Remembering Stalingrad
Part of IERES' Visiting Scholar Roundtable Series

with

Charles J. Sullivan
PhD Candidate, Political Science, GW

and

Ivan Kurilla
Professor of History, Volgograd State University

On February 2, 1943, the last German soldiers in Stalingrad surrendered to the Soviet army. The day that ended the largest battle in human history is widely remembered in Russia, and especially in Volgograd (the former Stalingrad). This presentation will examine the significance of the Great Patriotic War in Russia today through the use of a recent public opinion survey conducted by the Levada Analytical Center. Charles J. Sullivan will speak about the extent to which Russians consider the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) to be the “greatest achievement” of the Soviet Union and offer an explanation of why this is so. In brief, Sullivan’s work argues that while nostalgia for the Soviet Union in Russia runs deep, Russians in general are not nostalgic for the war, but selectively draw upon its memory as a source of pride as Russia continues its transition process. Ivan Kurilla will discuss how the current ruling regime shapes the memory of the Great Patriotic War and why it does so. He will also examine the significance of Stalingrad for the political uses of history and the public memory of Russians. Kurilla will offer an assessment of how Russians in general, and Volgograders in particular, commemorate the Stalingrad battle and Victory Day. Finally, he will explain how the manner Russia and neighboring countries in Central and Eastern Europe choose to remember the war affects their international relations.

Charles Sullivan is a PhD Candidate in GW’s Department of Political Science. Ivan Kurilla is a department head at Volgograd State University and a visiting scholar at IERES.

Thursday, January 24, 2013
4:00 – 5:00 pm
Voesar Conference Room
1957 E Street NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP at http://go.gwu.edu/Stalingrad.

This event is on the record