This talk explores the spatial politics of Russia’s increased religiosity in Moscow. It analyzes the rights of minority Muslim communities within the context of increased political support for Russian Orthodoxy in Moscow’s public space. Moscow’s Russian Orthodox and Muslim religious leaders claim that their communities have a lack of religious infrastructure, with one church per 35,000 residents and one mosque per 3 million residents, respectively. However, the Russian Orthodox Church has been more successful than Muslim organizations at expanding their presence in Moscow’s neighborhoods. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork, I examine how religious spaces become sites of dissent and participatory, active citizenship at three different sites in Moscow. I investigate how the protest over Russian Orthodox Church construction in one neighborhood contrasts with the protests over mosque construction in two neighborhoods. This talk provides insights into the types of civil society groups that the increased public presence of religion produces in Moscow and the unequal access that different groups have to public space in Moscow.

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