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### Is Russia a militocracy? Conceptual issues and extant findings regarding elite militarization

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## Is Russia a militocracy? Conceptual issues and extant findings regarding elite militarization

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The dominant paradigm for understanding contemporary Russia holds that Vladimir Putin's tenure in office has been accompanied by a massive influx of former KGB and military personnel – so-called “siloviki” – into positions of power and authority throughout the polity and economy. Claims of extensive elite militarization, however, are largely based on the analyses of only one research program and, moreover, the validity of the estimates produced by that research program is open to question on numerous grounds. In this article, we review existing research on elite militarization in Russia; discuss a series of conceptual and empirical issues that need to be resolved if valid and meaningful estimation of military–security representation is to be achieved; introduce new findings; and evaluate the totality of existing evidence regarding whether the Russian state under Putin deserves to be labeled a militocracy. We find that the most straightforward reading of existing data indicates that the percentage of *siloviki* in the political elite during Putin's first two terms as president was approximately half of that which has been widely reported in both scholarship and the media, and also declined during the Medvedev presidency. In addition, our analysis of a broader cross section of the elite estimates military–security representation during the Putin presidency to have been lower still. Overall, existing data paint a less alarming picture of the depths to which *siloviki* have penetrated the corridors of power since 2000 than has been commonly portrayed and thereby cast doubt on Russia's status as an “FSB state.” On the other hand, past trends also provide some basis for expecting that the numbers of *siloviki* will once again rise during Putin's current presidential term.

**Keywords:** siloviki; militocracy; FSB state; elite militarization; methodology of elite analysis

### 1. Introduction

Soon after Vladimir Putin's ascent to the Russian presidency at the turn of the millennium, the central narrative to emerge in scholarly, public policy, and journalistic analyses of Russia on both sides of the Atlantic coalesced around an alleged resurgence of the KGB. This framework for conceptualizing and understanding both the evolution of the Russian polity and the contents of Russian policy, both foreign and domestic, stresses the professional backgrounds of Russia's rulers – in particular, their prior service in Russia's “force structures” or “power ministries,” those institutions entrusted with marshaling armed force in

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defense of the state from potential enemies, whether foreign or domestic.<sup>2</sup> According to this framework, former KGB Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Putin came into office determined to reestablish Moscow's authority throughout the far-flung Russian Federation and, more generally, to increase the state's control over a society perceived to be descending into chaos. In order to accomplish these objectives, the president methodically appointed scores of fellow *siloviki* to important positions throughout the polity and economy. The end result of Putin's personnel policies was Russia's transformation into what *The Economist* called a "neo-KGB state" ("The Making of a Neo-KGB State: Russia under Putin" (*The Economist*, August 25, 2007)) and the Russian sociologist Olga Kryshtanovskaya termed a "militocracy" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003).<sup>3</sup>

The Russian polity continued to be described in these terms even after Putin had moved to the less powerful post of prime minister in 2008 and Dmitry Medvedev, a civilian lawyer by background, had taken his place as president. For instance, writing in 2010, Susan Glasser and Peter Baker explain Mikhail Khodorkovsky's continued imprisonment by pointing out that "in today's Russia, Putin and his fellow KGB veterans have broken the opposition, marginalized the few survivors of Boris Yeltsin's epic if flawed revolution, and ensured that no force in society is strong enough to undermine their rule" (Glasser and Baker 2010, 65).<sup>4</sup> Writing on the eve of Putin's return to the presidency for a third term, the editor of *Moscow News* predicts that "Vladimir Putin's new administration is more likely to see the coming to power not of a new tandem, but a new troika. This troika will represent the three main centers of power and influence in the elite – oil, finance capital and the siloviki . . . As the guarantor of siloviki influence, Putin will remain the ultimate arbiter in Russian politics . . ." (Wall 2012). Other analysts are even more categorical. For example, Shevtsova (2012, 253) describes Putin's current administration as "a praetorian regime run by people from the secret services – indeed, from these services' most archaic provincial level ." "[F]or the first time in Russian history," she adds, "people from these institutions have taken power in their own hands."

One of the main contributions of this framework – which we shall call the "militocracy paradigm" – has been to provide the most widespread explanation of the de-democratization that has been a hallmark of the Putin years. For instance, Treisman (2007, 142) asserts that "the temptation to use secret service tools and techniques predisposes [regimes dominated by *siloviki*] toward authoritarian politics." Or, to take a second example, in their masterful account of Putin's first term as president, Baker and Glasser (2005, 11) explain the "rollback of Russian democracy" primarily with reference to the "KGB tactics and mentality that Putin brought to the Kremlin."<sup>5</sup>

Nor, it is alleged, are the ominous consequences of elite militarization limited to the contours of the political system. A detailed treatment of the "silovik ideology" is provided by Olga Kryshtanovskaya and Stephen White, who describe it in the following terms:

The state is the basis of society; therefore, the state should be strong. A strong state controls everything . . . Security agents who risk their lives in the service of the

state . . . should be beyond the reach of courts of law. A strong state should also control the economy, at least its natural resources, which cannot be allowed to remain in private hands. Pluralism of opinions is dangerous as it undermines the state from within. There is still an external enemy – the West – and this means that a strong army is needed, and a powerful armaments industry. (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005, 1073)

Moreover, they add, these ideas constitute a “national project” that *siloviki* regard as having “domestic and foreign opponents. Its external enemies are all who do not wish or even fear a strong Russia, the USA in particular. Internal enemies, by extension, are those who support the West and share its values” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2005, 1073).<sup>6</sup> In regard to foreign policy, Andrei Illarionov, Putin’s top economic adviser from 2000 to 2004, argues that *siloviki* possess an “internal psychological need to wage aggressive wars” against Russia’s neighbors (Illarionov 2009, 71). And in regard to crime and corruption, Karen Dawisha asserts:

For the *siloviki*, Russia’s connections with Venezuela’s Chavez, Syria’s Assad, Iran’s Ahmadinejad, Libya’s Gadhafi, and, of course, Central Asian leaders and Belarus’s Lukashenka, plus, they hope, Ukraine’s Yanukovich, are key to recreating a worldwide network of authoritarian leaders who support each other not only in military/intelligence advice, but also in offshore banking, money laundering, and other illicit activities. (Dawisha 2011, 48)<sup>7</sup>

In sum, for over a decade the conventional wisdom has held that Putin’s tenure as president was accompanied by a massive influx of former military and security personnel into positions of power and authority, and that this influx has major implications for Russian politics and policy.<sup>8</sup> But is the conventional wisdom actually true? That is, aside from Putin and a dozen or so other high-ranking Kremlin officials, did a huge influx of *siloviki* into the elite actually occur? And if so, what was its scale? Due to the small amount of systematic empirical research that has been conducted on these questions, observers of Russian politics should be skeptical regarding whether they really know the answers to them. In fact, claims of extensive elite militarization are largely based on the analyses of only one research program and, moreover, the data analysis techniques utilized by that research program have resulted in the inflation of its estimates by as much as 100%. In addition, examination of a broader cross section of the elite produces estimates of military–security representation that are even lower still.

In this article, we elaborate on and demonstrate these claims.<sup>9</sup> First, we review the core findings of two separate research programs that have advanced estimates of the extent of elite militarization, one of which has generated relatively high estimates and the other, relatively low estimates. Second, we discuss a series of conceptual and empirical issues that need to be handled correctly if accurate estimation of the composition of the Russian elite is to be achieved. In the process, we scrutinize extant research through the prism of these issues. Third, we present both new estimates and corrections to previously published findings that extend from the end of Boris Yel’tsin’s years in office to the Medvedev presidency. Fourth, we evaluate the totality of existing knowledge regarding the extent to

which Russia has been governed by *siloviki* during the Putin–Medvedev era. In a concluding section, we summarize and draw out the implications of our core arguments.

## 2. Existing estimates of the extent of elite militarization

Since the Putin era began, two research programs have compiled large-N data on the professional backgrounds of Russian elites and have used those data to generate estimates of the extent of elite militarization.<sup>10</sup> The most well known of these research programs is housed at the Department of Elite Studies of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and is directed by Olga Kryshtanovskaya. The second research program is housed at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, and is directed by the authors.<sup>11</sup>

### 2.1 *Kryshtanovskaya and White*

The widespread conceptualization of contemporary Russia as a state dominated by *siloviki* has received its greatest impetus from Kryshtanovskaya's various publications and media statements on the subject. One of the primary vehicles by which Kryshtanovskaya has disseminated her findings to English-language audiences consists of scholarly articles authored with her British collaborator Stephen White. In this regard, their 2003 article "Putin's Militocracy" is one of the most influential articles to be published about Russia since the Putin era began.<sup>12</sup> It opens with the assertion that "[s]ince his victory in the 2000 presidential election, Vladimir Putin has drawn a stream of people in uniform into Russia's power structures" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, 289). This claim is then supported with data on the educational and occupational backgrounds of the members of various state institutions at various points in time.<sup>13</sup> In particular, Kryshtanovskaya and White examine five sectors of Russian "officialdom," which in 2002 consisted of the "national leadership" (defined as the 24 members of the Security Council); the 58 members of the government; 88 chief executives of Russia's regional subdivisions (Chechnya is excluded); 168 members of the Federation Council; and 448 deputies of the State Duma as elected in 1999. The overall percentage of the members of these sectors with a "military education" (the exact meaning of which is never defined) in 1993 and 2002 is reported, as is the percentage of "military–security representatives" (presumably defined by previous employment) in each sector in 1988, 1993, 1999, and 2002. In regard to educational training, Kryshtanovskaya and White find that 6.7% of the elite in 1993 possessed a military education, whereas 26.6% of the elite possessed a military education in 2002 (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, Table 1). As concerns previous employment, Kryshtanovskaya and White average together the percentages of *siloviki* in each of the five sectors to produce an aggregate "average by cohort" of military–security representation that similarly increases monotonically from 3.7% in 1988 to 25.1% in 2002 (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, Table 2). The latter figure is the central finding of their article, one

that is highlighted in its opening paragraph, which states: “At present every fourth member of the Russian elite has a military or security background, and their numbers are continuing to grow” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, 289).

The influence that “Putin’s Militocracy” has exerted on perceptions of Russia manifests itself not only in the predominance of the paradigm but also in the frequency with which its central finding has been cited in journalistic and academic analyses. For instance, Freedom House’s annual survey of political rights and civil liberties states the following in its report on Russia in 2007:

After taking office, Putin . . . considerably altered the composition of the ruling elite through an influx of personnel from the security and military services; they now represent approximately 25 percent of the country’s ministers, deputy ministers, legislators, regional governors, and heads of multiregional federal districts (Freedom House 2007).<sup>14</sup>

National leaders have similarly found the finding compelling. For example, while serving as prime minister of neighboring Ukraine, Yuliya Tymoshenko (2007, 71–72) asserted that one-quarter of the “leading figures in Putin’s regime . . . at some point served in the KGB or one of its successor agencies.”<sup>15</sup> Even voices critical of the militocracy concept have accepted this 25% figure as accurate (Bacon, Renz, and Cooper 2006, 30; Vendil Pallin 2007, 22; Gaman-Golutvina 2008, 1038).

In light of how much resonance their research has enjoyed, it should come as no surprise that Kryshtanovskaya and White have subsequently updated their demographic analyses to include more recent time periods. While their 2009 article, “The Sovietization of Russian Politics,” is primarily devoted to an exploration of the various means by which Putin’s Kremlin eliminated all alternative bases of power in Russian political life (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009), it also devotes some attention to – and vigorously reaffirms – the “militocracy thesis,” as they call it. Specifically, the authors present three sets of noteworthy findings on this score. First, they argue that under Putin, an “inner core” of individuals “based around the Presidential Administration” became “the only authoritative source of strategic decisions that affect the society as a whole” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 293). And within the halls of the Presidential Administration, they assert, “officials with a ‘force ministry’ background – the *siloviki* – have represented a steadily increasing proportion of its leading members” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 294). Moreover, they claim that *siloviki* monopolized the president’s ear. “Officials with a different [i.e., civilian] background, however senior the position they occupied,” they write, “acted only within the limits of their own competence and were primarily executants, not admitted to the meetings of the ‘inner circle’ where Putin and his closest colleagues agreed on the ‘general line’” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 294).

Second, Kryshtanovskaya and White extend into Putin’s second presidential term the analysis of the professional backgrounds of high-ranking government officials that was the most prominent feature of their 2003 article. Specifically, they report that military–security representation increased between 2002 and January 2008 in each of the sectors that they had previously examined: from 58% to 67%



among the national leadership (now defined as “heads and deputy heads of departments of the Presidential Administration, presidential envoys and their aides, and the apparatus of the Security Council”); from 33% to 40% in the government; from 10% to 21% among regional chief executives; from 15% to 17% in the Federation Council; and from 9% to 14% in the Duma. As in their previous article, they then average together the most recent percentages and report a figure of 32% military–security representation for the 2008 cohort as a whole (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, Table 2). (Later in the article, however, this figure mysteriously rises to 42% in *February 2008* [Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, Tables 5 and 6, 303]. That the percentage of *siloviki* could increase by such a large amount in just a month seems highly unlikely. Moreover, the percentages in each of the five subgroups are reported to be either the same or virtually the same [the percentage in the national leadership differs by a mere 2%] in both January and February and 32% is indeed the correct average, not 42% [Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, Table 6, 301]. Hence, we conclude that the 42% figure is simply an error.<sup>16</sup>)

Third, the final section of Kryshtanovskaya and White’s (2009) article presents findings on trends in elite turnover during the first year and a half of Dmitry Medvedev’s presidency. As one might expect given the new president’s status as a “textbook civilian, a civil law scholar who co-authored an award-winning textbook on the Russian civil code” (Stack 2007), Kryshtanovskaya and White report that elite militarization decreased during this period. Specifically, according to their data, military–security representation declined between February 2008 and September 2009 from 69% to 51% in the Presidential Administration and Security Council and from 40% to 36% in the government (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, Tables 6 and 7). Kryshtanovskaya and White do not report the “average by cohort” for 2009, yet if one assumes that no changes took place in their remaining three subgroups and then computes the average of the percentages reported for all five sectors, these decreases bring that figure down from 32% in 2008 to 27.8% in 2009.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, in light of the fact that other research indicates that demilitarization extended to the governors’ corps as well, the latter figure is probably on the high side. Specifically, Blakkisrud (2011, 381) reports that 21.4% of the governors appointed by Putin between 2005 and 2008 hailed from the force structures but that the comparable figure regarding those appointed by Medvedev between May 2008 and May 2010 fell to 11.1%.

Notwithstanding these decreases, however, Kryshtanovskaya and White conclude their article by asserting that the militocracy paradigm sheds just as much light on Russia under the Putin–Medvedev tandem as it did during the previous eight years. “Russia’s entire history and the nature of the changes that have taken place since 2000 suggest that the defense and security complex will remain a central part of the regime and a key instrument of power. Putin spent eight years in order to strengthen the *siloviki*, and to install them in leading state positions – hardly to give it all up at a later stage,” they write. “[T]heir position has never been more powerful, both in government and in the growing network of state corporations” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 305).

## 2.2 Rivera and Rivera

Over course of the last decade, we have compiled an original database containing a wide array of information on the educational and professional backgrounds of 2539 individuals who were prominent in the political, economic, and/or cultural life of the Russian Federation at some point in the 1990s or 2000s. The information that we have used to generate our data has come primarily (but not exclusively) from the biographical entries contained in a series of directories published by the Center for Political Information, an independent research center located in Moscow, and entitled *Federal'naya i regional'naya elita Rossii: Kto yest' kto v politike i ekonomike. Yezhegodnyy biograficheskiy spravochnik* [The federal and regional elite of Russia: Who is who in politics and the economy. An annual biographical directory] (hereafter referred to as FRER). On the basis of this biographical information, we have categorized and coded over two dozen aspects of the demographic profiles, educational backgrounds, and career histories of all of the individuals listed in the 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004, and 2006 editions of the directory.<sup>18</sup>

In an article entitled “The Russian Elite under Putin: Militocratic or Bourgeois?,” published in 2006, we present findings on the extent of elite militarization among the 1055 individuals listed in the 2002 edition of FRER. The resulting sample of elites “is more comprehensive [than Kryshtanovskaya and White’s sample], and also includes most of the key members of the federal government and the two houses of the Federal Assembly” (Rivera and Rivera 2006, 133). Our analyses reveal that only 8.9% of this group – which we termed “societal” (as opposed to purely governmental) elites – had received a military education. Similarly, only 10.7% of this wider swath of the Russian elite had employment experience in any of Russia’s force structures (Rivera and Rivera 2006, 136–139). In other words, whereas Kryshtanovskaya and White claim that one-quarter of Russian officialdom was comprised of *siloviki* at the mid-point of Putin’s first presidential term, we find that the proportion in this broader cross section of political, economic, and cultural figures was approximately one-tenth. After contrasting these figures with the percentage of our sample that had employment experience in the economic field, whether private or state owned, we conclude that the Russian elite during Putin’s first presidential term was more bourgeois than militocratic.

## 3. Threats to the validity of existing estimates

Both our estimate of the extent of military–security representation in Russia’s societal elite and Kryshtanovskaya and White’s various point estimates of its extent in the political elite, however, need to be treated as rough approximations of a very complex reality. We make this claim because in the course of analyzing the biographies of thousands of Russian elites over the last decade, we have come to appreciate the significant extent to which valid and meaningful estimation of the representation of *siloviki* (or any group) in a country’s elite depends upon the careful and thoughtful resolution of a series of conceptual and empirical issues. In this section, we discuss six such issues that we have encountered and grappled



with in the course of examining the career histories of Russian elites. As we will demonstrate, the two research programs discussed above handle many of these issues in different ways. In addition, they often do so with insufficient transparency, which both impairs the interpretability of their findings and makes it difficult for other members of the scholarly community to replicate their analyses.

### 3.1 Issue #1. Specifying the scope of the elite

First and perhaps most importantly, research on elite militarization needs to be clear and thoughtful about both its definition of the elite and its operationalization of that definition. In practice, this means that it needs to provide a clear and convincing answer to the question, which positions in society constitute its “elite”? In this regard, the bulk of Kryshtanovskaya and White’s analyses are based on a clear conceptualization of their object of study: namely, “the political elite – that is, the people who govern the country” (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 583). Moreover, in light of the centrality of the state in modern life, that conceptualization is certainly a reasonable one. In addition, another strength of Kryshtanovskaya and White’s research is that, as we have seen, their quantitative findings are based on an explicit enumeration of their elite population: the approximately 800 officials occupying the highest echelons of executive and legislative authority at both the national and regional levels.<sup>19</sup>

In contrast, our prior research handles this issue with somewhat less clarity and considerably less success. On the one hand, we clearly state how we chose our sample: we took the full complement of individuals listed in the 2002 edition of FRER. We also discuss the criteria that the editors of that volume used to select individuals for inclusion: namely, that he or she “changed or facilitated change in the political and economic processes of Russia during the given period” and “continued to be well-known in 2002,” resulting in a sample consisting of “individuals who, in the opinion of the editor, were prominent members of Russian society in the period 1990–2002” (Mukhin 2002, 3). In addition, by including economic elites, our sample corresponds to the theoretical understanding of the “elite” that is used in many writings on militocracy.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, notwithstanding the transparency and seeming reasonableness of our selection criterion, our sample presents several problems for subsequent interpretation. First, due to the inclusion of not only political and business elites but also cultural figures, our sample is a highly heterogeneous grouping and it is likely – notwithstanding the claims advanced by the editors of FRER – that not all of these individuals were genuinely influential in 2002. Second, FRER also includes many *active-duty* officers in the Russian military – such as members of the General Staff and the commanders of Russia’s major fleets – yet such positions do not fit within the definitions of the elite that are standard in the militocracy literature. In sum, these drawbacks mean that even if our finding that 10.7% of Russia’s “societal elite” had careers in the military–security field is accurate (and reasons to question its accuracy will be discussed below), it is not necessarily very meaningful because our sample is so broad and amorphous.

### 3.2 Issue #2. Defining and enumerating the force structures

Second, research on elite militarization also needs to be clear and thoughtful about both its conceptualization of a force structure and its operationalization of that conceptualization. In practice, this means providing a clear answer to the question, professional experience in what agencies confers on an individual the status of *silovik*? In this regard, Kryshtanovskaya and White's analyses are based on a fairly clear conceptualization of a force structure. Specifically, they define the "force ministries" as "all the government departments that include armed formations" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 298). Moreover, in other places in their various works, they make clear that by "siloviki" they mean "people in uniform" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, 289). Or as Kryshtanovskaya writes in her book on the Russian elite: "By 'military men' we mean people wearing a uniform of any type: officers of the army, navy, border patrol, internal troops, state security agencies, etc." (Kryshtanovskaya 2005, 269).

Where Kryshtanovskaya and White fall somewhat short, however, is in regard to enumerating the many "government departments" that possess armed formations and that serve as the basis for coding individuals as either *siloviki* or civilians. They note that there are "about 20 of these departments at present" (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009, 298), yet in none of their works are they listed in full. Even though they probably believe that the force structures in Russia are so obvious as not to need enumeration, social scientific research should make such matters explicit so that the reader is not required to engage in guesswork.

In partial contrast, in our 2006 article, we both define *siloviki* and fully explain how we coded individuals as such. Specifically, we adopt the standard definition of *siloviki* as "individuals with backgrounds in roughly a dozen 'power ministries,' such as the Federal Security Service (FSB), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), and Ministry of Defense" (Rivera and Rivera 2006, 126). In addition, we specify that prior employment in the following institutions or occupations qualified someone as a *silovik*: "the FSB, Foreign Intelligence Service, military, MVD, border troops, railroad troops, and federal tax police, as well as cosmonauts" (Rivera and Rivera 2006, 137).<sup>21</sup> As a result, this aspect of our research should be fully replicable by other scholars.

### 3.3 Issue #3. Differentiating between military and civilian occupations within the force structures

Third, in order to correctly identify *siloviki*, one must give careful consideration to the issue of which positions within a force structure count as military–security positions and which do not. In this regard, in her wide-ranging critique of the militocracy paradigm, Renz (2006, 915) contends that "the previous careers of many prominent *siloviki* in contemporary Russia . . . were often compatible with tasks required of civilian specialists, and not commonly associated with traditional military training and discipline." While Renz's point is that military officers are frequently not occupied with "military tasks" as conventionally understood, a

related point is that military–security institutions generally employ both military personnel and civilians. To take the MVD as an example, it employed “around 1,230,000 people” in 2005, roughly 80% of whom constituted “law enforcement personnel” and the remaining 20% of whom were “civilian employees” (Taylor 2011, 46–47).

In light of this ratio, it is not surprising that in the course of the coding and recoding of the career histories of elites that we have conducted since 2006, we have discovered that some of the elites in our database who had been employed in a force structure (and whom we had coded as *siloviki*) were in fact civilians at the time. In particular, Russia’s power ministries often filled the following positions with civilian employees: (1) engineers; (2) physicists; (3) construction supervisors; (4) journalists; and (5) public relations and media spokespersons. Notwithstanding the fact that force structures employ large numbers of civilians, the issue of what kinds of employment within a force structure should and should not qualify an individual as a *silovik* receives no attention in either Kryshtanovskaya and White’s articles or our prior work. Hence, it seems likely that some number of civilian engineers, physicists, etc., were counted as *siloviki* in both their and our estimates, thereby inflating the extent of military–security representation in both.

### 3.4 Issue #4. Establishing a minimum length of time necessary to qualify as a *silovik*

Accurate estimation of the extent of elite militarization also requires that other aspects of an individual’s professional background receive careful consideration. One of the more central of them involves the length of his or her service in uniform in relation to the length of employment in civilian spheres. In this regard, Kryshtanovskaya and White themselves posit that retired *siloviki* experience a significant degree of resocialization and value change during subsequent employment in other realms. “As the military and security officials of the ‘Putin enrollment’ have acquired some experience of democratic politics, and as they have worked in business or even abroad,” they write, “their authoritarian tendencies in many instances have been moderated” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003, 304).<sup>22</sup> Moreover, in *Anatomiya Rossiyskoy elity*, Kryshtanovskaya (2005) presents this argument more forcefully. “Soviet officers were a social group distinguished by a strong penchant for communist orthodoxy and Great Power-nationalism. It was almost impossible to find among them a critic of the Soviet regime, never mind a dissident,” she writes. “However, the longer these people worked in business-structures, the longer they were dependent on oligarchs and ‘new Russians,’ then the more they adopted a liberal outlook” (Kryshtanovskaya 2005, 277).

It logically follows from these arguments that Russian elites should be conceptualized not in a dichotomous manner but rather along a continuum that represents the proportion of their professional experience spent in one or another of the country’s security institutions. In this regard, if an individual spent most of his or her professional life as a *silovik*, then the presumption that he/she possesses

a worldview and value system shaped by socialization in the armed forces seems a priori strong. Conversely, elites who spent only a small portion of their careers in epaulettes presumably think and act more like civilians than military personnel.

Both Kryshtanovskaya's compelling arguments about the resocializing effect of civilian life and our extrapolation of their implications, however, still provide little guidance regarding how to handle this matter empirically. That is, how long must an individual work in a force structure to qualify later in life as a *silovik*? Clearly, if only a year or less was spent in epaulettes and several decades of a long career were spent in civilian employ, then that amount of experience would be too little. But how long is enough? Neither Kryshtanovskaya and White's articles nor our prior work contain any discussion of this issue. Hence, one is left with the impression (correct in our case) that both their and our coding procedures place no minimum on how long one's military career must have been in order to qualify as a *silovik*. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that both sets of estimates of the extent of elite militarization suffer from some amount of inflation due to the inclusion of individuals who would not be considered to be *siloviki* by most reasonable definitions of the term.

As an illustration of the problems associated with this practice, consider the career history of the following individual who is included in both Kryshtanovskaya and White's and our samples: Aleksandr Karelin, whom we code as a *silovik* due to his tenure as a "specialist" in the tax police for a handful of years in the 1990s (when he was in his late twenties). Karelin's previous career was as a world-class wrestler, and his subsequent employment was as a sports adviser to the government and then a Duma deputy. In other words, as of 2006, Karelin had spent at most 20%, and probably closer to 10%, of his adult life in epaulettes and the remaining 80–90% in civilian employ. It clearly strains one's imagination to suppose that such an individual possesses a worldview and value system predominantly shaped by socialization in the armed forces, yet our coding rules (and presumably Kryshtanovskaya's as well) treat him as equivalent to a lifelong *silovik* nonetheless.

### **3.5 Issue #5. Not weighting the importance of elite positions or justifying weights**

Fifth, estimation of the aggregate representation of *siloviki* in the elite of any country requires making a decision as to whether all positions in the elite should be counted equally or, conversely, whether some positions should be regarded as more important than others. Our previous analyses treat the various "societal elites" in our sample equally regardless of an individual's rank or apparent degree of influence. In contrast, Kryshtanovskaya and White's analyses de facto apply varying weights to different categories of positions that they fail to justify (or even make explicit). Because their weighting scheme significantly impacts their results, it warrants further elaboration.

As was discussed above, in "Putin's Militocracy," Kryshtanovskaya and White (2003) report the percentages of "military–security representatives" in five

different state sectors and then average these percentages together to produce an aggregate “average by cohort” for 1988, 1993, 1999, and 2002.<sup>23</sup> As we point out in our 2006 article, however, they do not provide any theoretical justification for creating a summary indicator for each cohort by averaging together the percentages in these five sectors. Moreover, their “average by cohort” averages together the scores of groups of very different sizes as if they were equivalent in either size or significance. As we write,

the percentage of *siloviki* in Russia’s national leadership (which, to repeat, is defined as the 24 members of the Security Council) is averaged together with their percentage in the lower house of parliament (which possessed 448 members). As a result, a member of the Security Council carries 18.7 times the weight of a Duma deputy in the overall “average by cohort.” Such a summary statistic will produce distorted values if any of the very large or very small elite sectors possess extreme scores. Unfortunately, this is the case with regard to Kryshtanovskaya and White’s data for 2003: the Security Council constitutes the smallest elite sector and (unsurprisingly) has the largest proportion of *siloviki* (58.3%); and the lower house of parliament constitutes the largest elite sector and has the smallest share of former military-security personnel (9.4%). (Rivera and Rivera 2006, 135)

We then recalculate the percentages of *siloviki* in each of Kryshtanovskaya and White’s elite cohorts and discover that the unweighted figures range from 4.4% in 1988 to 13.9% in 2002, which is just over *half* of the 25.1% that is arrived at by averaging the percentages in the five sectors (Rivera and Rivera 2006, Table 1).

Even though our 2006 article pointed out how their aggregation procedure greatly impacts their results – and, in fact, makes their central finding that one-quarter of the elite consisted of *siloviki* technically inaccurate – Kryshtanovskaya repeats this figure in an essay published in 2008.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, in their more recent article, as we have seen, Kryshtanovskaya and White (2009, Table 2) continue to use the same aggregation technique (again without any theoretical justification) that produces the 25% figure and results in a figure of 32% military–security representation in 2008.<sup>25</sup> Yet, this practice is again misleading. If one replicates the procedures conducted in our 2006 article and recalculates the percentage of *siloviki* in the political elite counting each individual equally, then the figure for the 2008 cohort, like the one for 2002, drops dramatically. Specifically, Kryshtanovskaya and White report that 67% of 39 members of the national leadership were *siloviki*, which equates to 27 individuals; 40% of 86 members of the government were *siloviki*, or 34 individuals; 21% of 86 governors were *siloviki*, or 18 individuals; 17% of 186 members of the Federation Council were *siloviki*, or approximately 32 individuals; and 14% of 450 members of the Duma were *siloviki*, or approximately 63 individuals.<sup>26</sup> These numbers sum to 174 *siloviki* out of an elite consisting of 847 positions, which equals 20.5%. In other words, abandoning Kryshtanovskaya and White’s implicit weighting scheme in favor of treating each individual equally reduces the aggregate estimate of military–security representation in their elite population for 2008 from 32%, or almost one-third, to 20.5%, or just over one-fifth. Even beyond the implications of this finding for our understanding of the nature of the Russian polity, the large

difference between these alternative readings of Kryshtanovskaya and White's own data illustrates our point that accurate estimation of elite militarization requires either that one count all individuals equally or that one provide a weighting scheme with thorough and extensive justification.

### 3.6 Issue #6. Avoiding double-counting

Sixth and finally, if one is going to average together the percentages of *siloviki* present in various subgroups, then ideally these subgroups should be mutually exclusive. If some individuals are members of more than one group, they will be counted multiple times. The analyses present in our 2006 article contain no aggregation of subgroups and thus do not suffer from any double-counting. In contrast, Kryshtanovskaya and White aggregate groups whose memberships overlap with each other *and* they fail to delete individuals with multiple memberships from one or the other of these groups. Specifically, in the years in question, membership of the Security Council overlapped considerably with that of the government.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the Security Council also included the chairmen of both the Federation Council and State Duma (Chleny 2013). As a result, Kryshtanovskaya and White double-count these individuals in their aggregate "average by cohort."<sup>28</sup> Moreover, because the Security Council contains the highest military–security representation among their five subgroups and the double-counted individuals are thereby more likely to be *siloviki* than are those not double-counted, their failure to correct for the problem posed by multiple group memberships would seem to have impacted their findings in the direction of inflating military–security representation.

## 4. Existing estimates revisited: Is Russia a militocracy?

As the foregoing has sought to demonstrate, valid and meaningful estimation of the extent of elite militarization in Russia (or any country) requires the prior resolution of a series of conceptual and empirical issues. As we have also shown, however, the two research programs discussed above resolve some of these issues successfully yet others largely unsuccessfully. Specifically, as is displayed in the third column of Table 1, our prior research on the career histories of Russian societal elites successfully deals with the second, fifth, and sixth of the issues that we have discussed above. As a result, even though our analyses erroneously include some civilians among the ranks of *siloviki* (Issue #3) and also include some former officers who spent only a small portion of their careers in uniform (Issue #4), our finding that 10.7% of Russian societal elites in 2002 were *siloviki* nonetheless would appear to possess a reasonable degree of validity. The central problem with our analyses, however, arises when one attempts to answer the question, who are these societal elites exactly (Issue #1)? The technically correct answer to this question – they are the broad swath of political, economic, and cultural elites listed in the 2002 edition of FRER – possesses limited real-world significance and thus is not very meaningful.



In contrast, as is displayed in the second column of [Table 1](#), Kryshtanovskaya and White's various articles are very thoughtful and explicit regarding the composition of the elites under analysis (Issue #1). In addition, they provide clear and intuitive definitions of both the force structures (even if these structures are not fully enumerated) and *siloviki* (Issue #2). However, they deal with the remaining conceptual and empirical issues much less transparently, much less successfully, or not at all. As a result, as we have seen, when their data are not filtered through the weighting scheme utilized by them (Issue #5), it turns out that the proportion of the political elite that hailed from the power ministries is considerably lower during both of Putin's first two presidential terms than they report. Moreover, even this revised set of these estimates counts perhaps a dozen *siloviki* twice (Issue #6), probably includes some individuals whose careers in uniform were brief (Issue #4), and likely includes yet others whose employment in a force structure was actually in a civilian capacity (Issue #3). In sum, the failure of both Kryshtanovskaya and White's and our research to effectively deal with a large number of these issues calls into question the validity and/or meaningfulness of the various estimates of the extent of elite militarization advanced in both their and our publications on the subject.

Notwithstanding the imperfections of existing research, however, analysts need to decide how much credence to attribute to the various claims of the "militocracy paradigm" on the basis of the evidence that is currently available. The full range of existing estimates of military–security representation in the Russian elite that Kryshtanovskaya and White and we have generated, including both our recalculations of their data and new estimates that we have not previously published, is presented in [Table 2](#). They reveal eight items of interest. First, even

Table 1. The resolution of conceptual and empirical issues in existing research.<sup>a</sup>

Issue	Kryshtanovskaya and White (2003, 2009)		Rivera and Rivera (2006)	
	T	S	T	S
1. Specifying the scope of the elite	×	×	×	
2. Defining and enumerating the force structures		×	×	×
3. Differentiating between military and civilian employees of a force structure		?		
4. Establishing a minimum length of time necessary to qualify as a <i>silovik</i>		?		
5. Not weighting elite positions or justifying weights			×	×
6. Avoiding double-counting			×	×

<sup>a</sup>T, transparent; S, successful.

though Kryshtanovskaya and White’s finding that *siloviki* comprised 25% of the political elite in 2002 (second column, fifth row) has been cited and disseminated widely by scholars, journalists, and even national leaders, that figure is dependent on their particular weighting scheme. As we have pointed out before, if one reanalyzes their data utilizing the more straightforward and intuitive procedure of counting each individual equally regardless of the position he or she occupies, the proportion of *siloviki* drops to just under 14% (third column, fifth row).

Second, if one examines the broader cross section of the elite represented by the individuals selected for inclusion in *Federal’naya i regional’naya elita Rossii*, then we estimate military–security representation in 2002 to be slightly lower, at just over 12% (fourth column, fifth row). Third, our analysis of Russia’s “societal elite” in both preceding and succeeding years produces only slightly higher estimates: 16.5% in 1999, 13.1% in 2001, 13.7% in 2004, and 14.2% in 2006 (fourth column). Fourth, when all individuals are counted equally regardless of the positions they occupy, then both Kryshtanovskaya and White’s analysis of the political elite and our analysis of the societal elite produce rather similar results. Even though we use rather different samples and draw upon completely independent databases, we both estimate military–security representation to be between 12% and 14% in 2002 (third and fourth columns, fifth row). Interestingly, moreover, our analysis of a wider swath of Russia’s elite does not produce uniformly lower estimates: the percentage of *siloviki* in the societal elite is 1.7 percentage points lower than in the political elite in 2002, but in 1999 it is 7.2 percentage points higher!

Table 2. Alternative estimates of military–security representation in the Russian elite (percent).

Year	K&W’s political elite, weighted subgroups	R&R’s recalculations of the political elite, no weights	R&R’s societal elites, no weights
1988	3.7	4.4	
1993	11.2	5.7	
1999	17.4	9.3	16.5
2001			13.1
2002	25.1	13.9	12.2 <sup>a</sup>
2004			13.7
2006			14.2
2008	32/42 <sup>b</sup>	20.5	
2009	27.8 <sup>c</sup>	19.4	

Sources: Compiled by authors from Kryshtanovskaya and White (2003, Table 2), Rivera and Rivera (2006, 138 and Table 1), Kryshtanovskaya and White (2009, Tables 2, 5, and 6), and authors’ database.<sup>a</sup> This percentage is higher than we reported in our 2006 article due to several minor changes to our coding procedures. For instance, we now code individuals as *siloviki* on the basis of a broader set of force structures that includes the Procuracy and the Federal Customs Service.

<sup>b</sup> Kryshtanovskaya and White (2009) report both figures in their Tables 2, 5, and 6.

<sup>c</sup> Our calculation, as described in the text.

Fifth, our recalculations of Kryshtanovskaya and White's data reveal that just over 20% of the political elite in 2008 was recruited from the military and security services (third column, eighth row). In other words, whereas Kryshtanovskaya (2008, 596) asserts that military–security representation at the end of the Putin presidency reached “[a]lmost half,”<sup>29</sup> the actual representation of *siloviki* in her elite population (using her own data, we hasten to add) in early 2008 amounted to just one-fifth. Moreover, while this figure does not include individuals whose employment in a force structure was covert and remains so to this day, it is also the case, as was argued above, that it includes several categories of individuals who should not be regarded as *siloviki* in any truly meaningful sense.<sup>30</sup>

Sixth, whether one goes by Kryshtanovskaya and White's weighted percentages or our unweighted recalculations of their data, the proportion of *siloviki* in the political elite rose steadily over the course of Putin's first two terms as president. Specifically, both readings of Kryshtanovskaya's data suggest an increase of roughly 7 percentage points (from 25.1% to 32% and from 13.9% to 20.5%) between 2002 and 2008 (second and third columns, fifth and eighth rows). In other words, the observation made by Kryshtanovskaya and White (2003, 289) to the effect that the numbers of *siloviki* “are continuing to grow” seems to have accurately predicted the Kremlin's pattern of appointments during Putin's second term. Seventh and in partial contrast, however, our data indicate an increase by only 1.1 percentage points (from 13.1% to 14.2%) among societal elites between 2001 and 2006 (fourth column, fourth and seventh rows).<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, these two data series together provide some basis to expect a modest increase in the representation of *siloviki* during Putin's current presidential term.

The eighth noteworthy finding revealed by the data in Table 2 is that this upward trend appears to have been reversed during the first 2 years of the Medvedev presidency. Specifically, as we calculated above, Kryshtanovskaya and White report that military–security representation declined among the national leadership and government by amounts that reduce the overall “average by cohort” from 32% in 2008 to 27.8% in 2009 (second column, eighth and ninth rows). In addition, if one recalculates the percentage of *siloviki* in the political elite counting each individual equally, then military–security representation drops from 20.5% to 19.4% (third column, eighth and ninth rows).<sup>32</sup> Such a downward trend is consistent with the intention that Medvedev expressed early in his presidency to accelerate elite turnover. During his first meeting with the top 100 individuals on the list of the Kremlin's new “reserve of administrative personnel,” the president stated: “[W]ithout a reserve of this kind, we will not be able to move forward because, as we all understand perfectly well, the renewal of personnel, the renewal of human potential, and the appearance of new people in the appropriate positions are taking place very slowly in our country” (Stenograficheskiy 2009). Moreover, at least one analysis of Medvedev's preferred candidates for future state appointments concludes that “none of the individuals on the list have or had any sort of membership in the security forces . . .” (Bridge 2009).<sup>33</sup>

Overall, both our analyses of Russia's societal elite and our reanalyses of Kryshtanovskaya's data on the political elite paint a rather different – and less

alarming – picture of the depths to which *siloviki* have penetrated the corridors of power since 2000 than has been commonly depicted in both scholarship and the media. A key question remaining to be answered is whether the distribution of estimates presented in Table 2 passes the threshold required for a state to be considered a “militocracy.” Such a judgment ideally should be based on an underlying theory of militocracy as a general regime type. In addition, data on military–security representation in the elites of other countries, especially Russia’s postcommunist counterparts, would provide useful comparative referents. To our knowledge, however, existing scholarship has hitherto produced neither the requisite theorizing nor many relevant points of reference. In fact, we have encountered only one such reference point: Bruce Porter’s description of Napoleonic France. Explicitly referring to the French state as a “militocracy,” he writes:

Napoleon’s whole regime was irrepressibly, pervasively *military* in character. Simon Schama describes the France of 1793 as a warrior state; after 1799, it became a state governed by warriors as well . . . If the Napoleonic nobility as a whole is measured, military officers constituted 59 percent of its ranks, a much higher percentage than in the aristocracy of the Old Regime. (Porter 1994, 136)

If this standard is applied to Russia, one must conclude that at no point in the Putin era has it been correct to label the Russian state in its entirety a militocracy.

Fifty-nine percent is clearly a high threshold, however, and Napoleonic France represents only one data point. Hence, we suggest turning to Kryshtanovskaya and White for additional guidance. In “Putin’s Militocracy” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003), as we have seen, they designate the Russian state in 2002 as a militocracy on the basis of their (inflated) finding that one-quarter of the elite hailed from the power ministries. In addition, they also make clear that they do not consider Russia in 1999, when they report military–security representation to have been 17.4%, to have been one. Hence, if we take a figure of 25% military–security representation as the appropriate threshold and then reexamine the various estimates (which crest at 20.5%) displayed in the third and fourth columns of Table 2, then one must again conclude that at no point between 1988 and the present does the Russian state in its entirety qualify as a militocracy.

## 5. Conclusions

Due largely to the time-consuming and arduous nature of in-depth biographical analysis, very few research programs have compiled databases on the backgrounds of contemporary Russian elites that allow for large-N, longitudinal analysis of the individuals occupying the country’s governmental institutions. Moreover, only two of these research programs – one housed at the Institute of Sociology in Moscow and the other at Hamilton College in central New York – have used such data to estimate the extent of elite militarization. As a result, the quantity of empirical evidence undergirding the claim that the Russian state under Putin has become a “militocracy” is small, especially relative to the dominance of the concept in both Russian and American discourses about Russia. Moreover, the

estimates produced by these two research programs suffer from several threats to validity and/or meaningfulness.

This is the case because estimating the extent of elite militarization in Russia (or any country) requires the resolution of at least six conceptual and empirical issues: the “elite” needs to be thoughtfully defined and explicitly operationalized; the “force structures” need to be defined and their full complement enumerated; civilian employees of these agencies need to be differentiated from their military counterparts; a minimum length (or proportion) of one’s career necessary to qualify as a *silovik* should be established; a system for weighting the importance of various elite positions needs to be either justified or rejected; and any potential double-counting of individuals also needs to be either avoided or made explicit and justified. Existing research, however, deals with many of these issues with insufficient transparency and even less success.

What we *can* say, however, is that, whereas the presence of *siloviki* in the political elite has been widely reported in both scholarship and the media to have been 25% in 2002 and 42% in 2008, the most straightforward reading of existing data actually indicates that their percentage was approximately half of those amounts and then declined further during the Medvedev presidency. In addition, our analyses of a broader cross-section of the elite estimate military–security representation during Putin’s first two presidential terms to have been even lower still. Overall, whether one examines only Russian “officialdom” or a broader slice of influential members of Russian society, the correct inference to draw from extant data is that *perhaps Russia’s top political leadership came to be dominated by siloviki during the Putin presidency but its elite as a whole definitely did not.*

We can also assert with some confidence that military–security representation in the Russian elite increased over the course of Putin’s first two presidential terms. Nonetheless, it is equally clear that further research that eliminates as many of the aforementioned threats to validity as possible is sorely needed. Moreover, the need for such research is only magnified by Putin’s return to the presidency in 2012. Until such research is conducted – and until we possess both a clear theoretical understanding and well-developed empirical benchmarks of precisely what constitutes a militocracy – the scholarly and policy communities need to maintain a healthy degree of skepticism regarding whether Russia under Putin qualifies as such.

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## Notes

1. Email: [srivera@hamilton.edu](mailto:srivera@hamilton.edu).
2. Taylor (2007, vii) provides consensus definitions of both the power ministries and their employees as “those state agencies in which the personnel generally wear uniforms and in which some people carry guns. More precisely, these bodies are military, security, or law enforcement bodies that possess armed units or formations. People with power ministry backgrounds are referred to as *siloviki*.” In this regard, it is worth noting that, unlike in much of the rest of the world, Russia’s various intelligence services are thoroughly “militarized.” As Tsyppkin (2006, 74) writes, “Their personnel hold military ranks and are considered to be the equivalent of armed-services personnel, not civil servants.”
3. Other works advancing the same thesis include Baker and Glasser (2005) and Anderson (2006), which uses the term “FSB State”, Waller (2006), Bremmer and Charap (2006–2007), Shevtsova (2007, 100), Treisman (2007), Yasmann (2007), Åslund (2008), Felshinsky and Pribylovsky (2008), Schneider (2008), and Taylor (2011).
4. See also Illarionov (2009), Soldatov and Borogan (2010), Gudkov (2011), and Harding (2011, esp. chap. 1).
5. For other concurring assessments on this score, see Kryshantovskaya and White (2003, 303–304), Shevtsova (2007, 103), Kasparov (2007, 115), Pipes (2008), and Gessen (2012, 152–154, 259–260).
6. For concurring analyses, see Albats (2004), Bremmer and Charap (2006–2007, 89), and Taylor (2011, 62–64). Additional aspects of the worldview held by former KGB agents are discussed in Baker and Glasser (2005, chap. 13) and Kryshantovskaya (2008, 592–595).
7. See also Cameron and Orenstein (2012).
8. Critics of the militocracy paradigm are relatively few in number, but include the following: Bacon, Renz, and Cooper (2006), Renz (2006), Gaman-Golutvina (2008), Gomart (2008), and Huskey (2010).
9. In contrast, we will not seek to evaluate the proposition that *siloviki* possess, on average, a significantly more illiberal and anti-western worldview than do civilian elites. Moreover, while this proposition certainly deserves further research, it seems to us to be both reasonably intuitive and sufficiently supported by qualitative evidence to warrant its tentative acceptance.
10. In addition, at least two other scholars have engaged in elite analysis for other purposes. Specifically, Eugene Huskey has analyzed the professional backgrounds of 86 ranking members of the Russian government, and Joel Moses has compiled an original data set containing information on thousands of regional elites (see Moses 2008; Huskey 2010).
11. In addition to the two bodies of research produced by these research programs, three other studies quantify the prevalence of *siloviki* in top state positions. They are Gaffney, Gause, and Gorenburg (2007, 161–166), Roldugin (2007), and Schneider (2008). These studies are much less well known than are those by Kryshantovskaya and White and have not shaped the debate over militocracy to any appreciable extent. In addition, problems with their research procedures and/or the interpretation of their findings greatly reduce the usefulness of their results. For these reasons, these studies will not be scrutinized in this section, but we do examine them in detail in a



- supplementary appendix that can be accessed on Sharon Rivera's webpage (<http://academics.hamilton.edu/government/faculty/sharon-werning-rivera>).
12. A search in the Social Sciences Citation Index (Web of Science) conducted in March 2013 and utilizing the following parameters – title contains Russia or Putin; journal category equals political science; document type equals article or review; and publication years equal 2003–2013 – retrieved 1264 items, among which “Putin’s Militocracy” was the single most frequently cited. Moreover, a cited-reference search on this article revealed that interest in the article remained high during the Medvedev presidency. Specifically, of the 40 items in which it was cited during this 10-year span, 24 were published between 2004 and 2008 and 16 were published between 2009 and 2013.
  13. The source of these data is listed simply as follows: “Data collected by the Elites Department of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences.”
  14. Other examples include Karatnycky (2003), Bellaby (2004), Freedom House (2004, 2005, 2006), Reddaway et al. (2004), Baker and Glasser (2005, 8, 252), Anderson (2006, 239), “The Making of a Neo-KGB State: Russia under Putin” (*The Economist*, August 25, 2007), Cowell (2008, 168), van Zon (2008, 57), Harding (2011, 11), and Mendras (2012, 251). For Russian examples, see Zudin (2004) and Kostikov (2005).
  15. Timoshenko references an unnamed study by Kryshtanovskaya.
  16. This seemingly erroneous figure also appears in a previous article by Kryshtanovskaya, in which she states: “By February 2008 [military people] already accounted for 42 per cent of the federal elite” (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 595). In addition, the 42% figure is reproduced in, among other places, Felshtinsky and Pribylovsky (2008, 199), Harding (2011, 11), and White (2011, 328–329).
  17. It is also worth noting that Kryshtanovskaya has reported even lower numbers in 2011. When asked in an interview (Polunin 2011) how the Russian elite had changed after 3 years of rule by President Medvedev, she replied: “The quantity of *siloviki* has decreased. When Medvedev came to power, their numbers had reached 47%. Now that figure is 22%, which represents approximately 1,080 people.” It should be stressed, however, that the large number of *siloviki* referenced by Kryshtanovskaya means that these percentages refer to a different elite population than is used in both “Putin’s Militocracy” and “The Sovietization of Russian Politics.”
  18. The Center for Political Information has not published any editions since 2006.
  19. Specifically, Kryshtanovskaya and White (2009, Table 5) report that their *N*’s consisted of 707 individuals in 1993, 797 in 2002, and 825 in 2008.
  20. See especially Treisman (2007). Kryshtanovskaya and White’s various articles as well frequently discuss the influx of *siloviki* into corporate boardrooms. On this subject, see especially Kryshtanovskaya and White (2011, 33–34).
  21. We should have added that we also included all of the predecessors to these organizations (such as the KGB). In addition, it should be noted that we now utilize a slightly expanded set of force structures as the basis for identifying *siloviki*.
  22. On this point, see also Renz (2006, 916–917).
  23. Kryshtanovskaya and White utilize the same aggregation technique in previous work as well. See Tables 1 and 4 of Kryshtanovskaya and White (2002). In that article, the statistics being computed are the average age of the Brezhnev, Gorbachev, Yel’tsin, and Putin generations and the percentage of federal officials with a *nomenklatura* background.
  24. Referencing “Putin’s Militocracy” in a footnote, she writes: “Under Putin . . . it was increasingly the *siloviki* who came into these top state positions. Indeed every fourth member of the establishment was a *silovik*” (Kryshtanovskaya 2008, 594).
  25. Moreover, without providing any substantive refutation of our critique, in Note 9 they even assert that “[i]n our judgment, no convincing evidence has yet been presented to suggest that our original statement of the numbers, distribution, and influence of the *siloviki* was seriously in error” (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009).

26. The percentages of *siloviki* in and the sizes of the five state sectors are reported in Kryshnanovskaya and White (2009, Tables 2 and 6, 301).
27. Kryshnanovskaya and White (2009, 296) themselves note that many government ministers “overlap substantially with the membership of the Security Council.” Moreover, they also observe that the overlapping ministries include “defense, foreign affairs, internal affairs, emergency situations, and justice.”
28. Kryshnanovskaya and White (2009, 301) write that “the Russian political elite as we define it [at the end of the Putin presidency] consisted of 825 individuals” and then proceed to list the sizes of the familiar five elite sectors. Because these sizes actually sum, as we noted above, to 847, we infer that 22 individuals are double-counted in the 2008 elite cohort.
29. This figure of “nearly 50 percent” is cited in Silitski (2009) and Mendras (2012, 251).
30. Kryshnanovskaya and White (2009, 300) briefly discuss “covert *siloviki*.”
31. Of course, the relatively high level of military–security representation that we find in 1999 represents an even more noteworthy finding. However, we are currently reluctant to attach a high degree of significance to that finding for two reasons: (1) it is our only Yel’ tsin-era data point and (2) as we discussed above, our yearly samples of “societal elites” are highly heterogeneous groupings consisting of between 879 and 1596 individuals. Moreover, the positions represented in these samples may have changed over time in ways that we do not fully understand.
32. We calculated this figure as follows. Because Kryshnanovskaya and White do not report either the percentages of *siloviki* among the governors, Duma deputies, or senators or the sizes of any of their elite subgroups in 2009, we assumed that both these percentages and sizes remained unchanged from 2008. Hence, according to the information that they do provide, 51% of 39 members of the national leadership were *siloviki*, which equates to 20 individuals; 36% of 86 members of the government were *siloviki*, or 31 individuals; 21% of 86 governors were *siloviki*, or 18 individuals; 17% of 186 members of the Federation Council were *siloviki*, or approximately 32 individuals; and 14% of the 450 members of the Duma were *siloviki*, or approximately 63 individuals. These numbers sum to 164 *siloviki* out of an elite consisting of 847 positions, which equals 19.4%. In addition, as was discussed above, Helge Blakkisrud’s findings strongly suggest that somewhat less than 18 governors were actually *siloviki*.
33. It should be noted that the author does not provide any details regarding how he arrived at this conclusion. For expressions of the same conclusion, however, see “All the Russian President’s Men No Longer ‘Siloviki’,” ITAR-TASS, 18 February 2009, as carried on *Johnson’s Russia List* #35, 19 February 2009; and Vladimir Frolov, “Russia Profile Weekly Experts Panel: Medvedev’s Golden Hundred,” 27 February 2009, available at [www.russiaprofile.org](http://www.russiaprofile.org) (accessed on 3 January 2011).

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