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Author(s): Romashko, Tatiana

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Corresponding Author	Family Name Romashko Particle Given Name Tatiana Suffix Organization University of Jyväskylä Address Jyväskylä, Finland
Abstract	<p>The chapter discusses different frameworks of knowledge production within the discourses and practices of Russian cultural policy. Russian cultural policy as an administrative sector has been developed in line with two distinctive governmental regimes, more precisely during the period of liberal decentralisation of the 1990s and the conservative centralisation from 2011 up until today. The study focuses on the main changes that have occurred in the framework of policy design and participation in policymaking.</p> <p>An attempt is made to combine Foucauldian analytical frameworks of power and discourse with a Gramscian hegemonic approach to political studies that was mainly advocated by the Essex scholars—Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, and David Howarth. Such a perspective opens up a possibility of considering the institutional rearrangements of intellectual leadership through which the post-2012 establishment has endeavoured to advance its sovereignty and planning capacities in both the symbolic and the normative dimensions of culture. Thus examined, Russian state cultural policy turns out to be intrinsically subordinated to the sovereignty of the presidential apparatus that privileges the conservative stance of the ‘Russian World’ project and neglects human rights and cultural diversity.</p> <p>The research is based on a wide selection of national strategies and drafts of federal laws on culture.</p>
Keywords (separated by ‘-’)	Russia - Cultural policy discourses - Hegemonic approach - Intellectual leadership - Sovereign power - Laclau and Mouffe - Foucault

Chapter 8 1

Production of Cultural Policy in Russia: 2

Authority and Intellectual Leadership 3

Tatiana Romashko 4

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T. Romashko (✉)
University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

26 8.1 Introduction

27 Back in 2004, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine¹ became a kick-off for the first
 28 steps made by the Russian establishment towards consolidation of power within the
 29 Administration of the President of the Russian Federation (AP) and mobilisation of
 30 anti-Western rhetoric through a set of Kremlin-affiliated think-tanks. The antago-
 31 nistic features of Putin's political project demonstrate its hegemonic character.
 32 Various researches have described the corresponding discursive practices of the
 33 Kremlin in many ways, e.g. as 'Putin's vertical of power' or 'federalism and
 34 electoral authoritarianism' (Ross 2015); 'supranationalism' or 'cultural and economic regionalism' (Kazharski 2019); and the 'Russian World project' (Suslov 2018). Nonetheless, a noticeable political and cultural turn towards conservatism occurred in the Russian Federation after the crisis of Putin's legitimacy in 2011–2013 (Ross 2015; Robinson 2017). Initially, thousands of metropolitan citizens took to the streets to protest against the unfair 2011 State Duma elections, and, later, massive peaceful anti-Putin protests shook the whole country in 2012–2015.

41 A literature overview (Gel'man 2015; Gudkov 2015; Bogush 2017) shows that
 42 the Russian establishment did not expect a chain reaction in the non-systemic
 43 opposition and, thus, took urgent measures. Primarily, the ideological shift in the
 44 post-2012 Kremlin's thinking sparked numerous changes in Russian legislation,
 45 which, in general, might be characterized as a 'state against civil society' confronta-
 46 tion (Ross 2015). Various restrictive federal and local laws led to a narrowing of
 47 the political space available for the non-systemic opposition, along with an institu-
 48 tional transformation of state governance as such. Additionally, such a squeeze on
 49 constitutional freedoms was accompanied by empowerment of both the repressive
 50 apparatus and the Kremlin-affiliated think-tanks (including the Russian Orthodox
 51 Church) in the promotion and preservation of traditional values, spiritual bonds,
 52 social stability and state sovereignty (Kalinin 2015; Grishaeva 2015; Yatsyk 2019).
 53 Within this context, Russian cultural policy became part of the national security
 54 strategy protecting 'traditional values and norms, traditions, and customs and pat-
 55 terns of behaviour of the Russian civilisation' (President of the Russian Federation
 56 2014). According to the Presidential Decree № 808 (2004), 'culture' has been
 57 defined as 'a set of formal and informal institutions, phenomena and factors influenc-
 58 ing the conservation, production, transmission and dissemination of spiritual
 59 values'. And ultimately, 'culture' has been turned into 'the guarantor of the preser-
 60 vation of the common cultural space and territorial integrity' of the country (Russian
 61 Government 2016).

62 Nevertheless, the post-2012 Russian state is neither totalitarian nor democratic. It
 63 is a 'hybrid regime', which simulates democratic institutions such as the Parliament
 64 but relies on 'repressive legislation inspired by the Presidential Administration'

¹See 'Strategy of National Security of the Russian Federation' for an interpretation of the Ukrainian case as an 'anti-constitutional coup' supported by the United States and the EU (Russian President 2015).

AU1

AU2

(Noble and Schulmann 2018, 50). Following this course of thought, the chapter addresses a pivotal moment in Russian cultural policy development by examining the institutional background behind the conservative turn. A few critical studies show that today's Russian cultural policy tends to have features that differ from what the cultural policy supposedly was before. These are mainly associated with an 'instrumentalisation of culture' in an attempt to (1) legitimise the federal government (Turoma et al. 2018, 651), (2) establish 'cultural borders between Russia and the EU countries' and (3) reduce 'Russian society to a single national identity' (Romashko 2018, 90). In contrast, the mainstream national cultural policy discourse encourages conservative statements about the 'Russian distinctive path', 'Russian World civilisation' and 'Orthodox values' (Ministry of Culture 2015). In this vein, top Russian academics insist on the appropriateness of the new 'model of state cultural policy' (Vostryakov and Turgaev 2018), where the 'political will' comes from the president and his administrative apparatuses (see Gudima 2014; Turgaev et al. 2017).

Taking into account these existing contradictions, the chapter endeavours to explain the paradox of the novel framework of Russian *state* cultural policy and its post-2012 transformation. It is done through an analysis of the current political and legislative context, which is understood as an ensemble of power relations. The main research question is how the institutional conditions of the hegemonic conservative project affected the cultural policy framework in post-2012 Russia. In answering it, I pay special attention to the complexity of the relations between governmental rationalities and administrative techniques, as well as legislative proposals and institutions, which altogether constitute a specific governmental logic of cultural policymaking. In particular, I examine to what extent the sovereign power of the presidential apparatus² has embodied intellectual leadership and replaced network forms of governance in cultural policy.

Drawing on ideas from post-foundational political science and cultural theory (Gramsci 2000; Foucault 1969; Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000), I explore Russian cultural policy frameworks in terms of different governmental logics, ways of production and forms of intellectual leadership. In doing so, I scrutinise the recent legislative amendments on culture and the political discourses around them. The aim is to show the actual power relations and political decisions behind the empowerment of the Presidential Council for Culture and Art, PCCA (1996–2018), and the abrupt dissolution of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research, RICR (1986–2014), which for many years had played a leading role in cultural policy development. Thus, the research focuses on the dynamics of parliamentary lawmaking activity in the cultural sector and the political debates around it over the period from 2007 to 2018. Special attention is devoted to the analysis of

²It consists of the (1) Administration of the President of the Russian Federation (AP) and its profile departments; (2) members of the 'United Russia' party who hold (2.1.) leading positions in Kremlin-affiliated foundations and think-tanks; (2.2) the position of the Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the State Duma (since 2018) and those of other committees in the Parliament; and (3) the highest positions in the Russian Government, which are appointed by the President of the Russian Federation.

103 routine procedures of the RICR and PCCA and executive-legislative activities of the
104 lower (the State Duma) and higher (the Federal Council) chambers of the Russian
105 Parliament.

106 The chapter starts with a discussion on the post-Soviet cultural policy framework,
107 addressing its legal system and political struggle for intellectual leadership. After
108 that, I will explain the post-2012 mode of Russian state cultural policy and reveal its
109 institutional background. Before doing so, I outline the methodological background
110 of the study.

111 **8.2 Hegemony, Intellectual Leadership, and Power in** 112 **Russian Cultural Policy**

113 Originally, Gramsci (2000, 249) defined ‘hegemony’ as an ensemble of ‘domina-
114 tion’ and ‘intellectual and moral leadership’, which is a precondition for the political
115 authority of a supreme social group. Proposing a non-essentialist notion of ‘hege-
116 monic subjects’, which Gramsci saw as the ‘fundamental classes’, Laclau and
117 Mouffe (2001, 138) developed a post-Marxist theory of hegemony. They used the
118 term to designate ‘a political type of relations’ that is incompatible with ‘relations of
119 subordination or power’ because ‘a hegemonic articulation’ requires the ‘presence of
120 antagonistic forces and the instability of the frontiers which separate them’ (Laclau
121 and Mouffe 2001, 138). Their discourse theory emphasises ‘a logic of equivalence’
122 that explains how a specific constellation of ‘nodal points’ becomes a privileged
123 signifier through converting ‘elements’ of heterogeneous discursive practices into
124 ‘moments’ of a discursive formation (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 114). As a result,
125 Laclau and Mouffe tend to focus more on the symbolic dimension of hegemony and
126 do not take into account the mutual interplay of power and discourse, which is a
127 matter of importance in political studies.

128 For the purposes of political analysis, Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000, 5) state
129 that they ‘take discourse or discourses to refer to systems of meaningful practices
130 that form the identities of subjects and objects’. Further, they deduce that ‘moments’
131 of discourse are the ‘differential positions’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, 5) that
132 are visible at the political level due to their incorporation by the hegemonic forces,
133 e.g. moral, intellectual, political and economic forces. Meanwhile, elements are
134 those differences that exist in the complex discursive field, but their ‘articulatory
135 practices’ and ‘subject positions’ lack a political will, and as a result, they do not
136 obtain a higher degree of mediation, reproduction and dissemination within the
137 ‘hegemonic formation’ (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 136). In this respect, the
138 Gramscian notion of *moral and intellectual leadership* might be interpreted as an
139 ensemble of subject positions located within the *dominant* or *politically recognised*
140 *discursive formation*, which is involved in policy formulation. Since intellectual
141 leadership assumes both *authority* and *expert knowledge*, it articulates meaningful
142 systems, identities and values that in a modern state support legal reasoning and
143 political goals. Yet, neither Gramsci nor Laclau and Mouffe have much to say about

the institutionalisation of a particular intellectual leadership and what kind of power 144
 pillars its subject positions. Moving beyond the most abstract comprehension 145
 of hegemony, this chapter seeks to extend the scope of the problem to different 146
 forms of power that might be mapped into a political logic of difference and a logic 147
 of equivalence. This is done in line with Laclau and Mouffe's observation 'that the 148
 logic of equivalence is a logic of the simplification of political space, while the logic 149
 of difference is a logic of its expansion and increasing complexity' (2001, 130). 150

A Foucauldian perspective on power and discourse can help to overcome this 151
 methodological challenge. Referring to Foucault's writings (1969, 1975), one may 152
 say that power operates not only from outside the discourse, investing a political will 153
 in the institutionalisation of a specific alliance of intellectual forces and constituting 154
 their discursive formations. But power is also exercised through the articulatory 155
 practices or discursive regularities of intellectual leadership. It follows that intellec- 156
 tual leadership might be endowed with authority either (1) by political forms of 157
 domination compatible with a democratic regime, which allows for the existence of 158
 political differences in collaborative governance; or (2) by the sovereign power of a 159
 particular institute or a supreme leader, which is typical for hybrid or authoritarian 160
 regimes with a centralised government. Apart from this, institutions of intellectual 161
 leadership themselves accumulate political features. This is due to the fact that they 162
 enunciate 'rules for the formation of objects, modalities of statements, concepts and 163
 theoretical choices' (Foucault 1969, 72). Therefore, those institutional entities that 164
 perform leading roles are capable of orchestrating a group of statements, norms of 165
 verification, critique and coherence, which a priori excludes certain possibilities, 166
 constructing lines of inclusion and exclusion within its sphere of competence. This 167
 kind of thinking is particularly relevant when considering the Russian case, because, 168
 on the one hand, as an *analytical category*, *intellectual leadership* carries political 169
 recognition or authority. On the other hand, as a *political category*, it reveals the 170
 struggle for domination among intellectual forces. 171

In this respect, a set of 'differential positions' (i.e. experts, opinion leaders and top 172
 officials of the cultural sector) located within the Presidential Council for Culture 173
 and Art³ can be regarded as a coalition of Kremlin-elitist intellectual forces, which in 174
 exchange for privileges and economic rent authorise the 'power bloc' to speak out on 175
 behalf of the nation. An important fact is that, before 2012, this body was in charge 176
 of a limited number of functions, which were mainly related to the management of 177
 the national and presidential 'award in the field of literature and art'. Meanwhile, the 178
 political will and driving forces of cultural policy development resided dispersed 179
 within a network of different institutions of cultural policy, i.e. profile committees in 180
 regional governments and the Parliament, cultural and research agencies, independ- 181
 ent think-tanks, and professional and academic units. 182

³Allegedly, this 'consultative body, established to inform the president of the situation in culture and the arts, coordinates his contacts with cultural and artistic organisations and members of culture and arts communities, as well as prepares draft proposals on topical issues concerning state policy in culture and the arts' (Kremlin 2001).

183 However, on the threshold of the 2014 National Year of Culture, Putin suggested
 184 that the honourable members of the Presidential Council for Culture and Art should
 185 ‘formulate the central, basic objectives of the state cultural policy’ (Kremlin 2013).
 186 Ironically, this initiative resulted in a public scandal. In April 2014, a ministerial
 187 document on the ‘principles of state cultural policy’,⁴ which mainly consisted of
 188 Putin’s quotations and instructions, caused public discontent. Quite a few aca-
 189 demics⁵ and research centres (e.g. the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Acad-
 190 emy of Science, https://iphras.ru/cult_polit.htm) were against radical statements
 191 proposed in the document, such as ‘Russia is not Europe’ (for more, see Gudima
 192 2014, 44; Moroz 2016). This was a pivotal moment since, in order to resolve the
 193 situation, President Putin authorised his Council for Culture and Art to take intel-
 194 lectual leadership in cultural policy formulation. Later on in 2014–2016, proceeding
 195 in the same way, the president expanded the privileges of his ‘consultative body’ to
 196 legislative activity, bypassing parliamentary discussions and political representation.
 197 One may say that the redistribution of intellectual leadership has occurred through
 198 institutional alterations caused by the reinforcement of the sovereign power coming
 199 from the Presidential Administration. Thus, I argue that after 2012 the presidential
 200 apparatus has gradually established a monopoly on political and legislative initia-
 201 tives in cultural policy through rearrangements of institutional apparatuses and
 202 consolidation of intellectual and moral leadership⁶ within the Presidential Council
 203 for Culture and Art. In particular, it is important to stress that the shift from the logic
 204 of differences to the logic of equivalences in cultural policy has occurred in the
 205 context of the post-2012 institutional transformation, within which it became part of
 206 the hegemonic political project. Hence, to provide evidence for the above claim, the
 207 next section will examine several aspects of this institutional transformation of the
 208 cultural policy framework. Before that, I will briefly introduce its legislative back-
 209 ground, which originates from the early 1990s.

210 ***8.2.1 The Post-Soviet Legislative Framework of Cultural*** 211 ***Policy***

212 Essentially, cultural policy in the Russian Federation is ruled by laws. These include
 213 (1) the fundamental federal law on culture (1992); (2) a set of nationwide sectoral
 214 laws; and (3) a number of regional legislations on cultural policy in 59 out of the

⁴The Ministry of Culture outlined the ‘foundations of state cultural policy’ (Izvetia 2014).

⁵See the special issue on cultural policy in the *Iskusstvo* journal (<http://iskusstvo-info.ru/issues/kulturnaya-politika/>)

⁶To address the institutional level of the problem, I understand the assemblage of different institutional entities of the civil society (i.e. research, academic, cultural, analytical and political actors) as an alliance of intellectual forces that struggle for intellectual leadership in policy production.

85 regions of the Russian Federation, which assume a local aspect of cultural development. In addition, ‘many relationships in the sphere of culture are regulated by the Civil, Labour, Budget, Tax, Land and Urban Planning Codes of the Russian Federation’ and other federal laws related to education, informational security and mass communications (Ministry of Culture 2014, 240). To become a law, all legislative initiatives must first pass three stages of parliamentary readings (i.e. be accepted twice by the Duma and by the Federal Council), then, be adopted by the Russian Government and, finally, be approved by the President of the Russian Federation. According to the Russian Constitution (1993, 104), the president of the state, Duma deputies, members of the Government, the Ministries of Culture and the Constitutional and the Supreme Arbitration Court all have equal authority to submit bills to the State Duma.

An initial normative framework of cultural policy was established by the first federal law ‘Fundamentals of Russian Legislation on Culture’, FRLC (Russian Supreme Council 1992). It prescribed the common reciprocal relationships between the state and other actors of the cultural sphere based on the principles of cultural and economic freedom.⁷ These relationships were limited to four main targets that the law intended to tackle. In particular, it aimed (1) to ‘protect the constitutional rights of Russian citizens to cultural activity’; (2) to create legal guarantees for free cultural activity and associations’; and to define (3) ‘legal norms for relations between subjects of cultural activity’; and (4) ‘principles of state cultural policy, legal norms of state support and guarantees of non-interference into creative processes’ (Russian Supreme Council 1992: article 2). According to the FRLC, the key instruments of state cultural policy were four-year federal ‘target’ programmes of cultural development, government subsidies and tax benefits for the third sector and all cultural activities. However, many empirical studies (Kostina and Gudima 2007; Karpova 2009) have highlighted that the Russian Government repeatedly reduced the allocated budget for all ‘target’ programmes by half due to the budget cuts coming from the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, such a policy toolkit provided little opportunities for the diversification of local policies. The target programmes approved by the Russian Government were mainly oriented to support the state-run cultural sector and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the general recentralisation of governance that occurred within the 2004 administrative reform and a range of related centralising laws⁸ practically cancelled the previously announced social

⁷To be precise, Article 11 of the FRLC (1992), states that ‘[e]veryone has the right to a free choice of moral, aesthetic and other values, [...] to the state’s protection of cultural identity’. In addition, Article 46 outlines the economic freedom of ‘cultural organisations’, which have an unrestricted right ‘to obtain gratuitous donations (grants, subsidies) from Russian and foreign legal entities and individuals, and international organisations’.

⁸The Federal Laws № 122 (2004) and № 94 (2005), and numerous amendments to the legislation on non-governmental organisations in 2006–2007, which aimed at increasing control over the public and third sectors as well as combating corruption, in fact, led to the elimination of the economic freedom of state-run cultural organisations (Russian Government 1996, 2004, 2005a).

249 guarantees and tax exemptions for cultural activity and the third sector (see Gudima
250 2014; Robertson 2009).

AU3

251 Nevertheless, the 1992 basic law on culture allowed the introduction of unprec-
252 edented democratisation and participation in policymaking, which progressed in line
253 with post-Soviet decentralisation. First, the ideological content of culture was not
254 limited to a particular, single idea imposed by the central government or declared in a
255 law of high jurisdiction. In this respect, all regional authorities and republics had a
256 right to develop their own 'programmes of cultural protection and development',
257 sourcing intellectual leadership from numerous schools of thinking and professional
258 units. Secondly, Article 28 of the 1992 FRLC proclaims that 'the state provides an
259 opportunity for organisations that represent creative workers to participate in policy
260 formulation'.

261 In theory, this mechanism of policy formulation assumed joint work between
262 various experts or groups of interest and local governmental bodies (i.e. committees
263 of the Federal Council, the State and regional Dumas as well as the Ministries of
264 Culture). They were supposed to take into account the demands and needs of social
265 or professional groups and formulate decisions at the municipal level. Then, if
266 successfully argued for on the regional Duma's floor, such a political statement
267 might become the subject of federal legislative activity and be put forward in the
268 State Duma by political representatives or members of legislative branches.

269 On the whole, the basic post-Soviet legislation on culture clearly stipulated the
270 introduction of political differences and a kind of network governance in the cultural
271 sector. Nevertheless, the continuous process of legislative activities always implied
272 an antagonism of two forces. On the one hand, the conservative forces of the Russian
273 Government have intended to regulate, operate and maintain those cultural domains
274 that are subordinated to the state apparatuses (i.e. Ministries of Culture) through
275 financial and administrative control. On the other hand, the liberal forces dispersed
276 across miscellaneous actors of the civil society have striven to expand the scope of
277 legislation in terms of equality, social security and labour and economic rights for all
278 actors in the art and cultural sphere irrespective of their affiliation with the state. The
279 next sections describe two discursive formations of Russian cultural policy that were
280 shaped by the liberal and conservative forces during their intellectual leadership.

281 8.2.2 *The Fate of Cultural Governance in Putin's Russia*

282 An analysis of the recent legislative initiatives (2007–2018) to change the basic law
283 on culture (1992) and the political debates around it makes it possible to detect two
284 ensembles of social relations, within which the conservative and liberal forces have
285 exercised intellectual leadership within a particular regime of power relations. In
286 practice, Russian cultural policy has developed in two major directions. Driven by
287 competing assemblages of intellectual forces, its framework has evolved as (1) a
288 political dimension of democratic debates and bottom-up initiatives and (2) admin-
289 istrative-regulative practices of the central government. The latter has eventually

transformed into a Kremlin-run mechanism of rent distribution among loyal elites 290
and, thereby, has entailed the relocation of the political will from the Parliament to 291
the Presidential Administration. 292

This section examines the evolving network form of governance in cultural policy 293
that was compatible with the post-Soviet political logic of difference. According to 294
the results of my previous analysis (Romashko 2019), the process of decentralisation 295
and regionalisation of post-Soviet cultural policy was mainly associated with the 296
democratic project of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research. Under the leader- 297
ship of Kirill Razlogov, this think-tank was a kind of pioneer in building mutual 298
relationships between legislative authorities and non-governmental actors in society 299
(see Razlogov and Butenko 2000). 300

In close cooperation with the State Duma, the federal and regional⁹ Ministries of 301
Culture and the European Council, the RICR had regularly initiated meetings and 302
collaborative projects with local communities, professionals and scholars in order to 303
make their side of the story heard at the political level. Throughout 1990–2012, this 304
cluster of discursive practices was composed of a broad network of different 305
association, unions, agencies and NGOs. They actively participated in cultural 306
policy formulation by providing (1) relevant background for political argumentation 307
and legal reasoning; (2) reliable evidence of the actual execution of laws and state 308
guarantees; and (3) expertise on legislative initiatives (Fedorova and Kochelyaeva 309
2013). Typically, a large part of these bottom-up legislative proposals aimed to resist 310
the ongoing limitation of rights, freedoms and social security in the cultural sector 311
through the gradual budget squeeze and security policies of the mid-2000s, which 312
were mentioned above in the previous section. Consequently, through a mechanism 313
of political representation, this discursive formation succeeded in encompassing and 314
orchestrating standard procedures and techniques of cultural policymaking, which 315
ultimately constituted a domain of normativity and participation for various actors of 316
the sector. 317

In April 2010, during the so-called ‘Medvedev’s modernisation government’ 318
(7 May 2008–7 May 2012), Kirill Razlogov, backed by the Duma’s Committee on 319
Culture, took a political moment to challenge the Parliament. He claimed that 320
cultural activity in Russia desperately needed a legal framework that would 321
strengthen the protection of the constitutional rights and freedoms of all actors in 322
the cultural sphere, including consumers and freelance creative labourers. He 323
stressed three main problem areas (1) controversial issues related to the central 324
government’s attempt to ‘regulate’ and ‘manage’ the culture, ‘beliefs, customs and 325
traditions of people’; (2) a problem with the recognition of cultural diversity in 326
Russia; and (3) difficulties with accepting the synthesis of cultural and human rights 327
(Razlogov 2011: 36). As Razlogov stated, ‘[i]n our country, this problem is partic- 328
ularly acute, since, as you know, there are influential people who believe that the 329
very concept of human rights is not applicable in our culture and our tradition, that 330

⁹For example, the Ministry of Art and Cultural Policy of the Ulyanovsk Region, Omskaya Oblast’, the Republic of Karelia, etc.

331 we have other ideas about human rights’ (Razlogov 2011, 37). At the end of his
 332 speech, he also concluded that the ‘key problem’ in Russia is ‘the problem of
 333 recognizing the plurality of cultures, the problem of respect for another culture, the
 334 problem of its understanding. . . So, all *these differences*, they are *the very cultural*
 335 *life* that saturates all societies’ (Razlogov 2011: 37–38, emphasis added). In
 336 November 2011, the first draft of the federal law ‘on culture in the Russian
 337 Federation’ was submitted to the State Duma. In line with the above-mentioned
 338 ideas, the law expressed consolidated bottom-up voices from regions and political
 339 demands of cultural labourers. It declared a considerably broader understanding of
 340 culture, in the sense that all forms of folk culture, art and creativity should be equally
 341 recognised as cultural activities that deserve support and protection (Institute of
 342 Economics and Social Policy 2011). The intention was to change the existing
 343 mechanism of state support¹⁰ for culture through an economic and administrative
 344 liberalisation of the cultural sector.

345 An analysis of the primary considerations, reviews and comments on the draft
 346 (2011–2015), carried out and provided by several committees of the State Duma as
 347 well as regional Ministries of Culture and expert groups, shows that all actors
 348 accepted the concept of the law and its draft positively. Nevertheless, this legislative
 349 initiative failed to go through the first readings due to formal comments to the draft
 350 and a negative review from Vladislav Surkov, who was in charge of Putin’s
 351 administration at the time (Russian Government 2011). Several academics who
 352 were involved in this legislative process admitted that there was ‘no state’s will to
 353 adopt it’, since the Ministry of Culture indicated that ‘the proposed legislation could
 354 be considered only after the adoption of the “Principles of State Cultural Policy
 355 (PSCP)”’ (Gudima 2014, 41). Ultimately, in April 2018, the State Duma decided to
 356 reject the bill because:

357 According to the results of the Presidential Council for Culture and Art’s meeting held on
 358 21 December 2017, President Vladimir Putin instructed the Presidential Administration of
 359 the Russian Federation, in collaboration with the Presidential Council for Culture and Art, to
 360 develop and present the concepts of the draft federal laws ‘on culture’ and on amendments to
 361 certain legislative acts in connection with the adoption of the federal law ‘on culture’ and,
 362 consequently, to ensure the development of these federal laws. Ultimately, *the draft federal*
 363 *law developed in accordance with the instructions of the President* of the Russian Federation
 364 *might happen to differ from* the draft law under consideration [the 2015 draft of the federal
 365 law ‘on culture’], which, in the opinion of the Committee on Culture [of the State Duma], *is*
 366 *unacceptable*. (State Dumas Committee of Culture 2018; translated from Russian by the
 367 author, stress is added).

368 The extract above clearly demonstrates that in 2018 the authority of the presidential
 369 apparatus overrode the constitutional framework of cultural policymaking, or to put

¹⁰The FRLC (1992) was significantly limited by the Federal Law № 122 ‘concerning the common principles of the organisation of local government in the Russian Federation’ (2004), which abolished Article 45, which was related to social security and assignments of cultural labour; Articles 27 and 28 on the status of creative workers and professional units; Article 53 on the interaction between cultural institutions and other enterprises etc. For more, see the latest edition of the FRLC (1992). Consultant. http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_1870/

it differently, the sovereign power of the Presidential Administration took over the role of the Parliament in cultural policy formulation. Thus, in order to understand the actual power relations behind the suspension of this legislative initiative, we should examine the genealogy of Kremlin-driven cultural policy—the nature and origins of its intellectual leadership—and the moment when it became hegemonic.

8.3 Consolidation of Intellectual Forces within the Kremlin's Russian World

During the second period of his presidency (2004–2007), Vladimir Putin appeared increasingly often in academic circles, round tables and forums of the most prominent intellectuals across the country. In these meetings, the Russian president expressed profound concern regarding the mission of culture, which in his own words is ‘to make *“the people out of a mere population”*’ (Putin 2006). Through this, the Kremlin designated culture as a terrain where a constitution of a new political agent—the people of the *Russian civilisation*—out of the *demos* has occurred. Expressing similar sentiments, Vladislav Surkov,¹¹ Vyacheslav Nikonov¹² and other influential figures of the AP, as well as numerous pro-Kremlin think-tanks and foundations,¹³ have extensively succeeded in constituting a set of subject positions within the discursive formation of the ‘Russian World’ project. On the one hand, it has encompassed a number of administrative operations of money and power redistribution among Kremlin-affiliated entities and projects.¹⁴ On the other hand, its symbolic dimension has expanded considerably at the expense of unlimited and unoccupied elements of the discursive field, which have regularly been converted into moments of the antagonistic and therefore hegemonic discourse of the establishment.

Initially, Surkov (2006) proposed a political process of ‘nationalisation of the future’ through the use of Russian ‘culture as an organism of meaning formation and ideological influence’. Later, in his 2007 Address to the Federal Assembly, Putin defined the ‘state sovereignty’ of Russia through its ‘cultural and spiritual distinctiveness’ (*samobytnost*) (Putin 2007). Further, followed by a round of applause, the president firmly stated that Russian is ‘a true language of international communication’ and should be ‘popularised to secure a living space for the multimillion

¹¹A former Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration.

¹²A member of the Public Chamber of Russia.

¹³Such as the ‘Unity for Russia Foundation’ (<http://www.fondedin.ru/o-fonde.html>), ‘Russian Social and Political Centre’ foundation (<http://www.rppc.ru/>), non-profit foundation ‘Policy’ (<http://www.polity.ru/>), discussion club ‘Valdai’ (<http://ru.valdaiclub.com/>) and ‘Russian World Foundation’ (<https://www.ruskiymir.ru/>)

¹⁴For instance, the Russian World Foundation was established by Putin in 2007 (Russian President 2007).

401 “Russian World”, which, of course, is much broader than Russia itself’ (Putin 2007).
402 In fact, a range of Kremlin statements rearticulated Shchedrovitskii’s original con-
403 ceptual framework of the ‘Russian World’ into a meaningful system of proto-
404 conservative ideas, where ‘sovereign democracy’ (Surkov 2006) was politically
405 linked to national culture, protectionist policies and state intervention in the cultural
406 life of the population (for more, see Suslov 2018).

407 Finally, the Russian World narrative validated a specific set of Kremlin practices
408 of intervention in the cultural terrain. It both affected the former instruments of
409 cultural policy and generated a parallel toolkit of rent redistribution among subjects
410 of the Russian World who performed the Kremlin’s priorities and initiatives. For
411 instance, the federal target programme ‘Russian language (2006–2010)’ was
412 launched ‘in order to strengthen the statehood, national security and prestige of the
413 Russian Federation’ (Russian Government 2005b). Federal targeted programmes
414 were supplemented by a set of Kremlin initiatives, such as annual celebrations of the
415 national thematic year or presidential grants in the sphere of culture. For example,
416 during the 2007 ‘Year of Russian Language’ (Russian President 2006), numerous
417 international and national ‘events in the field of culture, science and education’
418 obtained federal financial assistance to deliver the political objectives of the Krem-
419 lin. Moreover, many state-affiliated NGOs and think-tanks were set up to implement
420 a protectionist range of tasks to promote the Russian language and Russian national
421 culture in accordance with Putin’s message (Suslov 2018; Yatsyk 2019).

422 As a result, moments of the Kremlin’s discourse on national identity became
423 institutionalised into a meaningful system of governmental practices of the ‘Russian
424 World’. During the mid-2000s, the Russian World project spread via federal targeted
425 programmes, institutions and policies. On the one hand, this intervention in the
426 cultural domain was sufficient for the Kremlin to consolidate loyal intellectual
427 forces. This way, the AP secured authority to speak on behalf of ‘the people’ after
428 the 2012 crisis of Putin’s legitimacy. On the other hand, after 2014 the ‘Russian
429 World’ was rearticulated within a conservative political idea of ‘sovereign democ-
430 racy’, which enunciated ‘Russia’s stance vis-à-vis the liberal democracies’ (Suslov
431 2018, 9).

432 **8.4 Closing Remarks on the Institutionalisation of State** 433 **Cultural Policy**

434 An institutional transformation of Russian cultural policy began in 2013. That year,
435 the newly appointed Ministry of Culture rejected a national report on culture, which
436 had been prepared by a team of experts in cooperation with several regional
437 ministries and already endorsed by the European Council. In relation to this issue,
438 Kirill Razlogov, one of the editors of this volume, noted that officials wanted him to
439 ‘improve’ the final version of the text in line with Putin’s quotations from the 2012
440 Valdai Club (Razlogov 2014a). Razlogov refused to comply with these instructions.

In response, the bureaucratic apparatus of the Ministry of Culture and the Russian Government were appointed to prepare and approve the national report on culture (Russian Government 2013). Thereby, the central government consolidated its supervision over the input and output of cultural policy all at once, which completely changed its framework in terms of procedures and methods of scientific research. Instead of providing an unbiased review of the real state of things in the cultural sphere and identifying its problem areas, all ‘state reports on the state of culture in the Russian Federation’¹⁵ celebrate the best practices of the ‘Russian World project’ and Putin’s personal involvement in the formulation of cultural policy priorities. Thus, since 2013, each national report on culture has glorified Putin’s seminal words. For instance, the 2018 Cultural Forum brochure started with Putin’s words: ‘[i]t is extremely important to preserve our identity in the turbulent age of technological change, and here it is impossible to overestimate the role of culture, which is our national civilisational code and reveals creative principles in human beings’ (Ministry of Culture 2018: 4, translated by the author).

Later in 2014, the Russian Institute for Cultural Research was dissolved as part of the implementation of the ‘optimisation policy’ of Putin’s 2012 May Decrees (see Razlogov 2014b). It was replaced by the Presidential Council for Culture and Art appointed by Putin to take a leading role in cultural policy formulation. Consequently, in 2014–2016 the PCCA was commissioned to elaborate two nationwide legislative acts, namely, the ‘Principles of State Cultural Policy’ (Russian President 2014) and the ‘Strategy of State Cultural Policy’ (Russian Government 2016). Approved by the head of the country, without having been considered in the Duma, both papers were statutory and consistent with the conservative priorities of the Kremlin (see Romashko 2018). Both these so-called ‘national strategic documents’ attained a status of supreme power, revoking the previous federal and sectoral laws.

Imposing a totalising logic of equivalence on the further legislative as well as administrative process in the cultural sector, these official papers articulate ‘culture’ through the nodal points of the ‘Russian World’. Consequently, the chains of equivalences include both the spiritual dimension of culture, in other words, spiritual bonds = Orthodox religion = Russian traditional values and non-Western morality, and its normative aspect, i.e. single cultural space = civilisational code = patriotism and historical identity = state sovereignty. In this manner, the meaning of culture is partially fixed, through an antagonism, to an empty signifier ‘the West’, which bears ‘threats to national security in the field of culture, including the erosion of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values and the weakening of the unity of the multinational people of the Russian Federation’ and makes ‘never-ending attempts at falsification of the Russian history, at its revision’ (Russian Government 2016: 6–7; 9).

¹⁵For example, see a number of Cultural Ministry reports from the period of 2014–2018 (<https://www.mkrf.ru/activities/reports/>)

481 In fact, the novel ‘management of state cultural policy’ (Russian Government
482 2015) produced a whole range of bureaucratic operations. Some of the most visible
483 governmental practices were intended to bring about a general ‘improvement in the
484 management system of state cultural policy’, mainly by focusing on two issues
485 (Russian Government 2015). The first was the task of ‘bringing *the legislation of the*
486 *Russian Federation* in line with the goals and objectives of *state cultural policy*’,
487 which involved the process of elaborating a set of documents consistent with the
488 president’s annual list of instructions and the 2012 Presidential May Decrees
489 (Russian Government 2015, 2016).

490 The second task was to organise a structural basis for the operative work and
491 actual management of Russian *state* cultural policy. In this respect, various state
492 commissions, councils, committees and Kremlin-affiliated expert and working
493 groups were commissioned to ensure the implementation of the ‘principles of state
494 cultural policy’. Subsequently, this created a need to ‘improve the federal and
495 regional legislation on culture’ and to ‘create structures at the federal and regional
496 levels to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the goals and objectives of
497 Strategy 2030 and the principles of state cultural policy’ (Council of Federation
498 2017). For instance, between 2012 and 2018, the Russian Government adopted
499 51 federal laws in relation to culture and its regulation (Ministry of Culture 2018,
500 57). This is almost nine times more compared to the number of legislative acts
501 accepted via the democratic mode of cultural policy during the equally long period of
502 2004–2011.

503 In general, this scope of rulemaking procedures served to justify the further
504 morphologic growth of state-run organisations responsible for the implementation
505 and control of targets, ideas and measures set out by the Presidential Decree №
506 808 on the PRSCP (2014) and related acts. Moreover, it provided an institutional
507 basis for the (1) monopolisation of power over cultural policy formulation within the
508 presidential apparatus and (2) reduction of the political capacities of policymaking at
509 the regional and local levels. To a certain extent, such a sovereign mechanism of
510 decision-making is justified because the presidential instructions are authorised by
511 the PCCA at its annual meeting. Hence, these decisions are not supposed to be
512 questioned or challenged in the Parliament.

513 In sum, it can be said that state cultural policy became part of the hegemonic
514 conservative project within the ideological limits of the Kremlin’s ‘Russian World’.
515 It was carried out through the gradual empowering of the Presidential Council for
516 Culture and Art and weakening of the democratic forms of governance as well as the
517 representative capacity of the Parliament. The acceleration of these processes led to a
518 moment in 2018 when the authority of the Presidential Administration completely
519 substituted the former mechanism of governance and its logic of difference that
520 conveyed various voices of the cultural sector.

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689 Makarychev A (eds) *The EU and Russia: spaces of interaction in times of crisis*. Routledge,
690 London, pp 71–90

691 **Tatiana Romashko** is a grant researcher and a doctoral student at the University of Jyväskylä. The
692 scope of her interests is composed of Russian cultural policy and Finnish–Russian cross-border
693 relations. Tatiana has extensive experience in teaching. She came to the University of Jyväskylä in
694 2017 from Russia in response to an invitation to teach on the Master’s Programme in Cultural
695 Policy. Before that, Tatiana worked as a senior lecturer at Herzen University and other various
696 universities of St. Petersburg in Russia.

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