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The Twilight of Prometheism? The Fate of Polish-Ukrainian Activists and Their Ideas during the Cold War*

Abstrakt: II wojna światowa okazała się kluczowym momentem dla losów ruchu prometejskiego. Po 1945 roku, mimo politycznej marginalizacji, prometeiści kontynuowali starania o zbudowanie antysowieckiego frontu. W artykule przeanalizowano powody, dla których prometeizm, wbrew dominującym narracjom w anglosaskiej historiografii, nie znalazł miejsca w głównym nurcie zachodniego antykomunizmu. Analizowane są przyczyny porażki odrodzenia prometeizmu oraz jego stopniowe przekształcenie w nowe formy walki antykomunistycznej w realiach zimnej wojny.

Słowa kluczowe: prometeizm, zimna wojna, sieci antykomunistyczne, Roman Smal-Stocki, Pawło Szandruk, Klaudiusz Hrabyk, AMCOMLIB.

Abstract: The Second World War proved to be a watershed moment for the fate of the Promethean movement. After 1945, despite political marginalisation, Prometheists continued their efforts to build an anti-Soviet front. The article examines the reasons why Prometheism, contrary to the dominant narrative in Anglo-Saxon historiography, failed to find a place in mainstream Western anti-communism. It analyzes the failure of the revival of Prometheism and its gradual transformation into new forms of anti-communist struggle in the realities of the Cold War.

Keywords: Prometheism, Cold War, anti-Communist networks, Roman Smal-Stocki, Pavlo Shandruk, Klaudiusz Hrabyk, AMCOMLIB.

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In the history of Poland and the course of the Promethean movement, the year 1939 represented a momentous turning point. Prometheism, both as a political agenda and a transnational movement, sought to dismantle the Russian Empire, regardless of whether it appeared in its white or red forms, by leveraging 'ethnic fault lines', as elucidated by its ideological architect, Marshal Józef Piłsudski. Extending across the expansive reaches of Eurasia, spanning from Paris to Harbin, Helsinki, and Istanbul, the interwar network of Promethean activists, guided by Polish leadership, encompassed individuals from approximately a dozen diverse nations. Among its ranks were Ukrainians, free Cossacks, and peoples of the Caucasus and Turkestan. These individuals were bound together by a shared objective: to combat the spread of the Communist ideology and to apprise the West of the perils associated with the Bolshevik experiment. Their tactics ranged from informational activities and creating the foundations for Soviet Studies to practical military and intelligence operations.[1]

The partition of Poland in 1939, carried out with the active participation of the Soviet Union, symbolised the ultimate downfall of Promethean aspirations. The Polish state yielded to external aggression, compelling the government to go into exile, while the upheaval of war dispersed the Promethean International throughout different parts of Europe under the control of totalitarian dictatorships. Some, like most Polish leaders, managed to find refuge in Britain. Others, such as the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) leaders, Foreign Minister Oleksandr Shulhyn, and President of Warsaw's Promethean Club Roman Smal-Stocki, faced imprisonment or forced isolation due to their pro-Western stance. A few Promethean exiles entered forced or voluntary collaboration with the German occupiers. In any case, Poland's collapse and its initial efforts to garner Western support for the Promethean program in the early years of the war (1939–1941) led to the complete disintegration of the movement. Publishing operations reached a standstill, and magazines like *La Revue de Prométhée* and *Tryzub* ceased publication. In 1942, the Ukrainian 'Ofinor' news agency halted its activities. It can be rightly concluded that the Promethean movement was virtually disbanded and organizationally dormant during the war.[2] To make matters worse, in

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[1] T. Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven, 2008); J.J. Bruski, *Między prometeizmem a Realpolitik: II Rzeczpospolita wobec Ukrainy Sowieckiej 1921–1926* (Kraków, 2010); V. Komar, *Koncenciya prometeyizmu v polityci Pol'shhi (1921–1939)* (Ivano-Frankivs'k, 2011); *Ruch prometejski i walka o przebudowę Europy Wschodniej (1918–1940). Studia i szkice*, ed. by M. Kornat (Warszawa, 2012); *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, ed. by P. Libera (Warszawa, 2013); Z. Gasimov, *Warschau gegen Moskau: prometheistische Aktivitäten zwischen Polen, Frankreich und der Türkei, 1918–1939* (Stuttgart, 2022); J. Pisuliński, "Ukraiński Mazarini'? Roman Smal-Stocki i Polacy', *Nowy Prometeusz*, vol. 9 (2016), pp. 79–93.

[2] P. Libera, 'Prometeizm po prometeizmie. Zarys historii ruchu prometejskiego po 1939 roku', *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, vol. 39 (2022), p. 53.

the post-war era, the Polish government-in-exile, no longer recognised by Western powers, found itself in a similar situation of representation without official acknowledgement, much like Promethean nations after 1921. It was compelled to adopt the role of a politically marginalised underdog desperately seeking international support and geopolitical backing.[3]

While extensive scholarship on Prometheism during the interwar period has been conducted in Polish, German, and Ukrainian historiography, there remains a notable absence of comprehensive investigations into the post-war experiences of Promethean figures and the role of their ideas in the unfolding Cold War. Interestingly, Anglo-Saxon historiography, particularly its revisionist faction, has allocated more attention to wartime and post-war manifestations of Promethean activism. It critically examines the actions of Promethean exiles within the context of US anti-Communist policies and covert political warfare operations. Outside of East-Central Europe, Prometheism is often viewed not as a Polish-originated effort to free non-Russian nations but rather as a wartime German tactic to dismantle the Soviet Union, which was later embraced by American anticommunism, frequently involving the use of actual or suspected collaborators with Nazi Germany.[4] Certain authors have drawn audacious conclusions, suggesting a direct connection between the Nazi leadership's efforts to harness anti-Stalinist sentiments among Soviet citizens and the subsequent post-war US anticommunism. These assertions suggest a level of responsibility on the part of Washington for the onset of the Cold War and underscore the alleged significant role played by exiles in its initial phases.[5]

This one-sided portrayal fails to capture the varied experiences of Prometheans during and after the Second World War. It overlooks their determined efforts to navigate the extremely challenging conditions of the post-Yalta world and the nuanced approach of Western policymakers toward the Soviet empire. An exception is Anna Mazurkiewicz's valuable analysis of Central European exiles in early Cold War US policy towards the Soviet bloc, though it is limited to 'satellite' countries, omitting Promethean nations of the Soviet Union.[6] Contrary to the prevailing notion among Cold War revisionist historians that there existed an alleged US Cold War consensus (which, according to Joseph Fousek, was reduced to three points: national greatness, global responsibility, and anti-communism[7]), the experience of Prometheans and the fate of their

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[3] For more, see P. Machcewicz, *Emigracja w polityce międzynarodowej* (Warszawa, 1999).

[4] Ch. Simpson, *Blowback: The Recruitment of Nazis and Its Destructive Impact on Our Domestic and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1988); S. Dorril, *M16: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service* (New York, 2000).

[5] J. Burds, 'The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948', *Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 1505 (2001), pp. 1–70.

[6] A. Mazurkiewicz, *Uchodźcy polityczni z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w amerykańskiej polityce zimnowojennej, 1948–1954* (Warszawa, 2016).

[7] J. Fousek, *To Lead the Free World. American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, 2000), p. 2.

ideas point to quite the opposite conclusion. In this article, I examine the efforts to revive the Promethean movement in the context of changing conditions that seemed to be conducive to anti-communism. Through selected examples of Polish and Ukrainian figures, I analyse the factors contributing to the setbacks in these revival efforts and the unforeseen transformation of the Promethean agenda into novel expressions of the anti-Communist struggle. Due to space constraints, I do not discuss the contributions of Promethean activists from other Eastern European nations, even though many played crucial roles within the reestablished West German secret services (known as the Gehlen Organization) or in shaping American anti-Communist policies.[8] My goal is instead to assert that 'liberationism' was not a predominant theme in the US Cold War discourse, while today's emphasis on the role of Russian exiles as a means of American anticommunism, should be enriched by non-Russian viewpoints, especially those of Prometheans.[9]

The Promethean Constellation in the DP Universe

After the Second World War, hundreds of thousands of Eastern European émigrés who opposed the Soviet-backed regimes in their homelands found themselves scattered across Europe.[10] Among this displaced population, there were numerous individuals associated with the pre-war Promethean movement. Many of them ended up in displaced persons camps (DP) in the Western Zone of German occupation, making every effort to avoid forced repatriation to the USSR. It was during the repatriation campaign that Ukrainian Prometheans first established contact with the American occupation authorities in the spring of 1945. The Petlurites, who were residing at the Offenbach refugee centre near Frankfurt, anticipated the impending collapse of the anti-Hitler coalition and sought Western support for their anti-Communist agenda. Personal connections played a crucial role in this endeavour. Roman Smal-Stocki, after meeting Stephen J. Skubik, an American of Ukrainian descent working for the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), raised concerns about Soviet plans to eliminate General George Patton. Patton was known as one of the most vehemently anti-Communist American commanders and died under mysterious circumstances shortly thereafter. Interviewed by CIC, Smal-Stocki justified his inclusion on the NKVD's priority repatriation list by mentioning his membership in the Promethean League. This episode

[8] For a recent analysis of the contribution of Muslim émigrés to the Cold War, see I. Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich. Nazis, the CIA, and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (Boston, 2011).

[9] B. Tromly, *Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia* (New York, 2019).

[10] For a general survey, see *East Central European Migrations During the Cold War. A Handbook*, ed. by A. Mazurkiewicz (Berlin, 2019).

marked one of the initial instances where American intelligence services gained first-hand insight into the existence of the Promethean network and its involvement in anti-Soviet activities.[11]

American intelligence gurus, including Office of Strategic Services (OSS) chief William Donovan, initially dismissed Smal-Stocki's warnings, and the CIC officer who interrogated him even faced a demotion in rank. During the summer of 1945, the US and the USSR appeared to enjoy a relatively amicable relationship despite Moscow's thinly veiled expansionist intentions. On an operational level, however, US intelligence recognised the DPs as a valuable source of information regarding the situation within the Soviet sphere of influence. Prometheans remained determined to continue their efforts to garner American backing despite initial setbacks. By September 1946, Smal-Stocki and Pavlo Shandruk, a Ukrainian UNR general and contract officer in the Polish Army, had devised a plan to revive the Promethean movement with American support. Shandruk was purportedly offered the position of head of the intelligence bureau at the CIC headquarters in Munich. At the request of the Americans, he recommended some of his colleagues for CIC positions, but he still harboured optimism for more substantial support. Reflecting on his post-war endeavours, Shandruk noted that 'there was no sense of urgency; they [US officials] thought that the Bolsheviks were angels and were afraid that the Bolsheviks might learn about us [Prometheans]'.[12]

Declassified documents from the CIA archives provide a slightly different perspective on the early, somewhat ineffective efforts by Prometheans to establish ties with US intelligence. In November 1946, Shandruk indeed engaged in discussions with representatives of the Central Intelligence Group (CIG) and proposed the establishment of an intelligence network involving former Prometheans operating in Ukraine, in exchange for a monthly subsidy of $2,000.[13] Meanwhile, Roman Smal-Stocki, despite post-war claims of extensive ties to American circles, did not appear to have made a strong impression on US intelligence. He often appeared in intelligence documents under the name of his father, the renowned philologist Stepan Smal-Stocki, indicating that American awareness of his activities was somewhat limited when considered in the context of their relatively thorough understanding of the Ukrainian political exile.[14] During the fall of 1946, the CIA did, in fact, gather information about Eastern European groups in DP camps who might have been considered for sabotage and reconnaissance missions,

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[11] S. Skubik, *The Murder of General Patton* (Bennington, 1993), pp. 22–25.

[12] Shevchenko Scientific Society Archives in New York (hereinafter: SSSA), Pavlo Shandruk Papers (hereinafter: PSP), folder 8, P. Shandruk to R. Shulhyn, undated (1948), fol. 67.

[13] K. Ruffner, *Eagle and Swastika: CIA and Nazi War Criminals and Collaborators* (Washington, 2003), chap. 5, p. 15.

[14] Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act (hereinafter: CIA FOIA), QRPLUMB, vol. 1, no. 14, S-Memo # 7, 14 Oct. 1946, pp. 1–2.

especially in Soviet Ukraine.[15] However, American agencies responsible for organizing covert operations within the USSR ultimately chose to cooperate with a group of former OUN(B) members associated with Mykola Lebed's UHVR (*Ukrayins'ka Holovna Vyzvol'na Rada* or Ukrainian Main Liberation Council), rather than with Prometheans. Despite Lebed's prior reputation for engaging in anti-Polish terrorist activities, such as orchestrating the assassination of Polish Interior Minister Bronisław Pieracki in 1934, this decision was influenced by multiple factors. Unlike Prometheans, the UHVR had the capacity to establish a tangible connection with the anti-Communist underground operating in the Carpathian forests. Moreover, it had a well-structured and disciplined movement, which made it a more reliable partner for US intelligence. Most importantly, the UHVR demonstrated a willingness to fully align their organisation with the directives of the new sponsor, a trait they had learned from their clandestine activities before the Second World War. Over the subsequent four decades, exile activists affiliated with the UHVR, coalescing around the Prolog Research Corporation in New York and funded by the CIA covert operation codenamed AERODYMANIC (later QRPLUMB), would emerge as the most prominent US collaborators in a secret war against communism.[16]

These initial contacts coincided with efforts to revive the organised Promethean movement in Western Europe. In April 1946, a congress held in The Hague resulted in a new name for the organisation: the Promethean League of the Atlantic Charter, a proper name reflecting an enhanced pro-American orientation of its members. The meeting culminated in a call for the international community to unite in opposition to 'Soviet Russia'. In the absence of Polish representatives, a special address was extended to General Tadeusz Pełczyński, a pre-war overseer of the movement on the Polish intelligence front. This gesture served as a tribute to the official Polish exile authorities in London, signifying the acknowledgement of the historical Polish role in the movement.[17] However, the League assembled a diverse national representation that held a somewhat sceptical view of the Polish claim to leadership. When a careless Ukrainian publicist called the League a 'Polish' organisation, Shandruk was quick to refute that.[18] Roman Smal-Stocki was

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[15] CIA FOIA, The Ukrainian Nationalist Movement. An Interim Study, Oct. 1946, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp83-00764r000500040001-3 (accessed: 13 Oct. 2023).

[16] T. Kuzio, 'U.S. support for Ukraine's liberation during the Cold War: A study of Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, no. 45 (2012), pp. 51–64; R. Breitman, N. Goda, *Hitler's Shadow: Nazi War Criminals, US Intelligence, and the Cold War* (Washington, 2012).

[17] Archive of Józef Piłsudski Institute in London (hereinafter: AJPIL), Zespół Prometeusz (hereinafter: ZP), file: 709/148/5, Roman Smal-Stocki, Jerzy Nakaszydze, Balo Billati to Tadeusz Pełczyński, 25 Apr. 1946, fol. 64.

[18] SSSA, PSP, folder 9, R. Ilnyckyj to P. Shandruk, 4 Feb. 1948, fol. 1.

also aware that being labelled as 'Polish agents' could damage Prometheans' standing within the broader émigré community. He purposefully omitted any reference to Polish support in his post-war account of the movement's pre-war activities.[19] He subsequently explained to the Poles that he had adopted this approach for strategic reasons. Allegedly, Smal-Stocki chose not to reveal the full extent of Poland's role to prevent further complicating the situation for the Polish exile government and to deny Moscow additional reasons to exert greater control over Poland. Additionally, he stressed that emphasising the Polish contribution could potentially have a negative impact on public opinion among Ukrainians in America.[20]

In parallel with Promethean groups in Western Europe, efforts to foster cooperation among federalists were taking shape. Under the auspices of the Federal Clubs of Central Europe, these individuals formulated initiatives reminiscent of the pre-war Prometheism movement while advocating for establishing a wider pan-European community.[21] In December 1947, representatives of one such club in Paris, which included individuals with close ties to the old Promethean Oleksandr Shulhyn, articulated a position regarding the new post-war reality. They contended that the most significant threat to the democratic world was 'Russian traditional imperialism'. The Paris Club called upon other exiled groups to develop a constructive program for Eastern Europe, one that could be presented to Western capitals. Their stance echoed the Promethean slogan of granting independence to all peoples oppressed by Soviet Russia since 1917. They also recognised that the Russian Federal Soviet Republic, with its many non-Russian regions, was susceptible to becoming a hub of imperialism. The federalists thus advocated for genuine federalisation of Russia itself, emphasising the need to make Russians aware that the expansion of the state beyond its borders ultimately harmed, rather than benefited, the Russian people.[22] As part of the Paris Club's initiatives, Shulhyn engaged in discussions with French authorities. In 1948, Shandruk even proposed reviving Prometheus, suggesting that it be headquartered in Paris under Shulhyn's leadership. During these negotiations, the Ukrainians sought to strengthen their position by hinting at alleged Turkish interest in the movement through the Crimean Tatars. They emphasized that Ukrainian and Polish Prometheans favoured cooperation

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[19] R. Smal Stocky, 'The Struggle of the Subjugated Nations in the Soviet Union for Freedom, Sketch of the History of the Promethean Movement', *Ukrainian Quarterly*, no. 4 (1947), pp. 324–44.

[20] AJPIL, ZP, R. Smal-Stocki to T. Schaetzel, undated (1947), fol. 156.

[21] For more see S. Łukasiewicz, *Trzecia Europa: Polska myśl federalistyczna w Stanach Zjednoczonych 1940–1971* (Warszawa, 2010).

[22] AJPIL, ZP, Position of the representatives of the independent Belarusian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian and Ukrainian opinion, 2 Dec. 1947, fols 409–10.

with Paris, aiming to enhance the Promethean cause's appeal to France by underscoring the Polish-Ukrainian partnership.[23]

Starting in 1947, specific discussions involving Polish representatives such as Klaudiusz Hrabyk, Jerzy Ponikiewski and Stanisław Paprocki took place in DP camps in Western Germany. They even went on to establish the International Committee of Political Refugees and Displaced Persons, seeking to include not only Poles and Ukrainians but also Slovaks affiliated with Tiso's nationalist regime, Caucasians, Turkestan representatives, and even some Germans. The Board of Prometheus adhered to a legalistic principle and included pre-war leaders such as Roman Smal-Stocki, Georgian George Nakashydze, and Ossetian Balo Billati. They also established separate units in various locations, including France, Turkey, Switzerland, Brazil, and Argentina. Towards the end of 1948, the Polish Group, led by an influential Pilsudskite in exile, Tadeusz Schaetzel, was formed in London. In January 1949, a Promethean convention was held in Munich. The participants discussed the idea of allowing representatives from all political parties to join the movement, not just those from exile centres. Despite some objections, the majority voted in favour of this inclusivity. Additionally, for the first time, a proposal was made to relocate the movement's headquarters to America, where Roman Smal-Stocki had already established himself.[24] The composition of these initial post-war bodies, particularly their Ukrainian representatives, reflected the broader changes happening in the post-war émigré community. A faction of Petlurites, led by the exiled UNR President Andriy Livytskyi, who had been open to cooperation with the Poles before the war, changed their position after 1945. There was a noticeable reluctance in the Ukrainian community to entertain any Polish proposals. This reluctance was rooted in fundamental differences in territorial aspirations and the traumatic experiences of the Second World War. Beyond the challenges facing the Promethean movement, this rejection of Polish initiatives for reorganizing Eastern Europe added yet another layer of complexity.[25]

The initial activities of Prometheans primarily revolved around the dissemination of information and publishing efforts. The leaders of the League advocated for the concept of cooperation among exile politicians. Shandruk, for his part, authored articles on the military aspects of the Ukrainian question, which were subsequently published in the Polish press.[26] The Poles also sought to disseminate an English translation of his work to British and American

[23] SSSA, PSP, folder 8, P. Shandruk to R. Shulhyn, undated (1948), fol. 67.

[24] Libera, 'Prometeizm po prometeizmie', pp. 56–58.

[25] K. Tarka, 'Kijów-Warszawa wspólna sprawa? Rozmowy polsko-ukraińskie na emigracji w pierwszych latach po II wojnie światowej, in: *Podzielone narody. Szkice z historii stosunków polsko-ukraińskich w latach 40. XX wieku*, ed. by M. Białokur, M. Patelski (Toruń, 2012), pp. 205–20.

[26] P. Szandruk, 'Militarny potencjał Ukrainy', *Reduta*, no. 2 (1949).

audiences.[27] In 1947, the League issued a declaration concerning German reparations to the USSR. It called for these payments not to be made directly to the Soviet government but rather to an international bank. This bank would then oversee these funds until the oppressed peoples under Communist rule were liberated.[28] In 1949, Promethean representatives jointly issued an anti-Communist appeal to UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie.[29] These efforts to reinvigorate the movement in Europe met with limited success. Notably, the information accessible to the Soviet MGB (Ministry of State Security) regarding Prometheans was rather limited at that stage.[30] This was an indication of the overall decline of the movement. Paweł Libera accurately points out that the suspension of Promethean activities can be attributed to the dispersal of émigré groups, internal rivalries, resource shortages, and, most significantly, the absence of organisational support from state institutions.[31] Nevertheless, the confrontation between Washington and Moscow raised hopes for a potential revival of the movement in this new geopolitical environment.

Across the Atlantic

The escalation of the US-Soviet confrontation following the first Berlin crisis (1948–1949) and the Korean War outbreak (1950) raised new hopes that major powers would become more interested in Promethean initiatives. Some activists, aiming to establish closer ties with American circles, decided to relocate to America. By the early 1950s, figures such as Roman Smal-Stocki, Pavlo Shandruk, Klaudiusz Hrabyk, Jerzy Ponikiewski, Balo Billati, and George Nakashydze, in addition to younger like-minded émigrés Kamil Dziewanowski and Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky had moved across the Atlantic. In the wake of the war in Korea, the global media began discussing the potential onset of the Second World War, prompting Washington to intensify its efforts in political warfare against Moscow. Smal-Stocki, a professor at Marquette University at that time, frequently visited Washington to engage with diplomats and military officials. Leveraging his connections, he sought to arrange for Pavlo Shandruk to teach Russian to American officers at the Monterey Army Centre. In one of his letters, Smal-Stocki did not hide the motivations behind his efforts: 'You have to slowly educate our Americans into Prometheans'.[32]

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[27] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, J. Starzewski to P. Shandruk, 27 Apr. 1950, fol. 79.

[28] SSSA, PSP, folder 8, 'K voprosu o reparacijah trebuemyh pravitel'stvom SSSR ot Germanii', 31 May 1947, fol. 8–11.

[29] SSSA, PSP, folder 8, Letter to Trygve Lie, 17 Sep. 1949, fol. 18.

[30] Haluzevyj derzhavnyj arxiv Sluzhby zovnishn'oyi rozvidky Ukrayiny, fond 1, spr. 9813, vol. 1, Spravka po delu-formulyar № 687 na Smal'-Stockoho, 16 Feb. 1953, fols 41–44.

[31] Libera, 'Prometeizm po prometeizmie', p. 57.

[32] SSSA, PSP, folder 4, R. Smal-Stocki to Shandruk, 1948, fol. 84.

The summer of 1950 saw attempts to revitalise the Prometheus in America, partly as a response to increasing competition from alternative exile groups, notably the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), whose strong anti-Polish sentiments were exacerbated by its association with Stepan Bandera's OUN. On the Polish side, the negotiations were led by Klaudiusz Hrabyk, an activist associated with the Pilsudskite League for Poland's Independence. The resolve of Polish Prometheans was driven by information from reliable US sources suggesting that a faction within the American establishment became aware of the importance of non-Russian nations. Additionally, it was reported to the Polish authorities in London that US diplomat Eric Kuniholm, an advocate of exile involvement against the USSR and a future advisor to AMCOMLIB (American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia), was holding meetings with Muslim Promethean activists in Germany.[33]

A favourable environment did not imply a straightforward arrangement in any way. The New York meetings in the fall of 1950, which occurred against the backdrop of General Władysław Anders' somewhat unsuccessful visit to America, exposed conflicts over fundamental issues. The central point of contention revolved around disagreements regarding borders. The Ukrainians chose to intensify tensions by issuing a harsh statement on Lviv just before Anders' meeting with representatives of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), apparently playing on Polish sensitivities.[34] They were aware of the growing isolation of Polish exiles in relation to great powers and sought to capitalise on their vulnerabilities. On the other hand, the Polish delegation had concerns that the Promethean activities in the US might clash with the agenda of the Polish government-in-exile. Another concern was the potential threat that the Promethean program, if backed by US actors, could pose to the prospects of the Intermarium project. While somewhat distinct from the Promethean agenda, the Intermarium concept had a less explicitly anti-Russian focus. Perhaps for these reasons, Hrabyk, representing the Polish group, expressed reservations about making America the primary centre of the movement. He argued that most members are in Europe or other parts of the world, while Americans, in contrast to the British, lacked a strong understanding of the non-Russian cause. Hrabyk also advocated for applying the concept of autonomy to the American Club while securing Polish leadership across the movement. In November 1950, Shandruk presented a project that involved launching a publishing operation aimed at distributing publications behind the Iron Curtain and conducting propaganda campaigns among American politicians. To achieve this goal, a budget of $25,000 was deemed necessary. The meeting participants agreed that the proposal should be directed to US authorities involved in political

[33] AJPIL, ZP, A letter to T. Schaetzel, 17 Oct. 1950, fol. 109.
[34] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 16 Oct. 1950, fol. 145.

warfare but should avoid official bodies such as the State Department. There was a recognition of the differing stances between American politicians and the military regarding the role of political exiles in the broader US Cold War effort.[35]

In addition to border disputes, tensions between Poles and Ukrainians were exacerbated by personnel matters, particularly in the selection of a representative from Belarus. The Polish faction argued that Mikola Abramchyk, the chairman of the Council of the Belarusian People's Republic, was the legitimate representative, while the Ukrainian-backed Radoslav Ostrovsky, president of the Belarusian Central Council, was not recognised by anyone.[36] Behind this seemingly minor conflict lay a deeper disagreement over the wartime conduct of anti-Communist activists. Ostrovsky, supported by the Ukrainians, was accused of close collaboration with the Germans, a charge frequently levelled by Abramchyk's group.[37] It is worth noting, however, that the claims made by both sides did not accurately reflect the reality. In truth, both Belarusian factions experienced varying degrees of collaboration with the Germans. To complicate matters further, the issue of collaboration affected nearly all major Promethean political groups. Hrabyk lamented that, aside from the Poles and Smal-Stocki, there were hardly any Prometheans with a completely clean record in this regard. In a letter to Schaetzel, he admitted, 'One cannot ignore this fact if we wish to continue the work of Prometheus today, involving both its former and new members'.[38]

The diverse wartime experiences were a recurring theme at Promethean gatherings, often leading to unpleasant confrontations. Polish accusations of pro-German tendencies deeply offended some Azerbaijani officers of the Polish Army.[39] Roman Smal-Stocki, on the other hand, used this issue as a tool to undermine his rivals in exile, specifically the President of the UNR, Andriy Livytsky, and his son Mykola, who were discredited by wartime associations with the Germans. The leaders of the ABN and representatives of Turkestan, who had collaborated with Gerhard von Mende, Alfred Rosenberg's specialist on Soviet minorities, also faced accusations of having Nazi ties. Smal-Stocki justified his reluctance to engage more closely with the ABN by pointing to these questionable episodes in wartime history, saying, 'Let's not tarnish our cause!'[40] Interestingly, none of the Prometheans raised objections to the wartime actions of Pavlo Shandruk, the leader of the Ukrainian National Army formed on the basis of the Waffen-SS Division Galicia. After Shandruk was

[35] Archives of Józef Piłsudski Institute of America (hereinafter: AJPIA), Klaudiusz Hrabyk Archive (hereinafter: KHA), cat. no. 2, Report on the Prometheus meeting in New York on 5 Nov. 1950, fols 218–20.

[36] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 31 May 1950, fol. 99.

[37] Ibid., K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 5 June 1950, fol. 101.

[38] AJPIL, ZP, K. Hrabyk to T. Schaetzel, 20 Nov. 1951, fol. 135.

[39] SSSA, PSP, folder 15, J. Kazimbeyli to P. Shandruk, 17 Jan. 1951, fol. 6.

[40] SSSA, PSP, folder 37, R. Smal-Stocki to P. Shandruk, undated (1950), fol. 12.

honoured in 1961 with the Virtuti Militari for his heroic role in the September 1939 campaign, he faced criticism from the Polish National Democrats in exile and Communist propaganda. Most Prometheans, however, including the Paris-based *Kultura*, rallied to Shandruk's support at that point.[41]

Beyond mere personnel issues and wartime experiences, the Polish-Ukrainian dispute revolved around the question of leadership within the resurging movement. The culmination of this disagreement occurred during the meeting in December 1950. The Polish representation, consisting of Hrabyk and Ponikiewski, expressed complains about the inclusion of unknown individuals brought in by the Ukrainians, and, more significantly, the conduct of the meeting's host, Roman Smal-Stocki, who was supposed to focus solely on the Ukrainian agenda. Therefore, Polish activists began to voice concerns about what they perceived as a 'Ukrainian dictatorship within Prometheus'.[42] Hrabyk, deeply troubled by this situation, was calmed down by Tadeusz Schaetzel, who suggested giving Ukrainians a leading role in America. Schaetzel appeared to acknowledge that the rivalry between Ukrainians and Poles stemmed from the similarity in the political fate of Poland after 1945 and Ukraine after 1921.[43]

Certain representatives of smaller nations welcomed the growing confidence of the Ukrainians. For instance, the Azerbaijani delegate, an officer in the Polish Army named Jahangir bey Kazimbeyli, openly encouraged the Ukrainians to take the lead in the movement. He argued that, having laid the foundations of the Promethean movement in Paris in 1927, it was now their responsibility to carry it forward in America.[44] On the other hand, some groups, like the Cossacks, began accusing Smal-Stocki and Shandruk of practising 'Ukrainian imperialism'.[45] These rising ambitions were fueled by the perception that the Ukrainian cause was gaining prominence in Washington. In December 1950, Shandruk and Smal-Stocki engaged in discussions at the State Department and the US General Staff, characterising their interlocutors as having 'medium authority with backing from higher levels'. While these talks revealed a lack of a unified position within the US establishment, the Ukrainians held hope that some US policymakers recognised the potential of non-Russian nations. Still, in contrast to Smal-Stocki's unwavering arrogance, Shandruk took into consideration the rationale presented by his Polish colleagues. In his correspondence with Hrabyk, he recommended that, for tactical reasons, the Poles should not assert their dominance within the resurging

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[41] R. Stobiecki, "Sprawa Pawła Szandruka' na łamach 'Kultury", in: *Między nauką a sztuką. Wokół problemów współczesnej historiografii*, ed. by E. Solska, P. Witek, and M. Woźniak (Lublin, 2017), pp. 327–39.

[42] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 26 Dec. 1950, fol. 172.

[43] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 2, T. Schaetzel to K. Hrabyk, 21 Sep. 1951, fol. 223.

[44] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, J. Kazimbeyli to P. Shandruk, 26 Jan. 1950, fol. 15.

[45] Ibid., K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 27 Aug. 1950, fol. 128.

movement but instead maintain their influence through relationships with 'friendly' Ukrainians. Shandruk declared himself to be such a person who 'considered Poland to be his second homeland'.[46]

A general assembly of national sections took place in March 1951, officially establishing the American Prometheus Club. It took some time, however, for regular meetings to be organised. The conference that had been planned for the autumn had to be cancelled due to the illness of several participants. This meeting was intended to address important matters such as adopting the Club's charter and outlining its plans for the near future.[47] Meanwhile, it became clear that the political aspirations of the Ukrainian Prometheans had a relatively limited bearing on their actual significance within Ukrainian exile politics. The most substantial Ukrainian organisation in America, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), staunchly declined to endorse Prometheans. This reluctance stemmed from the considerable influence of Banderites within the UCCA, who strongly opposed what they saw as 'Polish-Ukrainian parties' within the Promethean movement.[48] The Ukrainian section even failed to fulfil relatively simple obligations, such as paying the $50 membership fee, as nobody within the UCCA deemed it necessary to support it.[49] Despite his sympathy for the concept of an anti--Communist struggle, Lev Dobriansky, the UCCA president and a professor at Georgetown University, chose to support ABN over Prometheans. Among American Ukrainians, there was a prevailing belief that Prometheus was essentially a 'foreign organisation'.[50]

Considering the Ukrainian Prometheans' limited ties to the mainstream diaspora community, they actively sought to expand their influence by reaching out to alternative political groups. The Ukrainian section, in particular, aimed to broaden its membership to include representatives from Soviet Ukraine, non-Petlurite circles, and women.[51] Notably, among Ukrainian members of the Promethean Club in America, only two figures had a pre-war background: Pavlo Shandruk and Roman Smal-Stocki. The rest consisted of individuals from diverse backgrounds, such as the ex-Soviet intelligentsia, exemplified by Kharkiv geneticist Mykhailo Vetukhiv, and Galician liberal intellectuals, including members of the Rudnytsky clan, such as pre-war journalist for *Bunt Młodych* Ivan Kedryn and young Columbia University PhD candidate Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky.[52] Ukrainians still aspired to take a leadership role within

[46] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 2, Note from an interview with Shandrukh, 6 Jan. 1951, fol. 5.
[47] Columbia University Archives (hereinafter: CUA), Mykhailo Vetukhiv Papers (MVP), box 27, folder 4, S. Kalba to M. Vetukhiv, 5 Nov. 1951.
[48] SSSA, PSP, folder 9, K. Pankivsky to P. Shandruk, 28 Oct. 1953, fol. 80.
[49] CUA, MVP, box 27, folder 3, P. Shandruk to M. Vetukhiv, 20 March 1952.
[50] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, S. Tomkiw to P. Shandruk, 1 Nov. 1952, fol. 37.
[51] Ibid., S. Kalba to P. Shandruk, 14 Jan. 1952, fol. 3.
[52] SSSA, PSP, folder 8, Invitation List, 25 May 1952, fol. 74.

the organisation. The second conference of the American Club in June 1952 once again featured predominantly Ukrainian speakers. Ukrainians justified this by pointing to regained interest in Ukraine within Washington. Hopes for US support were further bolstered when Yaroslav Chyz, an employee of the Common Council for American Unity, arranged a meeting between Pavlo Shandruk and Pentagon representatives. In May 1952, Colonel Albert H. Mackenzie from the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, Department of the Army, even visited Shandruk at his home in Trenton. During their conversation, Shandruk returned to plans for potential military conflict with the USSR, which he had developed earlier in Germany, and discussed the role of non-Russian exiles in such a scenario.[53]

Mackenzie subsequently attended the Promethean meeting in June 1952, even though he admittedly could not understand the speeches as he did not speak Slavic languages. Following Chyz's recommendation, other influential American figures, including representatives from the National Committee for Free Europe (NCFE) and AMCOMLIB, were also invited to participate.[54] Shandruk additionally met with George Fischer, Harvard's expert on refugee matters and a key figure within AMCOMLIB. Shandruk's interlocutors were primarily interested in gaining insights into the psychology of fighters against communism, as this knowledge could potentially be applied in the ongoing Korean War and the anticipated Third World War.[55] However, as Shandruk later recollected, those discussions did not yield tangible outcomes. In his view, the primary opposition to the Promethean agenda did not stem from military circles but from within the State Department.[56]

Prometheans versus AMCOMLIB

Shandruk accurately identified the core issue when he noted the reluctance of non-military circles in Washington to embrace Promethean initiatives. The CIA had already established a network of proxies through Mykola Lebed's Prolog, while experts on political warfare within the State Department, including George Kennan, favoured uniting Eastern European exiles under the banner of Russian anti-communists, such as former premier of Russia Alexander Kerensky or New York-based Mensheviks Boris Nikolayevsky and David Dallin. As a result, financial and political backing was funnelled to AMCOMLIB, an American-funded organisation established in 1950 to build an exile base for American propaganda efforts and unify various Soviet national

[53] SSSA, PSP, folder 7, A. Mackenzie to P. Shandruk, 16 May 1952, fol. 86.
[54] SSSA, PSP, folder 18, Y. Chyz to P. Shandruk, 11 June 1952, fol. 4.
[55] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, An unsigned letter to Shandruk, 17 Apr. 1952, fol. 15.
[56] SSSA, PSP, folder 7, P. Shandruk to V. Shandor, 7 Apr. 1958, fol. 182.

representations. AMCOMLIB advocated a 'non-predetermined' approach to the future structure of the non-Communist USSR, emphasising a predominantly Russian federalist vision. This stance sharply contrasted with the Promethean principles that upheld the rights of all non-Russian nations to full independence.[57]

The discord was further compounded by the typical suspicion of exile governments towards Washington's official policies and US efforts to dominate the anti-Communist diaspora, as seen in the NCFE case and Radio Free Europe's editorial line. The attitude towards AMCOMLIB became a crucial litmus test for the post-war direction of the Promethean movement. The most significant disagreement within its ranks arose from AMCOMLIB's claim that Russians should be considered victims of Soviet totalitarianism, on par with other captive nations. On the contrary, all post-war Promethean statements depicted the Russians as the masterminds of the Communist 'prison of nations'. One activist responded to American pressure by stating, 'Trying to instil a Promethean spirit in the Russian people was an impractical and unrealistic endeavour, going against the very essence of the idea'.[58]

As AMCOMLIB intensified its efforts throughout 1951 to consolidate various exile groups under Russian leadership, concerns arose that some Prometheus representatives might become entangled in Russian actions.[59] Nevertheless, it quickly became apparent that Russian exiles were inadvertently undermining their own cause. During a conference held in Wiesbaden in November 1951, non-Russian delegates appeared on the AMCOMLIB agenda for the first time. The discussions exposed a significant divide between Russian politicians and representatives from other nations, including Georgians, Belarusians, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, as well as individuals from the North Caucasus and Central Asia. Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov, a North Caucasian delegate who attended the conference, recounted Kerensky's surprise as non-Russians began to express concerns about their dependence on Moscow. Empowered by Washington's support, Russians displayed a profound lack of understanding of the aspirations of non-Russian peoples.[60] Consequently, the compromise achieved in Wiesbaden, which involved the establishment of a joint Council for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (known by its Russian acronym as SONR, *Sovet osvobozhdeniia narodov Rossii*), began to unravel almost immediately after the conclusion of the conference sessions.[61]

The discussions in Wiesbaden drew the close attention of the Promethean community. Some members expressed their contentment that no Ukrainian representative had participated in the conference.[62] All major

[57] Tromly, *Cold War Exiles*, p. 125.
[58] AJPIL, ZP, J. Veli Sadych Oglu to Polish Prometheus, 3 Sep. 1951.
[59] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 11 Jan. 1952, fol. 6.
[60] A. Avtorxanov, *Memuarы* (Frankfurt, 1983), p. 668.
[61] Tromly, *Cold War Exiles*, pp. 130–37.
[62] SSSA, PSP, folder 15, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 22 Dec. 1951, fol. 123.

Ukrainian groups in one voice criticised the initiatives of AMCOMLIB and its Russian allies. Towards the end of November 1951, a Conference of the Nations of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Turkestan was convened in Munich, initiated by Mykola Livytskyi. This gathering condemned the Wiesbaden meeting and passed a resolution calling for the inclusion of captive nations in the work of the NCFE and the European Movement. Although Livytsky's initiative competed with Prometheus, its program shared a similar goal of shifting non-Russian nations of the USSR from being regarded as Russia's internal affairs to gaining recognition as at least satellite countries.[63] By 1953, Livytsky's group had coalesced into the League for the Liberation of the Peoples of the USSR, also referred to as the Paris Bloc. It consisted of representatives from émigré centres of Promethean nations who resisted complying with Washington's directives and the federalist agenda of AMCOMLIB.

Promethean leaders also shared a common stance on the unification efforts of Russian émigrés and their American backers. While some, like the Sovietologist and former Polish intelligence officer Ryszard Wraga, warmly supported the Russian unification endeavours, most activists viewed them as a new form of Russian imperialism. In a special statement issued in February 1952, the American Club explicitly rejected the federalist platform proposed by SONR. It argued that the Russian émigré initiative was essentially a continuation of historical Russian imperialist practices. Once again, Prometheans criticised the Americans for failing to acknowledge the significance of 100 million non-Russian inhabitants of Eastern Europe.[64]

With the goals of AMCOMLIB in mind, Prometheus identified its primary mission as countering Russian attempts to label Soviet nations as 'peoples of Russia'. Within this overarching objective, activists believed it was crucial to focus their greatest efforts on opposing the actions of Alexander Kerensky, Sergey Melgunov, and the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (*Narodno-trudovoy soyuz rossiyskikh solidaristov*, NTS), who were perceived as aligning with Russian interests and gaining American support.[65] It was noted that, for the time being, the nations within the Prometheus group considered 'satellites' – those perceived in American optics as under the jurisdiction of the NCFE – should not be directly engaged in this struggle. These objectives created some ambivalence regarding the role of Polish activists in this new arrangement. It was reasonable to argue that Poles might not be as effective in engaging in debates with Russian émigrés as Georgians or Ukrainians

[63] AJPIA, Archiwum Rzeczowe, cat. no. 414, Summary of memo from S. Paprocki to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 Dec. 1951, fol. 363.

[64] SSSA, PSP, folder 8, Komunikat klubu 'Prometej' v SShA, February, 1952, fol. 73.

[65] In recent years, Łukasz Dryblak has extensively documented the relations between Russian exiles and Poles, see Ł. Dryblak, 'Siergieja Mielgunowa emigracyjne spotkania z Polską', *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, vol. 39 (2022), pp. 291–312.

because, as a nation regarded as 'satellite', Poles did not have a direct connection to AMCOMLIB.[66]

The predominant belief among American sponsors of exile initiatives, which prioritised engaging democratic Russians to undermine communism from abroad, led Ukrainians to seek alternative sources of support. In the autumn of 1952, a series of consultations took place at Klaudiusz Hrabyk's apartment in New York, involving informal representatives from the Ukrainian National Council (UNRada), such as Stepan Vytvytsky, as well as the Rudnytsky clan. The latter comprised members of the Ukrainian section of Prometheus, including Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, his mother Milena, a former Polish Sejm member, and journalist Ivan Kedryn. The primary Ukrainian motivation behind these discussions was the desire to break free from international isolation, especially in light of the increasing influence of the Russian federalist program among American circles. In exchange for certain territorial concessions, such as relinquishing control over the oil-rich districts of Drohobych, Ukrainian Prometheans aimed, as Hrabyk clarified, 'to shift away from the Russian sphere and become part of the satellite countries, thereby forming East Central Europe'.[67] These contacts with the Poles were viewed as a strategy to enhance the international standing of the Ukrainian movement. Establishing closer ties with Poland was seen as a potential countermeasure against unfavourable factors, such as pro-Russian inclinations within the State Department, American anti-communists in general, and the successful pro-Banderite propaganda within the exile community.[68]

The meetings in New York never evolved into a substantial alliance. The Polish government-in-exile had limited enthusiasm for overly supporting such projects due to alternative visions for the Intermarium and anti-Ukrainian sentiments within a portion of the diaspora community. These resentments were evident in the reception of discussions about borders initiated by *Kultura*. Moreover, Hrabyk's Ukrainian counterparts were not the most influential political group in America. The Psychological Strategy Conference in Washington, organised by anti-Communist Congressman Charles Kersten in February 1952, notably excluded Promethean representatives. The conference primarily highlighted Russian speakers (50%), with a few individual Poles like Jan Karski, and the UCCA, primarily led by ABN supporters.[69] Unlike Prometheans, UCCA President Lev Dobriansky had close connections with anti-Communist hawks like James Burnham and DeWitt Wallace, which positioned him well for a prominent role in advocating for the rights of

[66] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, Jan Nanuaszwili to P. Shandruk, 30 May 1952, fol. 20.
[67] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 3, K. Hrabyk to W. Jędrzejewicz, 8 Oct. 1952, fol. 67.
[68] Ibid., Note from an interview with Ivan Rudnytsky, 2 Oct. 1952, fol. 184–85.
[69] AJPIA, Archiwum Rzeczowe, cat. no. 414, Briefing note from Mr Paprocki of April 1952, fol. 368.

captive nations in Washington.[70] When some Georgian Prometheans sought Shandruk's assistance in establishing contacts with the Pentagon, they were unaware that the Ukrainian leader not only lacked connections within the American military but had also been unemployed for an extended period.[71]

The formation of the Paris Bloc led by Mykola Livytsky in 1953 as an opposition to AMCOMLIB had another negative consequence for Prometheus. It attracted some movement members, including Belarusians from Mykola Abramchyk's group. However, by the late 1950s, the Paris Bloc had also ceased to function due to internal disputes and a lack of opportunities for exile projects. This lack of a unified stance regarding Washington's pro-Russian policies was rooted in the challenges faced by many displaced individuals. Some Caucasian Prometheans tried to maintain a dual approach, supporting the Promethean movement while also adopting a wait-and-see attitude towards the actions of Russian organisations and AMCOMLIB.[72] Furthermore, there was a lack of unity within the Ukrainian section itself. Ordinary members criticised undemocratic methods employed by Roman Smal-Stocki and Pavlo Shandruk, who often acted independently and without consulting others. The breaking point came with Shandruk's letter to AMCOMLIB, purportedly expressing the readiness to cooperate, which was perceived as a form of capitulation.[73] In response to pronounced criticism, Shandruk resigned from his membership in the Promethean General Board in May 1953. He cited a deepening disagreement with Smal-Stocki and accusations that he was prepared to cede control of Prometheus to AMCOMLIB as his reasons to leave.[74]

By that point, Roman Smal-Stocki, despite his overtly anti-Russian stance, which he conveyed through publications and public allegations of Soviet espionage against Russian émigré professors, had also distanced himself from the Promethean Club. Shandruk attributed this shift to Smal-Stocki's attempt to adjust to the evolving political climate, feeling that such involvement had become politically unwise. To illustrate his point, Shandruk mentioned Smal-Stocki's meetings with German experts, including pre-war *Ostforschung* figures like Werner Markert, who resumed his research on Soviet Studies after the war.[75] It is notable, however, that Shandruk himself reestablished ties with his German acquaintances after 1945.[76] Differing views on the German question indeed played a significant role in deepening strife among Prometheans. The Polish group was very sensitive to any indication

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[70] Ukrainian Museum and Library in Stamford, Mykola Chubatyj Papers, box 2, L. Dobriansky to M. Chubatyj, 10 Nov. 1950.
[71] SSSA, PSP, folder 7, Jan Nanuaszwili to P. Shandruk, 8 May 1952, fol. 85.
[72] SSSA, PSP, folder 9, B. Billati to P. Shandruk, 4 July 1952, fol. 73.
[73] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, S. Tomkiw to P. Shandruk, 2 Apr. 1953, fol. 53.
[74] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 5, P. Shandruk to K. Hrabyk, 9 May 1953, fol. 305–08.
[75] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 7, P. Shandruk to K. Hrabyk, 5 May 1954, fol. 16.
[76] SSSA, PSP, folder 15, Fritz Arlt to P. Shandruk, 29 Sep. 1951, fol. 99–100.

of Ukrainian cooperation with the Germans, as its March 1951 declaration positioned the movement as a counterweight to both the Germans and the Soviets. This framing of the movement within the traditional Polish political mindset of being 'between Russia and Germany' was even criticised by Włodzimierz Bączkowski, a key pre-war Sovietologist. He argued that, given the post-war reality of a German-American alliance at the core of the US Cold War strategy, imposing the traditional Polish perspective on Prometheus was a 'tactical mistake'.[77]

It was becoming increasingly clear that the US did not provide a favourable environment for the Promethean group. Some Ukrainian members openly acknowledged this fact by stating, 'Prometheus is a burden because we lack the resources to fully commit to this work'.[78] Some were candid enough to admit the futility of continuing their efforts. A former employee of the Ukrainian Scientific Institute in Warsaw confessed in a letter to Shandruk as early as 1950 that while young émigrés were purposefully integrating into their host countries, only 'old dreamers' were involved with the Prometheus. According to him, Smal-Stocki recognised this reality and, for these reasons, withdrew from the movement. Americans, the argument went, were just as well-informed about the Soviet reality as the exiles themselves: 'They had access to richer, fresher, and more convincing materials than the exiles could provide. They treat the old exiles as if they were not worthy of attention. The tradition here is that the young people are in charge. This is not Europe'.[79]

By the mid-1950s, pessimism had finally taken hold. The Promethean centre in New York disintegrated. The Polish exiles were embroiled in an ill-fated consolidation effort, leaving the American section with neither the time nor the resources to carry out any organisational activities. The fate of Klaudiusz Hrabyk, who returned to Poland in 1959 and played an important role in Communist propaganda against exiles, illustrates the ultimate defeat of the reviving effort. Faced with a lack of work and prospects, Ukrainian members left New York, with Pavlo Shandruk departing first, followed by others. Balo Billati moved to California without even notifying anyone of his relocation.[80] Roman Smal-Stocki immersed himself in academic and journalistic work, severing all ties with the old Prometheans. One of his former colleagues complained that 'in America, he has changed so much that it is now difficult to speak of him as a Promethean. In his books, he is no different from the Banderites, whose tastes he apparently wants to cater to'.[81] After meeting Smal-Stocki at a conference in Washington in 1956,

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[77] AJPIL, ZP, W. Bączkowski to T. Schaetzel, 30 June 1951, fol. 63.
[78] SSSA, PSP, folder 9, K. Pankivsky to P. Shandruk, 21 Oct. 1954, fol. 85.
[79] SSSA, PSP, folder 14, V. Ivanys to P. Shandruk, 21 March 1950, fol. 49.
[80] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, K. Hrabyk to P. Shandruk, 4 May 1954, fol. 110.
[81] AJPIA, Archiwum Włodzimierza Bączkowskiego (hereinafter: AWB), B. Billati to W. Bączkowski, 10 Apr. 1955, fol. 90.

Włodzimierz Bączkowski made a telling observation: he had 'aged and become somewhat eccentric'.[82]

In this context, communication within the aging Promethean network mainly consisted of mutual complaints about America's inaction, the dire state of the exile community, the bleak prospects for captive nations, discussions of articles and books, and shared concerns about personal and health issues. Under such circumstances, the field was gradually dominated by the ABN circles, which found sympathisers within Ukrainian organisations like the UCCA, among certain congressmen, and among those in the American establishment still backing the 'liberation' strategy.[83] In the private correspondence of Prometheans, a recurring theme was jealousy over the success of the ABN, which, with the support of American Ukrainians, managed to gain influence within the corridors of power.[84] It is notable that the ABN and the Assembly of Captive European Nations (ACEN), rather than Prometheus, proved to be the more adept lobbyist for the Captive Nations Resolution, which was passed by the US Congress in 1959 and established the regular observance of Captive Nations Week.[85] When George Kennan complained about 'anti-Communist ethnic groups' trying to involve America in an 'unnecessary' war, he was not referring to figures like Shandruk, Bączkowski, and Smal-Stocki but rather to Lev Dobriansky, the head of the UCCA.[86]

A Post-War Shift

However, it is important to acknowledge that not everything was lost from the post-war attempts to reinvigorate the Promethean movement. While exiles had to shift their focus from politics to academia and journalism, they became a significant source of information for early Cold War Sovietology. Pavlo Shandruk was occasionally interviewed by American scholars like George Fisher and John Armstrong, who were pioneers in the field of Soviet nationality policy, while scholars of Polish descent, including Richard Pipes of Harvard, heavily relied on Promethean sources in their post-war research. The primary goal of these Promethean endeavours was to provide accurate information about the Soviet reality so that young researchers would not rely on interpretations from émigré Russians hostile to non-Russian causes.[87] Some Prometheans managed to secure academic or analytical positions in

[82] Ibid., W. Bączkowski do E. Charaszkiewicz, 18 Feb. 1956, fol. 45.
[83] SSSA, PSP, folder 16, M. Szczors to P. Shandruk, 16 Feb. 1955, fol. 146.
[84] AJPIA, KHA, cat. no. 7, P. Shandruk to K. Hrabyk, 3 May 1954, fol. 20.
[85] A. Mazurkiewicz, "Narody ujarzmione' – lobby polityczne czy projekt propagandowy?', *Studia Historica Gedanensia*, vol. 5 (2014), pp. 354–92.
[86] G. Kennan, *Memoirs 1950–1963* (Boston, 1972), vol. 2, p. 99–100.
[87] SSSA, PSP, folder 18, Y. Chyz to P. Shandruk, 9 March 1952, fol. 6.

American Soviet Studies. Notable examples include Roman Smal-Stocki from Marquette University and Włodzimierz Bączkowski from the Library of Congress. Younger members were more likely to pursue academic careers, such as Kamil Dziewanowski at Harvard, who wrote a dissertation on the Polish Communist Party, and Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, who continued his career at Columbia and Edmonton. However, older-generation Prometheans often struggled to secure doctoral scholarships and instead found work within the extensive network of American political warfare structures on both sides of the Atlantic. These new roles in academia and journalism often led them into positions in think tanks or radio broadcasting. Radio Liberation, one of AMCOMLIB's primary undertakings, was a significant platform in this regard. Additionally, some Prometheans sought to secure positions within the Institute for the Study of the USSR in Munich, which brought together a few dozen exiles representing various Soviet nationalities.[88]

By the mid-1950s, when AMCOMLIB and its Munich Institute began moving away from an openly pro-Russian program, some Prometheans established cooperation with them. At the Institute, they worked alongside former activists like Azerbajdzhani Mirza Bala Mammadzade, who led the North Caucasian section, pre-war associates of the Institute for the Study and Research of Eastern Europe in Wilno Belarusian Stanislav Stankievich and Crimean Tatar Mustafa Edige Kirimal, as well as Ukrainian Yevhen Glovinsky, a pre-war Secretary at the Ukrainian Scientific Institute in Warsaw.[89] Conferences organised by the Institute brought together Polish Prometheans and Soviet Studies experts like Ryszard Wraga and Wiktor Sukiennicki, and the younger generation of Sovietologists of Polish origin, including Zbigniew Brzeziński and Richard Pipes. Many post-war Prometheans, however, remained somewhat isolated from the Institute, viewing it as influenced by Russian émigrés and US Russophiles.[90] Furthermore, Polish citizenship presented a clear obstacle to cooperation within Sovietological research centres in the American political warfare infrastructure. American officials assumed that scholars from countries like Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia should focus on issues related to their respective satellite countries. On the other hand, Soviet issues were expected to be addressed by representatives of Soviet nations, including Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, or Tatars. This view led to cases like Shandruk being denied a job at the NCFE and Sukiennicki facing difficulties in securing a permanent position at the AMCOMLIB's Munich Institute.[91]

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[88] Ch. O'Connell, *The Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR* (Pittsburgh, 1990).

[89] CUA, MVP, box 24, folder 14, Spysok Obshheho Sobranyya chlenov Ynstytuta po yzuchenyyu SSSR, 30–31 July 1955.

[90] AJPIA, Archiwum Edmunda Charaszkiewicza, box 2, E. Charaszkiewicz to R. Smal-Stocki, 23 Nov. 1968, fol. 12–15.

[91] More on Sukiennicki's post-war career, see S. Łukasiewicz, "Bezdomność' sowietologa. Emigracyjne losy Wiktora Sukiennickiego', *Przegląd Wschodni*, vol. 18 (2022), pp. 159–94.

Bączkowski, who settled in Washington, openly admitted that he envied Kirimal, a fellow at the Munich Institute, saying, 'In any case, you are in a bustling political centre, where you encounter many fascinating individuals from the political spheres that we are highly interested in'.[92] In any case, the American sponsors of these initiatives appeared to consider an individual's national background to be a significant factor in determining eligibility for research related to the Soviet Union.

The highly partisan mindsets of Prometheans also limited their chances for academic positions. The case of Pavlo Shandruk, one of the Promethean 'old dreamers', served a good illustration. Following the events in Poland and Hungary in 1956, he, along with other exiles, anticipated an escalation in the East-West conflict. In preparation for such a scenario, he authored a study that analysed potential plans for a Western bloc invasion of the USSR through the territory of Ukrainian Transcarpathia. Shandruk completed this proposal in early 1957 and submitted it to Borys Martos, a Ukrainian member of the Munich Institute. Predictably, Martos declined to publish the study, explaining that while the topic was undoubtedly interesting, the Institute could not risk publishing it 'to avoid accusations that they were providing material for the preparation of aggression against the USSR'. In light of the prevailing climate of peaceful coexistence, Martos suggested that Shandruk shift his focus and instead analyse Soviet plans for an offensive through Transcarpathia.[93] This exchange underscored the clash between Prometheans' offensive aspirations and the defensive approach favoured by the mainstream Soviet Studies community.

Another passionate Ukrainian figure, Roman Smal-Stocki faced a similar failure with his proposals. His anti-Soviet pamphlets and strong anti-Russian stance pushed him to the margins of American debate. Even his friends privately admitted that his monograph on Russian-Communist imperialism was 'hysterical' and had given him a bad reputation in America.[94] Smal-Stocki's political projects also failed to gain the favour of US anticommunists. In 1957, he came up with an idea to establish a centre for training anti-Communist activists from nations under Soviet rule. This proposal was submitted to US Vice President Richard Nixon, who found it substantively interesting and sought advice from CIA Director Allen Dulles. Yet Dulles did not share Nixon's assessment and raised several concerns. He pointed out that Marquette University, where Smal-Stocki worked, was a small Catholic institution and might be unable to carry out such an ambitious plan, especially in the face of more powerful Soviet studies centres at Harvard and Columbia. He also questioned the wisdom of training anti-Communist elites

[92] AJPIA, AWB, cat. no. 342, W. Bączkowski to E. Kirimal, 12 Feb. 1959, fol. 147.
[93] SSSA, PSP, folder 18, B. Martos to P. Shandruk, 12 June 1957, fol. 73.
[94] AJPIA, AWB, cat. no. 342, W. Bączkowski to E. Charaszkiewicz, 18 Feb. 1956, fol. 45.

under the existing political conditions. Faced with opposition from the CIA, Smal-Stocki's proposal had no chance of success.[95]

The fate of Prometheans in Cold War America illustrates the lack of consensus across the Atlantic regarding the future of the Soviet empire. Attitudes toward the satellite states shifted following the events of 1956 in Hungary and Poland. Instead of the earlier outspoken rhetoric of 'liberation', there emerged a pragmatic acknowledgement of the Yalta status quo and a policy of 'breaking up the monolith', as Jakub Tyszkiewicz nicely put it.[96] This approach entailed a strategy of gradual change built upon the existing Communist governments. The situation of the Soviet republics proved even more challenging. Despite prevailing beliefs, American mainstream anticommunism exhibited a strong pro-Russian orientation. Figures like George Kennan and organisations such as AMCOMLIB and Radio Liberation predominantly amplified the voices of Russian exiles, while alternative Promethean concepts were largely overlooked.

In terms of organisation, the pre-war Promethean movement struggled to adapt to the new conditions of the Cold War era. The older generation, accustomed to the stability and institutional backing they had previously enjoyed, did not display enough flexibility characteristic of the younger exiles who aligned themselves with groups like the ABN or the Prolog milieu, which emerged as successors to the Promethean program after 1945. Another significant factor contributing to the decline of Prometheism in its original form was the US government's real, rather than rhetorical, attitude toward the Cold War realities. There was an unwillingness to fully embrace the program of liberation of captive nations and a de facto acceptance of the status quo. This further marginalised Prometheans in American politics, associating them with extreme conservative groups such as William Buckley's *National Review* and, at its worst, with the controversial Senator Joseph McCarthy. The constraints on manoeuvring were further exacerbated as even Republican politicians and thinkers sought to distance themselves from the notoriety of McCarthyism.

While one can observe a decline in the Promethean movement during the Cold War, it would be premature to declare the demise of Prometheism as a political idea. The concept of Prometheism, inspired by the myth of the ancient titan who dared to steal fire from the gods, has always symbolized rebellion, defiance against the established order, and a vision for a just and transformative world. This spirit of resistance lived on in the collective consciousness and political practices of émigrés, from the 'old dreamers' to the

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[95] CIA FOIA, R. Smal-Stocki to R. Nixon, 14 May 1957, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80b01676r004200150051-6 (accessed: 13 Oct. 2023); A. Dulles to R. Nixon, 3 July 1957, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80b01676r004200150050-7 (accessed: 13 Oct. 2023).

[96] J. Tyszkiewicz, *Rozbijanie monolitu. Polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych wobec Polski 1945–1988* (Warszawa, 2015).

pragmatists, and among all those who continued to hope for the eventual collapse of the Soviet empire – a hope that was ultimately realised in 1991. The idea remains relevant as long as Moscow continues its aggressive policies aimed at subjugating neighbouring nations.

Summary

1939 was a watershed moment in the history of Poland and the Promethean movement – a transnational effort to undermine the influence of Russian imperialism, regardless of its 'white' or 'red' form. Even though after 1945, the Polish government-in-exile found itself in a state of political marginalisation similar to that of the Promethean nations after 1921, Prometheans continued actively pursuing international support for their initiatives. This article addresses a notable research gap regarding post-war Prometheism and its role in the emerging Cold War. The article underscores the divergence from the commonly held belief in Anglo-American historiography, which suggests the existence of an American Cold War consensus. Instead, it highlights that Promethean ideology never gained prominence within Western anticommunism. The article dissects the efforts to rejuvenate the Promethean movement, pinpoints the reasons for their lack of success, and explores the transformation of the Promethean program into novel forms of anti-Communist resistance. By scrutinising the experiences of selected Polish and Ukrainian activists, the article illuminates the factors that contributed to the unexpected evolution of Promethean ideology within the context of the Cold War.

Zmierzch prometeizmu? Losy polsko-ukraińskich aktywistów i ich idei w czasach zimnej wojny

Rok 1939 był przełomowym momentem w historii Polski oraz ruchu prometejskiego – ponadnarodowego wysiłku mającego na celu osłabienie wpływów rosyjskiego imperializmu, niezależnie od jego odmiany „białej" czy „czerwonej". Chociaż po 1945 r. polski rząd na uchodźstwie znalazł się w sytuacji politycznego marginesu podobnej do tej narodów prometejskich po roku 1921, prometeiści nadal aktywnie dążyli do uzyskania międzynarodowego wsparcia dla swoich projektów. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu wypełnić lukę w badaniach dotyczących powojennego prometeizmu i jego roli w rodzącej się zimnej wojnie. Autor podkreśla w nim, że wbrew powszechnemu w anglosaskiej historiografii przekonaniu o istnieniu amerykańskiego zimnowojennego konsensusu, ideologia prometejska nigdy nie weszła do głównego nurtu zachodniego antykomunizmu. Po przeanalizowaniu wysiłków podejmowanych w celu odrodzenia ruchu prometejskiego, identyfikuje przyczyny ich niepowodzenia i bada ewolucję programu prometejskiego w nowe formy walki antykomunistycznej. Poprzez analizę doświadczeń wybranych działaczy polskich i ukraińskich, artykuł rzuca światło na czynniki przyczyniające się do nieoczekiwanej transformacji ideologii prometejskiej w realiach zimnej wojny.

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