Abigial Weil

Harvard University

Beatitude Adjustment: Power and Performance in and around the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, 1812-2012

This paper will consider the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow — commissioned and constructed during the imperial era, demolished under Stalin with its site and some of its rich materials reallocated for other projects, and rebuilt following the fall of the Soviet Union — as a standpoint from which to see changes in power and authority over the course of two centuries.  The cathedral has also hosted cultural events that exemplify shifting social values, from the premiere of Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture* to Pussy Riot’s damning “punk prayer” in 2012, a subversive performance which I argue amounts to a queering of this transmuting and loaded space.