The Russo-Ukrainian war, euphemistically called the ‘Ukraine crisis,’ has largely confirmed a dramatic split of the country and people’s loyalties between the proverbial ‘East’ and ‘West,’ between the ‘Eurasian’ and ‘European’ models of development epitomized by Russia and the European Union. By other accounts, however, it has proved that the Ukrainian nation is much more united than many experts and policymakers had expected and that outside the occupied regions of Donbas and Crimea, public support for the Russian invasion is close to nil. Professor Riabchuk does not deny that Ukraine is divided in many respects but argues that the main (and indeed, the only important) divide is not between ethnic Russians and Ukrainians, or between Russophones and Ukrainophones, or even between the ‘East’ and the ‘West.’ Rather, the main fault line is ideological: between the two different types of Ukrainian identity, i.e. non/anti-Soviet and post/neo-Soviet, ‘European’ and ‘East Slavonic.’ All other factors, such as ethnicity, language, region, income, education, or age, correlate to a different degree with this principal divide. However divisive those factors may be, the external threat to the nation makes them largely irrelevant, as they bring to the fore the crucial issue of values epitomized in two different Ukrainian identities.

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Tuesday, March 29, 2016
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Voesar Conference Room
1957 E St. NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP at go.gwu.edu/riabchuk