

IVAN KURILLA

Professor of History

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Historian of Russian-American relations, U.S. foreign relations, and the political uses of history. Author and editor of books with Cambridge University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, Bloomsbury, Slavica publisher, Anthem Press, and major Russian-language publishers. Experienced in interdisciplinary teaching, graduate advising, academic program leadership, and public-facing scholarship.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

U.S.–Russian relations; U.S. foreign relations; international dimensions of the American Civil War; historical memory and politics of history; identity and foreign policy; historiography.

CURRENT POSITION

Visiting Professor of History, The Ohio State University
August 2025 – August 2026

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Mary L. Cornille Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Humanities, Wellesley College, 2024

Visiting Tallman Scholar, Bowdoin College, 2024

Professor, European University at St. Petersburg, 2015–2024

Visiting Scholar, George Washington University, 2012–2013

Professor and Head, Department of International Relations, Volgograd State University, 2006–2015

Associate Professor / Professor, Volgograd State University, 1995–2006

Fulbright Visiting Scholar, Dartmouth College, 2001–2002

EDUCATION

Doktor Nauk (Habilitation), History
Institute of Universal History, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2005

Kandidat Nauk (PhD equivalent), History
Institute of Universal History, Russian Academy of Sciences, 1996

MA (Diploma with Honors), History
Volgograd State University, 1991

PUBLICATIONS

Books (English)

Distant Friends and Intimate Enemies: A History of American-Russian Relations (with David S. Foglesong and Victoria Zhuravleva). Cambridge University Press, 2025.

Battle for the Past: How Politics Rewrites History. Palgrave Macmillan, 2025.

Echoes of the American Civil War Abroad: Perceptions, Identities, and Historical Memory (co-edited with Victoria Zhuravleva). Bloomsbury, forthcoming 2026.

Americans and All the Rest: Identity and Foreign Policy in U.S. History. Palgrave Macmillan, 2026.

Trailing the Bolsheviks: Twelve Thousand Miles with the Allies in Siberia by Carl W. Ackerman (edited and annotated). Slavica, 2020; new edition, Anthem Press, 2025.

Russian/Soviet Studies in the United States, Amerikanistika in Russia: Mutual Representations in Academic Projects (co-edited). Lexington Books, 2016.

Selected Books (Russian)

Amerikantsy i vse ostalnye: Istoki i smysl vneshnei politiki SShA (Americans and All the Rest: Origin and Meaning of U.S. Foreign Policy). Alpina, 2024.

Bitva za proshloe: Kak politika meniaet istoriiu (Battle for the Past: How Politics Changes History). Alpina, 2022.

Zakliatye druzia: Istoriia mnenii, fantazii, kontaktov, vzaimo(ne)ponimaniia Rossii i SShA (Frenemies: Russia and the United States in Mutual Perceptions). NLO, 2018.

Istoriia, ili proshloe v nastoiashchem (History, or the Past in the Present). European University at St. Petersburg Press, 2017.

Zaokeanskie partnery: Amerika i Rossiia v 1830–1850-e gody (Transoceanic Partners: America and Russia in the 1830s–1850s). Volgograd University Press, 2005.

Selected Articles and Chapters (English)

“History as a Political Language.” In *Education and the Politics of Memory in Russia and Eastern Europe: Infested with History*. Routledge, 2025.

“Understanding the Immortal Regiment: Memory Dualism in a Social Movement.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 75, no. 8 (2023): 1266–1285.

“Evaluating the Demise of the Soviet Union.” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 25, no. 3 (2023): 142–187. (with Archie Brown, Thomas W. Simons, Andrea Graziosi, and Louis D. Sell, Vladislav Zubok).

“Russia and the US in the Mirrors of Academic Research.” *Arei: Journal for Central and Eastern European History and Politics* 1, no. 1 (2022): 68–91.

“Presentism, Politicization of History, and the New Role of the Historian in Russia.” In *The Future of the Soviet Past: The Politics of History in Putin’s Russia*. Indiana University Press, 2021.

“George Frost Kennan and Russian-American Relations.” In *A Kennan for Our Times: Revisiting America’s Greatest 20th Century Diplomat in the 21st Century*. Wilson Center, Kennan Institute, 2019.

“Russia, Trump, and the United States: The Uses of the Other in a Political Crisis.” In *The New World Disorder: Challenges and Threats in an Uncertain World*. Lexington Books, 2019.

“Russia’s View on Obama’s Presidency: From Hope to Disappointment.” In *The World Views of the Obama Era: From Hope to Disillusionment*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Russia and the American Civil War (book manuscript); Co-editor, *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Russian History*; forthcoming volumes with Bloomsbury and Palgrave.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (SELECTED)

Courses generally taught in discussion-based seminar format, with emphasis on primary-source analysis, collective interpretation, comparative frameworks, and independent student research.

The Ohio State University, 2025–2026

Civil War and Reconstruction: Global Perspectives (BA level)

Examines the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction as both a national crisis and a global event, focusing on slavery, emancipation, citizenship, federal power, and international debates about democracy, nationalism, and revolution.

Russian-American Relations (BA and MA level; taught in English and Russian)

Traces Russian-American relations from the eighteenth century to the present through diplomatic, cultural, and ideological frameworks, with attention to mutual perceptions, empire, the Cold War, and the construction of the "Other."

Uses and Misuses of History: History, Memory, and Politics in the Contemporary World (BA level)

Explores how societies mobilize the past in politics and public culture, including monuments, museums, school curricula, memory laws, traumatic memory, and debates over historical responsibility.

Wellesley College, 2024–2025

How Distant Friends Became Intimate Enemies: Russian-American Relations in Past and Present (BA level)

Examined Russian-American relations beyond traditional diplomacy, focusing on political imagination, technological exchange, ideological rivalry, wartime cooperation, Cold War confrontation, and domestic uses of the other country's image.

Bowdoin College, 2024

Frenemies: History of Russian-American Relations (BA level)

Introduced the long history of Russian-American encounters, emphasizing slavery and serfdom, continental expansion, Russian emigration, technological transfers, military alliances, and recurring cycles of admiration and hostility.

European University at St. Petersburg, 2015–2024

History of Russian-American Relations from a Constructivist Perspective (MA level)

Diplomatic history and constructivist approaches to identity, mutual images, and ideological rivalry in U.S.-Russian relations.

Historical Memory and Politics of History (MA level)

Historical narratives, memory conflicts, public history, commemoration, and national identity.

Smolny Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences, St. Petersburg State University, 2015

Historical narratives, memory conflicts, public history, commemoration, and national identity.

Volgograd State University, 1991–2015

U.S. History; Modern History of Europe and America; History of Historical Knowledge; Introduction to Russian History for U.S. exchange students (BA level)

Taught survey and upper-level courses in U.S., European, Russian, and historiographical history, including courses for international students and American studies majors.

Advising

Advised MA theses in Russian and English and Kandidatskaya dissertations (PhD equivalent) on U.S. history, Russian-American relations, historical memory, nationalism, and the political uses of the past.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Academic Director, International MA Program (IMARES), European University at St. Petersburg, 2016–2022

Director, Program of Regional Cooperation, European University at St. Petersburg, 2015–2022

Chair, Department of International Relations, Volgograd State University, 2006–2015

Vice Rector for International Programs, Volgograd State University, 2002–2003

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Editorial Board Member:

The Journal of Russian American Studies

REGION: Regional Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia

International Advisory Board Member, *Research Initiative on Post-Soviet Space (RIPSS)*, University of Melbourne.

Member: ASEEES; SHAFR, PONARS Eurasia

AWARDS AND HONORS

Prosvetitel Prize (Best Non-Fiction Book, Russia), 2024