

Defining and identifying Russia's elite groups

Siloviki representation during Putin's third term



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Introduction

Introducing the siloviki

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation has experienced post-communist power structures that have shown various patterns under the successive presidencies of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. During the Soviet era, leadership was dominated by the Communist Party and its nomenklatura who generally filled all the top-level governmental positions. Under Yeltsin, the chaotic and ineffective transition from communism to capitalism during the 1990s was accompanied by the rise of extreme wealthy businessmen known as the “oligarchs”. This elite group greatly benefited from the privatization of state-owned companies and soon exercised significant control over essential economic and political institutions. Often referred to as the “seven bankers”, the most influential of these tycoons including Boris Berezovsky, Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky were immediately forced to cede power when Putin entered the presidency.

Under Putin, the authoritarianization of Russia’s political landscape contributed to the creation of a new elite clan known as the “siloviki”. Despite a lack of agreement on a clearly detailed definition of the term “siloviki”, this elite group is often basically referred to as politicians and officials who are active, or used to be active in one of the force structures which include state coercive institutions like the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Federal Security Service (FSB). In general, highly influential leaders including Sergey Ivanov, Viktor Ivanov and Nikolai Patrushev are often regarded as core members of this forceful siloviki team. Due to the influx of these elites with force structure backgrounds on key positions of power, Russia under Putin is often labelled a “militocracy” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, 289), or a “neo-KGB state” (The Economist 2007). This newly created inner circle of elites has ever since formed the backbone for Putin’s continuous power base and therefore gathered much attention from international scholars and media. Especially since Putin’s return to the presidency in 2012, increased authoritarian practices are often linked to increased siloviki domination and therefore his current presidential term draws much attention.

General research gaps

Despite the attractiveness of extensive research on the siloviki elites, it generally appears that literature has been facing many difficulties leading to speculations, disagreements and other open spaces. As the group is theoretically often poorly understood, the first essential problem is that clear and operational definitions of siloviki are missing as scholars and media tend to forget to answer the basic question: who exactly are these elites, and what unites them? As a result, conclusions and claims

concerning the role of the siloviki often lack a reasonable basis and leave a significant number of uncertainties. Secondly, many studies are limited to an examination of the group's role and omit systematic empirical research on representation numbers and related findings that provide broader insights. Besides, the relatively small number of existing empirical studies on the subject are outdated as they examined siloviki representation during Putin's first two presidential terms (2000-2008) and don't conduct any comparative analysis. As Putin's third presidential term is rather underexposed, it fosters an environment conducive to research that would be helpful in order to provide new findings without on elite without the involvement of significant uncertainties.

Research question

This thesis intends to fill some of the open spaces by focussing on siloviki representation in top-level positions of power during Putin's third presidential term. The specific purpose is to examine how siloviki representation has developed in comparison to earlier terms to ultimately conclude distinctive trends, especially regarding Putin's increased authoritarian practices during his third presidential term. Therefore, this thesis addresses the following research question: How has siloviki representation in key positions of power developed during Putin's third presidential term compared to his earlier terms? This question will be answered from a comparative perspective as this thesis aims to conclude undiscovered trends, and therefore earlier presidential terms are included as well. Representation is measured through provable presence of siloviki on the most significant positions of political power in order to prevent speculations and rough estimates. In contrast to earlier studies, this thesis focusses on a confined scope of elites on key positions of power, instead of total representation. In addition, not only representation of siloviki on top-level posts is measured but also other helpful elements that have received limited attentions by previous studies. These include findings on the specific backgrounds of the siloviki, dominance in certain institutional bodies, and length of services in one of the key positions.

Three theoretical camps on the political influence of siloviki concluded by Peter Vaughn Sager assist in facilitating an answer to the main question. The first camp, the orthodox school, argues that Putin started filling as many top-level posts of power as possible with active reservist from the security services right after his entrance to the presidency in order to stabilize political control and personal power. The second camp, the critical school, argues that this large-scale influx of siloviki claimed by the orthodox school is exaggerated. The third camp, the revisionist school, largely follows the orthodox school but stresses that the siloviki clan is dominated by elites with a KGB or FSB background (Sager 2013, 7-9).

As discussed in more detail in the next section, according to recent political developments and the assumed link between increased authoritarianism and siloviki domination, the most obvious outcome would be an increase in the total number of siloviki on key positions during Putin's third term. A decrease could however imply that Putin is moving away from the siloviki and that power is shifting towards another elite group(s), or possibly himself.

This study is among the first attempts to examine siloviki representation during Putin's third presidential term compared to his earlier terms, and ultimately aims to demonstrate that, as siloviki representation in key positions of power has declined during Putin's third term compared to his earlier terms, there is no assumed link between increased authoritarianism and increased siloviki domination on key positions. In the context of this argument, the critical school is the most applicable theoretical camp as siloviki representation in key positions throughout the entire examined period (2000-2016) has been less substantial than is often assumed.

Methodology

Elite representation requires a transparent method that is practicable in the context of the research question. This thesis studies siloviki representation through an examination of the educational and occupational backgrounds of all politicians and officials who have filled the most influential positions of power between May 2000 and October 2016. Before conducting this positional identification, a clear framework needs to be established including two key elements: criteria for siloviki labelling through an operational conceptualization, and a selection of the most essential positions of power that are to be examined. This framework is established by the formulation of a clear and operational definition of siloviki through an extensive literature review, and a selection of key positions through an analysis of the Russian political system and its most influential institutions according to a number of selected criteria. Available bibliographic data primarily in English ultimately determines whether a politician or official can be given the status of a silovik. Results of this positional identification are used to provide new insights on siloviki representation during Putin's third presidential term.

Chapter overview

In order to understand the rise of the siloviki, the first section elaborates on the correlation between Putin's consolidation and personalization of power and the influx of siloviki personnel. Through a literature review, the second section formulates a clear and operational definition of siloviki by focussing on the most essential theoretical elements. As definitions of siloviki in literature are often unspecified and contradictory, the clear-cut conceptualization in this thesis should leave no room for ambiguity. The key positions of political power are determined through an analysis of the Russian

political system in the third section. Finally, the fourth section presents and discusses the results of the positional analysis.

Section 1: Rise of the siloviki

This section serves as an introduction to the upcoming chapters as it analyzes key events and conditions that have contributed to the emergence of siloviki elites under Putin. The first part discusses the authoritarianization of Russia that has stimulated siloviki integration into politics during Putin's first two presidential terms. It highlights some of the key features of the siloviki clan and shortly discusses earlier studies on their representation. The second part discusses Putin's third presidential term and political conditions that have contributed to expectations of increased siloviki domination. It ultimately stresses the importance of empirical research on siloviki representation during Putin's third presidential term, which likewise is the main motive for conducting the study in this thesis.

1.1 The Politburo 2.0

Russia's new world of siloviki domination commenced with the appointment of Putin as the second president of the Russian Federation. After serving in the presidential staff and working as the director of the Federal Security Service (FSB; the KGB's successor), Putin somewhat unexpectedly took the throne following an early resignation of Yeltsin in 1999. Heavily supported by Yeltsin, the Russian population, and some of the most influential oligarchs (including Berezovsky), Putin as a silovik himself easily won the elections in 2000 which are often labelled as the first democratic and peaceful transfer of power in Russian history (Rutland 2000, 313).

Despite a lack of political experience, Putin and his administration immediately knocked down the turbulent democratic experience of 1990s and constructed a system with increased authoritarianism. In order to better understand the rise of the siloviki in the context of Putin's consolidation and personalization of power, this restructuring of Russia's political landscape is shortly analyzed by focussing on three aspects during Putin's first two presidential terms (2000-2008): domestic policies, opposition elimination and the new composition of elite groups.

Domestic policies

Putin's eagerness to consolidate power led to a rapid introduction of a series of reforms, of which three are highlighted next. During the first month of his official appointment, Putin signed a decree that divided the 89 Russian provinces into 7 federal districts. As each of these "super-districts" were appointed to representatives of the president, this newly introduced policy can be seen as a measure that restricted the legislative powers of independent-minded regional leaders (Hahn 2001, 506). Putin immediately seized the opportunity to introduce siloviki into his newly defederalized landscape, as 5

of the 7 federal districts were appointed to “super-governors” with a force structure background (Taylor 2002, 1). These new governors were given the task to supervise and monitor the actions of regional leaders and the compliance with federal legislation (Orttung 2001, 343-344).

Secondly, Putin changed the composition of the Federal Council (upper house) by abolishing the automatic membership of regional leaders. This removal of regional chief executives and heads of regional legislatures from the Federal Council was accompanied by a new law providing Putin the right to dismiss governors and dissolve regional legislature. Putin since 2002 could practically dismiss any governor and abolish any regional policy he disliked, even if actions or laws were not contravening federal legislature.

Thirdly, following the Beslan school siege in North Ossetia in 2004 and the ‘Colour Revolutions’ in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan (2005), anti-terrorism measures and increased military spending were accompanied by new policies in order to strengthen the Kremlin’s executive authority. Governors were no longer popularly elected but instead nominated by the president and approved by regional legislatures. In reality, the appointment and approval processes are often considered to be both in the Kremlin’s hands (Shirayev 2013, 109). The end of popularly elected governors marked another anti-democratic step towards Putin’s new federal landscape. In addition to all the other aforementioned anti-federal policies, the rapid power restriction operation of regional heads contributed to a recentralized Russia with increased federal dominance.

Opposition elimination

Putin’s consolidation of power could not be further expanded without marginalizing a series of threatening opposition groups. Next to governors, the alternative obstacles of influence were formed by the political opposition, the oligarchs and the independent media (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 587-588). The elimination of each of these three groups is shortly discussed, using a number of striking examples.

Through another series of post-Beslan institutional reforms, pressure on political opposition has increased heavily since Putin’s second term. These key reforms include stricter regulations regarding political party registration (including a required minimum of fifty thousand members), a higher electoral threshold for political parties to secure representation in the parliament (increase from 5 to 7 percent), and the switch from a mixed voting system (half of the seats elected by proportional representation, half through single mandate) to a system of merely party-list proportional representation (Gel’man 2011, 509). Although the electoral threshold and voting system were again reversed a few years before the 2016 parliamentary elections, it has become increasingly difficult for

opposition parties to enter the State Duma due to the Kremlin's grip on the party system. Next to these reforms, the relatively competitive elections from the 1990s were replaced by fraud-filled and manipulated elections in the 2000s. According to reports from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), all elections during Putin's first two terms failed to meet the necessary democratic principles (OSCE 2000-2008). This electoral authoritarianism and the isolation of opposition resulted in relatively easy victories for Putin and his United Russia party in both parliamentary and presidential elections. Additionally, the safety of opposition is not guaranteed after the deaths of Kremlin critics Alexander Litvinenko (2006) and Boris Nemtsov (2015). Although Kremlin involvement has never been proven, the opposition has been given the clear message to act cautiously.

The privatization of the 1990s contributed to take-over of political and economic institutions by a group of powerful oligarchs. As it was claimed by prototype oligarch Berezovsky that the seven bankers controlled half of Russia's economy in 1996 (Treisman 2007, 141), Putin's re-establishment of authority required strict control over these business tycoons. Putin made a proposal to the oligarchs: as long as they did not interfere with politics and paid taxes properly, their property rights as well as the privatization policies from the 1990s would not be harmed (Gurieva and Rachinsky 2007, 146). Putin opened the attack on opinionated oligarchs and eliminated three of the seven bankers: Berezovsky, Gusinsky and Khodorkovsky. Former Sibneft shareholder Berezovsky, who initially supported Putin's presidential campaign, was forced to flee the country and sell his shares after criticizing the aforementioned domestic reforms on Russia's federal system. Gusinsky criticized the Kremlin through his media holdings (including the television channel "NTV") and after a short stay in prison, he decided to leave the country and relinquish his property in order to avoid further accusations. Probably the most striking case of oligarch elimination involved oil tycoon Khodorkovsky and his Yukos company, resulting in an imprisonment of nine years after being charged with tax fraud. To briefly mention the role of the siloviki in this process, it is claimed by reports that this controversial Yukos affair and the imprisonment of opposition figure Khodorkovsky was initiated by the siloviki (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 84). Despite ongoing international criticism of these convictions, Putin's attack ended political interference of oligarchs and contributed to another democratic setback in the new Russian political landscape.

The final challenge for Putin's power consolidation was formed by the media who enjoyed relative freedom in the 1990s. Already during Putin's first years in office, the Kremlin's grip on especially national television increased and eventually resulted in a state-controlled media imperium including six national television networks, two national newspapers and two national radio networks (Russell 2015, 1). Next to the recapturing of major media outlets, critical journalists who opposed the Kremlin

have been suppressed through manipulation, intimidation and possibly even assassination. The politically motivated killings of Kremlin critics Paul Klebnikov (2004) and Anna Politkovskaya (2006) are often linked to Putin and his associates, although again there is no clear prove of Kremlin involvement.

The Kremlin's actions regarding opposition groups heavily reduced political interference from alternative centres of power and completed Putin's restoration of authority. This marginalized opposition could now be replaced by alternative groups of power, strictly selected by Putin.

New composition of elite groups

Despite the use of different designations, scholars generally agree that the vacant space has been filled by elite groups often referred to as the liberals, the technocrats (or together: the liberal-technocrats) and the siloviki. The liberal-technocrats, who are mainly economists and lawyers from Putin's hometown St. Petersburg, do emphasize a strong state but believe that the process of economic renationalisation must be accomplished slowly and according to the law (Staun 2007, 31). They are considered to be brought to the political stage in order to achieve macroeconomic stability and a credible relationship with the West (Treisman 2007, 147). The group is headed by former president and current prime minister Dimitri Medvedev, and other core members include Vladislav Surkov (Putin's personal advisor), German Gref (head of Sberbank) and Alexei Kudrin (former Minister of Finance).

The siloviki, often considered the strongest of the two (Bremmer and Charap 2007; Rosefielde and Hedlund 2008), not only differ from the liberal-technocrats concerning their backgrounds, but also their interests and core values. The siloviki emphasize the consolidation of both economic and political power by the state, which is authorized to control the economy and the country's natural resources (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 89). Also, they don't prefer democratic methods of management due to the authoritarian and hierarchical structure of their military backgrounds (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 593). Finally, siloviki are not inclined to reconstruct old Soviet institutions, but rather to restore the Soviet order (Treisman 2007, 146). In general, the siloviki can thus be considered as more conservative and more inclined towards authoritarian policy than the liberal-technocrats.

An essential question is: why did Putin fill the vacant space of power with siloviki? Putin's fledgling political career desired a group of trustworthy and loyal individuals from non-political sectors. His KGB and FSB background provided this group of external supporters of which Putin's confidence in the siloviki clan was politically more significant than his ties with the liberal-technocrats from St. Petersburg (Waller 2005, 84). Although some siloviki were already appointed to essential political posts before the Putin era (Renz 2006, 905), the total representation of siloviki in key posts heavily

increased during Putin's first two presidential terms. In general, there have been two advanced studies on siloviki representation estimates. A 2006 study on Russian elites by sociologist Olga Kryshtanovskaya claimed that 78% of Russia's top 1,016 governmental positions were taken by siloviki (Kryshtanovskaya 2006), while in 2003 only 25% of the elite had a security or military background (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003). According to political scientists David W. Rivera and Sharon Werning Rivera, these estimates are highly exaggerated as their results show that siloviki representation during Putin's first two terms never exceeded 20.5%. Despite lower results, their study as well claims that the influx of siloviki increased during Putin's first two terms (Rivera and Rivera 2014). Although these studies present different results, they both prove that the "militarization" and "FSB-ization" of power through the entry of security and military veterans turned into a political trend during Putin's first two presidential terms. The next part of this section discusses developments during Putin's third presidential term that are considered to be closely related to potential shifts in siloviki representation.

1.2 Putin's return to the presidency

As it was constitutionally ineligible to rule another term, Putin gave way to one of his greatest confidants, Dmitry Medvedev, to succeed him in May 2008. Although Putin officially served as prime minister during Medvedev's first and only presidential term (2008-2012), their actual two-headed rule is often labelled as "tandemocracy" (Hale 2009). This duumvirate proved Putin's ambitions not to leave the political scene and to prepare for another presidential era, but this time his victories during both the parliamentary (2011) and presidential elections (2012) were disturbed by mass protests. Tens of thousands of people took the streets after fraud-filled elections in 2011, causing the greatest protest movement since the collapse of the Soviet Union. After another series of protests following the 2012 presidential elections, Putin's seemingly unassailable position was suddenly put under considerable pressure.

To appease the first wave of protesters, Medvedev proposed electoral reforms in 2011 including a return to the direct election of regional governors and a simplified process for the registration of new political parties and presidential candidates. During Putin's third term in office, these reforms were complemented by the reintroduction of the 5% threshold and the mixed voting system from the 1990s. Despite this apparent recovery of electoral competition, Putin implemented another series of reforms contributing to restrictions in order to restore his unassailable position from his first two terms. These measures that were supposed to eliminate every potential new protest movement, included severe restrictions on NGOs supporting democracy and human rights, a substantial increase in fines for those who participate in "illegal" gatherings, a ban on public meetings close to the former

protest areas, foreign media exclusion and internet access limitations (Kramer 2013, 2). Additionally, Putin’s anti-opposition campaign evolved into a large number of arrests and imprisonments after the protests were beaten down. Striking examples include the arrest of three members of the critical punk band Pussy Riot and the house arrest of anti-corruption blogger Alexei Navalny.

The results of Putin’s aggressive response to the protest movements and other anti-democratic policies are reflected in the democracy scores measured by the Economist Intelligence Unit in table 1 (10=best, 0=worst). It demonstrates that Putin’s eagerness to restrengthen Russia’s vertical power structure during his third term contributed to a democratic breakdown.

Table 1: Democracy scores in Russia

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
4.26	3.92	3.74	3.59	3.39	3.31

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

Paradoxically, Putin’s democratic breakdown has been accompanied by increased popularity ratings since the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 (The Guardian 2015). These favourable approval ratings resulted in an overwhelming victory for United Russia in the latest Duma elections (September 2016). Despite the opposition’s initial optimism due to the reintroduction of the mixed voting system, United Russia gained 23.4% extra seats in the State Duma compared to the 2011 elections (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016). Conditions seem ideal in preparation for the presidential elections scheduled for March 2018, as Putin will probably maintain his popular mandate.

The siloviki and Putin’s third term

Despite the absence of extensive research on siloviki representation during Putin’s third presidential term, an increase of siloviki on top positions would be a logical and realistic expectation. As the siloviki emphasize the consolidation of political power by the state and are generally considered to be loyalists to Putin, this elite group could easily support and develop Putin’s strategy. These thoughts have often been shared by various international media, as they have been concluding similar expectations: “Kremlin hardliners rule in Putin's Russia” (Deutsche Welle 2014), “The siloviki are bankrupting Russia” (The Moscow Times 2015) and “The siloviki coup in Russia” (The American Interest 2016). Also, as stated by Rivera and Rivera, the two existing data sets on siloviki representation during Putin’s first two terms (by Rivera and Rivera, and Kryshatanovskaya and White),

contribute to the expectation of an increased representation continuation during Putin's third term (Rivera and Rivera 2014, 42).

Still, these claims are not supported by empirical evidence and are merely based on speculations. Therefore, a study on siloviki representation during Putin's third term is highly valuable as it concludes findings based on empirical evidence that can assist in further studying elite groups during the Putin era. The next two sections serve as a preparation for the positional identification, of which the following starts with the formulation of a clear and operational definition of siloviki through a literature review.

Section 2: Conceptualizing the siloviki

An important conceptual issue that needs clarification is the formation of a clear definition of siloviki, as this section demonstrates that there has been no universally accepted one since its emergence shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Originally, “siloviki” is derived from the Russian term “silovye struktury”, which can be translated as “force structures” (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 86). This means that a silovik is literally someone who works or used to work for one of the force structures. Despite a small number of similarities, this simple and undetailed definition is often interpreted differently by various scholars. It is therefore meaningful to consider what these similarities and differences are before a clear definition is formed. Ultimately, this definition should offer clear support in determining which positions are occupied by siloviki and which are not in the forthcoming sections.

Essential issues that create vagueness and impreciseness in this definition include the classification of types and groups, issues concerning personal backgrounds, and a specific list of force structures that helps labelling siloviki. Vice versa, issues that cause little debate and do provide the necessary clarity include the core values and the hierarchical clan structure of the siloviki. Through a review of roughly a dozen articles on siloviki, discussions on these issues eventually lead to the creation of a central definition at the end of this section that is further operationalized throughout this thesis. Due to a shortage of literature on siloviki conceptualizations during Putin’s third term, many articles discussed in this section date from the 2000s.

2.1 Agreements in defining siloviki

In general, there is little disagreement on two aspects in available literature: the common core values of the siloviki and the hierarchical clan structure. Scholars that have examined core values generally agree that siloviki emphasize a strong state and authoritarian methods of leadership (Bremmer and Charap 2007; Kryshtanovskaya 2008; Treisman 2007). All features of siloviki discussed in section one, including the siloviki’s promotion of the consolidation of economic power (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 89), preference of anti-democratic methods of management (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 593) and the desire to restore Soviet order (Treisman 2007, 146), are closely linked to these general core values which also show strong similarities with Putin’s political ambitions.

When it comes to the hierarchical structure during Putin’s three presidential terms, a select group of siloviki are often labelled as the ‘core group’ who have been the closest to the president for many years. Although some core members have recently ceded power, there is general agreement on the

most influential siloviki since Putin's first presidency, which at least include Sergey Ivanov (former deputy prime minister and Chief of Staff), Nikolay Patrushev (Security Council Secretary) and Viktor Ivanov (former of Federal Narcotics Control Service) (Bremmer and Charap 2007; Kryshantovskaya 2008; Simonov 2006; Staun 2007). Depending on how scholars define siloviki, the only powerful silovik which is sometimes questioned is Igor Sechin (Chief Executive Officer of Rosneft). Due to gaps and obscurities in his biography, scholars who use definitions of siloviki not focussing purely on background but more on interests and values also count him as one of the core members. Secondary (and tertiary) members include larger numbers of individuals and have been more various due to more changes in the occupations of political posts, but some established examples include Sergey Shoigu (Minister of Defense), Alexander Bortnikov (Director of FSB) and Vladimir Yakunin (former Head of Russian Railways). As all of the just mentioned names frequently appear when the balance of power within the siloviki clan is being discussed, there is no doubt that these siloviki can exert the most influence on decisions taken by Putin. Therefore it is not necessary to elaborate further on this matter, as well as further exploration of the core values of the siloviki.

2.2 Discussions in defining siloviki

In general, there is far more disagreement on a detailed definition of siloviki than factors of agreement. The next part of this section discusses a number of widely used conceptualizations of siloviki by various scholars who shed different lights on types and groups, the background issue, and a specific list of force structures. At the end of this section, some of the most important elements are combined in order to formulate a clear and operational definition of siloviki.

Types and groups

The first issue leading to disagreement concerns the typology that is used to subdivide siloviki into different groups, as scholars tend to use a wide variety of similarities to coalesce various siloviki into different groups. For example, Konstantin Simonov distinguishes five subgroups which are often headed by members from the core group: the "radical siloviki", the "personnel men", the "Lubyanka men", "power businessmen" and the "liberal siloviki". According to Simonov, the "radical siloviki" are those who are the closest to Sechin and emphasize the strongest possible redistribution of economic assets. The "personnel men" are the people closest to Viktor Ivanov (former KGB officer and former head of the Federal Drug Control Service of Russia) who are accountable for the personnel policy of the executive. The "Lubyanka men" (Lubyana: KGB/FSB headquarters) are led by Patruchev and have close connections with the FSB and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The "power businessmen" are represented by the most influential asset holders with Cherkesov as their head. Finally, the "liberal

siloviki” headed by Sergey Ivanov don’t emphasize the excessive expansionist ambitions of the power elite (Simonov 2006, 11). In contrast to Simonov, Jørgen Staun makes a distinction between two groups with different interests: the first group is headed by Sechin and is mainly engaged in domestic affairs, and the second group is headed by Sergey Ivanov and is primarily interested in international affairs and security matters (Staun 2007, 28). Bettina Renz mentions a distinction between “real military figures or field generals” and siloviki of “the heroic type”. The former share lengthy careers as officers in the Soviet and Russian armed forces, and the latter share more traditional careers as war fighters and commanders of armies (Renz 2006, 914).

Following these distinctions, it can be noted that various groups within the siloviki clan can be differently connected to each other, but in general they are never classified according to their specific backgrounds in one of the force structures. As has been mentioned in the introduction, in addition to general representation, this thesis also examines what specific force structure backgrounds of the siloviki clan are represented the most. Therefore a classification based on force structure backgrounds is used in this thesis to link different siloviki, as other interconnecting features are less relevant for the purpose of this paper. All other recently mentioned typologies are therefore further omitted.

The background issue

The second issue of discussion concerns the concept of ‘backgrounds’ when defining the siloviki. An important question that arises is the necessity of a military or security background in order to be labelled as a silovik. The majority of definitions, of which many are not very comprehensive, are based on compulsory personal involvement in one of the force structures. An important issue of discussion in this camp includes the question whether past involvement or past and current involvement in military and security backgrounds is a prerequisite to be a silovik. For example, former economic advisor to Putin Andrei Illarionov defines siloviki as “the people who work for, or who used to work for, the silovye ministerstva—literally “the ministries of force”” (Illarionov 2009, 69). This definition omits the purely security and military background condition, as current involvement is also sufficient to be a member of the siloviki clan. Practically, according to this definition a politician or official who recently started serving in one of the force structures with no previous experiences in this sector can be labelled a silovik. Renz stresses that only past activities in one of the force ministers are linked to siloviki: “Politicians with a force-structure background, who have come to power under the leadership of Vladimir Putin” (Renz 2006, 903). Some scholars simply speak of “representatives” and don’t mention any periodical conditions. For example, Staun describes siloviki as “representatives from the security services and the armed forces” (Staun 2007, 4) and Denis Volkov identically formulates that siloviki are “representatives of the military-security establishment” (Volkov 2016). In general, all the

aforementioned definitions contradict each other when it comes to the exact 'timeframe' of backgrounds in one of the force structures. This is an issue that needs clarification in order to avoid gaps in the justification of the siloviki selection in the third section.

A relatively small number of scholars do not emphasize compulsory personal involvement in one of the force structures as a requirement to be a silovik. For example, Bremmer and Charap argue that many members of the siloviki clan do not meet the requirements as former or current involvement in one of the force structures is missing. Therefore a distinction must be made between the literal definition of siloviki and its "colloquial" use to describe the group, and Bremmer and Charap do this by focussing on common interests rather than on background: "The siloviki are thus united more by outlook and interests than by background. The faction is best understood as an informal network of government officials and businessmen, led by the core group of Sechin, Ivanov, and Patrushev, who share similar political views, pursue a common policy agenda, and seek joint control over economic assets" (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 86). This alternative interpretation of the siloviki is partially shared by Carolina Vendil Pallin, who states that it is probably unwise to endlessly dig into personal backgrounds looking for potential security and military involvement as a group of officials and politicians without any provable history in one of the force structures still have played influential roles within them. Therefore Pallin makes a distinction between the latter group and the "true" siloviki with a force structure background. Also she mentions that despite their significant role in Russian politics it can be problematic to study them: "The actual role that they play through their respective positions and the influence that they wield in Putin's circle is more interesting, albeit more difficult, to examine" (Pallin 2007, 22).

Omitting compulsory personal involvement in one of the force structures in order to label siloviki means that an alternative list of criteria needs to be determined, which should be based on other shared features. Additionally, the literal and traditional meaning of siloviki is ignored. The impracticability of these conditions is not conducive for the positional identification in this thesis, and therefore the traditional meaning of siloviki forms a better and more practical basis as is explained later on.

Force structures

Another issue of discussion in the camp that emphasizes the necessity of military or security involvement is the question what specific force structures (also often referred to as "force ministries" or "power ministries") confers on an individual the status of a silovik. This is probably the most controversial issue concerning definition formation, as specific force structures are either not explicated or there is hardly any agreement on the content of the specific list. The composition of the list primarily depends on how force structures are defined, although many scholars strangely enough

again omit precise definitions in articles covering siloviki. For example, Illarianov does not present any specific description and despite his indication of “22” such force ministry agencies he only mentions the FSB, agencies associated with the Interior Ministry, various branches of the military, the state prosecutor’s office and the intelligence services (Illarianov 2009, 69). Bremmer and Charap define force structures as “a reference to the armed services, law enforcement bodies, and intelligence agencies that wield the coercive power of the state” (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 86). Finally, Staun limits his description by the determination of the armed services, law enforcement structures and intelligence agencies as force structures (Staun 2007, 29). As all these definitions of force structures are rather imprecise and do not include specific lists of force structure institutions, they can hardly serve as operational conceptualizations in further research.

A smaller number of scholars stress the essence of more preciseness in defining force structures in articles related to siloviki, although their definitions are often rather short. The majority of this small group links force structure to specific institutions with armed troops under their command.

Kryshtanovskaya and White define the force structures as “all the government departments that include armed formations” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 298) and Nikolai Petrov states that force structures have “thousands of troops at their command” (Petrov 2002, 1). Both Brian D. Taylor and Renz add the possible presence of uniformed personnel to their more detailed definition of force structures, as Taylor defines force structures as “those state structures, such as ministries and agencies, in which some personnel generally wear uniforms and which possess armed units or formations” (Taylor 2011, 37), and Renz as “ministries and other institutions within the federal system of executive power that have under their command uniformed personnel and/or command their own militarized or armed formations” (Renz 2005, 561). These definitions clearly distinguish force structure institutions from normal institutions by centralizing the aspects of uniformed personnel and armed formations. A critical note could be that definitely not all officials wearing uniforms or carrying arms are related to these institutions and not all force structures, including the Foreign Intelligence Service, have armed troops under their command (Pallin 2007, 2).

Pallin approaches force structures differently by focussing on the “presidential block” instead of uniformed personnel and armed forces. Her definition appears to be slightly more mysterious, but she captures the essence of the Kremlin’s control over subordinated institutions that form the force structures: “These institutions constitute a sphere that the ruler in the Kremlin is determined to control since they constitute vital instruments of gaining and holding power” (Pallin 2007, 3). This definition includes institutions that are often not referred to as force structures by other scholars, like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidential Directorate for Administrative Affairs.

When analyzing the attached lists of force structure institutions by Kryshtanovskaya and White, Renz, Pallin and Taylor, it appears that all lists slightly differ from each other. However, there is a set of five bodies included in all lists and these can therefore be considered 'the core' of the force structures:

1. The Ministry of Defence
2. Federal Security Service
3. The Ministry of Internal Affairs
4. The Ministry for Emergency Situations
5. The Federal Protective Service

Generally, there seems to be no consensus on around ten institutions, of which the most important ones include the Ministry of Justice, the Foreign Intelligence Service and the State Courier Service. Except for some specifically mentioned bodies of larger institutions, it is barely clarified why these scholars have chosen to include certain institutions in their list and others not. Only Taylor explicitly explains why he, for example, includes institutions like the Federal Customs Service and the Procuracy. His selection is determined on the basis of post-Soviet bodies that emerged from the three main force structures from the Soviet era: the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the KGB. Also, he mentions the approximate size of the institutions in terms of personnel in 2007, and it appears that, indeed, all five institutions listed above are among the largest force structures. Therefore these key institutions are clearly inseparable from siloviki when it comes to labelling through their backgrounds.

2.3 Definition formation

The aforementioned overview of the most significant arguments and debates concerning the conceptualization of siloviki is now to be converted into a clearly defined and operational definition. As concluded before, there is much agreement on the hierarchical clan structure and core values of the siloviki, and therefore the common features concerning these issues have previously been determined. Issues that do need clarification in order to conduct the positional identification include the concept of backgrounds and the composition of a specific list of force structures that can assist in classifying the siloviki into different groups.

The central question regarding the issue of siloviki backgrounds is the necessity of a military or security background in order to be labelled as a silovik. If such a military or security background is not required, then what specific outlooks and interests would classify someone as a silovik? And if a politician or official shares these values only to a certain extent, then what qualifications are applicable? In order to avoid another grey area in addition to the already existing confusion about siloviki, it is most convenient to qualify siloviki according to provable bibliographic information. As the

positional analysis requires provable data, siloviki in this thesis are merely united by security and military backgrounds, and not by outlook and interests. It would be practically impossible to assign the siloviki status to individuals based on their ideas, as examinations would be mainly grounded on assumptions. Siloviki labelling through provable bibliographic information is therefore much more convenient and practicable. Secondly, this condition of united security and military backgrounds only applies to elites with past involvement in one of the force structures. As stated before, current involvement would imply that every politician or official working in one of the force structures is a silovik and this would result into a suspiciously large representation of siloviki in top-level positions.

The second main issue of discussion concerns the force structures and the composition of a specific list of institutions. It can be concluded that all relevant definitions of force structures include an unquestionable set of five institutions that are considered to be the key force structure bodies. This concrete list of the five most significant force structure institutions provides a framework that is practicable for the positional analysis in the fourth section, as there is plenty of information and data available about these institutions which will ease the search for possible backgrounds of politicians and officials in any of these bodies. As the list includes the most essential bodies, it is irrelevant to endlessly discuss all the other potential force structures institutions as they in all probability will not contribute to significant research differences and are therefore further omitted.

A combination of all the discussed elements leads to a clear and operational definition of siloviki that is sufficient for further research in this thesis:

Politicians and officials on key positions of power united by past involvement in one of the force structures, which include the Ministry of Defence, Federal Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry for Emergency Situations and the Federal Protective Service.

Additionally, there is a small number of strict conditions that need to be clarified following this definition. First of all, as this thesis mainly focusses on top-level positions of power, the conceptualization of siloviki is restricted to these high level positions which are discussed in section two. Secondly, as security and military backgrounds must be linked to a certain extent of working time in one of the force structure, working experience is set at a minimum of one year. Thirdly, there is no distinction made between specific positions hold in the past when it comes to the classification criteria. Fourthly, the Ministry of Defence includes the armed forces (established in 1992) as this military service is considered an integral part of the Defence Ministry. Finally, the key positions of power need to be determined in order to mobilize the definition of siloviki, which is the general part of the next section.

Section 3: Positional selection

This section intends to answer the following question: what positions from the Russian political system can be classified as the most influential? With the exception of some indisputable positions from the executive branch of power, it is rather challenging to prove dominance of one position over another due to Russia's thick network of informal governance and increasingly consolidated presidential power. Therefore positions are selected through a set of measurable criteria introduced later on in this section. In order to eventually form a concrete list of positions, a brief introduction to the Russian political system with a focus on the three branches of governmental power is helpful and therefore covered in the first part of this section. It intends to show that, due to the nature of the Russian political system, the executive branch is the main supplier of power positions. The second part discusses a number of issues regarding the positional selection that need to be clarified. These include the selection framework and the quantity of positions that are to be selected. Finally, the third part discusses and selects the most important positions that are to be identified in the next section.

3.1 The separation of powers

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the communist regime had to be replaced by a new governmental system including a new constitution. Triggered by democratic aspirations, Boris Yeltsin generated a wave of optimism, but high expectations were soon replaced by chaos and disorder through economic and political hardship. Following a boisterous period in which Yeltsin and the parliament struggled violently, the outcomes of the 1993 constitutional crisis laid the foundation for the current Russian state. The new constitution, adopted through a national referendum in December 1993, established a post-Soviet system with extended presidential powers and increased control over the legislative. Some essential consequences in favour of the president include the practical impossibility of removing the president from its office, a severe limitation on mechanisms ensuring checks and balances, and the president's ability to appoint key officials and submit proposals (draft laws) to the State Duma. Since the adoption of the constitution, Russia's semi-presidential system further expanded into what is often labelled as "superpresidential" (Colton and Skach 2005, 120). This expansion is characterized by an executive body with extensive bureaucratic power tools, leadership based on presidential decrees, and formal and informal presidential monitoring of governmental bodies (Protsyk 2003, 428).

After his inauguration, Putin's initial promise to establish a "dictatorship of the law" was soon exchanged by an intensification of the superpresidential system: a strong centralisation and personalization of power, deeply flawed democratic institutions, a lack of a multiparty political system,

and high levels of corruption. In general, there have been three consequences of Putin's authoritarian politics for Russia's political system which are important for the positional map-out of this section. First of all, Putin's consolidation of power contributed to the building of a very strong executive branch. This transformation has barely left room for limitations of presidential power nor for institutional power checks by other branches. As a result, a substantial part of the top-level positions that are analyzed in the next section emerge from the executive branch, as they are the closest to the main source of power: the president. Secondly, the authoritative executive has severely weakened the exercise of power by the relatively toothless legislative body. Additionally, by repeatedly creating a pro-Kremlin majority in the legislative branch, Putin has expanded his executive body with considerable control over the legislature. Thirdly, Russia's court system is also affected by the executive as judicial independence has been under great pressure. Disputable trials against, for example, political enemies have contributed to international criticism on the quality of the court system. As both the legislative and judicial have been limitedly able to counter-balance the president's hierarchy, a relatively small number of positions is selected from these branches.

3.2 Pre-selection issues

A number of issues concerning the selection of positions need careful consideration. First of all, an important question is whether the selection should be limited to positions derived from the governmental branches, as a powerful fourth branch needs to be assessed as well: state-owned enterprises. As the privatization and the economic restructuring of the 1990s was replaced by increased state-ownership during the Putin era, major businesses in the media, banking and energy sectors were gradually incorporated by the government. By structurally increasing the assets of state-owned enterprises, the share of the state sector in the economy has ever since increased heavily. In 2015, around 55% of the economy was controlled by the state, and 28% of the workforce directly employed by the government (Aven 2015). As the state's role as the guardian of the economy has recovered and many highly influential positions within the most powerful of these enterprises have ever since been held by political officials, it is indispensable to include state-owned enterprises in the scope of selection.

Secondly, the quantity of elite positions that are to be identified needs to be determined. In contrast to the studies on siloviki representation by Kryshchanovskaya and White, and Rivera and Rivera, this thesis does not focus on total siloviki representation but rather on representation in the most influential positions. Whereas Kryshchanovskaya and White and Rivera and Rivera examined a wide scope of elites by identifying around 1000 individuals, research in this thesis is based on a significantly smaller number of positions. The main reason for this is because elite positions differ greatly in

importance and therefore a smaller number of more equivalent top-level positions indicates siloviki domination more accurately than total representation in positions that greatly differ in the power hierarchy. Through a selection of a small group of top-level posts that, with some minor exceptions, have existed throughout 2000-2016, the difficulty of weighting different categories of positions according to degrees of influence is avoided as key positions can be more easily counted as equal. Therefore a selective group of 21 positions is filtered from the most powerful institutional bodies. The selection of these positions is justified in the next part.

3.3 Mapping top-level positions

As the pre-selection conditions are now set, the positional selection through brief discussions of the most significant positions from the main bodies of the three branches of power and state-owned enterprises is covered in the next part. The actual domination of these bodies and positions is discussed by using four branches and one additional source of power: the president, the executive, the legislative, the judiciary, and state-owned enterprises. Positions are ultimately selected through criteria formulated by the author that are arguably strongly linked to the nature of the Russian political system. These include direct involvement of the president considering the appointment and nomination of politicians and officials for the respective positions, certain restrictions on the actual level of influence due to close interaction with the president (although their 'formal' power is supposed to be significant according to, for example, the constitution), and a relatively close (working) relationship with the president or other influential members from the higher ranks of the executive. As demonstrated later, the selected positions all meet these criteria to various degrees although not every aspect is equally measurable. Only eligible senior positions are discussed as it is unnecessary and nearly impossible to cover all offices, and contestable positions in mainly the legislative are covered in greater detail in order to better justify final choices. As has been stated before, due to difficulties in proving power dominance of certain positions over others, the selected list is subjective and different interpretations of power influence and selection criteria could have led to different lists of positions. Still, the list in this thesis generally contains positions that would also have been included in selections from many other political systems. In order to summarize the findings, an overview of the 21 selected positions is included at the end of this section (table 5).

The president

According to the 1993 Constitution, *the President of the Russian Federation (1)* is the head of the state and the protector of the rights and freedoms of the Russian citizens. Since 2012, presidential terms have been extended from four to six years with a maximum of two consecutive terms. The president

appoints the prime minister (by agreement with the State Duma) and federal ministers and nominates the chairperson of the Central Bank, the Prosecutor General and the judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Arbitration Court. As the president also possesses significant legislative and judicial powers in addition to its superior executive capacity, a vast number of closely connected confidants is needful as it would be nearly impossible to exercise them all alone (Shirayev 2013, 97).

One of these key bodies is the president's executive office, the Presidential Administration, which possibly is the most powerful institution in Russian politics (Bremmer and Charap 2007, 87). This body is responsible for preparing and drafting laws, monitoring federal legislation and government activity, and briefing the press and organisations abroad. More than 2,000 officials constitute the Presidential Administration that operates directly under the president and independently of the government. The head of this powerful institution, *the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Administration (2)*, is considered to be the second most influential individual source of power after the president (Waller 2005, 33). Prominent politicians including Sergei Ivanov, Dmitry Medvedev and Alexander Voloshin have filled this position that allows direct access to the president. Due to the political dominance and the size of the Presidential Administration, not only the chief of staff is included in the list of key positions, but also the *First Deputy Chief of Staff (3)*. As both positions are appointed by the president, he has the ability to control and fill two key posts with loyalists who can just as easily be dismissed again. For example, one of Putin's closest allies, Sergey Ivanov, was unexpectedly dismissed as chief of staff in August 2016 after decades of serving in Putin's inner circle.

Next to the Presidential Administration, another powerful body close to the President is the Security Council. This consultative body responsible for analyzing national security matters consists of 30 members including the heads of security-related ministries and agencies, and is chaired by the president and overseen by the *Secretary of the Security Council (4)*. The latter, appointed by the president, has the task to ensure that all the involved ministries and agencies remain loyal to the Kremlin by monitoring instructions implemented by the president. As the Security Council is composed of merely heads of other institutions of which many are already selected, only the Secretary as representative from the Security Council is included in the list.

The executive

The Government of the Russian Federation is composed of the prime minister, deputy ministers and federal ministers. Its main tasks include the preparations on and execution of the federal budget, the implementation of federal policies, the protection of property and freedoms of its citizens, and the prevention of crime (Shirayev 2013, 101). The head of the government, *the Prime Minister of the*

Russian Federation (5), officially serves as the second most powerful official in the Russian political system, but due to the heavy consolidation of power under Putin's presidency, the prime minister's role is more restricted than in other semi-presidential systems. However, as has been mentioned before, Putin's role as prime minister during Medvedev's presidential term temporarily changed from a subordinate power to a politically dominant power, as in fact he was doing most of the steering on the tandem with Medvedev (Duncan 2013, 2). The prime minister is backed-up by a *First Deputy Prime Minister* (6) and a shifting number of *Deputy Prime Ministers* (7), who are proposed by the prime minister and other federal ministers and appointed by the president. These deputies assist on the coordination and management of the work of the federal executive bodies (Willerton 2014, 31). The deputy prime ministers may temporarily takeover the position as prime minister in his or her absence, and therefore these positions definitely require examination.

As for the government's ministers (21 in 2016), a clear distinction must be made between ministries accountable to the president and ministries that report to the prime minister. The first group is considered to be the most powerful and includes the *Ministry for Emergency Situations* (8), the *Ministry of Justice* (9), the *Ministry of Defence* (10), the *Ministry of Internal Affairs* (11) and the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (12) (Shirayev 2013, 102). As previously stated, these ministries are often considered to be part of the force structures and are therefore closely linked to the siloviki. Also, the Ministers of Defence, Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs are members of the Security Council. All the other ministries have been more frequently subjected to institutional reform and have therefore been less sustainable. Consequently, due to their subordinate role in combination with many splits, mergers and dissolvments during Putin's presidencies, it is rather irrelevant to examine them.

The last major set of bodies from the executive branch consist of a number of Federal Services and Agencies. They don't operate fully independently as their activities are overseen by the president. Two of these services need close attention: the *Federal Security Service (FSB)* (13) and the *Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR)* (14). These two organizational successors of the former KGB, as well as the five afore-mentioned ministries, are considered to be part of the force structures and their directors, appointed by the president, are members of the Security Council. The FSB is responsible for counterterrorism, counterintelligence, surveillance of the military, and all other operations concerning national security at home and abroad. Under Putin's presidency, the successor of the Soviet KGB has regained some of the former KGB tasks that were ceded to separate agencies during the 1990s (Taylor 2011, 57). Some of them include the incorporation of the Federal Border Guard Service and the Federal Agency of Government Communications and Information. Officially designed to improve the FSB's efficiency, much of the former powers have consequently been restored and many positions

have been filled by Putin's former FSB/KGB associates. The power of the FSB penetrates several areas beyond national security, as it has been given the additional task to protect Putin's political regime (Soldatov and Borogan 2010) and the ability to even influence judicial decisions (Walther 2014, 673). Despite a general lack of statistical information on secret services like the FSB, rough estimates suggest that it employs a total of more than 300,000 personnel (Lucas 2013, 68). Even a further reinforcement of the FSB is realistic, as a recent article by the Russian newspaper Kommersant announced a plan for a possible merger between the FSB and SVR into the "Ministry of State Security of Russia" (Kommersant 2016). Due to the FSB's restored power reputation under Putin, the director of this service is included in the list of top-level positions.

In contrast to the FSB, the SVR is responsible for the protection of the state from external threats by conducting foreign intelligence operations. The service has two main tasks: analyzing all gathered information related to essential security interests, and the assisting with and conducting of measures to ensure national security (Shirayev 2013, 296-297). Just like the FSB, the SVR directly reports to the president and has the responsibility to protect state secrets. It has a personnel of 13,000 (Jones and Kovacich 2015, 208), which makes in its comparison to the FSB a relatively small service. In spite of its small size, the service and its authorizations form a crucial body concerning Russia's national security and therefore the Director of the SVR is indispensable for the positional analysis.

The legislative

Russia's legislative branch requires a more detailed analysis compared to the forceful executive, as the choice to omit members of parliament needs to be justified. Russia's parliament, the Federal Assembly, consists of two chambers: the State Duma and the Federation Council. The 450-seat State Duma is the lower house of the Federal Assembly and its deputies are directly elected for a five-year term by the Russian citizens; half of the seats by proportional representation and the other half through single mandate since the latest elections in 2016. The jurisdiction of the Duma is defined by the Russian Constitution, which includes decision making on the confidence in the government, approving the appointment of the Chairman of the Government by the president, hearing reports from the government regarding the results of its work, appointing and dismissing the heads of some independent organizations including the Chairman of the Central Bank, the granting of amnesty, and advancing accusations against the president for his impeachment (Article 103 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation 1993). Furthermore, the Duma has the "legislative initiative" which provides the opportunity to introduce proposals (draft laws) and adopt or reject federal laws.

These constitutional powers are overshadowed by the presidential ability to dissolve the Duma under specific circumstances and the rejection of certain laws passed by the legislature. Vice versa,

impeachment of the president is almost impossible to achieve in practice and the Duma’s power to dissolve the government is strongly limited as well. In contrast to the relatively influential and competitive parliament shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, the 1993 Constitution and Putin’s additional power consolidation have caused a significant shift in the balance of power in the president’s favour. This shift has been further enhanced by competitive restrictions in the Duma through its unchanging composition since parliamentary elections in 2003, as Putin’s United Russia has been constantly holding large numbers of seats. Election results and the domination of United Russia in the Duma are demonstrated in the following table:

Table 2: Results of parliamentary elections under Putin and Medvedev (% of total seats)

	2003	2007	2011	2016
United Russia	49.6	70	52.9	76.2
Communist Party	11.6	12.7	20.4	9.3
Liberal Democratic Party	8	8.9	12.5	8.7
A Just Russia	-	8.4	14.2	5.1
Other	30.8	-	-	0.7

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

United Russia has ever since been accompanied in the Duma by parties often referred to as the “systemic opposition” in literature and media, which include the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and A Just Russia. These parties are committed to counteract certain policies but they are generally not seeking for major regime changes (Gel’man 2015, 178). This block is therefore nothing more than a semblance of opposition that is eventually mainly operating under the Kremlin’s command. Due to the presidential influence on the legislative and the relatively powerless role of the systemic opposition, seats in the State Duma are not regarded as influential within the Russian political system.

However, *the Chairman of the State Duma (15)*, or the Speaker of the State Duma, arguably fills a key position due to his or her relatively independent stance in the Duma (Roudik 2011). The chairman is elected by members of the State Duma and has the responsibility to monitor Duma sessions, communicate interests of the executive, and represent the Duma in its cooperation with other

domestic institutional bodies, and states and organisations abroad. As all the chairs under Putin and Medvedev since 2003 have been represented by United Russia members, both the activities in the Duma and interaction with the executive and the judiciary is organized and controlled by pro-Kremlin deputies (Danks 2009, 157). The position as Chairman of the State Duma can thus be considered as superior to the other Duma members, and is therefore included in the list.

The least prominent of the two chambers of parliament, the Federation Council, is the upper house of the Federal Assembly and consists of two representatives from each of the 85 subjects (number of subjects has often changed) of the Russian Federation, including the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol (2). Originally, representatives were directly elected but since Putin's early reforms each subject sends two senators for a non-fixed term either elected by the regional legislature or nominated by regional administrators. This system has often been criticized as mainly the Kremlin controls these "undemocratic" appointments (Shirayev 2013, 127-128). Some of the most important constitutional powers of the Federation Council include the approval of border changes between subjects of the Russian Federation, deciding on the possibility of using the Armed Forces outside the territory of the Russian Federation, impeachment of the President of the Russian Federation, and the appointment of judges of all courts and the Procurator-General (Article 102 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation 1993). Next to its subnational powers, the Federation Council has the responsibility to approve or reject federal laws passed by the Duma and supervise parliamentary activity. In practice, the Council spends limited time on actual floor debates and voting rounds always easily result in favour of the president (Remington 2014). The 170-seat Federation Council used to act as a representing voice of the regions, but due to Putin's defederalization politics (discussed in section one), the Council has been deregionalized and its independence has additionally been affected through the large numbers of seats taken by United Russia members (Ross and Turovsky 2013, 62). As the Federation Council, just like the State Duma, has become an extension of Putin's power, regular seats in the Council are not considered as key positions in this thesis.

However, *the Chairman of the Federation Council (16)* is included in the list as it arguably is the third most powerful political post in Russia after the president and prime minister, as in the case of incapacity of both the chairman of the Federation Council becomes the acting president. The chairman is elected by the Council's senators and presides over sessions, coordinates activities, controls the internal schedule, and is a member of the Security Council. The chairs of the State Duma and the Federation Council are considered to be the only posts of influence in the legislative, and all other positions (including regional powers) struggle to play any significant role. Besides, as all the single seats in the State Duma and the Federal Council basically have equal power, they should definitely all be excluded.

The judiciary

The legal basis for judicial reforms after the collapse of the Soviet Union was formed by the 1993 Constitution which states that the judiciary, just like the executive and legislative, operates as an independent branch. The judicial branch is charged with the interpretation and application of the law, and the Supreme Court (expanded with tasks of the dissolved Supreme Arbitration Court since 2014) and the Constitutional Court are on top of the judicial hierarchy. The final court of appeal, the Supreme Court, is the highest court for criminal, economic, civil and administrative cases and mainly supervises and reviews the activities of courts according to procedural forms. It consists of 170 judges nominated by the president and appointed by the Federation Council. The Constitutional Court is the judicial body that protects the Constitution and reviews whether certain laws or decrees fit within this jurisdiction. For example, it constituted decisions on the government's use of military force in Chechnya in 1995 and Putin's federal reforms in 2005 (Shirayev 2013, 139). The court consists of 19 judges who are appointed in the same way as the judges from the Supreme Court.

Despite many reforms since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the credibility and quality of the Russian court system still leaves room for improvement. Both a lack of independence of judges and a lack of public trust in the judicial system are among its main weaknesses (International Commission for Jurists 2010, 6). Especially the lack of public trust due to the Kremlin's influence on the appointment and decisions of judges has contributed to public distrust in Russia's judiciary. According to a survey conducted by Levada-Center, public confidence in the judicial system in 2015 (table 3) was even the lowest of all institutions discussed in this section (Levada-Center 2015). Therefore, the Kremlin's ability to abuse the court system has arguably added a political dimension to the judicial branch, as court decisions can be steered from above. The biggest victim is the political opposition, which has suffered from disputable trials through bribery and intimidation of juries. As mentioned before, some examples of disputable cases include the Navalny and Khodorkovsky trials that demonstrated the Kremlin's effective interference.

The head of the Supreme Court, *The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation (17)*, and the head of the Constitutional Court, the *Chairman of the Constitutional Court (18)*, are both appointed for a six-year term by the Federation Council after the president's nomination. Their main tasks include the representation of their courts in relationships with state bodies and the public, supervising and overseeing activities of judges and preside over plenary sessions, and the allocation of responsibilities among its deputies. Additionally, the Chief Justice has the right to participate in the sessions of the State Duma, the Federation Council and the government. As both posts form essential extensions of the Kremlin's ability to influence court decisions, they are included in the list.

The final judicial body of importance is the Prosecution Office, which is charged with the supervision over the execution of laws by authorities, human rights and freedoms. Also, the Prosecution Office has the responsibility to prosecute in behalf of the state, and challenge court decisions. The head of the Prosecution Office, *the Prosecutor General of Russia (19)*, is appointed in the same way as the heads of the two courts and coordinates the activities of the Prosecution Office. Although the Prosecution Office officially operates independent from the all the three branches of power, the full judicial independence is again questionable as there have been several signs that the Russian procuracy is guided by politics instead of law (Burger and Holland 2008). For example, the procuracy has largely been responsible for the controversial charges against Khodorkovsky, which arguably demonstrates its alliance with the Kremlin. Therefore, for the same reasons as the heads of the two highest courts, the chair of this body is qualified as a key position.

Table 3: Trust in Russian institutions in 2015 (%): “To what degree, in your opinion, can you trust..”

	Fully trust	Partially trust	Not at all trust	Difficult to say
The president	80	11	7	3
Security agencies	50	25	11	15
The government	45	32	17	7
The Federation Council	40	33	14	13
The State Duma	40	33	14	13
The courts	29	37	20	15

Note: presence of statistical error (not exceeding 1%)
 Source: Levada-Center

State-owned enterprises

As mentioned before, the Putin era replaced the large-scale privatization of the 1990s by increased state-ownership of enterprises active in strategically important sectors. This transition from “crony capitalism” to “state capitalism” (Djankov 2015, 3) commenced with the nationalization of Khodorkovsky’s Yukos, and further expanded with structurally increased state-ownership in the energy, media and banking sectors. As a result, the most powerful Russian companies in especially the

energy sector have been subjected to coercive takeovers by the state, and in many cases political officials have been holding key positions in these state-owned companies.

Two of these state-owned companies in the energy sector stand out: Gazprom and Rosneft. According to the Fortune Global 500, total revenues of these two companies in the energy sector in 2016 (see table 4) significantly surpassed the total revenues of other major Russian companies (with the exception of Lukoil). In addition to profit maximization, these companies have been serving for political purposes since the Kremlin’s intervention in the 2000s. Decisions on Russia’s energy supplies are therefore steered by “supreme arbitrator” Putin (Baev 2014, 3). One of the few exceptions of state intervention, Lukoil, belongs to the biggest private companies in Russia and is therefore not further discussed.

Table 4: Top five firms in Russia according to total revenues in 2016 (USD million)

	Total Revenues (\$M)	World Rank
1. Gazprom	99,464	56
2. Lukoil	84,677	76
3. Rosneft	64,749	118
4. Sberbank	45,608	199
5. VTB Bank	22,449	478

Source: Fortune Global 500

The largest natural gas company in the world, Gazprom, controls the largest gas reserves in the world, owns the largest pipeline system in the world, and supplies gas to more than 30 countries (Gazprom 2016). As the Russian state owns just over 50% of the company’s shares (Ibid.), ultimate state control of Russia’s biggest company provides a political and economic weapon that has been essential in shaping foreign policy through, especially, Europe’s dependence on Russian gas. Since the state’s majority ownership (2006), minority shareholders have played no significant role in the governance of the company (Moe and Kryukov 2013). The Board of Directors (11 individuals in 2016) is the directing body within Gazprom that is in charge of all activities except for the issues in hands of the supreme governing body: the General Meeting of Shareholders (Gazprom 2016). As these shareholders are mainly represented by statesmen due to the majority state-ownership, the Kremlin has ultimate control over final decisions. Members of the Board of Directors are elected by the General Meeting of Shareholders, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman by the Board of Directors itself for an unfixed

term. According to the official regulations of Gazprom, the *Chairman of the Gazprom Board of Directors (20)* is responsible for organizing and chairing meetings of the Board of Directors and the General Shareholders, signing contracts with Management Committee, and the keeping of minutes during meetings (Gazprom: Regulation on Board of Directors 2016, 5). It is rather obvious that this position and others within the Board of Directors have been filled by Kremlin loyalists and therefore the chairman is included in the list of key positions.

Russia’s second largest oil company according to total revenues, Rosneft, is the biggest oil producer in Russia, holds the biggest reserves in Russia, and nearly 70% of its shares are in hands of the state (Rosneft 2016). Its dominant position in the oil sector has been especially obtained through the looting of Yukos assets between 2004-2007. The organizational and electoral structure of Rosneft is comparable to Gazprom, with the *Chairman of the Board of Directors of Rosneft (21)* and his or her deputies on top of the Board of Directors. As many of the highest positions in the Board of Directors have been filled by one of Putin’s closest allies, Igor Sechin, this body can definitely not be omitted.

Table 5: Overview of selected positions

<p>The executive</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. President 2. Chief of Staff 3. First Deputy Chief of Staff 4. Security Council Secretary 5. Prime Minister 6. First Deputy Prime Minister 7. Deputy Prime Minister 8. Minister for Emergency Situations 9. Minister of Justice 10. Minister of Defence 11. Minister of Internal Affairs 12. Ministry of Foreign Affairs 13. Director of FSB 14. Director of SVR 	<p>The legislative</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. State Duma Chairman 16. Federation Council Chairman <p>The judiciary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court 18. Chairman of the Constitutional Court 19. Prosecutor General <p>State-owned enterprises</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Gazprom Chairman 21. Rosneft Chairman
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Section 4: Positional analysis

The content and results of the main study on siloviki representation are discussed in this final section. The complete datasets derived from the positional identification are included in the appendix and form the main source of this section. The first part serves as a brief overview of the study and explains how the positional identification has been conducted. The second part presents a set of concluding tables and figures derived from the results of the positional identification followed by a brief discussion of these findings. The third part elaborates on these findings and concludes some of the main indications and prospects, in particular by focusing on the upcoming presidential elections scheduled for 2018. In general, this section demonstrates that siloviki representation during Putin's third term has dropped compared to his earlier terms, and this indicates that there is no clear link between increased authoritarianism and increased siloviki domination on key positions.

4.1 Explanation of study

The positional identification in the appendix requires some explanation regarding the method of labelling. In total, 21 positions have been occupied by 60 different individuals starting from May 2000 until October 2016. The backgrounds of all of these individuals have been checked through available bibliographical data according to Russian governmental sources (in English), academic articles and books, and international media. When an individual meets the conditions determined in section two according to numerous sources, he or she is labelled as a 'confirmed' silovik including a reference to his or her specific background (classification) in one of the power ministries. When backgrounds of certain individuals are disputable through the lack of a clear bibliographical confirmation or different interpretations, the person is given the status of an 'alleged' silovik. Finally, early resignations for any reason as well as temporarily occupied positions are indicated as they influence representation calculations.

4.2 Positional analysis results

The results of the positional analysis are presented in four separate parts that all respond to the research question by focussing on specific elements. The first part discusses results on siloviki representation during Putin's third term compared to earlier terms and responds to the main research question of this thesis. The next three parts provide additional findings on elements that have received limited attention in previous studies: classification according to specific backgrounds, dominance in certain bodies, and length of services. All the figures and tables used in this section are derived from the positional identification in the appendix and the three theories on political influence

of siloviki mentioned in the introduction of this thesis (the orthodox school, the critical school and the revisionist school) are included in the discussions of the results. When required, results are compared to the findings by Kryshantovskaya, and Rivera and Rivera which have been discussed in the first section.

Siloviki representation

The datasets from the appendix show that from the 60 individuals studied, 12 have been identified as ‘confirmed’ siloviki (including Putin) and 5 as ‘alleged’ siloviki. During the examined period, annual occupation of confirmed siloviki has been remarkably steady as the total amount on key positions has varied between 6 and 7 per year. When adding the alleged siloviki, the total amount has varied between 8 and 11. Despite these relatively small margins, the total annual occupation of key positions including siloviki ranged from 19 to 29 individuals, and therefore the actual representation percentages show more shifts. In order to conduct a comparative analysis of the data, representation percentages have been calculated through a division of the total annual occupation of individuals by the number of siloviki on these posts. On the annual basis, when an individual resigned early from a specific position, different calculations have been used. For example, when a silovik on a specific position resigned and was replaced by another silovik, this situation does not count as a double siloviki occupation but as one. Furthermore, acting positions are not included in the calculations as they are not considered as a full-scale occupation. Results are reflected in the following figure, which shows the annual percentages of key positions occupied by siloviki during 2000-2016:

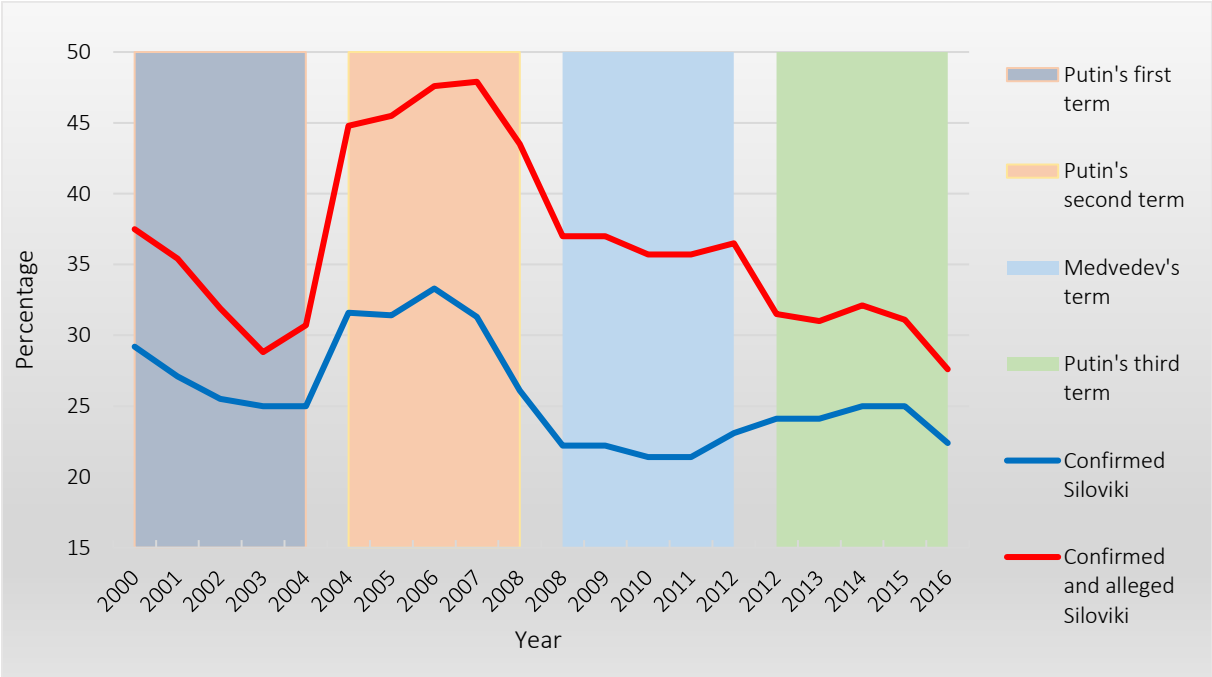


Figure 1: Annual percentages of top-level positions occupied by siloviki during 2000-2016.

The figure illustrates a number of crucial representation trends that need to be discussed. First of all, when analyzing annual rates under Putin's presidency, siloviki representation peaked during Putin's second term, when in 2006 33.3% of all key positions were occupied by confirmed siloviki. In 2016, representation under Putin's presidency was the lowest, as only 22.4% of the positions were occupied by confirmed siloviki. Overall, representation of confirmed siloviki was the lowest during Medvedev's term as percentages varied from 21.4% to 23.1%. Secondly, when analyzing complete terms, siloviki representation under Putin's presidency was the highest during his second term and the lowest during his third term, and overall the lowest under Medvedev's term. Finally and most importantly for the purpose of this thesis, the figure indicates that siloviki representation in top-level positions has declined during Putin's third term compared to his earlier terms, with Medvedev's term as an exception. This trend applies to both the confirmed, and the confirmed and alleged siloviki, which generally show similar shifts with some minor exceptions. As previously stated, variation in the total number of positions per year (19-29) rather than shifts in the total number of siloviki (8-11) on these positions explain the shifts in the representation percentages.

When comparing these results to earlier studies on total representation, the findings by Rivera and Rivera show the biggest overlap as they stated that total representation during Putin's first two terms never exceeded 20.5%. Kryshtanovskaya's results strongly deviate from both Rivera and Rivera and results from the study in this thesis (33.3% in 2006), as she claimed that 78% of Russia's top 1,016 governmental positions were taken by siloviki in 2006. Although the study in this thesis has identified a considerably smaller scope of individuals, Kryshtanovskaya's findings, as Rivera and Rivera argued, indeed seem highly exaggerated (Kryshtanovskaya 2006; Rivera and Rivera 2014). Therefore the critical school theory, which argues that the large-scale influx of siloviki is exaggerated, is applicable to siloviki representation in key positions not merely during Putin's first two terms but especially during his third term as section one illustrated that often the opposite is claimed by various media. It can therefore be argued that Putin's consolidation of political power during his third term has not been supported by an increase of siloviki on key positions. Implications concerning this argument are further discussed in the third part of this section.

Specific backgrounds of the siloviki

From the 12 individuals that have been identified as confirmed siloviki, 7 have a background in the FSB/KGB, two in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), two in the Ministry for Emergency Situations (EMERCOM), and one in the Ministry of Defence (MO). This indicates that more than half (58.3%) of the identified siloviki has a FSB-background. In order to compare siloviki representation in Putin's third

term to his earlier terms according to backgrounds, the annual representation is reflected in the following figure:

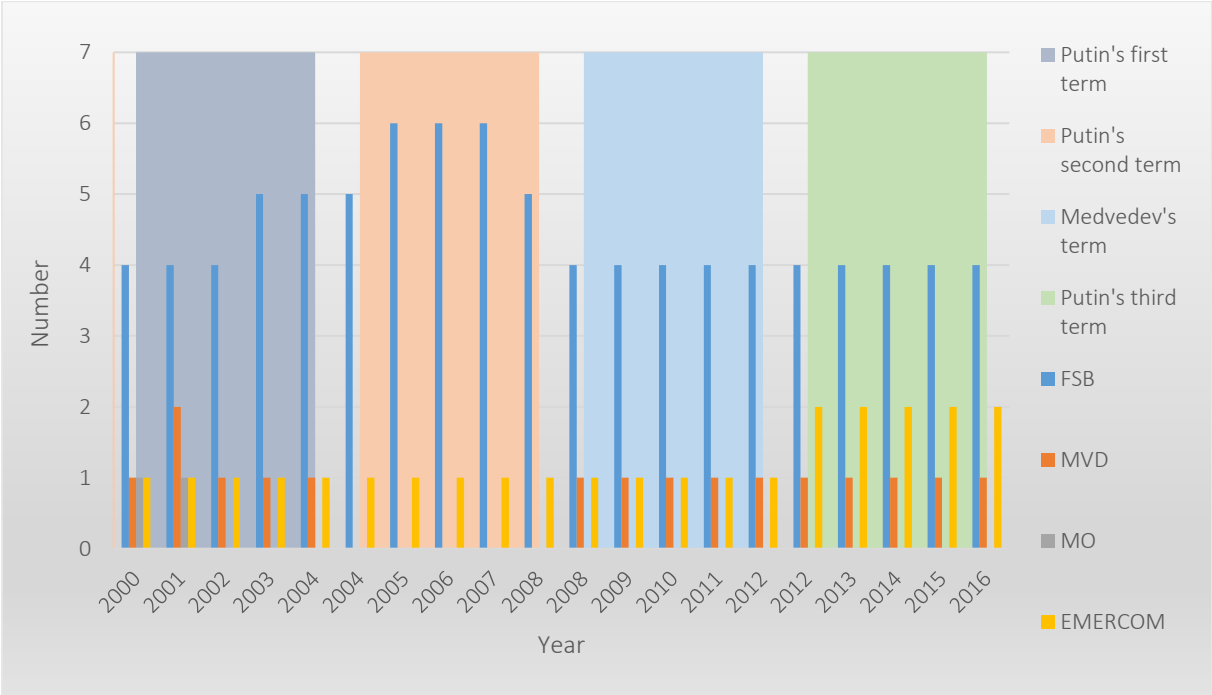


Figure 2: Annual siloviki representation in key positions according to backgrounds during 2000-2016

The figure clearly shows that individuals with a FSB-background have been the most dominant siloviki throughout the entire examined period. Since 2000, at least half of the positions occupied by confirmed siloviki have been filled by former FSB/KGB members. Putin’s third term shows no significant changes to this pattern of FSB/KGB domination in the siloviki clan, although it can be noticed that the number of siloviki with a FSB/KGB background has slightly declined during Medvedev’s term. Therefore the revisionist school is applicable as it argues that the siloviki clan is dominated by elites with a KGB or FSB background, although the part of this theory that follows the orthodox school (massive influx of siloviki) cannot be verified by the previous findings. Additionally, the term “FSB-ization”, often used by scholars to describe the same process as the revisionist school (Gomart 2008; Rivera & Rivera 2006; Van Bladel 2008), is therefore as well a suitable term to describe the proces of siloviki intrusion in the Russian political landscape according to the findings in this section.

Dominance in specific bodies

The positional identification clearly shows that certain bodies have been more dominantly occupied by confirmed siloviki than others. The most frequently occupied positions by confirmed siloviki according

to duration of service are shown in table 6, which does not include the presidency. During each term, a full year of occupation is counted as 20% and an early resignation as 10%:

Table 6: Positions and the percentages of time occupied by confirmed siloviki per term

	2000-2004	2004-2008	2008-2012	2012-2016	Average
1. Director of FSB	100	100	100	100	100
2. Minister for Emergency Situations	100	100	100	100	100
3. Minister of Internal Affairs	60	100	100	100	90
4. Security Council	90	30	100	100	80
5. Minister of Defence	100	70	0	90	65
6. Director of SVR	100	70	0	0	43.5
7. Chief of Staff	0	0	10	90	25

What is most striking is that, overall, many of these positions (1, 2, 3 and 5) are part of the force structure bodies which have been identified in section two of this thesis. As these force structures are the source of the siloviki, and especially the first three have been almost constantly filled by confirmed siloviki, it appears that most of the siloviki return to where they came from (or stay). Also, not surprisingly, all the bodies presented in table 5 are part of the executive branch, which is considered the by far most powerful body in the Russian political system. Therefore it can be concluded that, within the hierarchy of positions that are selected for the positional identification, the confirmed siloviki are active in the strongest branch which includes many positions that are part of the force structures.

Length of services

As section two stated, a select group of siloviki are often labelled as the ‘core group’ who have been the closest to Putin for many years. In this final part of discussion on the positional identification results, a core group of siloviki according to length of services (excluding Putin) in key positions is composed in order to conclude similarities or differences, and possible changes during Putin’s third term. The top five of confirmed siloviki according to their length of services (same counts as previous examination) is shown in the following table:

Table 7: Siloviki and their length of services (percentages) in key positions per term

	2000-2004	2004-2008	2008-2012	2012-2016	Average
Nikolay Patrushev	100	100	100	100	100
Sergey Ivanov	100	100	100	90	97.5
Sergey Shoygu	100	100	100	90	97.5
Alexander Bortkinov	0	0	100	100	50
Vladimir Kolokoltsev	0	0	100	100	50

According to length of services in top positions of power, Nikolay Patrushev, Sergey Ivanov and Sergey Shoygu stand out as they have all occupied key positions for a substantial amount of time. As section two mentioned, Patrushev and Ivanov are often labelled as core members of the siloviki team and this can indeed be confirmed by their length of services. The claim that Sergey Shoigu and Alexander Bortkinov can be considered as secondary members can also be derived from the table, although Bortkinov only ascended to a key position of power since Medvedev's presidency. Two other frequently mentioned core members are not included in the top five: Igor Sechin and Viktor Ivanov. As the positional identification has labelled Sechin as an alleged silovik due to this mysterious biography and his relatively shorter period of service in one of the top-level positions (47.5%), he is not considered a member of the core group in this context. As for Viktor Ivanov, his occupational background lacks involvement in one of the key positions that have been selected for the positional identification, and consequently he is not considered a core member as well. It can therefore be argued that not all members who are generally considered to be part of the siloviki core group have served in the most significant positions of power.

4.3 Indications and prospects

The final part of this section elaborates on the previously discussed findings and outlines some indications and prospects concerning siloviki representation that might explain developments in the nearby future. As the previous part concluded, there is no direct link between the process of authoritarianism during Putin's third presidential term and increased siloviki representation in the most essential positions of power. The main question that needs clarification in order to better understand Russia's elites in the nearby future is therefore: what alternative sources of power have

assisted Putin in the process of increased authoritarianism? As extended research is required to answer this question, only the most likely developments are discussed next.

According to the results of the positional identification, there is an assumed possibility that Putin is slowly moving away from his group of powerful loyalists in order to secure an unassailable position for the upcoming presidential elections in 2018. This possible trend can be supported by the unexpected dismissal of core silovik Sergey Ivanov in 2016, and other replacements of confirmed siloviki who have not been discussed in this thesis including Vladimir Yakunin in 2015 (former head of Russian Railways) and Andrei Belyaninov in 2016 (former head of the Federal Customs Service). As political analyst Stanislav Belkovsky stated, this is “a sign of Vladimir Putin’s focus on replacing his old friends at top posts in the executive branch with members of the servant staff, however high-ranking and polished they might be” (The New York Times 2016). This new ring of “servants” is useful as they do not constitute any threat to Putin’s position compared to the relatively more powerful siloviki. This replacement of siloviki by new loyalists could indicate that power is shifting towards another elite group, or even an additional consolidation of Putin’s personal power. But as these thoughts are merely based on speculation, extensive research should confirm these possible trends and ultimately identify these (new) elites.

Conclusion

Putin's first two terms in office marked the end of Russia's democratic experiment of the 1990s during which post-communist power structures were dominated by Yeltsin and the oligarchs commonly referred to as the "seven bankers". The consolidation and personalization of Putin's power was accompanied by the elimination of the oligarchs and the influx of highly influential loyalists with backgrounds in one of the force structures. These siloviki elites soon received much attention from scholars and media, but research conducted during this period generally lacks clarification on a number of essential aspects. Additionally, as Putin's third presidential term is rather underexposed under circumstances of increased authoritarian practices that are often linked to increased siloviki domination, extensive research is required in order to clarify past and present developments and better understand the role of the siloviki elites.

This thesis has intended to fill some of these black gaps by focussing on siloviki representation during Putin's third term compared to his earlier terms. Through a positional identification of the most influential positions of power throughout 2000-2016, siloviki representation has been measured and compared to earlier terms in order to conclude a number of distinctive trends. In contrast to earlier studies on siloviki representation, a relatively small number of individuals on key positions of power have been identified as results arguably provide more useful insides. The positions of power have been selected through a number of criteria and arguably represent the most influential posts in the Russian political system, although some may have been left out due to difficulties in actual power measurements.

Results of the positional identification have demonstrated that mainly siloviki with FSB/KGB backgrounds have filled these key positions, of which many are derived from the force structures institutions. Secondly, the individuals that are often labelled as the core group have indeed served the longest on these posts of which almost all are part of the forceful executive branch. Finally and most importantly, siloviki representation in key positions of power has declined during Putin's third term compared to his earlier terms, which is in line with the critical school theory. Therefore, against many expectations, increased authoritarianism since 2012 cannot be linked to increased siloviki domination on key positions of power. This might indicate that alternative sources of power have assisted Putin, although extensive research is required to identify these elites.

Appendix: Identification of key positions during 2000-2016

Identification labels (siloviki)

1. Federal Security Service (FSB) or Committee for State Security (KGB)
2. The Ministry of Internal Affairs
3. The Ministry of Defence (including the Armed Forces)
4. The Ministry for Emergency Situations
5. The Federal Protective Service
- ?: Alleged involvement

Positional labels

A: Acting

P: Position not occupied

R: Resigned

Abbreviations list for personal names:

AB	Alexander Bortkinov	II	Igor Ivanov	SSH	Sergey Shoygu
ABE	Andrey Belousov	IK	Ilya Klebanov	VC	Viktor Chernomyrdin
AD	Arkady Dvorkovich	IS	Igor Sergeyeu	VK	Viktor Khristenko
AG	Alexey Gordeyev	ISE	Igor Sechin	VKO	Vladimir Kolokoltsev
AGR	Alexey Gromov	ISH	Igor Shuvalov	VL	Vyacheslav Lebedev
AK	Alexei Kudrin	NP	Nikolay Patrushev	VM	Valentina Matviyenko
AKH	Alexander Khloponin	MB	Marat Baglai	VMU	Vitaly Mutko
AKO	Alexander Konovalov	MF	Mikhail Fradkov	VP	Vladimir Putin
AN	Alexander Nekipelov	MK	Mikhail Kasyanov	VPU	Vladimir Puchkov
AS	Anatoly Serdyukov	OG	Olga Golodets	VR	Vladimir Rushailo
AT	Alexander Torshin	RN	Rashid Nurgaliyev	VS	Valentin Sobolev
AV	Alexander Voloshin	SB	Sergey Bogdanchikov	VSU	Vladislav Surkov
AVA	Anton Vaino	SI	Sergey Ivanov	VU	Vladimir Ustinov
AZ	Alexander Zhukov	SK	Sergey Kiriyyenko	VV	Vyacheslav Volodin
BA	Boris Alyoshin	SL	Sergey Lavrov	VY	Vladimir Yakovlev
BG	Boris Gryzlov	SLE	Sergey Lebedev	VZ	Viktor Zubkov
DK	Dmitry Kozak	SM	Sergey Mironov	VZO	Valery Zorkin
DM	Dmitry Medvedev	SN	Sergey Naryshkin	YC	Yuri Chaika
DR	Dmitry Rogozin	SP	Sergey Prikhodko	YS	Yegor Stroyev
GK	Galina Karelova	SS	Sergey Sobyanyin	YT	Yury Trutnev

1. Positional identification (2000-2008)										
<i>Putin's first presidential term (7 May 2000 – 7 May 2004)</i>						<i>Putin's second presidential term (7 May 2004- 7 May 2008)</i>				
Positions	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<i>1. President</i>	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)
<i>2. Chief of Staff</i>	AV	AV	AV	AV (R) DM	DM	DM	DM (R) SS	SS	SS	SS
<i>3. First Deputy Chief of Staff</i>	DM	DM	DM	DM (R) DK	DK (R)	(P)	(P)	(P)	(P)	(P)
<i>4. Security Council Secretary</i>	SI (1)	SI (1,R) VR (2)	VR (2)	VR (2)	VR (2,R) II	II	II	II	II (R) VS (1)	VS (1)
<i>5. Prime Minister</i>	MK	MK	MK	MK	MK (R) VK (A) MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?,R) VZ	VZ
<i>6. First Deputy Prime Minister</i>	(P)	(P)	(P)	(P)	(P)	(P)	DM	DM	DM SI (1)	DM SI (1)
<i>7. Deputy Prime Minister</i>	VM	VM	VM	VM (R)	VK	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ
	VK	VK	VK	VK	AK		SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1,R) SN (?) AK	SN (?) AK
	IK (?)	IK (?)	IK (?,R)	AK	AG					
	AK	AK	AK	AG	GK					
	AG	AG	AG	GK	BA					
				BA	VY					
				VY	AZ					
<i>8. Minister for Emergency Situations</i>	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)
<i>9. Minister of Justice</i>	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC (R)	VU (?)	VU (?)

								VU (?)		
10. Minister of Defence	IS (3)	IS (3,R) SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1,R) AS	AS
11. Minister of Internal Affairs	VR (2)	VR (2,R) BG	BG	BG (R) RN (1,A)	RN (1,A) RN (1)	RN (1)	RN (1)	RN (1)	RN (1)	RN (1)
12. Minister of Foreign Affairs	II	II	II	II	II (R) SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL
13. Director of FSB	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)
14. Director of SVR	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1)	SLE (1,R) MF (?)	MF (?)
15. State Duma Chairman	GS	GS	GS	GS (R) BG	BG	BG	BG	BG	BG	BG
16. Federation Council Chairman	YS	YS (R) SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM	SM
17. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL
18. Chairman of the Constitutional Court	MB	MB	MB	MB (R) VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO
19. Prosecutor General	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?)	VU (?,R) YC	YC	YC
20. Gazprom Chairman	VC (R) DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
21. Rosneft Chairman	SB	SB	SB	SB	SB	SB (R) ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?)

Note. The First Deputy Prime Minister post was not filled from May 2000 to November 2005, and the First Deputy Chief of Staff post was not filled during Putin's entire second term.

2. Positional identification (2008-2016)

Positions	Medvedev's presidential term (7 may 2008- 7 may 2012)					Putin's third presidential term (7 May 2012- 31 November 2016)					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
1. President	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	
2. Chief of Staff	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?,R)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1,R)	
					VS (A)						AVA
					SI (1)						
3. First Deputy Chief of Staff	VSU	VSU	VSU	VSU (R)	VV	VV	VV	VV	VV	VV (R)	
				VV	AGR	AGR	AGR	AGR	AGR SK		
4. Security Council Secretary	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	NP (1)	
5. Prime Minister	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	VP (1)	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	
6. First Deputy Prime Minister	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	ISH	
	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ						
7. Deputy Prime Minister	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ (R)	ISE (?)	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	
	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1)	SI (1,R)		AKH	AKH	AKH	AKH	AKH	
	AK	AK	AK	AK (R)		DR	DR	DR	DR	DR	
	SS	SS	SS (R)	ISE (?)	DK	VSU	VSU (R)	AD	AD	AD	
						AD	AD			OG	
	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	DK	AKH	OG	OG	OG	OG	OG	SP
	DK	DK	DK	AKH	DR	DK	SP	SP	SP	SP	YT
		AKH	VV (R)	VSU							

			VV	DR			YT	YT	YT	VMU
				VSU						
8. Minister for Emergency Situations	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	VPU (4)	VPU (4)	VPU (4)	VPU (4)	VPU (4)
9. Minister of Justice	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO	AKO
10. Minister of Defence	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS (R)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)	SSH (4)
						SSH (4)				
11. Minister of Internal Affairs	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)	VKO (2)
12. Minister of Foreign Affairs	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL
13. Director of FSB	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)	AB (1)
14. Director of SVR	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?)	MF (?,R)
										SN (?)
15. State Duma Chairman	BG	BG	BG	BG (R)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?)	SN (?,R)
				SN (?)						VV
16. Federation Council Chairman	SM	SM	SM	SM (R)	VM	VM	VM	VM	VM	VM
				AT (A)						
				VM						
17. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL	VL
18. Chairman of the Constitutional Court	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO	VZO
19. Prosecutor General	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC	YC
20. Gazprom Chairman	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ	VZ
21. Rosneft Chairman	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?)	ISE (?,R)	AN	AN	AN	AN	AN (R)	AB
				AN					AB	

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