite giving in the US and Israel, respectively, that the elite donors
expressed dissatisfaction with the government’s poor performance in dealing
with social welfare problems and criticized the excessive bureaucracy and lack
of professionalism.

---

155 See Pleines (2009); Ryabinska (2011); Ryabinska (2014).
156 Szostek (2014); Leshchenko (2015).
157 Anheier & Daly (2004), p. 159 define philanthropy as “the voluntary use of private assets
for the benefit of specific public causes”. Payton & Moody (2008) p. 27 define the term as
158 See Frumkin (2006), pp. 1–2; Weinryb (2015); Leat (2016), p. 53;
159 Valuable contributions from Ostrower (1995); Frumkin (2006); Shimoni (2017).
160 NGOs and state relations in Ukraine are researched by Kuts (2002); Civil Society Organi-
zations in Ukraine: The State and Dynamics (2010); Romaniuk (2009).
According to research by Svitlana Kuts, a broad spectrum of philanthropic organizations functions next to state-maintained institutes and inter-community self-support networks act as providers of social services in Ukraine. When the public sector is of a poor quality and suffers from corruption\(^{162}\), and when grass-root NGOs are almost non-existent and questioned at best (as was the case at least before the Maidan protests), private foundations could be the actors that step in as rescuers. Taking inspiration from previous research on the relation between civil society and the government,\(^{163}\) I choose to analyze these practices as *compensating*, *competing with*, or *changing* the state.\(^{164}\) In what follows, I will present these alternatives against a background of combined research on western liberal democracies with research on Soviet and post-Soviet context.

How may expectations, practices, and institutions from the Soviet era influence elite giving organizations in contemporary Ukraine? Since the wealthy elite that I study in most cases come from a business background, the giving initiatives may be rooted in a tradition of the social role of the manager, historically globally and post-Soviet specifically.

In his study of the Kyrgyz and Uzbek post-Soviet elite relations to regimes and grass-root protest, Radnitz presents the concept of “subversive clientelism”, which is the creation of a social support base by making material and symbolic investments in local communities: “If challenged from above, elites who have cultivated a support base can mobilize loyal supporters in their defense.”\(^{165}\) The elite provide welfare that the state is unable or unwilling to provide and beneficiaries see the transaction as legitimate; “As non-state actors usurp the functional role and legitimacy of the state stemming from the state’s failure to provide for its citizens, clientelism can easily take on a political cast—and may even become subversive.”\(^{166}\) This can be interpreted as a competitive stand against the state.

A way for elites to strengthen their position is to seek protection from below by creating a social support base. Instead of searching for an easy exit to escape to abroad, they tie themselves down by embedding themselves more deeply in society. Instead of securing their position among higher authorities working within the system:

\(^{162}\) Ukraine scores number 144 (of 177) on Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. Available at: http://www.transparency.org/country#UKR.

\(^{163}\) Najam (2000); Young (2000); Dimaggio & Anheier (1990); Frumkin (2006).

\(^{164}\) For example, Najam (2002) identifies Cooperation, Complementarity, Co-optation, Confrontation, and Frumkin (2006), pp. 49–52 identifies philanthropy as Supplementary, Complementary, Adverse or Autonomous in relation to the state.

\(^{165}\) Radnitz (2010), p. 5. Original emphasis.

\(^{166}\) Radnitz (2010), p. 28.
[T]hey invest resources to earn the support of people who are essentially excluded from the system, in order to defend against abuses of that system. Although elites may engage in some combination of insurance strategies, engaging in subversive clientelism may be the last line of defense.¹⁶⁷

Competition with the state is operationalized in a combination of conspicuous donations, high donor dependency, and an attitude that claim the incapability of the state to take on welfare services. Actors have no interest in changing the state or supporting it.

The political perspective on CSR emerged as a response to globalization, which politicized the firm and challenged the instrumental perspective of legitimacy.¹⁶⁸ It is defined by seminal works by Guido Palazzo with co-authors.¹⁶⁹ Corporations become politicized in two ways; first, they are expected to take on an enlarged understanding of responsibility. Second, they help to solve political problems in cooperation with the state actors and civil society actors.¹⁷⁰ Gond et al. draw parallels to the Mafia, pointing at the creation of similar kinds of clientelistic relations.¹⁷¹ In their study of CSR in Russia, Henry et al. argue that local factors like “expectations about the behavior of economic enterprises, the low capacity of the state to deliver welfare and infrastructure, and the lingering effects of the integration of political and economic decision-making” from the Soviet period promote a continuity in relations between industry and local communities.¹⁷² This creates a neo-paternalistic perspective towards companies’ pro-social behavior.

Highlighting the political aspect of CSR is particularly productive for the attitudes on the relations between the philanthropic foundations and the state. In political CSR discourse, the enterprises are taking over the role of the state as they are taking responsibility for citizen’s rights when they operate in weak

¹⁷¹ Gond, Palazzo & Basu (2009). In philanthropy, the concept “Philanthrocapitalism” developed recently is argued by Bishop and Green to be a new phenomenon and is characterized by assuming previously political welfare tasks under an apolitical label. Michael Edwards (2009) develops the concept and makes two assumptions about the phenomenon. First, philanthro-capitalism will generate enough private resources to be able to compensate for a decline in aid from governments and NGOs. Secondly, philanthro-capitalism will achieve better and more sustainable results in these areas because it privileges the market as a superior mechanism for generating large-scale economic and social change, while the traditional development-industry must function on highly-fractured and bureaucratic structures”. A critical perspective is presented by Nickel & Eikenberry (2009). They argue that “apolitical operations” become political when they take on the fight to tackle social ills. These operations also become political when the donors become politicians with political power.
states. Political philanthropy can be interpreted as assuming the responsibility of welfare from the state (and thereby eradicating citizen’s rights). This is a way of *compensating* the public sector or the state. Compensating can either entail supporting status quo as mentioned above or include a change-agenda. The organization compensates the state in what is normally a welfare state’s social security program. Complementing the state falls under the same analytical concept “compensating” but can be described as when the organizations takes on issues not normally undertaken by a welfare state and. Compensating for the public sector may also be interpreted as a way of maintaining a power position vis-à-vis the citizens. A private foundation never gives *any rights* to the citizens or potential beneficiaries. There is always a hierarchical relation between the giver and the recipient, something that is not be the case in a welfare state. In a welfare state, the public sector meets the same kind of needs, but as an equal relationship. All citizens are equal and entitled to certain support. If the donations are on a small scale and given in fields that are not “normally” in the sphere of the public sector, they can function as opportunities for innovation. To support the state’s agenda and institutions also goes under the heading “compensate the state”.

To *change* the state means to create platforms that nourish democratic thinking or “mind opening” for the Ukrainian public. Education, empowerment of human rights, and contemporary art could fit into this agenda. However, the organization should be an independent force in order to fully be interpreted as an actor for change.

Nevertheless, discussing the state as a constant is impossible regarding a state in transformation that is experiencing rather drastic regime changes. Thus, the attitude towards the state is expected to be very dependent on political leadership. Is this also a sign that these foundations, claiming to be apolitical, are essentially political? Using an analytical framework that provides an analysis of the legitimation strategies’ relations to the state, and whether these relations change over political leadership, it may be possible to determine the ways in which these legitimation strategies are political or not.

---

In the previous discussion on motives behind elite giving, I concluded that motives are multifaceted and not mutually exclusive, thus difficult to differentiate between. However, the ultimate need of legitimacy proves a fruitful point of departure for studying elite giving in the post-Soviet Ukrainian context. The literature shows that there are different nuances of legitimation that are important to highlight. The Anglo-Saxon literature on corporate legitimation and elite giving emphasizes the political role of giving and power and recognition are driving forces. In the post-Soviet research, an additional driving force of moral responsibility is suggested. “Recognition” and “reproduction of capital” are concepts focusing on a personal interest and a “rational choice” of the actor, while also acknowledging the context and norms in society and with a wider aim to seek legitimacy. “Responsibility” is slightly different, since it has an implicit aim to contribute to public good, or private good. “Clientelism” is connected to legitimacy in the sense that in a society where hierarchical structures exist, gifts from the superior to the “client” give legitimacy to the superior. Reproduction of capital has an implicit aim to strengthen existing power structures; however, this power needs to be legitimate. Thus, I find legitimation as the most appropriate overarching perspective to use for this study.

The philanthropist’s drives are highly relevant in order to understand the role of foundations in society, but “there is little systematic examination of the motives and aims of private foundations, particularly those that have been more recently established.”174 Since there is a lack of connection between practice and discourse175, I see one way of approaching an understanding of these nuances of legitimation to be focusing on how donors and the foundations present themselves and their giving strategies.

Previous research has applied the “sense-making” approach to gain knowledge in this field, but emphasizes the novelty of this approach and underline that further research is necessary in order to understand how

---

companies actively understand and define their political role.\(^{176}\) Concrete legitimation strategies need to be analyzed, especially those that observe the political aspects of discursive legitimation and are comprised of values, beliefs, and power relations among actors.\(^{177}\) It is important to pay attention to textual strategies “since it allows us to see how senses of legitimacy are created and manipulated at the textual level.”\(^{178}\) This branch of research has suggested that multiple legitimation is the most effective form of legitimation\(^{179}\), yet future studies are needed to explore firms use of a combination of legitimation strategies and its importance.\(^{180}\) Thus, this is a relatively new approach and I contend that it is a fruitful approach not only for the study of corporate legitimacy, but also for research on individual actors with political-economic influence in transition states. In this thesis, a micro-level perspective will complement existing institutional research.

The four studies in this thesis use different methodological approaches (see Table 2 above and the section “Essays” below). Here, I intend to describe some general points of departure. First, I will present the selection of study objects. Next, I will present my interviews and my approach to the interview method, followed by a discussion of press material and documents that I use. Lastly, I will make a brief note on how I analyze the material.

**Study objects**

The selection of study objects for Essay I, which constitutes the basis also for the remaining essays\(^{181}\), are based on lists published in Ukrainian weekly magazines in 2011 on top philanthropists.\(^{182}\) One selection criterion was the national origin of the philanthropist, where only Ukrainians received attention. Further, since the study is based on interviews with managers of the foundations, their willingness to take part in the study was one criterion. This gave me ten foundations to focus on:

- Rinat Akhmetov Foundation “Development of Ukraine” / Фонд Ріната Ахметова «Розвиток України”
- Victor Pinchuk Foundation / Фонд Віктора Пінчука

\(^{176}\) Galang & Castello (2014).


\(^{181}\) Except for two actors that were added in Essay II.

\(^{182}\) ‘Kontrakty’ No. 17–18 (988–989) 25 April 2011, ‘Korrespondent’ 16 Dec 2011. Serhiy Arbusov’s Future of Ukraine foundation was only launched in 2013, explaining its absence in these lists. It was difficult to get hold of Firtash Foundation, why I left it out of the analysis. All others were rather easy accessible and willing to meet.
Petro Poroshenko Foundation / Фонд Петра Порошенка
The International Charitable Fund of Oleksandr Feldman / Міжнародний благодійний фонд «Фонд Олександра Фельдмана»
Borys Kolesnikov Foundation / Фонд Бориса Колеснікова
Klitschko Brothers Foundation / Фонд Братів Кличків
Open Ukraine – Arseniy Yatsenyuk Foundation / Фонд Відкрив Україну
International Charitable Fund ”Ukraine 3000” / Міжнародний благодійний фонд ”Україна 3000” (Viktor and Ekaterina Yushchenko).
Ukraine’s Future Foundation / Фонд ”Майбутнє України” (Serhiy Arbuzov)
Foundation for the Promotion of Arts / Фонд содействия развитию искусств (Anatoliy Tolstoukhov)

In order to contextualize the foundations selected in terms of their principal’s wealth, I will now locate those actors according to estimated wealth lists published in *Forbes* as well as in Ukrainian weekly magazines. In 2014, nine Ukrainians appeared in the *Forbes* world ranking of billionaires. Four of those Ukrainian billionaires had a private philanthropy foundation, where three met the criteria outlined above and were thus included in the study, see Table 3.

Table 3. Billionaires in Ukraine listed in Forbes 2014 and their engagement in philanthropy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billionaire</th>
<th>Engaged in philanthropy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rinat Akhmetov*</td>
<td>Private philanthropy foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Pinchuk*</td>
<td>Private philanthropy foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hennadii Boholiubov</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadym Novinskyi</td>
<td>Private philanthropy foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ihor Kolomoiskyi</td>
<td>Philanthropy in CSR program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuriy Kosiuk</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petro Poroshenko*</td>
<td>Private philanthropy foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serhiy Tihipko</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konstantyn Zhevago</td>
<td>&quot;Independent donor&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*included in this study

Further, two of the actors behind the selected foundations appear among the top-fifty wealthiest Ukrainians. The remaining five actors selected are among wealthy (but not necessarily with a stable presence on these top lists) politicians and businessmen.

---

183 Borys Kolesnikov and Oleksandr Feldman.
184 Klitschko brothers, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, The Yushchenko spouses, Serhiy Arbuzov and Anatoliy Tolstoukhov.
Generally, the cases are wealthy elites with political influence with a public interest in gift giving in post-Soviet space. Since I only include those with philanthropy foundations, the findings cannot be generalized to the Ukrainian political-economic elite. The selected cases are leaders in the field and can thus be expected to be influential. From a wider perspective, the population is the global super rich who are engaged in giving parts of their fortunes away. Even though the study of ten crucial cases is not statistically generalizable, it can make analytical generalizations that go beyond the specific setting for the cases.\textsuperscript{185}

For Essay II, my co-authors and I studied the newspapers \textit{Segodnya}, owned by Rinat Akhmetov’s System Capital Management and \textit{Fakty i Kommentarii}, owned by Victor Pinchuk’s metallurgical mill company Interpipe Group.\textsuperscript{186} We look specifically at their self-representation, but also at the wider image of the “oligarch”, including Ihor Kolomoiskyi, Dmitry Firtash, and Petro Poroshenko (for a more detailed description, see section “Press material” below). For Essay III, the selection is based on the two oligarchs who are among the top-ten wealthy and have their own giving organization: Viktor Pinchuk and Rinat Akhmetov. For Essay IV, five organizations and the individual actions of Klitschko, Yatsenyuk, Akhmetov, Pinchuk and Kolesnikov are in focus.

Table 4. \textit{Summary of wealthy elite actors included in the four studies}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essay I</th>
<th>Essay II</th>
<th>Essay III</th>
<th>Essay IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rinat Akhmetov</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Pinchuk</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petro Poroshenko</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borys Kolesnikov</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleksandr Feldman</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arseniy Yatsenyuk</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klitschko brothers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serhii Arbuzov</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yushchenko (spouses)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatolii Tolstoukhov</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ihor Kolomoiskyi</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dmitry Firtash</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studying the elite’s foundations is a way to look at its strategy and its relations to other actors in the society. The foundations embody the expression of the founder’s interests. In Essay II and III, the focus is on the actors themselves, while Essay I and IV are studies of the foundations via information from employees and directors. Winters and Wright Mills both make the point that the members of the power elite are not solitary rulers: “Advisers and consultants, spokesmen and opinion-makers are often the captains of their higher thought

\textsuperscript{185} Small (2009); Yin (2018).
\textsuperscript{186} Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2008); Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2011).
and decision.” Winters illuminates the professional forces working for the interests of the oligarchs. Practically, it is more realistic to meet with someone from the professional forces than it is to meet with the elite members themselves, but this argument is not the only one; these professional forces may generate more information on elites than the elites themselves.

Interviews

This is a qualitative study based on original interviews, printed media, web pages, as well as additional documents provided by the studied organizations. Various schools of qualitative methods hold different views on what constitutes an open-ended interview or a semi-structured interview. The most accurate classification of the kind of interviews I have conducted for this study is the semi-structured version, especially concerning the interviews with foundation representatives. In this section, I will explain how I selected the interviewees, how I accessed them, how I conducted the interviews, and which shortcomings and strengths this kind of material involves.

During field trips to Ukraine from 2011 to 2017, including one three-month stay in fall 2013 and four shorter stays, I conducted 57 interviews in total (see Table 5 for specification). Some informants and respondents were interviewed repeatedly, which is indicated in brackets.

Table 5. Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Number of interviews (incl. repeated interviews)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researchers, practitioners, analysts</td>
<td>5 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous employees of focus organizations, potential recipients, non-focus giving organizations representatives, wealthy businessmen/donors</td>
<td>12 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives (employees and directors), donors, associates, recipients of ten focus organizations</td>
<td>15 (24*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society activists</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40 (57)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*including one e-mail interview

Since some of the interviewees wanted to be anonymous, I made all those associated with foundations anonymous and mention only their affiliation.

---

191 See Bogner et al., eds. (2009) and Weiss (1994), and Mikecz (2012).
The donors wanted to have their names published, since “they have nothing to hide”, and probably also because they see an opportunity to reach out to an international audience via a researcher. A complete list of the interviewees is included in Appendix B.

In most cases, I got access to the interviewees through intermediaries or gatekeepers. The umbrella organization for private philanthropy foundations, the Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum, and scholars at my hosting University in Ukraine, the Kyiv Mohyla Academy, helped me especially with phone numbers. Other gatekeepers were part of my network in Kyiv that I had developed since I lived and worked there in 2007–2008. Mentioning familiar names quickly made the respondent willing to accept an interview. After an initial call, I usually sent over by e-mail a page introducing my research and myself, i.e. the purpose and usage of the interview, as well as which other foundations that had already agreed to participate. In a week or two, the interview usually was conducted. A downside of this gatekeeping culture is, of course, that it was difficult to reach the foundations that I had no connections to. The Firtash Foundation was impossible to access, for example. After several calls without success, the Oleksandr Feldman foundation in Kharkiv was, however, finally accessible when I decided to physically knock on their door. After half an hour of waiting, I could conduct a one-and-a-half-hour-long interview with one of the project managers.

In the initial stage of the research process, when the research design was yet unclear, I made some efforts to meet with the wealthy themselves. After an interview with the director of the Petro Poroshenko Foundation, I asked if it would be possible to meet with Mr. Poroshenko himself. This was in fall 2011. The director asked me to send my questions in advance and signaled that it would not be impossible. However, sometime after I had sent my questions, I received a simple “no” in response. During a conversation with my interviewee at the Victor Pinchuk Foundation, I asked whether it would be possible to meet in person with Mr. Pinchuk, the representative said: “maybe later, when I have seen what you write about us”. So far, this has led me nowhere. I did interview Teresa Yatsenyuk, though, Arseniys wife, and other members of the wealthy elite across Ukraine engaged in giving. This hesitation and suspiciousness of the wealthiest actors is much less frequent among the foundation representatives and associates. Only one interviewee asked for the questions in advance. This was the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation, and it occurred a couple of months after the culmination of the Maidan protests and during an escalating war scene in Akhmetov’s hometown Donbas.

Interviews lasted from 20 minutes to two hours, although they usually were about one-hour long. All except three interviews were audio recorded. Those not recorded were, in one case, at the request of the interviewee, and the remaining two were repeated meetings with one interviewee expert and
functioned more as source of information and was a discussion about the development of elite giving in Ukraine, sometimes of a sensitive character.

I let the interviewee decide which language he/she preferred out of Russian and English. My Ukrainian is too limited to use for an interview, but since all but one of my interviewees knew Russian, this was not a problem. Half of the interviews were conducted in Russian and the other half in English. The one who did not know Russian, or objected to speak Russian in Ukraine, preferred English and was the donor who lived most of his life in Canada and Switzerland. My Russian skills are sufficient to pose questions, understand answers, and engage in a conversation. However, I also received help from a Ukrainian assistant to transcribe some of the interviews and help me to disentangle some nuances that perhaps would have been otherwise overlooked. I transcribed the remaining interviews myself.

One interview was conducted via e-mail, while all of the others were face to face. To conduct an interview by e-mail limits observing many nuances and I could not use that interview to the same extent as the additional interviews with the same respondent conducted later. Most interviews took place at foundation offices, although some were in cafes.¹⁹³ Those conducted in cafes proved more “free” as they responded more candidly. They were more useful for me than those conducted in offices, as those sometimes were too close to their adjusted work. In general, it was fruitful to see the different offices. The location, interior style, and the number of guards surrounding the office of a philanthropy foundation says something about taste, social position and the image that the foundation wants to create.

By meeting with core interviewees two or three times, trust and reflections could develop between the meetings. I felt that those interviews were generally more valuable, since we got to know each other and knew the frames of expectations and could, hence, assume a more relaxed approach.¹⁹⁴ The reasons for meeting with the same people again in 2014 were mainly because I needed the viewpoints of the foundations’ staff on the Maidan protests and the development thereafter, while my initial interviews took place between 2011 and 2013. In a few cases, I organized a second meeting before the Maidan protests, due to lack of time to develop all of my question at the first appointment.

The semi-structured interviewing style required an interview guide that ensured that certain themes were explored with each interviewee. Putting focus on “how” questions rather than “why” questions could better grasp the

---

¹⁹³ Experts and associates but also some foundation representatives chose to meet in a café. Most foundation representatives invited me to their office. For a critical discussion on location and the choice of location, see Herzog (2012).

¹⁹⁴ See Grinyer & Thomas (2012), pp. 220–221.
underlying processes and provided me with details on attitudes.\textsuperscript{195} Also, to include open questions rather than directed ones was a strategy of mine, especially concerning civil society activists. In line with Manning (2003), I focus on what is out of sight: context, assumptions, the unspoken, the unwritten, and the "obvious", I ask for the story behind the case.

The interview guides have developed over time, especially over the first period 2011–2013, but inquired into the same themes and key questions. I originally created the guides during shorter field trips in 2010–2011 when I met with experts and was acquainted with the Ukrainian academia to understand the research field and gaps, as well as during the first interviews with foundation representatives. The interview guides are included in Appendix A.

Qualitative interviewing is an interaction between the researcher and the respondent. This interaction with semi-structured interview guides makes each meeting unique. To put them in their context and code them into topics is a relevant method. This kind of interview material unveils the respondents’ ideas of self-presentation and, in the cases of “other stakeholders”, it gives us attitudes and narratives of their own situation in relation to others. How do they interpret their activities? As Hasselberg points out, “We learn how they experience their situation and their opinions, i.e. we learn things that allow us to construct their norm system and the points of departures for their behavior.”\textsuperscript{196}

This thesis does not focus on the implementation and effect, but rather on the program design and presentation. As mentioned, I use the interviewees as respondents in order to grasp their self-presentation and attitudes, and as illustrations of underlying values.\textsuperscript{197} However, since I am also interested in the deeds of these foundations, to some extent, I use the interviewees as informants, i.e. I use their words for describing what they do. This is especially the case for Essay I in which I map the foundations’ activities. However, I do not engage in any evaluations. One foundation has been externally evaluated and provided me with this information.

The answers that have been supplied are biased in favor of the organization the respondent represent. This is, however, not a problem since my interest lies in their self-representation. The analysis is based on my interpretation of their self-representation, constructed by them as individuals in tune with the giving organization. In order to increase transparency of my interpretation, I let the respondents speak for themselves by using quotes. The time aspect may

\textsuperscript{195} Manning (2003), p. 95.
\textsuperscript{196} “Man får veta hur de upplever sin situation och vad de anser, dvs. man får reda på sånt som gör att man kan konstruera deras normsystem och utgångspunktarna för deras handlande.” Hasselberg (2012), p. 54.
\textsuperscript{197} Hasselberg (2012).
have distorted information to some extent in the interviews surrounding the Maidan protests 2013–2014 that were conducted in 2016.

I am interviewing both elites and experts. These are contested concepts and sometimes with an overlapping definition. Experts are those who I consider having both specialist knowledge and a specific interpretive and procedural knowledge obtained through professional practice.\(^{198}\) Elites are the primary study objects of the thesis. Not only are the wealthy individuals that initiated these foundations the elites, but also those working for these organizations. These professionals have in most cases obtained higher education and are specialists in their field. However, they can also be considered elite based on their mere connections to the wealthy elites, which in a country with widespread poverty and high inequality tends to be valuable, especially bearing in mind the importance of networks. In Littig’s terms, these elite professionals could also be labeled experts as “exploratory expert interviews — used in a relatively unknown field of research”.\(^{199}\) However, I will not label them experts here, since I would like to separate the professionals at the foundations from the experts that are independent of the foundations and have a broader understanding of the philanthropic landscape.

For elites and experts, the interviews create specific conditions. Since members of the elite tend to talk about and present their work and viewpoints and are accustomed to this, in order for me as the interviewer to gain the most, I needed to balance letting them talk freely, and directing and posing questions that enticed curiosity in the interviewees.\(^{200}\) When meeting with elites, it is important to present yourself as a competent partner who is familiar with the area of expertise.\(^{201}\) I prepared for the interviews by reading all material I could find about the foundation and the general role of elite foundations and oligarchs in Ukraine. By showing that I was well informed, I was able to gain interesting information and attitudes. Still, in rare cases I encountered a patronizing manner from the respondent. I presume my gender and relatively young age at the time of the interviews contributed to this. However, most times I received respect by being an international guest and research scholar with an interest in their society.

Interviews with external stakeholders can also be biased. Ex-employees can still be loyal to their previous employer. Either way, in most cases the interviewed “experts” are connected to and are more or less dependent on different organizations in society and this makes their answers possibly biased. One


\(^{200}\) See also Obelenc in Bogner et al (2009), p. 196. “It was important to think about how I could articulate the questions I wanted to ask in a way that would make the experts perceive them as innovative perspectives into the topic.”

\(^{201}\) Littig in Bogner et al., eds. (2009), p. 105.
respondent claimed she could say whatever she wanted and explained how it really works; she is not afraid because she has her “krysha”, which literally means roof, and symbolic personal security in the forms of valuable connections.

When initiating the contact, I introduced my research, my ethical guidelines and myself by e-mail or phone. Before the interview started, I always asked whether the interviewee wanted to be anonymous or not. If he or she asked for anonymity, I explained what the reference would be. Since I make a comparison of the foundations, there would be a danger in disclosing the subjects even though no names would be displayed in the thesis. I asked for the permission to audio record and, in most cases, this was accepted. Only when the interviewee asked for the transcripts were these sent over. Thanking for the interview by e-mail afterwards opened up the potential for further conversations in which also any worries of the interviewee could be articulated.

During the interview, I did my best to stick to the ethical guideline saying that “the subject will not be judged even if the researcher disagrees with the subject’s view; instead the researcher seeks to understand and displays an understanding”. However, by being from a university in the EU, I could be expected to have “pro EU” views. By being from a university in Sweden, a “neutral” and “socialist” country (at least in the eyes of the older generation), they may have assumed this image of me. Certainly, I had the opportunity to pose sensitive questions, for example about property stealth. However, in noticing their sensitivity I posed these types of questions only towards the end of the interview. The respondents replied or said that they did not have that information and referred to someone else who, in some cases, turned out to be difficult to access.

Documents and websites
During and after the interviews, I often received some published material by the foundation: annual reports, information leaflets, books. In other cases, I asked for the information that I lacked, but was denied or advised to ask again after six months or a year. In yet other cases, I e-mailed to ask for some specific information but did not receive a response. This could be due to either unwillingness to share this information, or simply the workload of the contact person. I used the material I obtained as an additional source of information.

---

202 See discussion by Obelené in Bogner et al. eds. (2009), p. 197.
204 Obelené in Bogner et al., eds. (2009). About establishing that one is interested in one thing but then encourages when the person starts to talk about the other, sensitive issue. p. 194.
which was especially relevant for Essay I where I map the activities of the foundations.

Since I am interested in the self-presentation of the foundations, I treat the documents produced by the studied foundations as a representation or account of the organization’s mission and use the data both as resource (information, although naturally biased) and topic (viewpoints). However, this method of using interviews as information sources is applied in Essay I and VI, while in Essay II and III I am more inclined to use the material as topics (viewpoints and attitudes).

Press material

In Essay II and III, I (we) used press material obtained from Ukrainian and international news sources. In Essay II, we selected newspapers based on ownership and nationality, identifying three Russian and three Ukrainian widely read newspapers. The three outlets from Ukraine include Segodna, Fakty i Komentarii, and Ukrainska Pravda. The three outlets from Russia include Izvestia, Vedomosti, and Novaya Gazeta. The selection of news outlets was guided by the following criteria. First, we studied Ukrainian and Russian media narratives about the Ukrainian oligarchy because Russian media pay much attention to socio-political change in Ukraine. Due to shared history, as well as complex political and economic relationships, it was logical to study their narratives as common and contested media fields.

Second, it is important to choose sources that have large readership and, thus, are important for each country’s social and political life. Next, we selected a variety of sources types to differentiate the ownership structure whether it was oligarchic, independent, and state-controlled. Fakty i Kommentarii belongs to Viktor Pinchuk’s metallurgical mill company, Interpipe Group. Segodnya is owned by Rinat Akhmetov’s SCM Limited and System Capital Management.205 These papers are classified as oligarchic according to our schema. Because Ukrainska Pravda and Novaya Gazeta are owned mostly by collectives of journalists, they are designated as independent. Izvestia is state controlled, as it is a subsidiary company of state-owned Gazprom. The classification of Vedomosti is not definitive, but we categorized it as a “state-controlled newspaper” (see Essay III for elaboration). We identified 175 news articles using the official website archives of each source, and utilized a two-fold selection strategy to analyze all of these news articles. First, we selected the names of wealthy individuals occupying positions in Ukrainian politics and the economy who own major media outlets (Akhmetov, Kolomoisky, 205 Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2008); Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2011).
Firtash, Pinchuk and Poroshenko). Second, we also selected keywords for media discussion of oligarchs (“oligarch”, “Maidan”, “politics”, “power”, “money”, “business”).

For Essay III, I collected interviews I found by using Internet search engines about a selection of two individuals. Hence, some articles were published in international press (American, French). I elaborate this further in the essay.

Analyzing the material

I have analyzed the interviews in categories that were identified after the interviews, although they came to resemble the topics of the interview guides. In line with Meuser and Nagel, the thematic comparison was checked in light of the other relevant passages in the interviews in order to examine whether they are sound, complete, and valid. The categories are efforts to capture the interview material. When I had transcribed and coded, I collected the excerpts of each code, summarized my impression, and wrote the analysis. Presenting my findings, I try to let the interviewees speak for themselves by selecting the most representative, or in some cases most articulate, quotations.

A similar approach was undertaken in Essay II. We employed an inductive and qualitative media analysis approach with three waves of coding. This approach allowed us to categorize content within each news article into nested and families of codes to analyze types of content changes over time.

A final note on method

Considering my location in Sweden when writing the major part of my thesis on Ukraine, the geographical distance must be discussed. I was far from the immediate situation following the Maidan protests, the Crimea annexation, and the subsequent war in eastern parts of Ukraine. Thus, I was not affected by the stress to the same extent as the inhabitants of Ukraine. However, the distance from my study objects may have restricted my knowledge on the studied actors’ perceived role in society by ordinary citizens. My many field trips throughout the years, including during the Maidan protests, proved extremely fruitful for my knowledge and inspiration to learn and understand the situation as in depth as possible.

---

206 Meuser & Nagel in Bogner et al., eds. (2009), p. 36.
208 Altheide & Schneider (2005).
The Essays

In four essays, I inquire about the legitimation strategies among the wealthy elite in Ukraine from different angles. The first one describes the institutionalization of the giving initiatives of the wealthy elite, while the second is a study of how the wealthy elite can control their image via media, and how the image of the oligarchs altered during political turmoil. The third essay investigates the self-presented justification logics for engaging in such matters as giving, and the final essay looks at the action of the institutionalized giving organizations during political turmoil and the perception of these organizations among civil society activists.

Table 6. An overview of the analytical framework as emphasized in the essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiences</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arenas</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Essay I: Elite Giving in Ukraine: State Relations and Legitimacy

This paper explores the assumption of legitimation purposes behind elite giving. Departing from the understanding of legitimacy explained in the analytical framework, I investigate the gift character and exposure, as well as the structure of the organizations. The objective is not only to increase our understanding of these initiatives in relation to the founders/donors, but also in relation the state. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the social welfare provision in Ukraine has suffered severely from great holes in the public budget. The role of these foundations in relation to the state is analyzed through the foundation representatives’ and donors’/founders’ attitudes toward the state.

The article increases our understanding of the elite giving landscape in the Ukrainian context by highlighting differences between foundations, but it also, more importantly, shows the similarities depending on political position. The political dependency of elite giving means that the phenomenon is still
much a part of the intertwined relations between politics and business. I also show how the foundations claim to compensate for state failure, and how these organizations may function as legitimacy creators for different reasons and in various ways.

The institutional setting in Ukraine is poorly developed and most of the organizations are not based on endowed capital. Upon this weak institutional base, the “personal-kingdom risk” is intensified, as their existence is dependent on yearly donations from the founders. The state can be interpreted as being challenged by the “Oligarchs-Politicians”, who have a regional focus, express distrust towards authorities, and provide social welfare for their beneficiaries. This is similar to patron-client relations. The state is depicted as inefficient and bureaucrats as thieves. Oligarchs-Politicians are most harsh in their criticism of the state, while the other organizations and donors express a wish to support the state in these difficult times, heavily coloured by “sistema practices”.209

Patriotism, pride, and hope are expressed in an abstract concept of “future Ukraine”. Some of the organizations, mostly headed by Post-Politician Oligarchs and Politicians, are working ostensibly for this. However, since the donor dependency is high due to the lack of endowments, and the political power is so important for the ability of the foundation to function, the sustainability of these projects is not secured. Something that cannot be contested is that all of these giving organizations, to a greater or lesser degree, compensate for state failure by providing some social welfare to targeted audiences.

Attitudes and relations to the state and local authorities are characterized by distrust, but also compassion in trying to support the state. The distrust of authorities is not only due to the incapability of the state to deliver, but to the way the state enforces “cooperation” with private entities, using their power to collect material resources supposedly for public good causes. The importance of political power is also evident in how some foundations talk about the need for a public figure to attract resources. While some organizations’ representatives were disgusted by the thought of the state, others were proposing a “Public Charitable Partnership” or the creation of projects meant to be transferred to the state, taking the innovative function of civil society seriously.

Representatives of big business are dependent on good relations with the governing elite. The very existence of some of the giving foundations can be interpreted as an outcome of regime change and perhaps even the values of the governing regime. While most Oligarchs-Politicians established their foundations in the late 1990s, during Leonid Kuchma’s presidency, Pinchuk and Akhmetov established theirs just after the Orange Revolution, when the presidency of Yushchenko stood for something new with more democracy and hopes for socio-political reforms. Engaging in these programs that aimed at

reform or democratization can be interpreted as a way of following dynamic norms in society. This means that what is seen as legitimate changes over different political regimes. Moreover, audiences and strategies will vary depending on the donor’s position in relation to the current political leadership.

Since legitimation is a two-way dynamic process, the presumed audiences need to be explained. Based on the project character and geographic location, I identify different audiences depending on social position and geographical location. In the literature, targeted audiences include recognition among peers, while international political and economic elites are, to my knowledge, rarely specified. Post-Politician Oligarchs, who distance themselves from the label “oligarch” and want to be presented as some kind of respected “post-oligarchs”, are targeting the broader public, peers and, in one case, the international political and economic elite. “Oligarchs-Politicians”, meanwhile, tend to target citizens on a regional level but, over time, also aim at a national intellectual elite. “Politicians” target the national intellectual elite, and, in one case, the interests stretch across borders.

The patterns of giving strategies that I trace suggest that in order to comprehend these organizations’ role in society, information on the donor’s profile helps our understandings. This challenges the argument that no attention should be paid to the origin of the money. Moreover, there are clear differences within the power elite between those with financial power and those without. This is in line with Winters’s argument about the necessity to split the wealthy elite from the other elites. My study suggests a need for differentiation of oligarchs and highlights patterns in giving strategies.

These giving initiatives can be interpreted as legitimization strategies, although of varying kinds. While politicians seek to legitimize their future power aspirations, oligarchs seek to legitimize their assets obtained in the past. Both types of groups need to legitimize their extraordinary positions in society. Post-Politician Oligarchs organizations show a portfolio of projects that touch on all three spheres. I interpret it as a way of maximizing their giving strategies in order to maximize influence and insurance.

Essay II: News Media Ownership and Social Change: Shifting Representations of Oligarchs in the Ukrainian and Russian Press

Essay II explores the relationship between representations of elites, media ownership, and social change in a transnational perspective. The legitimation strategies of Rinat Akhmetov and Victor Pinchuk are studied through their

---

media channels. How they frame themselves and other wealthy elites is compared with how other news media frame the same actors.

Using a qualitative content analysis of 175 articles in leading Russian and Ukrainian outlets before, during, and after the 2013–2014 Ukrainian protests, we find that portrayals of wealthy elites change over time but vary specifically by media ownership. Coverage of oligarchs in elite-owned, state-controlled, and independent outlets change in discrete but diverging ways during political turmoil.

We illuminate how oligarchs and media professionals working for oligarchic interests instrumentalize public relations through the press, and how their strategies shape public debate. We find that oligarch-owned newspapers frame wealthy elites as responsible citizens, while independent newspapers frame them as a threat to the public good. Before the Maidan protests, this is explicitly expressed in individual wealthy elites’ personal engagement in philanthropy; during the turbulence of the protests, the quantity of reporting on oligarchs declined as a way to control their image in times of uncertainty. Finally, to maintain legitimacy after the protests, the oligarch-owned press go on to frame its owners as philanthropists in a political sense, namely as key agents promoting national stability. While the term “oligarch” is rarely employed before the protests, after the protests its use becomes a common symbol to reflect public angst towards ruling elites. Oligarchs use the media outlets they own as instruments to recover shaken legitimacy, and this phenomenon was amplified in times of socio-political change.

Among the wealthy business elite, most tried to keep a low profile during the Maidan protests and its aftermath. We find a shift in coverage from a focus on the philanthropy of oligarchs to that of “political philanthropy”, followed by features that are not typically associated with Ukrainian oligarchy, but are well explained by Winters’ theory. Before the protests, Ukrainian oligarchs had been trying to refrain from engaging in official politics, maintaining political power through unofficial channels. The two newspapers studied are rather silent about “oligarchs” at the beginning of the protests, which is a reflection of a silence by the oligarchs themselves.

Towards the escalation of the protests in January and February, oligarchs “couldn’t stay silent”, and called for unity and a peaceful solution in an effort to remain neutral towards both the regime and the protestors, in order to secure a place on the winning side. Oligarchs have no need to be armed or to participate directly in politics when there is stability in the political system; instead, they can put their energy on income defence. Otherwise, they tend to participate in politics more directly. In the current case, the inaction of oligarchs during the first months of the protests on Maidan was mirrored by a silence in the media about oligarchs. Consequently, the basis of oligarchic legitimacy

---

began to disintegrate, which then led to oligarchs’ more direct participation in politics.

We find support for defining the oligarchs studied as a united social group. This was particularly so during political instability. Oligarchs and their clans in Ukraine have always been torn by rifts over resources and political power. However, during all three periods being studied, they not only call for national unity in the press but also often put a political alliance into practice. We find that they depict their social group almost exclusively in a positive light, although particular oligarch-owned newspapers mention other oligarchs infrequently. This is interesting since it is contradictory to the “media wars” between some oligarchs in the immediate aftermath of the Maidan culmination.\(^{212}\) However, these media wars were played out on TV and not in newspapers. More importantly, the actors differed. The wars were between Ihor Kolomoisky and Dmitro Firtash, who were oligarchs with less defined legitimation strategies than Akhmetov and Pinchuk. Pinchuk’s *Fakty i Kommentarii* positively mentioned Rinat Akhmetov, Dmytro Firtash, Ihor Kolomoisky etc. Poroshenko was depicted as a sincere and clever leader. Favoring only Dmitry Firtash before the outbreak of the protests, *Segodnya* framed Pinchuk, Poroshenko and Kolomoisky favorably in later periods. According to Winters, oligarchs may disagree, but they always share a basic commitment to defense of wealth and property, which explains why their outlets frame each other positively during the crisis. We see an increasing unity among these actors in the oligarch-owned newspapers, who are vulnerable to surges in other kinds of power during periods of severe crisis, especially massive mobilization they are not funding and controlling.\(^{213}\)

Essay III: The Business-*superman*: Oligarchs Justifying Giving in Post-Soviet Ukraine

“Oligarch” is a contested concept. When studying the political-economic elite in post-Soviet Ukraine, terms like “business magnate”, “representatives of big business”, “tycoons”, etc. are used interchangeably with oligarch. There are, however, increased attempts to try to define the analytical concept of oligarch.\(^{214}\) Of these, some actors on the Ukrainian political-economic scene indisputably fall within the framework of the term. Meanwhile, the same political-economic elite actors present themselves as “businessmen” and deter the idea of them being oligarchs. In this paper, I argue that, actually, while their explicit public self-identification is as “entrepreneurs” or “businessmen”, implicitly they are bestowing themselves business-*supermen*.

---

\(^{212}\) Dovzhenko (2015).


\(^{214}\) Guriev & Rechinsky (2005); Winters (2011); Pleines (2016); Sjöberg & Herron (2016).
The post-Soviet space had poorly developed property rights, which created room for shady acquisitions of previously state-owned property and corporations. Rojansky contends that oligarchs are top figures in more or less illegal corporate raidings\textsuperscript{215}, which constitute a major problem for trust in society and hampers economic development. It also downgrades the public respect for the rule of law, hindering a democratic development in Ukraine. The \textit{Kyiv Post} assumes a similar perspective in a report series called Oligarch Watch. The reports concern criminal acts in the past, cronyism, nepotism, money laundering, tax evasion, etc.

Those individuals who are labelled oligarchs in the public eye have a strong need for legitimacy. In this paper, the point of departure is that legitimization strategies consist of both image-making (through philanthropy) and image control (through media). The paper is a case study of two prototypes of the Ukrainian oligarch, namely Rinat Akhmetov and Victor Pinchuk, who both initiated private philanthropy foundations in 2005 and 2006, respectively, shortly after the Orange Revolution. I analyse how they promote their roles in society and justify their giving in national and international press. In particular, what justification worth logics are they adhering to, and have these changed over time? Since adaptation is a way of preserving their position in society, their statements reveal something about domestic expectations, the entry of international trends, and creation of new norms.

The analysis builds on material consisting of forty interviews with the two actors, published in Ukrainian and international press between 2004 and 2016. Additionally, eleven original interviews with foundation directors, employees, affiliated, and ex-employees conducted between 2011 and 2017 were used.

The analytic tool is derived from the work of Boltanski & Thevenot\textsuperscript{216} and Boltanski & Chiapello\textsuperscript{217}, and their \textit{worlds of justification}. A world is a system of values and the worlds that I analyse in this study are the domestic world, the managerial world, the civic world, the world of inspiration and the world of fame.

This paper demonstrates that, on the one hand, we see increasingly strong preference for efficiency, systemic approaches, and statistics, belonging to the \textit{managerial world of worth}. On the other hand, references to authority, responsibility, loyalty, and personal connections, belonging to the \textit{domestic world of worth}, are also important in their value system. These two worth logics, combined with a rhetoric of state inefficiency, the othering of oligarchs, the unity of the wealthy to combat social ills and the obligatory attributions of a philanthropist create the promotion of an image of a business-superman. They argue that compared to politicians, businessmen are much better suited to tackle social problems, as entrepreneurs they are creative, and united; they can make a

\textsuperscript{215} Rojansky (2014).
\textsuperscript{216} Boltanski & Thevenot (1991).
\textsuperscript{217} Boltanski & Chiapello (1999).
difference in a social context where the state is inefficient and incapable. Businessmen should constitute a good example to politicians since they know how to get things done. In this sense, they become business supermen.

Furthermore, when they donate parts of their wealth, Pinchuk and Akhmetov proclaim a result-oriented project management. Findings show that particularly Akhmetov, but also Pinchuk, are using the term efficiency similarly to that of “philanthro-capitalists”. Managerialism is also a sign of the institutionalized giving practices of these two individuals.

Moreover, references to civic worth logics are rare, except for the periods in the aftermath of the two public uprisings: the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Maidan protests in 2014. This supports the idea of the oligarch as a chameleon that adjusts to public opinion.

Essay IV: Shouldn’t, Wouldn’t, Couldn’t? Analysing the Involvement of Domestic Elite Giving in the Ukrainian Protests 2013–2014

This paper concerns the role of philanthropy foundations and wealthy elites during rapid social change. The actions of the giving organizations of the wealthy domestic elite during the Ukrainian protests of 2013–2014 are scrutinized. Those who protested against the government and president Victor Yanukovych strived for similar values of social change and democratization as, at least ostensibly, the majority of the elites’ giving organizations. However, since the protesters also specified one particular aim as “de-oligarchization”, the involvement of the foundations of the so-called oligarchs becomes a puzzle.

What did the foundations do at this critical point in social development, and how were the foundations’ actions or inactions accepted or received among the grassroots? Three explanation models are examined: institutional and framing barriers of the foundations, motives of the founders of the elite giving organizations, and the legitimacy of these foundations in the eyes of the grassroots movement. The aim is to highlight the complicated phenomenon of the “oligarch” and point at some of the obstacles that “de-oligarchization” encounter. The study is based on original interviews with five elite giving organizations, ranked among the largest and most renowned, in contemporary Ukraine. These were conducted both before the protests and after. In order to gain an understanding of the legitimacy of the organizations, I also conducted interviews with the Maidan civic sector activists. Political statements of the donors, and likewise members of the wealthy elites, were found in press material.

I find that oligarchs’ foundations were not supporting the Maidan protests, at least not officially. Rather than being a force for change, they made effort
to maintain the status quo. The wealthy elites responded to public opinion and adjusted their standpoints by broadcasting the protests on their TV channels when they understood which side would win. The actions of the foundations are in line with the attitude of the founder/donor, suggesting a dependency of these institutions on their owner, as well as the political particularities of post-Soviet Ukraine.

This paper shows how any green-washing attempts have not been successful among the NGOs that were active during the Maidan. The giving organizations studied are not yet legitimate in the eyes of the grassroots NGOs that constituted a significant part in the Maidan movement. In relation to elite theory, this study supports the thesis that elites are not drivers of transformations but respond to public opinion. Furthermore, in this essay, I find that the foundations have a strong tendency to frame themselves as apolitical. The degree of involvement on Maidan was more closely connected to the personal values of the employees and directors, rather than to the official overarching ideas of the foundations. It did not matter whether the foundation was framed with slogans related to social change or system change. What mattered in the end was the political affiliation of the founder.
Conclusions in context

The empirical contributions of this thesis consist of a description of how the economic elite in Ukraine use parts of their resources in attempts to create legitimacy. The main strategy for legitimizing an extraordinary position in society consists of engaging in socially responsible acts and making them visible. The instruments for doing this are here understood as giving initiatives and media ownership. Additionally, I have studied how these legitimation strategies changed during political turmoil and, to some extent, the reception of these strategies among the public. The thesis contributes to the literature of legitimacy by highlighting the dynamics of legitimation strategies targeting different audiences depending on context and original wealth base. Furthermore, the thesis contributes to the discussion on the role of elites in relation to the state and discusses implications on democratization.

While elite giving in the United States and Europe has been explored by Ostrower, Ostrander, Adam, etc., this field in Ukraine has been empirically under researched, with a few exceptions in the cultural-sociological field (such as by Kochnova). Meanwhile, these types of initiatives could potentially be influential, particularly within the post-Soviet contextual framework. In the field of corporate legitimacy and pro-social behaviour, the extent of studies that analyse concrete legitimacy strategies for corporate responsibility action are limited.218 Regarding post-Soviet privatization research, Frye purported the theory of the “original sin”, pointing to the positive correlation between business social legitimacy and its pro-social behaviour.219 Markus & Charnysh is supporting and adjusting the wealth defence theory (originally developed by Winters) with empirical evidence of wealth defence strategies of Ukrainian oligarchs.220 The thesis here contributes with a qualitative study and involves, among other things, their justification rationales, inviting a more thorough analysis of legitimation strategies.

The study of justification rationales in multiple interviews with elite members over a period of ten years represents a novel way of exploring the strategies of these actors. While previous research has focused on oligarchs as a rather stable category of similar actors, this thesis explores the different actors and puts them in relation to each other, highlighting the differences that give

218 Vaara & Tienari (2008), p. 28.
220 Markus & Charnysh (2017); Winters (2011).
a more specific understanding of these influential actors, and the context in which they thrive. Moreover, the thesis contributes to the empirical studies of philanthropy and social change. The studied organizations do not support grassroots organizations working for human rights and democracy during the studied period before the Maidan protests in 2013-2014; additionally, they were paralyzed from acting during the protests. In those cases when the wealthy elite actor behind the foundation also was paralyzed, the donor dependency seems a plausible explanation. However, the personal involvement of many foundation representatives suggests a value commitment that could potentially direct the actions of the foundations and perhaps, to some extent, influence the donor. In those cases, in which the wealthy elite actors behind the foundations were active political leaders of the Maidan, this was also apparent in the informal actions of the organization, which involved supporting the protests by some simple assistance.

Despite the eagerness and necessity to call philanthropic foundations apolitical both by their representatives and among civil society activists, its sphere is often closely related to politics and media. This is apparent in the physical space of many foundations; they share the office with the political party staff, and loyal employees move from media to philanthropy or from philanthropy to politics. A few of the giving organizations originate from a corporate structure and was first part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, but later reorganized to become a private “foundation” and employees moved from the CSR department of the corporation to the philanthropy foundation. For example, the Petro Poroshenko Foundation works in synergy with the CSR department of the company Roshen. This implies that the field of elite philanthropy in Ukraine cannot be studied as a detached phenomenon, and using theories stemming from corporate and communication research is an advantage when trying to increase our understanding of the phenomenon.

In the remaining part of this section, I will present the most important findings of this thesis.

Pluralistic legitimation strategies

Especially regarding giving practices, this thesis shows that there are different “subways” to legitimation, depending on wealth base, political and economic position and ambition.

The two individuals with the highest net worth that both have left official politics can afford staying outside. Hence, they can disclaim political accountability and, more explicitly, form an image of a philanthropist and businessman. The use of multiple legitimation strategies among the wealthiest and most influential oligarchs to reach multiple audiences is evident. Both Akhmetov and Pinchuk used full-spectra giving strategies, running philanthropic foundations aimed at all societal groups imaginable, except those...
NGO’s with a human right’s focus. They are maximising legitimation strategies and leaving no opportunity behind. Their image is also hinging on their ownership of media holdings, framing themselves in positive light as responsible citizens. My findings are in line with Markus & Charnysh, who argues that supporting party politics and owning media are the most powerful instruments for wealth defence. According to Markus & Charnysh, this strategy is much more successful than official political posts: “When invisibility is not an option, as is the case for the wealthiest members of a high-stakes unconsolidated democracy, deniability is the next best thing. What is deniable is not the general shadow influence but the responsibility for specific decisions.”221

Those slightly less rich all hold political office (although Poroshenko’s net worth has risen since his inauguration and could easily be compared to Akhmetov and Pinchuk) and have less operational foundations. They are working for image reputation with the help of hyper projects and embracing domestic values such as responsibility (positive) or clientelism (negative) through ad hoc welfare assistance.

Those with power that is almost exclusively political have yet another strategy. As mentioned earlier, this distinction between power bases could be interpreted as being in line with Winters’s theory of oligarchy. However, the power base need not be as distinct as Winters proposes, as status is closely connected to wealth and wealth is closely connected to political power. Integrative (and political) perspective with multiple legitimation borrowed from the literature on corporate legitimacy proved apt for the study. The integrative approach encompasses both the instrumental motives, the political, along with an additional recognition of the importance of status and respectability.

Previous literature has stressed that power or prestige are driving forces for elite giving. However, I argue that while these are much plausible, legitimation processes are context (nationally and globally) and actor driven, why we need a broader perspective and develop these hypotheses. For example; who is the legitimacy targeting? In the literature, the targeted audiences that were emphasised include recognition among peers, according to Ostrower. International political and economic elites are, to my knowledge, rarely raised. Audiences differ not only geographically but also socially. In this thesis, I distinguished the following audiences: citizens on a regional level, the national intellectual elite, international political economic elite, as well as the domestic regime and domestic competing elites/peers.

Table 7. Geographical and social groups as targeted audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical audience</th>
<th>Social audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Electorate, citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>The national political elite, intellectual elites, in some cases citizens and the electorate, recognition among peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>Economic and political elites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oligarchs who estrange themselves from the label of oligarch want to be presented as some kind of respected post-oligarch and target the broader public and peers. They also want to run programs that I interpret as compensating and competing with (and, to some extent, changing) the state.

Oligarchs in political office tend to target citizens on a regional level, but with time they also include a national intellectual elite. They, as well as the previous group, aim at compensating and competing with the state. They position themselves as disconnected from the state, blaming the state for theft and untrustworthiness, hence trying to ally themselves with the people. This narrative could be interpreted as congruent with the maintenance of the oligarchic power structure that undermines the state’s capability and ignores changes in political culture.

Oligarchs in political office initiated their philanthropic initiatives already in the 1990s. They sought legitimacy among the electorate on a national and regional level. When this occurs on a regional level, I interpret this as a sense of heritage from the Soviet Union, in which the patron factory director had the power over the distribution of the social benefits. This group of oligarchs in political office have developed their strategies and slightly shifted their audiences from religious believers and regional citizens to an intellectual elite on a national level. This is most probably an identical gesture in which they copy the doings of their wealthier peers, namely the post-politicians oligarchs.

Politicians without a business profile have an interest to stay legitimate among the electorate and thus work on a national level, targeting “normal children” as one foundation representative put it.222 In this sense, they compensate for the state. In other cases, a kind of aim for social change can be discerned. Politicians target the national intellectual elite and, in at least one case, the interests stretch across national borders. Their programs aim at compensating for the state and, in a roundabout way, changing the state.

---

222 Representative, Klitschko Foundation, October 23, 201.
Dynamic legitimation strategies

However, these strategies shift over time, both over periods of political turmoil but also along the changed general political economic contexts. This is clearest in the example of the post-politician oligarchs.

In the 1990s, lawlessness characterized the economic life of the up and coming oligarchs. Presumably, their interest in any kind of legitimacy was close to non-existent. During the years leading up to the Orange Revolution, people’s discontent with the “roving bandits” started to grow. Around this time, Yanukovych also became the alleged “grand prince” of President Kuchma. This was when the oligarchs understood they had to get along with an alternative, and even support his candidacy, since they feared the power accumulation tendencies of Victor Yanukovych. The alternative meant a democracy enthusiast, and this in parallel to an “awakened” population. This implied a new-found enthusiasm for gaining legitimacy, particularly with the new governing elite but also among the population, even though this presumably was secondary. Soon, however, they may have started to enjoy improving their image and began to enjoy their giving activities, maximized and covering all possible areas, apart from the support of advocacy and human rights organizations.

According to an ex-employee of the Victor Pinchuk Foundation, over time they have developed a genuine good will that is parallel to the CSR program and the concept of shared value, meaning that private good coincides with public good. They promote themselves not as oligarchs, but as business-supermen; they are responsible citizens who take the responsibility to care about the people when the state fails. Furthermore, their self-proclaimed efficient ways of conducting business makes them “super” suitable for giving and engaging in the public good. Moreover, even though the Orange Revolution failed to democratize the state, and in reality oligarchs swapped power with other oligarchs (and they actually should not feel fear from the people), these actors were keen on disseminating a positive image of themselves via their media channels. These were aiming at citizens, but not particularly the electorate since both Akhmetov and Pinchuk were about to or had already exited their roles as MPs in the Verkhovna Rada. During the next revolution on Maidan Nezalezhnosti in 2013–2014, these actors recognised a higher voice of the civil society and the general population, which is why they sought to broaden their legitimacy even more by assuming new norms.

Thus, not all oligarchs act the same in an oligarchy because of their dynamic legitimation strategies. They are dynamic in the sense that, firstly, their audiences for legitimacy vary over time and, secondly, this is a sort of ladder for oligarchs to become politicians and then post-politicians, similar to what Braudel suggested about the upper classes in 15th-19th century Europe.

---

Reformulation of legitimation strategies during times of political turmoil

During recent periods of political turmoil, oligarchs were silent as a strategy to avoid criticism and responsibility. They could not foresee the outcome of the crisis, which made them stuck in a limbo of slanted legitimacy throughout that period of time. Findings also suggest that there was a sense of social group cohesion at times of crisis. While pluralistic strategies (and competition) can be observed during stability, at times of political turmoil and uncertainty, these persons follow similar patterns of silence and support each other. These dynamics have been neglected in previous research but can be supplemented Winters’s argument that oligarchs move in and out of politics according to the institutional setting and political stability.²²⁴ Markus & Charnych interprets Winters’s statement as official politics,²²⁵ however I believe it is possible to also use this theory for public political statements of wealthy individuals in this context.

Furthermore, while the impact of the giving organizations’ framings of actions undertaken during social change was negligible, the ability to re-frame after the crisis was found to be crucial. This suggests that flexibility is more important than the rhetorical values purported. This finding is further supported in the observation of chameleon acting during popular uprisings. It is also compatible with the increase of “management values”, discussed in Essay III.

Agents or responders of change?

While modernization theory emphasizes institutions, transition theory stresses the role of the elite as agents for change.²²⁶ David Lane presents a golden middle-way that acknowledges the renewal and role of individual agency, ideology and action of the elites, while simultaneously not giving them recognition as drivers of the transformation process in post-Soviet.²²⁷ He means that a “reproduction” of elites does not necessarily lead to a reconstitution of the former system.²²⁸ Here, I assume that the features of a legitimization strategy develop in line with the audience’s value system. This means that the renewal of the elite, in accordance with public expectations, has the potential to become a force for change.

²²⁵ Markus & Charnych (2017).
²²⁶ Transition theory was developed by theorists such as Adam Przeworski, P.C. Schmitter, G. O’Donnell, J. J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, and John Higley. See Lane (2011), p. 34.
Different audiences are targeted depending on context and political ambitions (Essay I). The oligarchs try to influence public opinion, but they also respond to public opinion, making it a two-way process. How they are influencing public opinion is especially clear in Essay II, shown through their efforts to control their images, reflecting a dependency on public opinion. In Essay III and IV, on the other hand, I show that their actions are influenced by public opinion. Hence, their interest in change is presumably not as extensive as their interest in public opinion. However, in responding to public opinion they may create platforms for change towards democratization.

In the thesis, I find that giving is justified in management logics or, to borrow Stark’s terminology, in marketized relations of mutuality. These values are celebrated by the public when wealthy businessmen are perceived as efficient, manifested in the presidential election of 2014 when a wealthy business magnate was elected. This celebration of capitalistic logics exists parallel to a pronounced criticism of the oligarchs, in which they are not seen as legitimate actors, at least in the eyes of the civil society activists in this study. However, there was strong exceptionalism at the time in independent newspapers, as their depiction of oligarchs as a threat to public good was suddenly exchanged and one oligarch became “the good oligarch”. At this time of crisis, independent news was vulnerable to populism.

Although global philanthro-capitalists pronounce an ambition to “save the world”, previous international research shows that philanthropy foundations do not tend to support grassroots movements, even though there could be a huge potential impact. However, I found that most foundations are not willing to cooperate with organizations that do not have a concrete goal or cannot measure effectiveness, for example, human rights organizations: “They maybe lack an aim to change things from the base, and instead just provide service, but they work so that there is no development”, a foundation respondent told me.

This approach is compatible with the apolitical values of the ‘world of management’, and corresponds to the research presented by Jensen. She argues that those philanthropic foundations are most of all interested in promoting their role as private actors in society and are not ideologically invested in the political power situation.

My study reveals that while elite philanthropy foundations did not support grassroots movement openly, grassroots were not interested in their support either. I found a sense of reluctance among those organizations involved in the Maidan protests 2013–2014 when considering receiving assistance from, among others, Development of Ukraine and other organizations associated

\[^{229}\text{Stark (2011)}\]
\[^{230}\text{Bishop & Green (2008).}\]
\[^{231}\text{Author’s interview, Employee 2, Development of Ukraine. March 3, 2012.}\]
\[^{232}\text{Jensen (2013).}\]
with “oligarchs”. Thus, elite philanthropy foundations’ donations to social change initiatives are not only in their own hands, but also in the activists’

These findings show that elites are not drivers of social change but respond to public opinion, not excluding the possibility that they would be empowering social change. In the way that elites strive for legitimacy, norms in society are reflected in the projects developed by the appendage organization of the elites. As long as the opinion is shaped by the public on a grassroots level, this will be adopted by the elite organizations. The success of these legitimation strategies is tested only on a small scale among critical civil society activists. However, the “responsible initiatives” of the current president Petro Poroshenko that he has undertaken since 1998 may have had an impact on the election results. His company Roshen has actively let build playgrounds all over Ukraine with a huge placard displaying the “ROSHEN” name. When Poroshenko was elected, it somehow gave legitimacy to oligarchs as a group. The new leadership was supposed to be better than Yanukovych’s accumulation for self-indulgence.

Furthermore, the charitable initiatives of Rinat Akhmetov during the war in Eastern Ukraine certainly have helped improve or at least rebuild his previously damaged image (which was especially hurt at the beginning of the war). In addition to the literature about framing, the ability to re-frame proved important, at least in a crisis context. Braudel’s and Parry’s standpoints regarding how the elites converge, or at least appear to accept ideas from newcomers, even if it means that they deny themselves through actions such as proposing “de-oligarchization” can support a liberal development. Furthermore, also in line with Braudel, they prefer a revolution without damage or disturbances. The passivity of the oligarchs during the Maidan shows how they prefer stability. The uncertainty of the outcome caused additional confusion.

In the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, prominent researchers argued that the elite were deciding the essence of the outcome, even maintaining that the elite were the main drivers of democratization. While the elite acted similarly during both protests, by not officially supporting either side but unofficially showing support through their media outlets, post-Maidan research has shown an increased role of the civil society. My thesis suggests that civil society has a hesitant attitude towards the oligarchs. The increased magnitude of Ukrainian civil society changes the rules for the oligarchs, who desire to become legitimate among that group of activists. However, my findings do not support the argument that they are drivers of change.

Despite the reluctance towards accepting gifts or assistance from these institutions of those labelled oligarchs, civil society elites seem impressed by the professionalism and modernity of the organizations and some of their activities. They see their projects as potentially interesting, which means that the

---

wealthy elite have tried to reach this audience by responding to their needs. In this way, they are working according to norms in society which are also prevalent among the civil society elite actors, representing a democratic development. This confirms the hypothesis that legitimacy is about approval in society. In states undergoing a transition with a strong public opinion and wealthy elite with an extraordinary need for legitimacy, these attempts can create platforms for democratic empowerment. Whether the wealthy elite will use these platforms with benevolence from their positions of power is a question for future research.

**The Ukrainian context**

Despite the intertwined relations between the economic and political sphere, actors’ strategies vary. As mentioned, previous research on Ukrainian oligarchs has not paid enough attention to these differences. However, my findings also show similarities crossing the political economic backgrounds of the donors. Specifically, this deals with the low degree of endowed capital that the foundations hold. Non-endowments create a donor dependency that goes beyond the boundaries previously identified and is almost a rule for foundations in Ukraine. In addition, foundations are also affected by so-called “forced cooperation”, or the political embeddedness of business. This supports the thesis that actors are bound by context; in this case, this includes post-Soviet inequality, weak state, and corruption. This particular post-Soviet context is promoted by Ledeneva, Hale, Engvall, etc., and in research on Ukraine exclusively is represented by Puglisi, Melnykovska, Pleines, Wilson, etc.235

These findings also show how politicians in opposition have fewer resources to spend on philanthropy, while those in power positions spend more. This supports the argument of patronal politics, in which networks and power relations are pertinent. In such a system, elites are dependent on the state, supporting the criticism of the Radnitz theory of subversive clientelism, in which these relations are neglected. However, my findings also indicate how elites seek support from below in order to gain legitimacy. It is thus not only relations with the ruling elite that matter, but in a pluralistic society like Ukraine, support from below also matters.

---

References


Altheide David L. & Christopher J. Schneider (2005), *Qualitative Media Analysis*, SAGE Publications.


Bender (2014), “Revolutionary forces in the wake of turmoil in Ukraine, the role of the country’s oligarchs is under scrutiny”, *Financial Times Wealth*, Spring.


Engvall, Johan (2016), *The State as Investment Market: Kyrgyzstan in Comparative Perspective*, University of Pittsburgh Press.


Leat, Diana (2016), Philanthropic Foundations, Public Good and Public Policy, Palgrave Macmillan.

Littig, Beate (2009), Interviewing experts, Alexander Bogner et al., eds., Palgrave Macmillan.

Manning, P.K. (2003), “?” in Qualitative research in action, ed. May, T., SAGE Publications.


di Palma, Brian (1993), Carlito’s Way.
Seale, Clive (2004), Researching Society and Culture, SAGE.


Wilson, Andrew (2005), *Ukraine’s Orange Revolution*. Yale University Press.


Appendix A. Interview guides

*Foundation donors and representatives 2011-2013: (Some questions are donor specific, others directed solely to directors, managers, employees.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Questions</th>
<th>Follow-up Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start, Process, Personal interests, Drive</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors: When did you start your philanthropic activities?</td>
<td>Why then? Do you remember your first larger scale gift? How did it develop into this large foundation? Do you have technical or philanthropy advisors, accountants, attorneys?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees: How long have you worked for this organization (and what is your position here)? What are your tasks on a normal day?</td>
<td>Who had the idea? What happened next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about how your lastly initiated project came to being.</td>
<td>Describe the (your) daily work of (at) the foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors: To which degree can your personal interests be traced in the directions of the foundation?</td>
<td>You have done (this and that) What drives you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors: You could have spent your money on yourself and your family, why did you give it away?</td>
<td>What is your foundation’s relationship to other NGOs (are they applicants or partners)? Have you considered giving grants to other NGOs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooperation</strong></td>
<td>Do you have any collaboration with public institutions – joint projects? What is your foundation’s relation to public institutions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which organizations are you cooperating with?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who do you share information (informally or formally) with? (relations)

**Decision-making**

Employees: Have you met (the donor)? How often do you have meetings?

**Target audiences, Role in society, image, process**

Who should be supported by your programs? Why them and why not others?

The targeted groups of the programs of your foundation, would you consider them as previously overlooked or ignored by the authorities/ local municipalities?

Have you reached those you aimed at? How do you reach them? (Are they finding you or are you finding them?) How many have applied so far? Is that in accordance with expectations?

Do you contain contact with your beneficiaries after the completion of the project?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Role in society</th>
<th>Funding sources</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Philanthropy</th>
<th>Reasons – foundations in general</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have they been successful? How? What metrics do you apply to judge the</td>
<td>What is your own understanding of the matter?</td>
<td>What is your point of view on how other private philanthropy foundations</td>
<td>According to you, who should be responsible for financing (field)? (The public</td>
<td>Is it important that the donor is involved in the project?</td>
<td>Some are of the opinion that philanthropy should be anonymous and quiet, others that it should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>merits of the initiatives?</td>
<td></td>
<td>contributes?</td>
<td>sector, private philanthropists like you, or other actors in society?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>get the best effect of it. Which approach is more correct according to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If mentioning “effectiveness”:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do you feel any responsibility to provide x, to contribute in x field?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Do you think that so called “forced cooperation” with the state/local authorities may be a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reason for some philanthropic projects?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Does philanthropy bring influence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Who are engaged in the same kind of projects as you? How do you relate to them/their projects?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Many philanthropists hold political positions. What is your opinion on that? (Do you have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>any political ambitions?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If we widen our gaze and consider all the foundations, do you think that the image of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>foundation which is associated with a person can entail either advantages or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is an understanding in society that elite philanthropy is about creating a good image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>among the citizens. Do you think that can be so in some cases?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

86
disadvantages when it comes to for example being accepted for a grant or cooperation with an international organization?

Irrespectively of the reasons for engaging in philanthropy, what may the impact be for the donor?

- Improved reputation of the donor and his business, -helpful for relations with state authorities,
- improved financial performances of the donor’s business.

Your projects seem directed toward (the intellectual elite and the international community) (projects that look good in their eyes differs from projects that are gaining them directly), is that one of your aims?

If you have also other ambitions, which are those? Can you describe your ideology? Why do you think you have those beliefs?

Who are engaged in the same projects as the X foundation? How do you relate to their projects?

**Ultimate goal – what do you want to achieve?**

**Finish, Process**

How do you gather information on how to develop the programs run by the foundation? What do you see as the trajectory of the X foundation’s program over the next five years? Do you aim at handing over your projects to any other institution (state) over time?

Employees: What do you see as your trajectory over the next five years, are you here, or somewhere else?

Do you know of any other foundation or donor which could be interesting for me to meet?

In the 1950 Soviet Concise Dictionary of Foreign Words “philanthropy” is defined as “a means the bourgeoisie uses to deceive workers and disguise the parasitism and its exploiter’s face by rendering hypocritical aid to the poor in order to distract the latter from class struggle.” Do you feel that you have to justify your existence and actions more than for example similar foundations in the West, because of this ideological past?

---

*Foundation representatives, 2014*

Which are the implications of the development in Ukraine during the last six months on your foundation’s work? I assume it has been hard not to take stand during the recent sequence of events… Did the foundation support any groups? How?

That your founder has been taking stand for/against Maidan, has that affected your work in any way?

Have you had the same view on the development in Ukraine as the founder of your foundation? If not, has that been problematic? How?

How can your foundation best contribute to the situation in which Ukraine is now?
What do you think about the future of the foundation?
How do you think the public opinion of your founder is affected by the work of the foundation?
Has the foundation affected the actions of the founder in any way?
Has your perspective on cooperation with the state changed with the regime change?

Civil society activists, 2016

In the interviews, I asked about background of the organization, its connection to Maidan, and main funding sources. Then I showed the interviewee the names of twelve large philanthropy foundations in Ukraine today and asked whether he/she knew about them, with a particular focus on their activity or inactivity at Maidan. Next, I showed another picture with only the six names of foundations, and let them describe what they knew about them. This supplied me with attitudes towards the foundations.

Intro: You are the… of this organization… for how long have you been engaged in the work of the organization? Is it on paycheck or voluntary basis? Can you tell me about the history/origins of the organization? What was your role during the Maidan protests?
Which organizations do you cooperate with? (Who would you like to cooperate with?)
Are you familiar with these foundations? (first twelve foundations, then names of the six elite giving organizations included in this study)
What do you know about these foundations actions or inactions during the Maidan protests?
Have you ever approached the mentioned foundations? Have you been approached by them?
Did you cooperate in some way?
Did you receive support from them?
(Change over time?)
What do you think of their role in general?
Appendix B. Interviews

Focus giving organizations’ representatives
Representative, Borys Kolesnikov Foundation, November 14, 2011 (e-mail interview); October 16, 2013; May 23, 2014. Russian/English Kyiv.
Representative 1, 2 (two respondents), Ukraine’s Future Foundation, November 20, 2013. Russian. Kyiv.

Civil society organizations’ representatives/activists
Representative, Hromadske, June 6, 2016, Russian. Kyiv.
Representative, New Donbass, June 7, 2016, Russian. Kyiv.
Representative, Right Sector, June 8, 2016, Russian. Kyiv.

1 All were interviewed by the author.
Researchers, practitioners, and analysts

Previous employees, potential recipients, non-focus giving organizations’ representatives
Mikhail Minakov, Associate Professor at Kyiv Mohyla Academy, founder of Foundation for Good Politics, previous employee at Victor Pinchuk Foundation, October 26, 2011. English. Kyiv.
Dmytro Ostroushko, Director of the international program, Gorshenyn Institute, previous employee at Victor Pinchuk Foundation, October 26, 2011; June 4, 2016; September 21, 2017; November 15, 2017. English. Kyiv.

Wealthy donors-businessmen