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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

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# Chapter 8 1

## Production of Cultural Policy in Russia: 2

### Authority and Intellectual Leadership 3

Tatiana Romashko 4

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## 26 8.1 Introduction

27 Back in 2004, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine<sup>1</sup> 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 eco- AU1  
 35 nomic regionalism' (Kazharski 2019); and the 'Russian World project' (Suslov  
 36 2018). Nonetheless, a noticeable political and cultural turn towards conservatism  
 37 occurred in the Russian Federation after the crisis of Putin's legitimacy in  
 38 2011–2013 (Ross 2015; Robinson 2017). Initially, thousands of metropolitan citi-  
 39 zens took to the streets to protest against the unfair 2011 State Duma elections, and,  
 40 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' confron-  
 46 tation (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). AU2  
 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'

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<sup>1</sup>See '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).

(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 apparatus<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup>It 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 Art<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup>Allegedly, 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’,<sup>4</sup> which mainly consisted of  
 188 Putin’s quotations and instructions, caused public discontent. Quite a few aca-  
 189 demics<sup>5</sup> and research centres (e.g. the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Acad-  
 190 emy of Science, [https://iphras.ru/cult\\_polit.htm](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 leadership<sup>6</sup> 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

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

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

<sup>6</sup>To 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.<sup>7</sup> 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 laws<sup>8</sup> practically cancelled the previously announced social

<sup>7</sup>To 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’.

<sup>8</sup>The 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 regional<sup>9</sup> 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

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<sup>9</sup>For 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 support<sup>10</sup> 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

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<sup>10</sup>The 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/](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 prom-  
 inent 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,<sup>11</sup> Vyacheslav  
 Nikonov<sup>12</sup> and other influential figures of the AP, as well as numerous  
 pro-Kremlin think-tanks and foundations,<sup>13</sup> have extensively succeeded in consti-  
 tuting 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.<sup>14</sup> 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 distinc-  
 tiveness’ (*samobytnost*) (Putin 2007). Further, followed by a round of applause, the  
 president firmly stated that Russian is ‘a true language of international communica-  
 tion’ and should be ‘popularised to secure a living space for the multimillion

<sup>11</sup>A former Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration.

<sup>12</sup>A member of the Public Chamber of Russia.

<sup>13</sup>Such 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.russkiymir.ru/>)

<sup>14</sup>For 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’<sup>15</sup> 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).

<sup>15</sup>For 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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Uncorrected Proof

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