

Research Paper
Civil Society in post-Maidan Ukraine: a
driver towards new social and state
building principles?

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Abstract

Is civil society in post-Maidan Ukraine a driver towards new social and state building principles? In February – November 2014 civil society assumed some of the functions that are considered state ones: defense, internal security, lustration and counter-propaganda, challenging the traditional balance of state-civil society interaction. To analyze the implications of this shift, I turn to two approaches to state-civil society interaction: spatial, seeing the latter as a sphere between the state and private life, and behavioral – focusing on the civil society’s role in constructing socially acceptable norms and behaviors. Supporters of both approaches assume similar functional set for the civil society, and don’t provide guidance on the situation when it starts performing some of the state functions. Looking at the research about civil society, violence and war also didn’t bring satisfactory explanations. Consequently, I turn to basics and re-read Antonio Gramsci’s idea of hegemony and Tocqueville’s civic associations in light of the Ukrainian reality. This has provided encouraging results suggesting that Ukrainian civil society in the form of civic associations started the process of shifting hegemonic ideologies and practices, which, because of the war, took place in the sectors most important for the survival of the country.

Background and Introduction

Since November 2013 Ukraine has seen unprecedented rise of civil society. First, in the form of civic movement, when thousands of people from all social layers came to Maidan, country’s main square, to show their protest against violent suppression of the peaceful pro-EU Association Agreement manifestation organized by students. Later, Ukrainians demonstrated strong ability to self-organize and formed volunteer groups that, interconnected with each other, supplied food, clothes, wood for heating, medicines to the protesters and involved thousands of citizens who donated what they could (Taylor, 2013). The protesters even formed security groups and protected the perimeter of the protest area, which spread from the European Square to the Arena Entertainment center, covering the whole main street Kreshchatyk and all of its side streets. Later, field hospital and Maidan Open University emerged as private initiatives, supported by participation and donations from citizens, among which were also businessmen, medical workers, politicians, public figures, political activists and so on. Dramatic events on February, 19, when 100 unarmed protesters were deliberately shot on the street close to Maidan, was the highest point of the protest and raised even more confidence among participants, soon after which then-President Yanukovich fled to Russia together with some of his closest collaborators (Australian news, 2014). The victims of the regime were called “Heavenly hundred”, while this dramatic winter, when people resisted despite life threat, was named “Revolution of Dignity” in a meaning that the Ukrainian society, which was on Maidan, was no longer willing to live under the governance of corrupt elites and was ready to go extra mile for the rule of law to prevail (discussion of the mechanisms which could have made it possible for the “Revolution” to happen is available in Kryshtapovych (2015)).

These events later led to the Parliament to dismiss the President Yanukovich who didn't perform his duties, while transitional government was established and remained in charge between February and November 2014 (Australian news, 2014).

Then, unexpected events followed: in March Crimea was annexed by Russia, and Russian-backed separatists activated in the East regions of Luhansk and Donetsk, which ultimately led to the undeclared war between Russia and Ukraine. The Ukrainian government at that moment had hard times taking leadership in defense mostly because of corruption and because of the neglect the army has been facing for the last 20 years (BBC, 2014).

Instead, inspired by the success of Maidan, civil society stepped in. Minakov (2015) summed up areas where civil society de-facto substituted the state:

- Defense: volunteer battalions were formed against Russian intervention and separatists in the east, which were fully autonomously supplied with everything from socks to hi-tech equipment by volunteers. Some battalions were formed and supplied by the representatives of political and business elites, such as I. Kolomoyskyi's battalion in Dnipropetrovsk (SOURCE). In other cases, the remainders of the state army were supplied by volunteers, because government supply chain was hindered by corruption (SOURCE);
 - Internal security: self-defense groups, mostly formed during Maidan, continued to police cities across the country;
 - Counter-propaganda: activists formed online resources aimed at countering Russian propaganda about the annexation of the Crimea and conflict in Donbas (e.g. Facebook group "Dyvanna sotnya" ("Sofa hundred") and Inforesist (?));
 - Lustration: activists were pushing for change among power elites, mostly in public service, such as local administrations and courts. Their actions were direct – they raided offices of the former ruling party in Kyiv and regions and removed officials that were connected to Yanukovich. Their actions were not always just or tolerant, and they took place without court decision or any other official decision. Later activists created a group that promoted adoption of the new law on lustration.

According to Minakov (2015), it was the government that "allowed non-state actors to fulfill [these] functions". This is a questionable statement because civil society did not ask permission, while weak government at that time was not able to resist such actions by civil society anyway. In other words, the government was 'forced' to accept civil society's leadership in the face of foreign intervention¹.

Although Minakov (2015) accepts critical role of civil society in keeping the state running and countering Russian intervention, he is also concerned with the civil society crossing its 'legitimate boundary' and taking up too much power from the state. He goes as far as to say that this is a threat to the polity of Ukraine in the long-run.

¹ This statement can be supported by archive news reports about formation of volunteer battalions and Facebook posts of the supply groups such as "Kryla Feniksa" (The Wings of Phoenix).

Minakov's short article has thus inspired this paper in several ways. First, what are the boundaries between the state and civil society? Should there be boundaries? Second, does Ukrainian case call for revisiting classical thought of the relation between the civil society and state in a search for new, modernized forms and functions of both? Finally, can the civil society be the driving force that shifts the social norms and values in line with the Maidan requirements by acting according to them and by taking leadership in state spheres and thus changes the state itself (for example to less corruption)?

The paper is organized in the following way. First I will examine previous papers concerning the term, scope, functions of the civil society and its interaction with the state, focusing primarily on CEE. I will also survey the research on hybridization as this could be potential explanation for the Ukrainian case as well as research on civil society, violence and war considering the context. Next I will apply these findings to the situation in Ukraine, which will reveal the area of research where my contribution could potentially be made. I will then attempt to go to the basics and review the ideas of Antonio Gramsci on hegemonic forces and Alexis de Tocqueville on civic associations, and will demonstrate that the synthesis of these two theories may be helpful for explaining Ukrainian case. Finally, I will suggest some research questions and methods, and conclude.

Previous research on state and civil society

Definition and scope of civil society

The body of research on civil society in the CEE is massive and has been conducted in three waves: in 1980-90s, when the resistance movements opposing authoritarian state gave hope for democratization and civil society was seen as the driving force for change by mainstream researchers and media (Hirst (1991) gives an overview if this argument and provides counterarguments); in 2000s, when optimism was much reduced and researchers labeled civil society in CEE as "weak" mainly due to the absence of strong organizations like it existed in the West (Howard, 2003), and new developments in 2010s, when academic society started to consider more diverse forms of civil society, such as movements (Jacobsson and Saxonberg, 2012; Fröhlich, 2012) and social economy (Laine, 2014).

The interactions between state and civil society are inevitably in the focus of the research, because the concept of the civil society itself is usually defined in relation to the state, where the former is presented as an intermediary between the private sphere and the state (Bowden, 2006:158). The most influential theorists within this 'spatial' approach are Habermas, Gramsci, Cohen and Arato. The less spread approach, viewing civil society as a form of social interaction that is expressed in independence, finding compromise in a conflict without resorting to violence, acting out of public interest and recognizing diverse attitudes and lifestyles, is represented by Paine and Tocqueville (Baumgarten et al, 2011:291).

‘Spatial’ approach to state-civil society relations has been the most influential through the course of civil society research. For example, Ernst Gellner defines civil society as

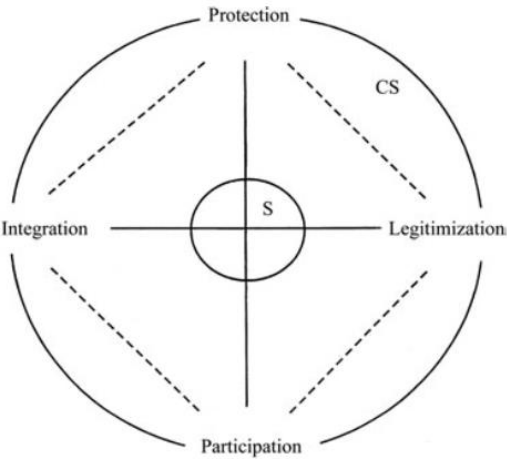
“that set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society” (Bowden, 2006:158).

The majority of the CEE civil society research uses ‘spatial’ definitions, and this is where the particular attention to organizational forms comes from. The more recent research on movements and social economy seems to be inclined towards behavioral definitions, which allows them to go beyond the limits of researching organizations and look at other forms. This approach, according to Laine (2014) is more promising in explaining the nature and mechanisms of civil society.

Functions of civil society

The literature review on CEE civil society did not bring about region-specific papers on functions of the civil society. Therefore this paper will be informed by the helpful summary of the civil society functions in general provided by Müller (2006:318). His overview of the civil society theories across time from Aristotle to modern thinkers like Cohen and Arato, made him able to determine four main functional dimensions of the civil society in relation to the state: protection, legitimization, participation, and integration (see Figure 1, from Müller (2006:320)).

Figure 1: The Functional Dimension in Relations between Civil Society and the State



Protective dimension stems from the extra-political nature of the civil society and its independence from the state. Thus civil society acts like a protective shield against potential expansion of the state power, which is inevitable due to natural inclination of the state to centralization.

Legitimizing function is based on the civil society's ability to form public opinion independently of political powers. And if the government is able to find common ground with this public opinion, it will enjoy the trust of its citizens, which ultimately will make this government legitimate. However, to be able to form this public opinion, civil society should be a relatively large structure, where social interests and government policies are constantly discussed, substantiated and aligned.

According to its participative function, civil society should be able to ensure more effective citizen engagement in public causes than the political parties do. Civil participation is ensured through multi-leveled decentralized processes, network-based spread of information and generally better awareness of the public in, for example, certain locality, about its problems and potential solutions. Within this function interest groups are formed, and due to their specific interest in a particular cause they are able to provide resource-efficient solutions in a timely manner, especially if the state is responsive.

Within its integrative function, civil society facilitates formation of the relations of affinity and loyalty from the repeated involvement in the causes of interest and subsequent formation of interest-based networks. This function also shows that if we continuously voice our interest, even if not addressed at the moment, the cause has greater chances of being acted upon in the future (Müller, 2006:318).

Interplay between the civil society and state

Antonio Gramsci's theory provides interesting starting point for this research paper, because he, on one hand, draws a line of separation between the state and civil society, but on the other hand, he acknowledges that in practice overlapping between the two spheres is significant (Katz, 2010). He describes civil society as "so-called private organizations such as churches, trade unions, political parties and cultural associations" that go in tension towards the state. The state for him is different from the civil society by its monopoly for coercion and thus consists of "the armed forces, law courts and prisons together with all the administrative departments concerning taxation, finance, trade, industry, social security, etc." (Bowden, 2006:169). Ultimately, civil society and state should aim for the balance of power between them.

Similar in the approach to civil society-state relations were Cohen and Arato, but they developed Gramsci's view adding the concept of legitimacy of the spheres' boundaries, meaning that boundaries between the spheres are intangible and established by constant balancing and finding social consensus on what is legitimate for the state, civil society, market and so on. As for the role to play, legitimate 'area of responsibility' of civil society is to serve as a space for social integration, building understanding and creating demands performing an integrative service for the whole society (Klein, 2010).

Applying existing research to the case of Ukraine: loopholes revealed

Application of the previously mentioned research findings to the case of Ukraine brings about some challenges. Available research papers emphasize the role of civil society as either a ‘watch dog’, a concern-raising power that tries to influence state policies or a ‘brewery’ of political demand and social cohesion.

Existing view of legitimate boundaries identified via the previous research of the civil society has important implications to the situation in Ukraine and, specifically, evaluation of the consequences civil society’s actions have on current and future Ukrainian polity.

Minakov (2014) is concerned by the civil society stepping over its legitimate boundaries and assuming functions that he considers to be within the sole jurisdiction of the state. Furthermore, he suggests that such a change from being the ‘watch dog’ to being direct actor poses a threat to Ukraine as a state and risks substituting rule of law with the rule of separate, more powerful, civil society actors. He uses Cohen and Arato’s legitimacy argument to prove his point. In order to understand his concerns, one should keep in mind that Cohen and Arato use Hegel’s views on state-civil society relations as a starting point for their theory, meaning that civil society plays important role in socialization and creation of political demand, but also it is a “battlefield . . . [of] individual private interests” which requires the supervision, and at times intervention, of the state to maintain civil order” (Bowden, 2006:162; Klein, 2010). Stemming from this perspective, active engagement of civil society in the traditional state sphere constitutes a threat that the powers that dominate in the civil society, will ultimately take up the state thus simply changing the elites and not changing the elite-citizen balance (in line with Acemoglu & Robinson (2006) elite-citizen competition theory).

Another challenge posed by existing research is that it draws a line between state and civil society functions, the where civil society acts in social spheres like human rights, health, and education rather than defense and internal security as it happened in Ukraine.

Thus the available research findings are not fully applicable to the topic of this paper, because by forming volunteer battalions, internal security and lustration groups the Ukrainian civil society has acted *directly* out of its functional sphere there, where the state would be more (seemingly) natural actor.

Partly, this is not unique. There are cases when civil society performs some of the state functions and they are present in the western welfare states like Sweden (Önnerfors & Pålsson, 2014). This phenomenon is called ‘hybridization’ and refers to mostly education and healthcare sectors, while civil society in this case is viewed in its neoliberal understanding as including corporate actors (service providers) (Brandson, 2010).

Looking at the civil society in Ukraine from the social movement perspective may help explain Maidan events, while hybridity approach is potentially useful to describe de-facto fusion between the state and civil society. But the challenge is in details: both of these concepts don't explain the mechanisms and implications of the civil society taking up defense and anti-propaganda functions, therefore cannot be used directly to explain this phenomenon.

What potentially could be used is the body of research on civil society, violence and war. Without deviation from the key topic of this paper, the state-civil society interactions, it is worth considering that the analysis takes place in the context of Ukraine being at war. In a useful summary of around ten major works on the topic dated between 1999 and 2008, Megan Meyer and Simon Stacey (2010) show that previous research mostly focused on the reconciling and preventive roles of civil society with regards to violence and war. They point to no research, which would explicitly describe a situation when civil society takes up a defense function of the state by organizing volunteer battalions and supplying them with everything from socks to hi-tech arms.

Thus, the loophole in previous research reveals itself. In essence, we probably deal with a new type of state-civil society interaction, induced by simultaneous condition of a nearly failing state and external military aggression². And this interaction is marked by the leadership of civil society that brings new norms and attitudes to the state functions by directly assuming responsibility for them. The question is, however, **is this really a new form of interaction or perhaps more a revival of civil society in its original meaning and, most importantly, what implications it has for both state and civil society?** Is assumption voiced by Minakov (2014) indeed valid or perhaps we should refrain from thinking of the civil society as having the 'watch dog' function as its primary role and look deeper in the process of how civil society of Ukraine has gained its legitimacy during 2013/2014 in a situation when state was incapable to secure defense at times of war.

Without finding the answer in the contemporary research, I will follow the line of thought by Laine (2014:72) and get back to basics.

Back to basics: classical theories of civil society and state revisited

The study of the basics will be informed by two classical social theorists Antonio Gramsci and Alexis de Tocqueville, amended where appropriate with other theorists. The reason for such a step back was well worded by Katz (2010): "One of the most attractive features of Gramsci's thought is the blueprint for social change that he offers. In recent writings applying his blueprint to our time, civil society is all too often taken as a

² This should not be confused with national or partisan resistance due to the level of organization and encompassing functionality from military defense to anti-propaganda and lustration.

homogenous reformist force. Nothing can be further from Gramsci's theory of civil society than such an overly benign view of civil society."

To understand how the civil society in Ukraine assumed functions, unusual for it, I will first overview Gramsci's hegemony and Tocqueville's civic associations concepts and then synthesize them to form a theoretical background to look at Ukraine.

Tocqueville with his concept of civic associations is a representative of a group of theorists who consider civil society to be a form of social interaction that goes beyond particular sphere, and rather describe the type of social action. These theories focus on social behavior – independence of the state and other actors, self-organization, finding compromise in a conflict situation without resorting to violence, acting out of public interest and recognizing diverse attitudes and lifestyles (Baumgarten et al, 2011:291). According to him, the People should govern their localities independently of the state, and turn to it only in rare cases, providing a sort of balance of periphery to the central government. It is important to note that although he pays a lot of tribute to civic associations, he also describes a functioning federal state that consciously provides such freedom of association and decentralized rule as the 19th century United States (Brinton, 2010). This theory is helpful in understanding Ukrainian civil society, because Tocqueville was talking about people uniting to solve their problems independently of the state, and he saw this as an expression of the true democracy. He, however, wasn't stressing on organizational forms – civic associations for him didn't necessarily have any organizational or legal form and were rather people assembling to solve certain issue (Brinton, 2010). In Ukraine, volunteer battalions, volunteer army supply chain, anti-propaganda internet activists and so on didn't have any legal status or organizational forms (especially at the beginning), but rather were a response to state inability to solve important security issues. In this sense, Tocqueville's understanding of civil society may be more suitable to Ukraine than the 'spatial' ones. Developing this point, the actions of civil society in Ukraine are not just legitimate, but also represent genuine social moods and natural flow of events, where civil society is independent and acts directly to solve its problems. As mentioned above, the difference from the situation described by Tocqueville is that prior to emergence of these activists there was no legal compact with the state – it neither predicted, nor facilitated such activities and the only thing it could do was to try to embrace volunteers into government structures in an attempt to re-establish its control in the sphere of state legitimacy, in Cohen and Arato's terms (Minakov, 2014; Klein, 2010).

To fully embrace peculiarities of the Ukrainian civil society, looking more attentively at Gramsci's hegemony concept is helpful. As a Marxist theorist, Gramsci focuses on class relations and contest, dividing the society into dominant and dominated classes (while class approach may seem somewhat outdated, the elite-citizen competition remains an active field of research (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006), that's why Gramsci's theory remains relevant in the current social setting). Consequently, he describes hegemony as a process through which dominated classes *accept* the dominant class' leadership as opposed to being coerced by the ruling class. In hegemony, certain lifestyle and line of thinking is dominant and diffuses through the society's norms, values, politics and social interactions (Katz, 2010). In

hegemonic arrangements, although coercion is also present, the power of ideas is more visible than that of the force (Rupert, 2005). Since leadership in hegemony is achieved not via imposition, but by gaining consent of the ruled, it is acquired rather within the civil society and not within the government mechanisms, because civil society for Gramsci is the sphere where consensus is developed. So the rulers have to allow a space for free associations and actions (or create the belief that it is allowed) in order to keep their hegemony. At the same time, the agenda of the civil society is not necessarily dominated by the ruling class. On the contrary, Gramsci views civil society as the arena where hegemony is contested making it an active and most important factor in historical changes, the driver of development. This is the space where dominated groups can conduct counter-hegemonic actions and try to change the society (Katz, 2010). Moreover, contradiction to hegemony is a natural process, where hegemony and counter-hegemony produce “simultaneous double movements”, **reshaping each other, causing the hegemonic powers to reorganize** (Persaud, 2001:49).

Formulating further research question and suggesting the methods

Reviewing Gramsci’s concept of hegemony for understanding civil society may be helpful in current times of widespread Internet. Gramsci’s hegemony has no definite source, leader, no particular tools and it seems to exist everywhere and nowhere within the society. Spread of information through networks and that how quickly it becomes available to all parts of the world and involves people in important social causes, slowly, but steadily changing perceptions of certain norms, may be an expression of the reshaping the hegemony. This is, of course, a very broad scope of research not to be covered with this paper. I suggest, however, that research on civil society and internet, such as Ester and Vinken (2003), could benefit from applying hegemony concept to analyzing the kind of impact civil society has on the norms by using internet as its tool and space.

Applying Gramsci’s theory onto the developments in Ukraine, the initial question of this paper could be reformulated as “**Applying Gramscian concept of hegemony to explain the dynamics and future of the Ukrainian state and civil society relations**”. In line with his concept, such activity of the civil society may be the manifestation of the hegemony being reshaped, and subsequent resistance of the government and corrupt elites may serve as confirmation for this idea, while civic associations according to Tocqueville serve as tools. Moreover, in the state of war and economic downshift, civil society has more opportunities to change the hegemonic ideologies and values with the reason that existing ones don’t allow the country to protect itself from the foreign aggression. In Gramsci’s terms, civil society ultimately diffuses its ideas while meeting less resistance from the weak government structures, which also doesn’t enjoy citizen’s support. Indirectly, M. Saakashvili confirmed this assumption in his interview, when he said that doing reforms in the state of war may be even more fruitful (Dozhd, 2015).

Unpacking the question posed above may contribute to the interesting research already being conducted by the Ukrainian socio-political activist, analyst and philosopher Valerii Pekar. In short, he argues that as a result of the change in self-identification of critical mass of the Ukrainian civil society, two types of societies – post-Medieval and Modern – are in constant battle with each other on multiple levels (cultural, political). This is why, on one side, we see wide voluntary action for reforms, on the other – resistance of the corrupt state structures (Pekar, 2015). In my opinion, Gramsci’s concept of hegemony would serve as the underlying explanation of such a shift in self-identification that Pekar takes as a fact through revealing internal “double movements”.

Developed further, this concept may serve as helpful background to analyzing subsequent power dynamics in the Ukrainian society, because aforementioned list of areas where civil society has taken leadership is not exhaustive, and new areas such as e-government are being embraced by activists directly involved in drafting and implementing the change. Finally, the ultimate result of the reshaping of hegemony would be the change in priorities of the government as well as its composition and establishment of the new power balance between civil society, perhaps in an updated shape, and state, also with an updated institutional system.

Gramsci, however, doesn’t explicitly reveal the tools how reshaping of the hegemony may take place. Instead, further research in this direction may be informed by refreshed attention to Tocqueville’s view of the power of civic associations. Indeed, all of the mentioned functions that civil society took up were the outcomes of unified effort of citizens who were not necessarily members of any civil society organization.

Using both concepts to look at the Ukrainian civil society creates additional question for the much wider area of research. For example, it re-iterates the need to review mainstream understanding of the civil society in its organized forms and to pay more attention to its alternative expressions, like Jacobsson and Saxonberg (2012) or Laine (2014) suggest.

These assumptions need, of course, to be tested, especially, due to concerns that also aroused in parallel to optimism. For example, Minakov (2015) is concerned with civil society going over its legitimate boundaries, which may be a threat to the Ukrainian polity, to the law and order. Gramscian perspective seems to be suitable to counteract these concerns, but it is not possible to do so without empirical research.

Further methods for empirical research will be suggested based on the assumptions that shift in hegemony should reveal itself on the symbolic, normative level and on the physical, tangible level. From the normative perspective, shift in hegemony will be expressed in prevailing civil society and government rhetoric, which would change from state-centered to civil society-centered. In the physical, real-world dimension, the quality of reforms should be changed from being “on paper” to actually being implemented and working, and the pace would change from slow to fast.

Consequently, the methods to be used should be both quantitative and qualitative.

For the normative dimension, quantitative research may be comprised of content analysis of key state decision-makers' statements on reforms and war and its comparison to the content analysis of sentiments of the users of the Ukrainian segment of popular social networks (Facebook, VKontakte). The subjects for comparison would be the frequency of usage of key words, which would be determined based on prior analysis of activists' rhetoric. The outcomes of this analysis would give a hint of how close or distant are symbolic worlds of the state and civil society and who determines the communicative discourse. The latter would be established by comparing the publication dates of government and activists' statements.

Qualitative research for this matter will serve as a preparation, when the researcher will identify key topics and speakers to monitor. Quick survey of the available online resources identified such potential speakers who will be both organizations and activists: Reanimation Package of Reforms³, Valerii Pekar⁴ (mentioned before), Minister of Economic Development and Trade Aivaras Abromavičius⁵, President Petro Poroshenko, Counselor to the President Yuri Biriukov⁶, specializing in military supply chain, e-purchasing initiative for the Army of Ukraine Prozorro⁷, e-government volunteer initiative ICT Competence Center⁸. Identification of key words and topics would be a more complex task, however, some suggestions would be "initiative", "volunteer initiative", "e-government". In the qualitative part it would be interesting to analyze posts by smaller, for example, city initiatives to see if they rely more in their projects on themselves (which would be in Tocqueville's spirit) or the state⁹.

For the physical or real-world dimension, it would be interesting to see how (and if) hegemony is being shifted within the state structures and within the social structures, and if it is civil society that drives the change. This again could be done with the help of qualitative and quantitative research. For the changes in state structure, one may follow institutional reorganization, measure how many of the former volunteers ended up in the government, how many civic associations work on government projects and how many of their projects are implemented and how successfully. A hint is provided by the report by V. Pekar from the Fifth meeting of the National Reform Council, where the Ministry of Defense, with currently largest number of employed former volunteers for the army supply chain, was also the most successfully implementing e-bidding system for 100% of its over-threshold purchases (Facebook, 2015).

As mentioned before, shift in hegemony would be visible through the quality and pace of reforms. In this case EU monitoring, associated with the provision of macro-economic assistance to Ukraine within the East European Partnership constitutes a helpful tool for

³ http://platforma-reform.org/?page_id=351 (newsletter is available in English)

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/valerii.pekar>

⁵ About Mr. Abromavičius <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2015-01-06/can-this-man-save-ukraines-economy>

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/yuri.biriukov>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/prozorro?fref=ts> (in Ukrainian only)

⁸ <http://www.ict.org.ua/> (in Ukrainian only)

⁹ Example of the initiative – Samosad – recreational area in Kyiv, fully constructed by the community of one of the city districts: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Samosad/1605911233024707>

analysis (European Council, 2015). Progress reports, comprised by the EU, would be free from the bias that internal ministry reports inevitably have, and are based on certain criteria and key performance indicators. For the purposes of the suggested research, the confirmation of the progress of the important administrative reform towards decentralization, which was promised to the EU by at least two former presidents and never implemented, would be an indicator of the shift in hegemony, because this is also the reform demanded by civil society.

Another approach, in order to follow intangible changes of the hegemony, may be implemented through the case study. For the object of research, it is suggested to select the Ministry of Defense for the following reasons: it is a key ministry considering current state of undeclared war with Russia and its proper functioning determines state survival; it is also the ministry, which functions were taken up by the volunteers the first; it is also the ministry where e-bidding reform is the most implemented so far and where supply chain is now being changed by the former volunteers. The research in this case will take place in the form of survey of the ministry employees as well as analysis of open sources, where ministry's activity is evaluated.

For the sake of comprehensiveness, further research should also include concerns with the leadership of civil society, such as the view that civil society is used as 'window dressing', and there is only a visibility of reforms¹⁰. Furthermore, in Ukraine civil society if understood as a non-state actor, should include corporate sector and oligarchs, therefore separate line of research may embrace these two groups and analyze their impact on the shift of hegemony, if any¹¹.

Conclusion

In this paper I tried to find possible explanations of the processes in Ukraine, which involved unusual participation of the civil society. I discussed theories of the civil society and state interactions and returned to the basics of civil society studies, Gramsci and Tocqueville, because modern theories didn't provide sufficient explanation. I came to a conclusion that the process that Ukraine is facing now could be a manifestation of shift in hegemonic forces and values in line with Gramsci led by the civil society in Tocquevillean terms, and provided some suggestions for the research in this direction. I also acknowledged the existence of critical opinions to such a view, that's why further research is needed.

¹⁰ Such point of view is expressed by Dmytro Lubkin, Projects Coordinator of the Public platform "New Country", an NGO involved actively in the reforms on his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/dlubkin>

¹¹ For example, oligarch I. Kolomoyskyi who was supporting voluntary battalion in Dnipropetrovsk and allegedly prevented separatism in the region. Despite being a controversial figure in the Ukrainian politics and business, he enjoys gratitude for his civic position from some mass media (see <http://unitpost.com/post/1apr2015/Politics/2387-yan-valetov-neudobnyy-kolomoyskiy.html>, in Russian only)

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