

Russians at the Gate: The Barbarians Are Coming

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If in the past, white European countries had looming fears of barbarians invading at twilight and sacking their cities, today Western governments and media portray Russia in a similar way in an intention to awaken pristine fears. As in other irrational sentiments, such fears are being evoked despite the lack of substantial evidence. [The headline of Huffington Post](#) a week ago titled “Panic: Russia Invades” based on the account that 9 [Russian soldiers were found](#) somewhere across the border reveals the degree to which the US media, even that professing to be an alternative one, is engaging in stirring hidden fears and anxieties with weak evidence or none at all.

Furthermore, it is precisely the lack of concrete evidence for a Russian invasion that is being used as testament to Russians’ inherent cunning abilities and subversive actions. Since Russians are being perceived with panic as barbarians, each action they allegedly take is deemed as if the barbarians have broken through the fortress.

The capture of several Russian soldiers who could have come to the area by accident, was a sign for the White House that Russia has invaded and was subsequently “[unwillingness to tell the truth](#)” although Ukrainian soldiers numbering in hundreds [crossed the border into Russia](#) in the past. Whereas earlier, the White House has constantly [struggled](#) to provide evidence of a [Russian invasion](#), this time the physical proof has been found. The mysterious [black-and-white aerial](#) photos of [a convoy](#) supposedly coming in via Russia, have been presented as the ultimate evidence for Russia’s invasion. NATO claims with confidence that “guns are pointed towards Ukrainian territory”.

All evidence and rational thinking suggest that Russia did not launch a ground invasion of Ukraine. It is hard to point to the capture of 9 soldiers as an indication that Russia, a country with an army of about [1,040,000 active soldiers](#), launched an invasion. Nor does the alleged transfer of weapons or vehicles via the border indicate Russia invaded. The United States, for example, has been providing [arms to Syrian rebels](#) and [extensive military aid to Israel](#), yet this of course does not mean that the US has invaded either Syria or Israel, and most media sources would have probably never made such an accusation as hastily. Human Rights Watch [was told](#) by a journalist of “pro-Kiev forces in non-standard uniform” who “had a Grad rocket system” which they actually fired on rebels but NATO took no issue with this. However, obscure pictures of guns inside Russia pointed towards Ukraine is presented as evidence that Russia invaded. Rockets have been exchanged on [the Syrian-Israeli border](#) recently, yet this does mean that Israel invaded Syria or vice versa? In the case of Russia, the smallest sign of evidence is seen as a proof for a full invasion. Russians must be constantly cunning and need to be caught in the act.

The hysteria with which the mainstream media covers the supposed “invasion” of Ukraine cannot be decoupled from the way in which Russians have been portrayed at large. When

one seeks to understand the mindset by which many in the Western media and governments view not only Russians in Russia but also ethnic Russians who are citizens of Ukraine, one may gain the impression they are being seen as nothing short of barbarians. Odessa residents who protested the arrest and imprisonment of pro-federalism protesters who were nearly burned alive in a [fire in a trade union house](#) in which tens of people perished while others who survived were beaten to death by pro-Kiev extremists, were termed as “mobs” who were “banging on a gate” by the [New York Times](#). The very arrest of the survivors of a massacre was not seen as problematic. These survivors were subsequently presented as those who were “pumping their fists” with little reason to do so. In Slovyansk, the [New York Times attributed](#) to Donbass fighters “a legacy of violent thuggery and chaos” creating among readers a sense that not much else could be expected from Russians. Professor Timothy Snyder did not bother to present any evidence when he painted rebels as [“local criminals”](#). The fact that they were associated with Russia was apparently proof enough.

When Russia sought to transfer to East Ukraine humanitarian convoys that were badly needed, this possibility was met with alarm by the West and deemed an “invasion”. Apparently, the possibility that Russians would engage in a humanitarian supply [seemed too far-fetched](#). As “barbarians”, Russians cannot be trusted to have humanitarian wishes and must have [sinister reasons](#) lurking behind their actions. After all, what else can be expected from those who according to German President Angela Merkel practice [“the law of the jungle”](#) in the Crimea? The so-called “anti-terrorism operation” by the Kiev government against residents of East Ukraine that resulted in over [2,600 dead](#) was not condemned by Merkel but Russia’s humanitarian aid was [criticized as a “provocation”](#). The bloodless annexation of Crimea was seen as more of a savage act than the shelling of civilians by Kiev’s forces.

With the portrayal of Russians as savages and as people who do not cease to [lie](#) (note how [frequently](#) the US claims that Russia is “lying” as if this was a Russian trait and as if the quality of truth-telling is embraced by the US government despite the Edward Snowden episode), the elusiveness of the evidence for a Russian “invasion” paradoxically serves as proof that Russia has indeed invaded. With Russians already dehumanized and seen as irrational, dangerous and cunning, the [black-and-white pictures produced by NATO](#) of Russia’s “invasion”, seem more convincing than ever. They grant the viewer an opportunity to believe that he is “smarter” than the cunning Russians and in fact caught them in their action. While it is likely that individual Russian soldiers volunteered to fight for an East Ukrainian civilian population that has [been shelled and cut off from supplies](#), one may wonder if this is any less objectionable than the fact that neo-Nazis from various European countries [joined the Ukrainian Azov Battalion](#) and are fighting civilians on the soil of East Ukraine.

It may therefore not be too far fetched to say that the supposed [Russian military buildup](#) across the border is being perceived by the Western media with a dreadful fear of barbarians entering fortress Europe from Asia while the existence of fascist military units on Ukrainian soil is being overlooked even though its members adhere to [white supremacy](#). [Ukraine is depicted as being European](#) and Russia as part of Eurasia while the killing of civilians in East Ukraine by the current Kiev regime is apparently accepted as part of the normative order of things. Cultivating hysterical and irrational fears and reinforcing prejudice against Russians has little to do with evidence nor reason, and in this way the Western media has been erring twice. It has not only failed to provide a balanced account of

the conflict, but has malignly stirred nascent fears regarding the looming barbarian invasion.

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