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Abstract

This working paper focuses on the plans to construct a skyscraper in St Petersburg, Russia, known originally as Gazprom-City and recently renamed into Okhta Center, and on the controversy that developed around these plans. The paper uses the skyscraper debates as a lens to discuss a particular "aesthetic politics" of St Petersburg, the meaning of "world cities" and "global architecture" in Russian and international contexts, post-Soviet forms of political and corporate governance, the mobilization of civic opposition to such projects and the ability of such urban protests to translate into a more unified and politically oriented opposition than has been possible in other contexts in Russia.