

Russia Is in Denial, But It Belongs in the EU

By [Maxim Goryunov](#)

April 20, 2015



Russia's place — despite its "special" historical path, fidelity to traditional values and mysterious spirituality — is in the European Union. This is because, to be perfectly honest, the EU is no more a bastion of European values than Russia is a Third Rome.

The European Union is really a club of those who have lost their former empires, and who, for various reasons, have been forced to confine themselves within their own borders.

They represent the last remnants of the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Austrian, German, French, Turkish, Polish and Swedish empires.

They have all lost that sweet status of "empire builder." The luckiest was the British Empire, which continues to exist today, albeit in vastly scaled-down form.

This hapless club of empire losers formed an alliance in order to survive in the new world where there are three times as many Muslims, Buddhists and Taoists than there are

Christians, where the United States is a towering colossus and the red dragon of China grows more powerful by the day.

That alliance is teeming with imperial slimebags that would be only too happy to get back on top and snatch their own little Crimeas, but their powers are not what they used to be and the situation is not as amenable as it used to be.

Could it be that the EU is so slow to come to Ukraine's aid because, despite all its claims to the contrary, it feels closer to Moscow than to Kiev?

The Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Finns and Scots — in fact, any people that has had to protect its identity from assimilation by an imperial center — can understand the plight of the Ukrainians.

But how could the French empathize with Ukrainians, if they themselves were only recently forced, under the volley of war guns, to relinquish their chokehold on colonies in North Africa and Indochina?

A Pole of my acquaintance told me that the Polish nationalists he knows are big fans of Russian nationalist Alexander Dugin, and other such figures with outsized geopolitical aspirations.

In the place of present-day Russia, they would like to see Poland rising from its knees, traditional, militarized and with an emphasis on Catholicism.

If they had their way, they would annex the ancestral Polish territories in Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine, and so on to the ends of the earth if it were possible.

Russia's behavior simply shows what will happen if Washington, as "GloboCop," stops whacking the likes of France and Turkey over the head just long enough for them to remember their predatory past and start pining for the era of white pith helmets and slave collars.

The moment that GloboCop retires from the scene, the world will devolve into the mass mayhem of hybrid and even outright war.

Some country like Hungary, which today behaves like an upstanding citizen, will tomorrow, sensing the absence of controls, ruthlessly invade Slovakia and spill rivers of blood — as Russia is now doing in eastern and southern Ukraine — seizing this or that worthless village because it once belonged to a Hungarian prince.

For that matter, what would stop France from standing up straight, spreading its shoulders and remembering its interests in Morocco, or stop Spain from casting its eye on Colombia?

This has nothing to do with economics. Did Moscow calculate its probable losses when it launched its Crimea escapade?

What is running the show here is a national myth based on imperial propaganda.

That myth is largely a substitute for dogmatic religion: it tenaciously holds the hearts

and minds of its adherents, and at the slightest touch, instantly — like some uncanny self-defense mechanism — generates a wave of imperial sentiment like that seen in Russia last spring.

Does the same phenomenon not explain the steadily growing success of nationalists in parliamentary elections in Europe?

Today's Russia is puffed up with false pride, trying not to admit to itself how outsized that gold filament-embroidered tunic of the Romanov empire now looks upon its neck.

Moscow rattles its nuclear arms and makes a scary face, although it has long been clear that with its corruption-ridden and fragile economy, negative demographic trends, capital flight, comatose science, and with giant China casting its shadow over the Far East, Russia should be beating a path to Brussels so fast that it zips past Ukraine along the way.

That will eventually happen. The only question is, under what conditions will Brussels receive Moscow, and will Russia have fully accepted the obvious fact that the 19th century ended in the 19th century?

If rational thinking wins out over propagandistic folly, in the near future the European Union really will stretch all the way to Vladivostok and the Moscow leadership will open branch offices in Brussels.

In fact, Russia has long been over there — after buying European real estate, educating its children there and making faltering attempts at mastering the language.

Russia is already in the EU. It is just too shy to admit it, and is willfully resisting the truth.

Maxim Goryunov is a Moscow-based philosopher.

The views expressed in opinion pieces do not necessarily reflect the position of The Moscow Times.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/04/20/russia-is-in-denial-but-it-belongs-in-the-eu-a45920>