

THE EVOLUTION OF PROMETHEANISM: JÓZEF PIŁSUDSKI'S STRATEGY AND
ITS IMPACT ON TWENTIETH-FIRST CENTURY WORLD AFFAIRS

by

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ABSTRACT

As the Bolsheviks attempted to assert their control over the territory of the Russian Empire during the chaotic years of the Russian Civil War many ethnic groups and nations formerly part of the empire declared their independence. Józef Piłsudski as the leader of the Second Polish Republic implemented a strategy called Prometheanism that sought to secure Poland's newly won independence by helping neighboring nations, such as Ukraine, break away from Russian control. Promethean ideas survived the destruction of the Polish state in 1939 when Poles with ties to Piłsudski or Prometheanism who fled to the West after the start of war continued their work in foreign lands. These Polish expatriates influenced the foreign policy of both post-communist Polish foreign policy and of the United States.

A study of Prometheanism is important for several reasons. The most obvious is that it helps explain some of the geopolitical and strategic currents at work in the Eurasia today, in particular Eastern Europe. A closer study of Prometheanism helps to highlight the importance of immigration in shaping policy, as well as showing some of the positive and negative aspects of liberal immigration and refugee policies for both the source and destination countries.

The purpose of this paper is to show how Polish émigrés kept the principles of Prometheanism alive in exile. This study shows that Prometheanism is not an obscure policy of a failed state but rather an important idea whose influence can still be seen

today. Additionally, the paper will examine the role of émigrés and immigrants in the formation of a state's foreign policy and how they bring different experiences and perspectives that influence the host country in both positive and negative manners. The paper will first cover the origins of Prometheanism and its implementation under Piłsudski. Then it will discuss the editor and writers of *Kultura* who adapted the principles of Prometheanism to Poland's post war reality and how this new vision played an important role in shaping Poland's foreign policy after 1989. Finally, the paper will show how Polish Americans lobbied for the United States to adopt policies towards the Soviet Union and Russia that bear a striking similarity to Prometheanism.

The paper will deal with what scholars of immigration history call the "Transatlantic exchange." This concept sees immigration as a two way exchange of ideas and culture rather than a one way flow of people. From 1945 to 1989 only in other countries could Poles think about Poland's foreign policy and place in the world. Some of these Polish émigrés focused their thinking on what Poland should do to restore its independence. Others used their experiences in Poland to help inform the foreign policies of their host nations. Their example shows what impact immigrant groups have on their host country; in this case how highly educated Polish Americans influenced the United States.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIGINS AND ACTIVITY PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II

In November of 1918, Józef Piłsudski accomplished his lifelong goal of seeing Poland restored as an independent country. Poland managed to free itself after over a hundred years of foreign occupation because of the collapse of the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian Empires after World War I. Due to his role as the creator and leader of Polish military formations during the war, he became the head of state of the newly independent Second Polish Republic. In this new capacity he faced the serious problem of how to maintain Poland's sovereignty.

Even though Poland was very weak in 1918–1920, so were its neighbors. Russia's weakness in particular represented an opportunity for Piłsudski to ensure the survival of the Polish state. After the Bolshevik takeover in October 1917, the Russian Empire collapsed and the country fell into a state of anarchy and civil war. In this chaotic environment, several nations broke away from Russian control and formed independent states such as, Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Other nations that once made up parts of the Russian Empire also attempted to break away during the civil war but only temporarily severed themselves from Moscow's grip. Examples of these temporarily free nations include Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Mountain Republic in the Caucasus, the Don Republic, the Kuban People's Republic, Basmachi,

Bukhara, and Khiva.¹ In addition to these, there were other active national separatist movements in regions such as Crimea and Tatarstan.

The chaotic situation in Russia presented an opportunity for Poland to consolidate its independence and then strengthen its position. If Poland's eastern neighbors were a series of smaller states rather than a unified Russian Empire or a consolidated Soviet Union, then the risks to Poland would be greatly diminished. Piłsudski understood this and therefore sponsored a movement called Prometheanism. This program aimed to promote nationalist movements inside the Soviet Union that would lead to the creation of several independent states in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Piłsudski's often quoted statement that "there can be no independent Poland without an independent Ukraine" is a good indication of the logic behind Prometheanism.² In other words, without an independent Ukraine, Poland positioned between Russia and Germany would not have the strength to preserve its independence on its own. Piłsudski hoped these states would serve to secure Poland's freshly won independence. Much like Moscow used communist parties in the West to serve its own interests, Poland's sponsorship of the nationalists movements in the USSR were meant to help serve Poland's interests.³

Piłsudski promoted Prometheanism in inter-war Poland, but the roots of the strategy have long been part of Polish thinking. The idea that Poland needs to cooperate and ally with its eastern neighbors in order survive dates back to the fourteenth century.

¹ See Figures 1 through 4 in Appendix A.

² Piłsudski made this statement during talks with Ukrainian leaders leading up to the signing of the Treaty of Warsaw and the creation of the Polish-Ukrainian alliance. Quote in: Roman Wolczuk, *Ukraine's Foreign and Security Policy 1991-2000* (New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003), 73.

³ Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 40.

In those days the Teutonic Knights, an expansionist crusading order located in Prussia, threatened Poland's existence. In 1385, Poland signed the Treaty of Krewo with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Grand Duke of Lithuania Jogaila, later known as King Władysław II Jagiello, agreed to convert to Christianity and marry the ruling Queen of Poland, Jadwiga. Thus began the Jagiellonian dynasty, which ruled both Poland and Lithuania until 1572 by which time the two states had formed an even closer union. The idea of Prometheanism ultimately stems from the multi-ethnic state created by this dynastic union.

Polish artists and writers also used Promethean imagery during the Partition era. The name of Prometheanism comes from the Greek myth of Prometheus. In Polish literature Prometheus came to symbolize enlightenment and resistance to tyranny. Several of Piłsudski's favorite authors wrote stories that featured characters based off of Prometheus, including Juliusz Słowacki, Adam Mickiewicz, Stefan Żeromski and Jan Kasprowicz. During the nineteenth century, several Polish independence activists called for the breakup of the Russian empire along ethnic lines.⁴ Literature's strong influence on Prometheanism led Stalin to charge and later execute dissident Crimean and Tatar nationalist leaders for the crime of "Wallenrodism," named after a fictional character in Adam Mickiewicz's poem, *Konrad Wallenrod*.⁵ The poem glamorized patriotic treason and featured an ethnically Lithuanian member of the Teutonic Knights who betrayed them after learning of his true heritage. The poem helped to inspire the 1830 revolt in

⁴ Serhiy Bilenky, *Romantic Nationalism in Eastern Europe Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian Political Imaginations* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012), <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=879037>, 58.

⁵ Edmund Charaszkiewicz et al., *Zbiór Dokumentów Ppłk. Edmunda Charaszkiewicza* (Krakow: Fundacja CDCN, 2000), 65.

Poland.⁶ One of the most popular novels in Poland during the partition era, *With Fire and Sword* (*Ogniem i Mieczem*), discussed the tragedies that befell both Poland and Ukraine due to their feuding. The novel, set during the seventeenth century Khmelnytsky Uprising, ends with this passage, “The Commonwealth became a desert; a desert the Ukraine. Wolves howled on the ruins of former towns, and a land once flourishing became a graveyard. Hatred grew into the hearts and poisoned the blood of brothers.”⁷ The culture and literary tradition that Piłsudski lived in helped him understand the need for Polish-Ukrainian cooperation against their common enemies.

Piłsudski attempted to breakup the Russian Empire along ethnic lines even before he took control of an independent Polish state. A military intelligence officer who wrote about his experiences in the movement, Edmund Charaszkiwicz, stated Prometheanism sprang forth from the mind of Joseph Piłsudski when he first formulated his ideas in a letter he wrote in 1904 to the Japanese government. In his letter, he asked for aid from Japan and in return would attack Russian forces thereby causing the Russians to have to fight a two front war in the Russo-Japanese War. He informed the Japanese that Russia, stripped of its control over other nations, would cease to be a dangerous neighbor.⁸ He even traveled to Japan and attempted to present his ideas in person.⁹

⁶ Christopher John Murray, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850* (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), <http://books.google.com/books?id=wgS2nYRIuUEC&pg=PA740&dq=Konrad+Wallenrod&cd=19#v=onepage&q=Konrad%20Wallenrod&f=false>, 740.

⁷ Henryk Sienkiewicz, *With Fire and Sword: A Historical Novel of Poland and Russia*, trans. Jeremiah Curtin, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1894), 776.

⁸ Charaszkiwicz, *Zbiór Dokumentów*, 56.

⁹ There he was foiled by Roman Dmowski who travelled to Japan to stop Piłsudski. Nothing material came of Piłsudski's trip however it is still significant because for the first time in nearly a century a government recognized Polish leaders as representatives of their country.

Through Prometheanism, Piłsudski sought to destabilize and destroy the Soviet Union by fostering nationalism in its constituent republics and ethnic minorities. After Poland's independence, Piłsudski attempted to capitalize on the Soviet Union's troubles and detach non-Russian areas from Moscow's control in several ways. He attempted this overtly during the Polish-Soviet War when Poland joined forces with Symon Petlura and his temporarily independent Ukrainian People's Republic. Their forces took Kyiv in an attempt to ensure Ukraine's freedom from Moscow's control. During the Russian Civil War Poland also recognized the independence of Georgia and Armenia.¹⁰ After the Soviet government managed to reassert control Poland had to continue its Promethean efforts covertly. The governments-in-exile of Ukraine and Tatarstan based themselves in Poland.¹¹ Prometheanism included helping these various nationalist groups get in contact with each other in order to coordinate their efforts.¹² Poland devoted funds to help exiled nationalists start publications and there were also covert efforts inside the Soviet Union to spread propaganda and nationalist literature.¹³ Piłsudski's vision called for nations, such as Ukraine and Belarus to be incorporated into a multi-national federation.¹⁴

Piłsudski entrusted the work of Prometheanism to a network of friends and subordinates, in keeping with his manner of governing. It was “never an official policy of any Polish government, and had no support from Polish political parties, who were never

¹⁰ See Figures 6 through 7 in Appendix A.

¹¹ Charaszkiwicz, *Zbiór Dokumentów*, 62.

¹² Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 41-42.

¹³ Alexandros Petersen, “Chapter 4: Prometheism,” in *The World Island: Eurasian Geopolitics and the Fate of the West*, Kindle Edition (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger Security International, 2011).

¹⁴ Richard K. Debo, *Survival and Consolidation: The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1918–1992* (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 59.

consulted.”¹⁵ His chosen agents carried out the policy and coordinated their efforts secretly. The men and women in the movement were veterans of the Polish struggle for independence. Many were from aristocratic families and born inside Russia but outside of Congress Poland. In other words, those chosen by Piłsudski to help organize Prometheanism largely grew up around the people they later worked with to help liberate.

Prometheanism spanned the length and breadth of Eurasia. Piłsudski’s agents established offices as far afield as Ankara, Turkey and Harbin, Manchuria. Poland also manned branches in Finland. Aid to the Caucasus came from the Polish embassy in Tehran. Caucasian officers were recruited into the Polish military. Poles developed pro-independence literature for peoples in Idel-Ural (i.e. Tatarstan), Crimea, and Central Asia.¹⁶ The briefly independent government in Crimea even asked to be placed under a Polish Mandate by the League of Nations.¹⁷ Poland helped Said Shamil, grandson of Imam Shamil, steer the 1931 World Moslem Congress against the Soviet Union. This led to a lot of negative press for the Soviets in Islamic publications.¹⁸ Said Shamil helped to found the Mountainous Republic of the Northern Caucasus, a briefly independent state from 1917—1920. Poland also hosted the remnants of this government after Piłsudski came to power in 1926.¹⁹

¹⁵ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 41.

¹⁶ Petersen, *The World Island*, “Chapter 4: Prometheism.”

¹⁷ “Warsaw Diet in Uproar: Socialists Prevent Vote on Proposal to Create a Senate,” *The New York Times*, November 7, 1920.

¹⁸ Charaszkiwicz, *Zbiór Dokumentów*, 65; Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses* (New Haven: Columbia University Press, 1986), 132.

¹⁹ Zeynel Abidin Besleney, *The Circassian Diaspora in Turkey: A Political History* (New York: Routledge, 2014), [https://books.google.com/books?id=zQEkAwAAQBAJ&pg=PT136&lpg=PT136&dq=%22Said+Shamil%](https://books.google.com/books?id=zQEkAwAAQBAJ&pg=PT136&lpg=PT136&dq=%22Said+Shamil%22)

While Prometheans worked with many different groups, the main focus of the movement's efforts centered on Soviet Ukraine. This happened for several reasons. Ukrainians were by far the largest of the non-Russian ethnic groups inside the USSR and many Ukrainians did not want to be ruled by Moscow. Additionally it bordered Poland and many Poles lived side by side with Ukrainians. Indeed, "Poland... placed particular hopes in Soviet Ukraine."²⁰ After the Treaty of Riga, Poland continued to covertly aid the Ukrainian People's Republic. It helped to organize Ukraine's military staff, including an intelligence section. Poland recruited Petlurist Ukrainian officers into its own armed forces. Aid also went into supporting pro-independence publications and academic research.

Prometheanism had a domestic component as well. The Volhynia Experiment represented Piłsudski's attempt to utilize Ukrainian nationalism to the benefit of the Polish state internally. Volhynia was an eastern region of Poland and ethnically the most Ukrainian, with Ukrainians consisting of around ninety percent of the population. The governor of Volhynia, Henryk Józewski, believed that support for Ukrainian culture would weaken the Soviet Union and prevent the Soviet Union from using Poland's ethnic minorities from rising up and weakening the Polish state. In addition to allowing Ukrainian to be used in schools, he also sponsored the creation of the Polish Orthodox Church and got its independence recognized by the Patriarch of Constantinople. This allowed Poland's Ukrainian orthodox believers to use Ukrainian in sermons and have a

22+poland&source=bl&ots=xIvrYk3B6m&sig=uqKiQznfzfkfFWGLfZgQnml3OFg&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ePyxVN3IDYW1ogTw54LACg&ved=0CDYQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=Said%20Shamil&f=false, 88-89.

²⁰ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, xviii.

religious leader independent of Moscow.²¹ The Volhynia Experiment is an important part of the overall history of the Prometheanism. Józewski closely collaborated with many of the writers and thinkers who would later carry on the ideals of Prometheanism after World War II.²²

Groups in Poland, such as the National Democrats, did not support Prometheanism. After Piłsudski temporarily left power in 1920, the Polish government decided to stop funding the Ukrainian government of Symon Petlura in 1923. The Polish foreign ministry then instructed its embassies to observe and report Ukrainian dispositions but no longer to provide aid to Ukrainian nationalists in exile. However, Piłsudski's allies in the foreign ministry continued to do what they could to help keep Prometheanism alive. After Piłsudski's coup in 1926 restored him to power, Promethean activity picked up again. Under his guidance, Polish aid to the cause of Prometheanism reached its zenith.

Poland did not aid these nationalist groups singlehandedly. Other countries tried to accomplish similar goals as well. For example, the British supported revolts in the Caucasus against Imperial Russia in the nineteenth century. France and the United Kingdom helped the same nationalist movements that Poland supported as well. Poland did not exclusively promote revolts inside Russia and the Soviet Union but did take the lead in supporting non-Russian nationalism in the interwar era and Poland did make the longest and most consistent effort to break up the Soviet Union prior to World War II.

²¹ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 149-150.

²² Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 250.

However, Germany actually provided the most military help to Ukrainian nationalists. The Germans in the later years of World War I set up a Ukrainian puppet state that they hoped to economically exploit. In 1917–18, the German military exploited their Ukrainian puppet state so badly that, “The peasantry, who had at first eschewed Bolshevism, now turned to it as a protection against the exploitation and repressive domination of the Central Powers.”²³ This shows that westerners, including Poles, do not offer their support for selfless reasons and that their help is often costly for Ukrainians and others.

Polish efforts to free captive nations differed in key ways from the policies of other nations. Unlike efforts such as the German support for Ukraine towards the end of World War I, Poland carried out its Promethean efforts covertly and did not publicly proclaimed them. Poland did not enact the movement as a last ditch effort to garner support for in a war nor as a temporary measure to help recruitment efforts. Rather Poland sustained the effort for over twenty years, spanning periods of war and peace.²⁴

Poland attempted to foster Ukrainian nationalism but at the same time gave Ukrainian nationalists reasons to be angry at Poland. The Polish seizure of key cities that Lithuanians and Ukrainians believed belonged to them resulted in conflict between Poland and those nations prior and became one of the biggest stumbling blocks in Poland’s relationship with both of those nations. In 1918–1919, Poland fought a brief war with the Ukrainian National Republic and seized the city of Lviv. In 1920, Piłsudski’s

²³ Germany was not alone in exploiting Ukraine. Ukrainian peasants hated Polish landowners this legacy of exploitation hurt efforts at cooperation between Poland and Ukraine; John W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Brest-Litovsk the Forgotten Peace* (London: Macmillan and CO., 1938), http://archive.org/stream/brestlitovskthef018745mbp/brestlitovskthef018745mbp_djvu.txt.

²⁴ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 40-41.

forces seized Vilnius. Because of this action, “Lithuanian resentment of Poland ran very deep and Lithuanians have only recently (early years of the 21st century) begun showing signs of understanding Polish aims and motives in 1920.”²⁵ These conflicting efforts led to the failure of Prometheanism in Piłsudski’s lifetime.

Józewski’s attempt to promote Ukrainian nationalism backfired. The Volhynia experiment neither tied Poland’s Ukrainian minority to the Polish state, nor did it result in Ukrainian goodwill. It did not lead to reconciliation between Polish and Ukrainian nationalists.²⁶ Neither Polish nor Ukrainian nationalists viewed the Volhynia Experiment in a positive light. “Soviet historians justified the Soviet annexation of Volhynia by portraying interwar Polish policy as the exploitation of the honest Ukrainian peasant. Much Ukrainian historiography has followed this line, and few Ukrainian national historians have shown much patience for Polish compromisers such as Józewski.”²⁷ Ukrainian nationalists ethnically cleansing the eastern regions of inter-war Poland. In World War II, the Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army (UPA) under Stepan Bandera “murdered 40,000-60,000 Poles living in the villages of former Volhynia and former East Galicia, while the Poles killed some 20,000 Ukrainians, mostly in former East Galicia in reprisal.”²⁸ Later, after the war, the Polish government ethnically cleansed south eastern

²⁵ Anna M. Cienciala, “The Rebirth of Poland,” *History 557 Lecture Notes*, Spring 2012, <http://acienciala.faculty.ku.edu/hist557/lect11.htm>.

²⁶ Tadeusz Hołowko one of the main ideologues of *Prometheanism* and a supporter of Ukrainian culture in Poland was assassinated by Ukrainian nationalists.

²⁷ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, xv.

²⁸ Cienciala, “The Rebirth of Poland.”

Poland of tens of thousands of Ukrainians.²⁹ Therefore, Prometheanism did not lead to better relations between the two nations. It actually led to disastrous results.

By the 1950s, it would seem that Prometheanism had failed and faded into obscurity. The project did not lead to the breakup of the Soviet Union. After World War II, the People's Republic of Poland did not adopt Piłsudski's geopolitical plan. Fears of renewed German aggression and Soviet occupation prevented the implementation of Piłsudski's ideals and methods. Communist Poland discarded Piłsudski's vision of Polish nationalism and its relationship with Poland's interwar minorities and instead implemented Roman Dmowski's version of Polish nationality based on ethnicity rather than loyalty to the state.

²⁹ Cienciala, "The Rebirth of Poland."

CHAPTER 2: SURVIVAL AND TRANSFORMATION

Yet while the Second Polish Republic no longer existed by the 1940s Prometheanism did not die with it. Promethean ideas survived the destruction of the Polish state when many of the people with ties to Piłsudski or Prometheanism fled to the West after the war. The idea that Poland should help promote nationalism in and the independence of the non-Russian nations in the Soviet Union continued and spread in the writing of Polish émigrés living in Western Europe and the United States, particularly in the journal *Kultura*. The grand strategy laid out in the pages of *Kultura* featured an updated version of Prometheanism which stated that Poland should treat Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine as nations on an equal footing with Poland and Russia, help them achieve independence, and to drop all territorial claims on their land. When Poland did restore its full independence in 1989, Poland carried out this program of promoting the independence of these three nations. Later as Poland's position improved and it became part of NATO and the EU, its ambition increased and Poland began to incorporate more elements of Prometheanism, namely the independence of nations farther afield such as Georgia and Chechnya. Prometheanism failed to preserve the Second Polish Republic but the program's influence continued after World War II.

Jerzy Giedroyc, as editor of *Kultura*, modernized Piłsudski's ideas and adapted them to the situation Poland found itself in after World War II. After the war he settled down near Paris, so *Kultura* is known as *Kultura paryska*, which means Parisian. His

journal called for a Polish foreign policy that would help promote the independence of its eastern neighbors much like the agenda for Piłsudski's Prometheanism. It is mainly through Giedroyc that Prometheanism, although a modified version of it, still occupies an influential place with Polish foreign policy.

Post-communist Polish foreign policy largely derived from the thinking of Giedroyc and his team of Polish exiles writing in the journal *Kultura*. His importance to Polish thinking about its eastern neighbors has been shown by historians such as Timothy Snyder.³⁰ His influence on Poland is such that both UNESCO and the Polish Sejm declared 2006, the 100th anniversary of his birth, to be "The Year of Jerzy Giedroyc."³¹ That Sejm resolution listed his accomplishments and his influence on post-1989 Poland. Notably, the resolution also mentioned events that occurred after his death, such as the Ukrainian Orange Revolution. It stated that, "The breakthrough achieved in Polish-Ukrainian relations during the 'Orange Revolution' in Kiev and the reactions of Poles to the Ukrainian struggle for the right to self-determination and democratic elections number among the Editor's [Giedroyc's] real and most resounding victories."³² The resolution thereby recognizes the continuing importance of Giedroyc's ideas even after his death.

³⁰ Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 218.

³¹ "The Year of Jerzy Giedroyc in 2006," *Culture.pl*, December 27, 2007, <http://culture.pl/en/event/the-year-of-jerzy-giedroyc-in-2006>; "Proposals by Member States For the Celebration of Anniversaries in 2006-2007 With Which UNESCO Could Be Associated," Unesco.org, October 6, 2005, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001411/141144e.pdf>.

³² "The Year Of Jerzy Giedroyc - Resolution of the Sejm," *Culture.pl*, May 5, 2014, <http://culture.pl/en/article/the-year-of-jerzy-giedroyc-resolution-of-the-sejm>.

There are several lines of continuity between Piłsudski's designs and Giedroyc's thought. Both men came from noble families were born into noble families east of modern Poland's borders where the nearby peasants spoke a language other than Polish. Piłsudski was born in a village in Lithuania and grew up in Vilnius while Giedroyc was born in Minsk. Piłsudski went to university in Kharkiv, which at the time was part of the Russian Empire but is today Ukraine's second largest city. Giedroyc studied law and Ukrainian history in Warsaw. Therefore both men learned about Ukrainian issues as part of their formal education. After the Polish-Soviet war, Giedroyc became a political ally of Piłsudski and opposed the National Democrats who handed his hometown of Minsk over to the Bolsheviks in the Treaty of Riga.³³ During Piłsudski's May 1926 coup Giedroyc initially supported the government against the rebels but seeing the government's disorder and chaotic response "deepened his pro-Piłsudski stance."³⁴

Not only did Giedroyc support Piłsudski, he participated the Promethean movement. Historian Timothy Snyder described Giedroyc during the interwar years as a "central if discreet figure of the Prometheanism of the early 1930s."³⁵ During this time he edited a magazine called *Myśl Mocarstwowa* that opposed National Democrats' vision of Poland as an ethnic state. Rather his publications supported the Jagiellon tradition³⁶ of

³³ They did this to reduce the number of ethnic minorities inside Poland's borders. See Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 68.

³⁴ Quoted from Giedroyc's autobiography on the Kultura Paryska website; Phillip T. Turner, trans., "Jerzy Giedroyc Biografia najkrótsza," *Kultura Paryska*, accessed January 9, 2015, <http://kulturoparyska.com/ludzie/pokaz/g/jerzy-giedroyc>.

³⁵ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 250.

³⁶ Later Polish nationalists and supporters of Prometheanism tried to uphold then legacy and ideals of the Jagiellonian dynasty. This ideal of Poland is known as the Jagiellonian Concept. The opposing ideal is known as the Piast Concept which draws its name from an earlier Polish dynasty. The Piast Concept stresses ties to Western Europe and Polish ethnicity as the basis for the Polish state. The conflict between these two viewpoints caused much of Piłsudski's domestic political struggles. He represented the

Poland as multi-ethnic state that tolerated many religions. His magazine attempted to popularize Prometheanism.³⁷ He befriended several leading Ukrainian nationalists and supported Piłsudski's efforts to free Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, Georgia and the other Caucasian nations from Soviet rule.³⁸ After World War II he managed to reunite several of the leading Prometheans in the pages of *Kultura*.³⁹

Historians of the subject note the continuity of Prometheanism inside the pages of *Kultura*. Timothy Snyder wrote that the “underlying logic of the *Kultura* eastern program was the same as that of interwar Polish Prometheanism.”⁴⁰ In his thesis about Poland's role in shaping EU eastern policy, Andreas Lorek wrote about Prometheanism, *Kultura* and Polish foreign policy after 1989. He described the “realistic” proposals of the National Democrats versus the Prometheanism and those who carried on its traditions after 1945:

The second school of thought was called the “Promethean” doctrine. This approach originated at the beginning of the twentieth-century under Marshal Józef Piłsudski, “the father of Polish independence.” It followed the argumentation that Poland's security must be based on the independence of the neighbouring states Lithuania, Belarus and especially Ukraine, eventually with a confederation between these states. During the time of the Cold war, representatives of the “realistic” ideas were the authorities of the Polish People Republic, the writers of

Jagiellonian Concept while his opponents the National Democrats, led by Roman Dmowski, held to the Piast Concept. The debate over these concepts extended into the post-1945 era because the Polish Communist government claimed that the “Reclaimed territories,” in western Poland belonged to Poland under the Piast dynasty.

³⁷ Turner, trans., “Jerzy Giedroyc Biografia najkrótsza.”

³⁸ Turner, “Jerzy Giedroyc Biografia najkrótsza.”

³⁹ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 250-251.

⁴⁰ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 251.

the Parisian journal “Kultura” [sic] developed and promoted the “Promethean” ideas.⁴¹

Therefore, historians of Polish foreign policy and of the region have noted that the principles of Prometheanism were the basis on which *Kultura*’s writings on what Poland’s relationship with its eastern neighbors should be like.

Indeed, sometimes the connections between Prometheanism and *Kultura* were explicitly stated. In a 1952 article for the journal *Kultura* Włodzimierz Bączkowski cited an earlier work of his that stated the underlying logic of Prometheanism well. He wrote that even if the Ukrainian nation did not yet exist, Poland’s national interest mandated aiding Ukrainian nationalists develop one simply so that Poland would not have to face ninety million Great Russians plus forty million Little Russians.⁴² He also argued that an independent Ukraine would naturally desire to expand eastwards into the Donbas rather than westward into Poland. This would bring them into conflict with the Russians who need access to the Black Sea.⁴³ Based on these arguments it is clear that an independent Ukraine would push the borders of Russia away from Poland and thereby relieve Poland of the necessity to guard against two hostile neighbors, Germany and Russia.

Giedroyc and the *Kultura* writers advocated for Poland to treat Lithuanian, Belarus and Ukraine as nations and to renounce claims on their territories. This sort of

⁴¹ His description of the non-Promethean Polish foreign policy is as follows: “The so-called ‘realistic option’ was represented by the National Democratic Party. It comprised the strategy to keep correct or eventually friendly relations with Russia at the expense of the countries lying between them. Poland and Russia were assumed to be equal partners as two independent nations; Andreas Lorek, “Poland’s Role in the Development of an ‘Eastern Dimension’ of the European Union” (Master’s Thesis, European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), 2006), <http://www.grin.com/en/e-book/65894/poland-s-role-in-the-development-of-an-eastern-dimension-of-the-european>.

⁴² Włodzimierz Bączkowski, “Sprawa Ukraińska,” *Kultura* 7, no. 57 (July 1952): 65.

⁴³ Bączkowski, “Sprawa Ukraińska, 65-66.

policy would make Poland an ally rather than an enemy of those nationalities.

Nationalists in Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine would then only have Moscow as an enemy. Giedroyc's main partner in spelling out Poland's future eastern policy was Juliusz Mieroszewski. According to Mieroszewski "Poland's security and freedom were ultimately tied to its ability to come to terms with its eastern neighbors... Mieroszewski was convinced that Poles would have to abandon the hate-cum-contempt attitude toward their eastern neighbors that has long been a part of their national ethos. Poland had to accept the loss of the *kresy* [the eastern borderlands] as the price to be paid for normal relations with Ukraine, Belarussia, and Lithuania."⁴⁴ They believed that Poland's first priority in its eastern strategy should be the support for the independence of its eastern neighbors, in particular Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania, precisely the core idea of Prometheanism.

The idea of treating Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine as legitimate nations that were the equals of Poland and Russia was revolutionary at the time. They had not enjoyed independence for hundreds of years. In fact, Mieroszewski devoted a lot of space to denouncing Poland's imperialistic attitude to its eastern neighbors. For example, he wrote: "Has our imperialist impulse died out? ... I do not think so. Many Poles not only wish for a Polish Lwów and Vilnius, they even dream of a Polish Minsk and Kyiv. Many idealize the idea of an independent Poland in a federation alongside Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus. In other words, the alternative to a Russian empire can only be a Polish

⁴⁴ Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 96.

empire.”⁴⁵ Speaking about Jagiellon tradition and how those east of Poland viewed it, “Only for us does the Jagiellon tradition carry no trace of imperialism. However, for Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Belarussians it is the traditional form of Polish imperialism.”⁴⁶ He repeatedly stressed that Poland should drop all its eastern territorial claims, “We cannot say that the Russians should give Kyiv back to the Ukrainians and at the same time say that Lwów must go back to Poland.”⁴⁷ For Mieroszewski the only way to come to an understanding with the Russians that would preserve Poland’s independence would be to recognize that Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine have an equal right to independence as Poland.⁴⁸

Giedroyc monitored the development of Ukrainian identity and nationalism and worried when it looked like the Ukrainian language was dying. In 1961, he wrote to Zbigniew Brzezinski about his travels in Kazakhstan and his interactions with Ukrainian farmers who had moved near to Alma-Ata. He expressed his worry that the Ukrainians who settled there would lose their distinctive culture and noted that the increasing use of Russian worried him. In Ukraine, Giedroyc found that only in Lviv did people still speak Ukrainian widely, and only there could he still find signs of Ukrainian nationalism, albeit of an anti-Polish strain. Overall, he wrote about the situation in Lviv favorably and compared it well to “the state of things in Kiev and also in Kharkiv, where the Ukrainians

⁴⁵ Note that the city of Lviv is spelled differently depending on which language it is translated from. Currently it is located in Ukraine and populated mainly by Ukrainians so the Ukrainian translation of Lviv is mainly used throughout the paper. However, when quoting Polish speakers the Polish name of the city, Lwów, will be used in order to quote the writer more accurately; Juliusz Mieroszewski, “Rosyjski ‘kompleks polski’ i obszar ULB,” trans. Phillip T. Turner, *Kultura*, September 1974, 5.

⁴⁶ Mieroszewski, “Rosyjski ‘kompleks polski’ i obszar ULB,” 7.

⁴⁷ Mieroszewski, “Rosyjski ‘kompleks polski’ i obszar ULB,” 7.

⁴⁸ Mieroszewski, “Rosyjski ‘kompleks polski’ i obszar ULB,” 12.

are losing ground.”⁴⁹ This letter shows how highly Giedroyc valued Ukrainian nationalism and cultural distinctiveness from Russia.

The *Kultura* program placed such a high priority on the independence of Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine because they would help Poland maintain its own independence. Mieroszewski wrote that without the presence of these nations Poland would be in a hopeless position, “Imagine for example that Russia is a nation-state. Populated from Vladivostok to Lwów by one mass of Russians. In this example Poland’s situation would be hopeless... Luckily this is not the case... Our only hope is to unite with those—who like us—want to free themselves and stand on their own two feet.”⁵⁰ For Mieroszewski Poland’s only hope of being able to fend off the Russians is good relations with the nations between Poland and Russia, “We are not choosing between a promethean program and a program of conversation with the Soviets, of course we do not have such a choice. We advocate for a program of liberation of nations subjugated by Russia—not because of any romantic notions but because, there is no other alternative and in fact never was.”⁵¹ This statement shows how thinking about Poland’s eastern neighbors began to evolve. *Kultura* moved away from the Jagiellon view of Ukraine and Belarus and moving towards viewing them as equals. This represented a reformed version of Prometheanism’s drive to secure their independence.

In 1989 democratic elections took place in Poland. They led to the fall of communism and left Poland free to conduct an independent foreign policy for two years

⁴⁹ Jerzy Giedroyc, “Komentarz Do Artykułu Lewickiego,” March 14, 1961, http://kulturoparyska.com/ludzie/korespondencja/zbigniew_brzezinski.

⁵⁰ Juliusz Mieroszewski, “Polska ‘Ostpolitik,’” trans. Phillip T. Turner, *Kultura*, 1973, 70.

⁵¹ Mieroszewski, “Polska ‘Ostpolitik,’” 70.

while the Soviet Union still existed. During this time Poland had to navigate a complicated and rapidly changing world. Germany had still not unified. German unification posed a serious problem for Poland because West Germany had never agreed to Poland's western borders. To the east the Soviet Union still commanded powerful conventional and nuclear forces. Poland had to secure its borders and define its relationship with its neighbors. Rather than stumble through these potential minefields, Poland's leaders acted with a plan. Post-communist Poland's strategic goals had already been laid out in the pages of *Kultura*.

After the fall of communism in Poland, the Polish government moved swiftly and deliberately to help eastern nations also achieve their independence while not antagonizing Moscow and helping to manage German reunification. Their deliberate and speedy response to events indicates that Poles were acting on a pre-existing plan rather than just successfully making up grand strategy as they went along. Mieroszewski wrote that, "The first priority for Poland's eastern policy should be the recognition of the rights of nations oppressed by the Soviets to self-determination and independence... in particular Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania."⁵² Giedroyc wrote in his autobiography that, "Our main goal should be normalizing relationships with Russia and Germany, exerted together with defense of the independence of Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic states, and with a close cooperation with them. We should realise that the stronger our position in the East is, the more we mean in the West."⁵³ In 1989–1991, non-Communist Poland did its best to

⁵² Mieroszewski, "Polska 'Ostpolitik,'" 76.

⁵³ Lorek, "Poland's Role."

follow their advice while managing the withdrawal of Soviet troops, German unification and the eventual Polish integration into NATO and the EU.

Poland's response to the Lithuanian independence movement shows the care that Poland took with its foreign relations in this era. Poland was one of the first states to support Lithuania's exit from the Soviet Union. On March 11, 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR adopted the Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania. The next day, Polish leaders sent congratulations to Lithuania. Lech Wałęsa issued a statement that declared, "The Government of the Polish Republic supports self-determination of nations, including self-determination leading to separate statehood... Poles are interested in good relations with the nation of Lithuania as well as with all our neighbors... I would like to express my delight that Lithuanian independence has been restored."⁵⁴ That same day Polish Solidarity officials traveled to Vilnius and Kyiv and addressed nationalist assemblies and the Lithuanian Parliament.⁵⁵ Wałęsa's statement called Lithuania a nation. This not only shows that Poland worked towards helping its eastern neighbors declare independence but that Polish leaders now viewed their neighbors as equals. This represented an important achievement of the *Kultura* program and a significant improvement over the efforts to promote nationalist movements during Piłsudski's lifetime when chauvinistic Polish attitudes towards Ukrainian, Lithuanian, and Belarusian national aspirations hampered such efforts.

Surprisingly in hindsight, when Lithuania became the first Soviet Republic to declare independence the international community did not support the breakup of the

⁵⁴ John Kifner, "Poland's Leaders Praise Lithuanian Sovereignty," *The New York Times*, March 12, 1990.

⁵⁵ Kifner, "Poland's Leaders Praise Lithuanian Sovereignty."

Soviet Union. Poland's support of Lithuania leaving the USSR was not an easy decision. However, as Lithuania moved to free itself from the Soviet Union, Poland cautiously but consistently supported its efforts, short of formal recognition. Poland's caution made sense because Soviet forces still occupied Poland at the time. However, despite its caution Poland still supported Lithuania independence far ahead of most other countries. Poland sent a letter of congratulations and recognized Lithuanian independence before all other Eastern European states. In contrast to Poland's stance, in March of 1991, a full year after Wałęsa celebrated Lithuania's potential independence, after the Soviet economic blockade against Lithuania and the use of force against the republic's parliament, President Bush's White House softened its tone against Gorbachev and "made it clear that it was not prepared to take Lithuania's side in a test of will with Moscow."⁵⁶ The United States did not recognize Lithuanian independence until September 1991 even though according to the State Department's Office of the Historian, the US never recognized Lithuania's incorporation into the Soviet Union.⁵⁷

Kultura played an important role in guiding Poland to support Lithuania. Jerzy Giedroyc and the writers he featured called for and supported Poland's role in the encouragement of Lithuania's contribution to the breakup of the USSR. The journal featured articles that promoted the importance of Lithuanian independence for Poland for years prior to 1990. Giedroyc personally called for the Polish government to recognize Lithuania. On March 8, 1990, three days prior to the official announcement, Jerzy

⁵⁶ Andrew Rosenthal, "U.S. Softens Tone On Lithuania Issue: White House Is Not Prepared to Side With the Republic U.S. Abandons Harshness on Lithuania," *The New York Times*, March 27, 1991.

⁵⁷ "A Guide to the United States' History of Recognition, Diplomatic, and Consular Relations, by Country, since 1776: Lithuania," *U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian*, accessed January 5, 2015, <https://history.state.gov/countries/lithuania>.

Giedroyc wrote to Zbigniew Brzezinski that Lithuania was about to declare independence. He stated in his letter that he would write to deputies in the Sejm that they should recognize Lithuania's independence quickly.

Poland's policy towards the Ukrainian SSR shows how Poland deliberately helped foster Ukrainian independence. On the twenty-fourth of August of 1990 the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet declared itself to be sovereign but within the framework of the Soviet Union. That day the Ukrainian SSR began signing agreements with Poland. A month later, "in October 1990, Poland became the first country in the world to back the idea of Ukrainian sovereignty."⁵⁸ That same month the Polish foreign minister travelled to Kyiv and signed an agreement on Polish-Ukrainian relations. This means that Poland treated Ukraine as an independent country almost a full year before the actual declaration of independence. On September 8th, 1991, the two countries signed:

a consular convention, a protocol on consultation between Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and a communique on establishing diplomatic relations in the near future. As a result of these agreements, and the fact that there were diplomatic representatives in Warsaw and Kyiv... the leaders of Poland and Ukraine could expand their mutual relations very quickly after Ukraine's proclamation of independence on August 24, 1991, and its subsequent confirmation by referendum on December 1, 1991. Poland was the first country to announce recognition of this act, a few hours after the Ukrainian proclamation.⁵⁹

By being supportive of Ukrainian leaders as they moved towards greater autonomy and then outright independence, Poland helped reassure them that other countries would back them if they left the Soviet Union. At the time this support was not

⁵⁸ The second country to support Ukraine's independence was Canada due to the influence of the Ukrainian ethnic lobby. This example shows the influence of immigrants and refugees on that country. The United States is not the only country where immigrants help shape foreign policy; Stephen Engelberg, "Poland Backs Ukraine Ties," *The New York Times*, November 29, 1991.

⁵⁹ Sharon L. Wolchik and Ryszard Zieba, "Ukraine's Relations with Visegrad Countries," in *Ukraine: The Search for a National Identity* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 137.

only crucial but also not universal. Poland's "early recognition [of Ukraine's independence] exceed the expectations of Ukrainian patriots, earned the Polish ambassador in Moscow summons from Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, and garnered disapproval from the United States."⁶⁰ In contrast, the American President Bush came to Kyiv prior to the independence vote and urged Ukrainians to support Moscow.⁶¹ Poland's rapid support for Ukrainian independence also shows that Poland was clearing following the *Kultura* program.

Poland's well thought out policy reaped dividends for both countries. After 1991 Poland was "the leading supporter of including Ukraine in European and Western institutions. Whether Ukraine will do so is a question appears still open. But that Poland is trying so hard shows that Prometheanism remains very much alive and too important to ignore."⁶² *Kultura's* program was instrumental in helping both countries transition to independence and peaceful cooperation:

Had Polish policy been hostile to Ukraine, some West Ukrainian activists would have been distracted from the civic project of nation-building, and they would have advanced a nationalism less appealing to Kyiv elites and the Russophone Ukrainian majority. Had Poland advocated peaceful changes in frontiers, as for example Hungary and Romania did at this time, much of the energy of West Ukrainian activists would have been diverted.⁶³

⁶⁰ Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 243.

⁶¹ Even though some Americans called for the United States to push for the breakup of the Soviet Union towards the end of the Cold War, cooler heads that wanted a more cautious approach ultimately prevailed. Fears of events spiraling out of control prevented the implantation of a Promethean policy by the United States under the elder President Bush. See; Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, Google Books (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 97.

⁶² Paul A. Goble, "Prometheanism Reborn: Poland's Approaches To The East Before And After World War II," Justice For North Caucasus, December 17, 2013, <http://justicefornorthcaucasus.info/?p=1251671703>.

⁶³ Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 244.

Poland's support for Ukraine's western orientation and independence in 1990—1991 “produced in both capitals the sense that the support by one country for the independence of the other was vital to itself.”⁶⁴ The first few years of the third Polish Republic are full of examples that show that Poland still pursued an updated foreign policy that drew on the core principles of Prometheanism.

Poland's foreign policy after 1991 also shows the continuing influence of Prometheanism. However, the struggle now became how to preserve the independence of its eastern neighbors and ensure their westward orientation. The “neo-Promethean movement, revived by the alliance of like-minded leaders of Eastern European states in the mid-2000s and led primarily by Lech Kaczyński and Mikheil Saakashvili, both the admirers of Piłsudski's Promethean vision,” seeks to assist countries like the Baltics, Ukraine and Georgia “in their endeavour to integrate with the Western institutions and to get the West more involved in protecting these countries vis-à-vis Russia.”⁶⁵ According to Paul A. Goble:

There are three other areas where Prometheanism remains on display. First, Warsaw continues to promote democratic change and a Western rather than Moscow orientation in the other countries around the periphery of Russia... Second, it has become the leader of what might for want of a better term be called ‘the Baltic-Nordic caucus’ within the West, a grouping of countries led by Poland and Estonia who want to ensure that the northeastern portion of Europe is more closely tied to the West... And third, Poland has become even more important as a center for the study of the peoples and politics of Eurasia, not only by attracting scholars and journalists from east and west as the pre-war Promethean League did

⁶⁴ Goble, “Prometheanism Reborn.”

⁶⁵ Gela Merabishvili, “Why Ukraine Matters to Georgia,” *New Eastern Europe*, March 3, 2014, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/interviews/1117-why-ukraine-matters-to-georgia>.

but also, again recapitulating the earlier experience, conducting research and issuing publications that are helping to define how each side views the other.⁶⁶

Poland's foreign policy, although constrained by limited means, consistently seeks to help Russia's neighbors integrate into western institutions and thereby prevent them from falling under Russia's control. For example, in 2014 Ukraine's President Poroshenko came to Warsaw and addressed Poland's parliament. In addition to thanking Poland for supporting Ukraine during the difficult year he also paraphrased Piłsudski when he said that, "Existence of independent Ukraine has a strategic dimension for Poland and is a very important factor that encourages Poland's independence too. Similarly, Poland has a strategic dimension for Ukraine as well."⁶⁷ Therefore, there were still elements of Prometheanism in Polish foreign policy after 1991.

Poland's commitment to Georgia's independence is one of the best examples of the continuing influence of Prometheanism today. The importance of Prometheanism to Georgia and Poland is shown by a statue of the Greek mythological figure Prometheus in Tbilisi.⁶⁸ The presidents of Poland, Lithuania and Georgia attended the November 22th 2007, unveiling of the statue. "The statue symbolised the international anti-communist movement of Prometheism of the 1920s and 1930s."⁶⁹ If the meaning of the statue of the titan for whom Prometheanism was named was not clear enough, President Kaczynski's comments that day should have left no doubt as to what message the leaders tried to send

⁶⁶ Goble, "Prometheanism Reborn."

⁶⁷ Petro Poroshenko, "Petro Poroshenko's Speech at the Polish Sejm," trans. Bartosz Marcinkowski, *New Eastern Europe*, December 19, 2014, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1428-petro-poroshenko-s-speech-at-the-polish-sejm>.

⁶⁸ See Figure 8 in Appendix A.

⁶⁹ Merabishvili, "Why Ukraine Matters to Georgia."

to Russia and the world. In his speech Kaczynski clearly stated that Georgian freedom is vital to Poland's freedom:

I am overcome with deep emotion as I receive this decoration from the hands of the President of the nation which has for centuries been resisting the Russian imperialism, the nation which for almost 18 centuries has been a Christian nation, a nation which after 1989 stood as a model of attachment of freedom, which fought to regain it after the Bolshevik revolution and has actually regained it for a few years... You referred, Mr President, to Georgian officers in the Polish army. This gesture was not a coincidental one on the part of Marshal Piłsudski. After 1920, in Poland we had many officers from various armies but it was only Georgian officers and a few Azeri ones who could serve in our army on a par. This was an expression of our sense of affinity with you. This feeling of affinity is still alive and translates into excellent relations between us and into very good relations with Mr Micheil [sic] Saakashvili.⁷⁰

Later that day President Kaczynski spoke with the Polish press and again stated that Poland's policy remained to ensure the continued independence of the nations in the Caucasus:

Poland is profoundly interested in the development of democracy in Georgia, in stabilization of the situation in that country and in forging possibly closest relations between our two countries. These relations are underpinned not only with the sense of affinity between our two nations... but they are also connected with intentional and consistent policy pursued by Poland especially in the last two years. That policy consists in developing possibly closest relations with the countries south east of Poland. This refers to Ukraine but also to Georgia, Azerbaijan and perhaps also other states in the long-term perspective. This is a policy which we would never want to change and its central part consists in providing support to European aspirations of these countries, i.e. aspirations to join NATO in the first place, and in a certain time perspective also to secure membership of the European Union.⁷¹

⁷⁰ "President of the Republic of Poland Visits Georgia," *President of the Republic of Poland*, November 23, 2007, <http://www.president.pl/en/archive/news-archive/news-2007/art,128,president-of-the-republic-of-poland-visits-georgia.html>.

⁷¹ "President of the Republic of Poland Visits Georgia."

The symbolism of the Promethean statue is backed up by a commitment to bring Georgia and other neighboring countries into western institution in order to prevent the Russians from being able to recreate a sphere of influence in the region. This is the President of Poland openly repeating Giedroyc's ideas that built off the logic of Prometheanism.

Kaczynski's support of Georgia did not just consist of empty platitudes; he risked his own personal safety during the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 by flying to Tbilisi.⁷² There he toured the battlefield with Saakashvili and was reportedly fired upon by Russian soldiers.⁷³ In a show of solidarity during that trip he stood alongside President Saakashvili, President Yushchenko, and the Presidents of the three Baltic countries.⁷⁴ Saakashvili repaid his debt "by being one of the few leaders to brave the ash clouds and fly to Poland for Kaczynski's funeral."⁷⁵ Upon Kaczynski's death in 2010, Saakashvili declared him to be a hero of Georgia and awarded him with the Order of the National Hero of Georgia, that country's highest award.⁷⁶

After 1989 Poland joined Western Europe and integrated into its supranational institutions. While this may seem like it is a counterargument to the idea that Piłsudski and *Kultura* are still influential, in reality it is not. Piłsudski hoped to free the captive

⁷² Jan Cienski, "The Polish Tiger," *Foreign Policy*, May 27, 2011, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/05/27/the-polish-tiger/>.

⁷³ Philip P Pan, "Georgian, Polish Presidents Say They Were Shot At Near Russian Checkpoint," *The Washington Post*, November 24, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/23/AR2008112300789.html>.

⁷⁴ "Kaczynski in Tbilisi: 'We Are Here to Take up the Fight'," *Free Republic*, August 13, 2008, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/2061279/posts>.

⁷⁵ Cienski, "The Polish Tiger."

⁷⁶ Uploaded by Luis Dingley, "Saakashvili `Lech Kaczynski Was Hero of Georgia,'" *YouTube*, April 12, 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyGzMRaJlhk>.

nations in the Soviet Union and then form a federation of eastern European countries, a concept he called the *Międzymorze*, which means “Between-seas” and is referred to by English language historians as the *Intermarium*.⁷⁷ *Kultura* took the idea of a *Intermarium* federation and updated it to a world where NATO and the EC existed, just like it updated Prometheanism.⁷⁸ In keeping *Kultura*’s program, independent Poland immediately tried to integrate within multi-national bodies. As early as 1952 Juliusz Mieroszewski wrote that independence for small countries is a fiction in modern world. He wrote that Poland should not chase after utopian visions of unfettered sovereignty.⁷⁹ He further presaged Poland’s eventual entry into the European Union by calling for Poland to see itself and its history as part of Europe rather than as a unique country that functioned a Europe’s bedrock and the last bastion of Christianity.⁸⁰ Even though in his 1952 article Mieroszewski warned Poland against heroic last stands and the sort of violent fight for independence that Piłsudski led, this was not a refutation of what Piłsudski did but rather a call a new form of struggle for Polish freedom in the face of overwhelming Soviet military power and the experiences of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.⁸¹ The new form of struggle he called for was for a federated Europe of which Poland would be apart. This harkened back to Piłsudski’s idea for a Baltic to Black sea federation but with the

⁷⁷ This idea stems from Adam Czartoryski’s ideas about recreating the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth but this time including the Ukrainians as one of the represented nations. The idea that Ukraine should be equal to Poland and Lithuania within the Commonwealth date as far back as 1658.

⁷⁸ Marek Suszko, “‘Kultura’ and European Unification, 1948-1953,” *The Polish Review* 45, no. 2 (2000): 190.

⁷⁹ Juliusz Mieroszewski, “O Reforme Zakonu Polskoscii,” *Kultura* 4, no. 54 (April 1952), 7.

⁸⁰ Mieroszewski, “O Reforme,” 9.

⁸¹ Mieroszewski, “O Reforme,” 5.

acknowledgement that Poland was not a leading great power.⁸² This federation of the countries between the seas was for Mieroszewski the only way Poland could hope to keep the territories seized from Germany in 1945.⁸³ An early example of this was Poland's negotiations with Czechoslovakia and Hungary that led to the formation of the Visegrád Group in 1991.

Piłsudski did not foresee organizations like NATO and the EU but Poland's enthusiasm for joining them does have a precedent in his thinking as updated by his followers in exile during the communist era. For Giedroyc and other *Kultura* contributors, Poland's promotion of a western oriented Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania complemented rather than opposed Poland's EU accession.⁸⁴ "In discussing the unification of Europe, many members of Poland's political and intellectual elites cite *Kultura* as their guide on how to achieve this goal. Fifty years after *Kultura* initiated its idea of a unification of Europe, a free Poland, together with the other eastern European nations, is on its way to fulfilling *Kultura's* vision."⁸⁵ Poland's participation in the EU and NATO complements rather than replaces the Promethean aspects of Poland's foreign policy. Radosław Sikorski, the Polish foreign minister from 2007 to 2014, also noted this. In describing Poland's place in the world he said that, "Rather than a buffer, it is better to be a promontory, projecting stability and Euro-Atlantic values to the East. Poland has two foreign-policy traditions: the mediaeval Piast tradition, whose main gambit was to anchor us in the West by adopting Latin Christianity; the later Jagiellon tradition was essentially

⁸² Mieroszewski, "O Reforme," 10.

⁸³ Mieroszewski, "O Reforme," 10.

⁸⁴ Lorek, "Poland's Role."

⁸⁵ Suszko, "'Kultura'," 195.

about using that anchoring to spread Western influences to the East. Membership of the EU allows us to pursue both.”⁸⁶ Therefore, Poland’s place in Europe today does not change Poland’s need to border friendly countries to the east. To ensure this happens Poland still needs to promote nationalism in non-Russian ethnicities, like Ukrainians. Rather than alleviating these requirements the EU helps Poland do this more effectively.

Sikorski’s statements also lend credibility to the idea that Prometheanism still influences Polish foreign policy. In his address on Polish foreign policy in 2014, he made one of the finest statements clarifying the legacy of Prometheanism in modern Poland. He described Poland’s foreign policy as a modernized version of Jerzy Giedroyc’s foreign policy doctrines. Sikorski described Giedroyc as the “patron of foreign policy of a free post-1989 Poland,” and then went on to describe point by point how Polish foreign policy in 2014 still follows the precepts laid down by Giedroyc.⁸⁷ If Poland’s foreign policy is a modernized version of Jerzy Giedroyc’s ideas, then it is also an updated version of Pilsudski’s strategic vision, of which Prometheanism was a relevant part. While working in the United States in 2004, Sikorski wrote about his experiences as a journalist in Afghanistan. He said that, “The victory in Afghanistan in the 1980s remains instructive today, because it shows that the best way of affecting events in foreign lands is not necessarily to send troops, but to empower your friends to do what they want to do anyway. The trick is to use other people's patriotism to the desired ends. Proxy war is to

⁸⁶ Radosław Sikorski used to write articles and when doing so he would sometimes use the shorter form of his name, Radek. Citations will use what form of his name as it appears on the publication; Radek Sikorski, “The Joy of Federalism,” *The Spectator*, February 17, 2001.

⁸⁷ Radosław Sikorski, “Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Goals of Polish Foreign Policy in 2014,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, May 8, 2014, http://www.mfa.gov.pl/en/c/MOBILE/news/address_by_the_minister_of_foreign_affairs_on_the_goals_of_polish_foreign_policy_in_2014#.U26M1TfDReA.facebook.

preventive war what judo is to boxing: A black belt beats Mike Tyson every time.”⁸⁸ This quote is important for a couple of reasons; it shows that he was using the same logic that underlined Prometheanism. Additionally, he first saw how patriotism and ethno-religious conflict can be used to weaken Russia and the Soviet Union where the United States first began to actively support non-Russian nationalism in the USSR.

In conclusion, Prometheanism survived the fall of the Second Republic in 1939 in Polish thinking about strategy and Poland’s relations with its neighbors. After the war Jerzy Giedroyc, who worked in Piłsudski’s project in the 1920s—1930s, founded the journal *Kultura*. Gathering together veterans of Prometheanism and other writers in that journal Giedroyc managed to adapt the principles of Prometheanism to Poland’s strategic reality in the Cold War. This formed the basis of the thinking of non-communist Poland’s foreign policy after 1989. Due to *Kultura*’s influence the newly freed Polish state made no territorial demands on its neighbors and encouraged them to break away from the Soviet Union. After the fall of the Soviet Union Poland has continued to help former Soviet Republics join NATO and the EU. This part of Poland’s strategy can be traced back to *Kultura* and from there to Piłsudski’s efforts to break up the USSR along ethnic lines.

⁸⁸ Radek Sikorski, “Mujaheddin Memories,” *National Review*, August 23, 2004.

CHAPTER 3: ACROSS THE POND

Prometheanism influenced the foreign policy of the United States as well as Poland's. To be precise, several notable Polish Americans called for the United States to adopt policies that closely resemble Prometheanism. The idea that Prometheanism influences US policy has been mentioned by historians, scholars, and activists. Timothy Snyder wrote that after the Cold War and Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004 "A shadow of Prometheanism stirred... This general project now enjoyed some support from a democratic European Union, as well as from the United States."⁸⁹ The direct connection with Prometheanism is not as strong in the United States as it is in Poland but there are strands of continuity between the policies of Piłsudski and the modern foreign policy of the United States. However, while Polish Americans did not exclusively call for the United States to support the breakup of the Soviet Union a group of Polish Americans did significantly influence the faction or lobby that called for the United States to promote nationalism in the USSR and this lobby did at least partially succeed in accomplishing their goals.

To see that Prometheanism has influenced the foreign policy of the United States it is important to prove several points. First, the United States or at least parts of the foreign policy establishment seek or sought to break up either the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation along ethnic lines. Second, this was not always the foreign policy of

⁸⁹ Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 262.

the United States towards Russia or the Soviet Union. Third, the Polish Americans, especially first generation Polish Americans, helped to shape United States policy. An overview of the US-Russian relations shows that, while never official United States policy, factions in the United States did try to break up the Soviet Union along ethnic lines. This policy did not predate the Cold War and therefore was not a long standing policy of the United States. Finally, Polish Americans, some with familial ties to Piłsudski's government or ties to *Kultura*, did influence United States policy along these lines in conjunction with other ethnic lobbies and American anti-communist cold warriors.

The United States has used nationalism to take countries out of Russia's control or sphere of influence and integrate them into a western oriented supranational federation, just like Piłsudski tried to do. Since the Cold War ended, the West, led by the United States, has sought to reduce or eliminate Russia's sphere of influence by bringing more and more states into NATO and the European Union, not only former Warsaw Pact member states but former republics of the Soviet Union.⁹⁰ The West also supported color revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine,⁹¹ and Kyrgyzstan⁹² that replaced pro-Russian leaders with pro-Western leaders who have attempted to bring their countries into NATO and wanted to distance them from Russia.⁹³ In 2013 and 2014 the West and the United States

⁹⁰ Steven Lee Myers, "Bush Backs Ukraine's Bid to Join NATO," *The New York Times*, April 1, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/01/world/europe/01iht-prexy.4.11593095.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&.

⁹¹ Ian Traynor, "US Campaign behind the Turmoil in Kiev," *The Guardian*, November 25, 2004, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/nov/26/ukraine.usa>.

⁹² Craig S. Smith, "U.S. Helped to Prepare the Way for Kyrgyzstan's Uprising," *The New York Times*, March 30, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/30/international/asia/30kyrgyzstan.html>.

⁹³ David Anable, "The Role of Georgia's Media—and Western Aid—in the Rose Revolution," *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 11, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 8.

in particular helped to overthrow the pro-Russian government of Ukraine and replace it with a pro-NATO one.⁹⁴ There are even assertions by the Russians that the United States is providing help to further break up the Russian Federation along ethnic lines.⁹⁵ Also, there are statements by politicians that show that the breakup of the Soviet Union and Russia is something that they hoped for. Robert Gates wrote that Dick Cheney wanted to break up the Russian Federation, “When the Soviet Union was collapsing in late 1991, Dick wanted to see the dismantlement not only of the Soviet Union and the Russian empire but of Russia itself, so it could never again be a threat to the rest of the world.”⁹⁶ Although United States support for ethnic fragmentation is rarely discussed in those terms openly in western media, the idea that the United States does so is widespread. When discussing why the United States should support the Orange Revolution, which switched Ukraine to a pro-western orientation, Charles Krauthammer wrote that, “This is about Russia first, democracy second.”⁹⁷ While never official policy, the US has sought to weaken Moscow by supporting nationalism in the former Soviet Republics and to consolidate those gains by then bringing those countries into NATO.

⁹⁴ “Top U.S. Official Visits Protesters in Kiev as Obama Admin. Ups Pressure on Ukraine President Yanukovich,” *CBS News*, December 11, 2013, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-victoria-nuland-wades-into-ukraine-turmoil-over-yanukovich/>; “US’ Nuland Treating Ukrainian Protesters to Cookies on Maidan,” *The Voice of Russia*, December 11, 2013, http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2013_12_11/US-s-Nuland-treating-Ukrainian-protesters-to-cookies-on-Maidan-1129/; “Ukraine: Nuland Feeds Hungry Maidan Protesters and Police - Ruptly,” *RT*, December 11, 2013, <http://ruptly.tv/site/vod/view/6876/ukraine-nuland-feeds-hungry-maidan-protesters-and-police>.

⁹⁵ “Russian Daily Says U.S. Supports Greater Autonomy For Tatarstan,” *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, December 10, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russian_Daily_Says_US_Supports_Greater_Autonomy_For_Tatarstan/1900885.html; John Laughland, “The Chechens’ American Friends,” *The Guardian*, September 8, 2004, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/08/usa.russia>.

⁹⁶ Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, Google Books (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 97.

⁹⁷ Charles Krauthammer, “Europe’s Democracy Hypocrisy,” *New York Daily News*, December 3, 2004, http://www.nydailynews.com/news/ideas_opinions/story/258291p-221237c.html.

Prometheanism under Piłsudski was never an official policy of the Polish state. It has never been an official policy of the government of the United States either. Like in Poland, an informal group of supporters promotes Prometheanism in the United States. In Poland, Piłsudski supported the movement and appointed his friends who also did to important positions that allowed them to work on the breakup of the Soviet Union. In the United States, Prometheans never had such a powerful patron but there were members of the foreign policy establishment who called for similar measures. For example, Freedom House is a non-governmental organization that sponsored the American Committee for Peace in the Caucasus. This group “supported the Chechen rebel movement, apparently as a strategy to weaken Russia and establish better U.S. ties in a region of increasing geopolitical value, which has vast, unexploited natural resource reserves including rich oil, gas, and hard mineral deposits.”⁹⁸ Just like Piłsudski invited exiled nationalists, US based Prometheans have invited exiled Chechnyan leaders. Mathew Brzezinski, nephew of Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote an article describing how Ilyas Akhmadov, a man wanted in Russia on terrorism charges, came to reside in the United States, “How is this possible? Well, it doesn't hurt that Akhmadov enjoys the patronage of a group of very senior Washington luminaries. His backers include two former secretaries of state, Madeleine Albright and Alexander Haig; a former defense secretary, Frank Carlucci; a former national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski.”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ “American Committee for Peace in Chechnya,” *Right Web - Institute for Policy Studies*, April 26, 2013, http://rightweb.irc-online.org/profile/American_Committee_for_Peace_in_Chechnya.

⁹⁹ It should also be noted that Madeleine Albright was a former student of Brzezinski who also mentored her. The two shared a bond because Brzezinski's wife is Czech, like Albright whose family went into exile for being aligned with former President Edvard Benes. Brzezinski's wife is Benes's grand-niece; Matthew Brzezinski, “Surrealpolitik: How a Chechen Terror Suspect Wound up Living on Taxpayers' Dollars near the National Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, March 20, 2005.

Russian politicians frequently state that the United States supported breaking up the Soviet Union and even the Russian Federation. Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, stated that “the West unequivocally demonstrates that it does not merely seek to change Russian policy (which in itself is illusory), but it seeks to change the regime — and practically nobody denies this.”¹⁰⁰ In his comments it is clear that he believes that the US seeks to do this by breaking the Ukraine away from Russia. “Ukraine’s Association Agreement with the EU had nothing to do with inviting Ukraine to join the EU and was aimed in the short term at preventing it from joining the Customs Union.”¹⁰¹ The separation of Ukraine from Russia in order to weaken Russia was a primary aim of Prometheanism, and according to Russian officials this is exactly what the United States is trying to accomplish as of 2014.

President Vladimir Putin’s summary of the history of United States policy in an October 2014 speech shows that he believes that the United States has a neo-Promethean agenda. Putin summarized a long list of United States actions towards Russia including a section where he described support to groups that sought to destabilize and dismember Russia. He said that the United States, “once sponsored Islamic extremist movements to fight the Soviet Union... The West if not supported, at least closed its eyes, and, I would say, gave information, political and financial support to international terrorists’ invasion of Russia (we have not forgotten this) and the Central Asian region’s countries.”¹⁰² In his

¹⁰⁰ Sergey Lavrov, “Remarks by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the XXII Assembly of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, Moscow, 22 November 2014,” *MFA of Russia*, November 22, 2014, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/24454A08D48F695EC3257D9A004BA32E.

¹⁰¹ Sergey Lavrov, “Remarks by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the XXII Assembly of the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, Moscow, 22 November 2014.”

¹⁰² Vladimir Putin, “Putin’s Speech at the Valdai Club - Full Transcript,” *The Vineyard of the Saker*, October 25, 2014, <http://vineyardsaker.blogspot.com/2014/10/putins-speech-at-valdai-club-full.html>.

2014 address to the Russian Federal Assembly, Putin clearly states that the United States seeks to break Russia apart by supporting separatist movements:

We remember well how and who, almost openly, supported separatism back then and even outright terrorism in Russia... the support for separatism in Russia from across the pond, including information, political and financial support and support provided by the special services – was absolutely obvious and left no doubt that they would gladly let Russia follow the Yugoslav scenario of disintegration and dismemberment. With all the tragic fallout for the people of Russia.¹⁰³

The United States actions described by Putin are similar in means and scope to Piłsudski's program. They both sought to create ethnic strife in Russia. They both extended into Central Asia. And finally, like Prometheanism under Piłsudski, United States policies were covert and only partially supported and implemented. All these examples show that the United States has to some degree supported policies meant to fragment the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation along ethnic lines.

However, this has not always been true. Prior to the start of the Cold War, the United States and Russia had a fruitful partnership and at times even an alliance. It began in the earliest days of the United States. During the Revolutionary War Great Britain hired mercenaries from across Europe, the most famous being the Hessians. Catherine the Great forbid the recruitment of mercenaries by the British in her territories. Her favorable diplomatic stance towards the fledgling United States and her "Declaration of Armed Neutrality" indirectly helped the American colonies establish independence from the British Empire.¹⁰⁴ Alexander I's diplomacy helped end the War of 1812.¹⁰⁵ Alexander II

¹⁰³ Vladimir Putin, "Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly," *President of Russia*, December 4, 2014, <http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/23341>.

¹⁰⁴ Frank A. Golder, "Catherine II. and The American Revolution," *The American Historical Review* 21, no. 1 (October 1915): 92–96.

sent the Russian fleet to the United States during the Civil War and was the largest show of support the Union received from any foreign nation. The move was much appreciated at the time. Lincoln in his declaration issued on Thanksgiving thanked the Almighty that no European nations used the Civil War as an opportunity to intervene into American affairs.¹⁰⁶ After the Civil War Congress authorized the Assistant Secretary of the Navy to go to Russia to offer the Czar the US's official congratulations on behalf of surviving an assassination attempt, but the trip also served as an unofficial "thank you" tour.¹⁰⁷ The idea of a Russian-American alliance even penetrated popular culture. In his 1878 novel *Anna Karenina* Leo Tolstoy references this alliance.¹⁰⁸

This pattern of friendly relations cools a bit in the early twentieth century but there is still no evidence of a Promethean movement in the United States. After the Russian Revolution, US forces intervened in Russia in order to strengthen the White faction and keep Russia in the war against Germany, not to weaken Russia. In the interwar years, the United States military prepared a series of war plans. The military made plans for a war against Britain, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Germany and others but did

¹⁰⁵ "Treaty of Ghent | War of 1812 | PBS," *PBS.org*, accessed October 28, 2014, <http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/essays/treaty-ghent/>; Webster Tarpley, "Russia's Participation in the U.S. Civil War." *C-Span 3*, September 24, 2013. <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/SCivil>.

¹⁰⁶ Webster Tarpley, "Russia's Participation in the U.S. Civil War." *C-Span 3*, September 24, 2013. <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/SCivil>; Webster G. Tarpley, "U.S. Civil War: The US-Russian Alliance That Saved the Union," *Voltairenet.org*, April 25, 2011, <http://www.voltairenet.org/article169488.html>; Wharton Barker, "The Secret of Russia's Friendship," *The Independent*, Vol. LVI, January-June 1904, 647; "Thanksgiving Day." *New York Times*, Nov 26, 1863, accessed 5 October 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/91775694?accountid=9649>.

¹⁰⁷ The trip was also a chance to show off the United States Navy's fleet of iron ships; J.F. Loubat, *Narrative of the Mission to Russia, in 1866 of the Hon. Gustavus Vasa Fox, Assistant-Secretary of the Navy* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 15.

¹⁰⁸ "Fortunately for him, at this period so difficult for him from the failure of his book, the various public questions of the dissenting sects, of the American alliance, of Samara famine, of exhibitions, and of spiritualism, were definitely replaced in public interest by the Slavonic question."; Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. Constance Garnett, Free Kindle Edition, n.d., 1103.

not have a plan for war against the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁹ One of the first major foreign policy decisions made by President Franklin Roosevelt was the formal recognition of the USSR.¹¹⁰ Of course the two countries fought against Germany together in World War II. Roosevelt's negotiations at Tehran and Yalta in effect recognized Stalin's seizure of the Baltic republics and Moldova. It also allowed for Stalin to create a series of satellite states in Eastern Europe. Roosevelt's diplomatic record shows that he did not concern himself about the independence of nations such as Ukraine and Georgia.¹¹¹ Once again this shows that Piłsudski's Prometheanism predates any efforts to do likewise by the United States on any appreciable scale.¹¹²

After World War II and the onset of the Cold War the United States needed a policy to deal with the Soviet threat. At first the United States sought to prevent further Soviet advances through a policy of "containment." Gradually the US began to consider the idea of ending the Soviet Union and the danger it posed by breaking it apart along ethnic lines. One of the significant milestones in this process happened towards the end of the Eisenhower administration:

¹⁰⁹ "War Plan Rainbow," *Global Security*, accessed November 12, 2014, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/war-plan-rainbow.htm>.

¹¹⁰ H.W. Brands, *Traitor to His Class*, Kindle Edition (New York: Doubleday, n.d.), 438-440.

¹¹¹ In his April 14, 1939 letter to Hitler Roosevelt asks him to give assurances that he would not attack a list of nations. In this list he included a number of nations that were not independent but colonial possessions of either the United Kingdom or France such as, Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. He does not mention any of the captive nations in the USSR but rather refers to them as all Russia; See: Franklin Roosevelt, "Letter to Adolf Hitler, April 14, 1939," *Ibiblio.com*, April 14, 1939, <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/7-2-188/188-12.html>.

¹¹² American intelligence agencies funded Promethean activity after World War II but there was no American funding for Prometheanism before then. Prior to the war the British and French sponsored Prometheanism but the United States is not mentioned.; See, Jonathan Levy, *The Intermarium, Wilson, Madison, & East Central European Federalism* (Boca Raton, Florida: Dissertation.com, 2006), <https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=wNb4RXDXEt4C&pg=GBS.PA169.w.0.15.0>, 167.

As a result, in 1959, at the end of his second term, President Dwight Eisenhower added the Captive Nations resolution to his policy of 'rollback.' ... It stated that the independence of submerged nations was in the vital interest of the United States... However... it is widely acknowledged that the main purpose of the Captive Nations resolution was rhetorical. In a talk with Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoliy Dobrynin on June 12, 1969, Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's adviser on national security, asked him not to pay attention "to separate public critical statements by the president on one East European country or another, since this is only a tribute to some layers of the U. S. population which play a role in American elections."¹¹³

A couple of points stand out from this summary; the first is that ethnic lobbies in the United States were responsible for the passage of the Captive Nations resolutions.¹¹⁴ Second, the resolution was rhetorical and did not result in much aid to nationalists in the non-Russian Soviet republics. It was not until members of those ethnic lobbies entered powerful positions in the United States establishment that the United States began to support national movements in the USSR. Several notable Polish Americans advised the United States to triumph in the Cold War by breaking up the Soviet Union along ethnic lines. In other words the response to the Soviet threat should be a neo-Promethean strategy.

The United States only gradually, fitfully, and partially adopted a strategy of dealing with the Soviet Union and Russia that incorporated principles of Prometheanism. When the Cold War began in the late 1940s the United States adopted the containment strategy advocated by George F. Keenan. Under the Nixon and Ford administrations the United States tried a balance of power strategy with the Soviet Union, known as *Détente*.

¹¹³ Olexiy Haran, "Disintegration of the Soviet Union and the U.S. Position on the Independence of Ukraine," *Belfer Center*, August 1995, http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/2933/disintegration_of_the_soviet_union_and_the_us_position_on_the_independence_of_ukraine.html.

¹¹⁴ The Ukrainian Americans were the most influential.

It was finally under Carter that a Polish-American with an understanding of non-Russian nationalities came to occupy a position of influence that Promethean ideas started gaining traction.

From the time he advised the 1960 Kennedy campaign through his time as National Security Advisor and an advisor to the 2007 Obama campaign and beyond, Brzezinski has been the principle advocate for US policies that incorporate elements of Prometheanism. When discussing why the United States needs to develop a close relationship with Poland while giving the keynote address at the launch of the Center for Strategic and International Studies launch of the Brzezinski Institute on Geostrategy, he cited Prometheanism as a key contribution Polish strategy can give to the United States:

It was in Poland, for example, that the so-called ‘Promethean League’ was sponsored. The Promethean League was a league dedicated to the idea that some day the non-Russian people of the old Tsarist empire, and then of the Soviet Union, will have their own independence. That was the political concept which was actively propagated and which had, incidentally, a very specific military dimension. The pre-World War II Polish army had a number of senior officers who were Ukrainians, who were Georgians, who were Armenians, and so forth. In fact, that now has an American connection because one of our very recent chairmen of the Joint Chiefs, General Shalikashvili, a Georgian native, was born in Poland, where his father was a colonel in the Polish army and a deputy commander of the most elite cavalry regiment in the Polish army. And this wasn’t—I hastily add—philanthropy. This was deliberate political action based on a certain political interest. So there is this connection, and it continued through World War II.¹¹⁵

He argued that Promethean ideas strengthen the security of the United States security and specifically used Piłsudski’s idea as a conceptual basis for United States policy.

¹¹⁵ Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, “Keynote Address” (Center for Strategic & International Studies, October 3, 2003).

In the 1970s as Brzezinski tried to convince the Carter administration of the importance of covert action to help promote nationalist independence movements, he met with stiff resistance. Robert Gates, an assistant to Brzezinski in the Carter years, wrote that Brzezinski's proposals were initially rejected because the State Department "claimed that the United States didn't know enough about Soviet nationalities and asserted that a tighter, more focused effort was clearly needed to increase our knowledge."¹¹⁶ Throughout the Cold War officials in the State department did not think that the independence of the Baltic republics, Ukraine, Georgia and the Central Asians states was worth the risking peaceful relations with the Soviet Union.

Brzezinski was thus the primary conduit of Piłsudski's program into United States foreign policy. Brzezinski's upbringing played an important role in shaping his ideas and helping him grasp the utility of Prometheanism. His father, Tadeusz Brzeziński, was born in modern day Zolochiv, Ukraine which was then located within the Austrian partition of Poland.¹¹⁷ The region in which Zolochiv is located, Galicia, was ethnically quite diverse at the time. The population there consisted of Poles, Ukrainians and Jews. The elder Brzeziński went to university in Lviv, which is the center of Ukrainian nationalism. Tadeusz fought in the Polish-Soviet War and took part in the battles of Lvov and Warsaw. Young Zbigniew Brzezinski was born in Warsaw in 1928. In 1939 he travelled to Canada

¹¹⁶ Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of the Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*, 93.

¹¹⁷ As another example of the influence of immigrants from the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, there were several other notable immigrants from Zolochiv that came to the United States, Roald Hoffmann the winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1981, Moyshe-Leyb Halpern Yiddish language poet who settled in New York, Ilya Schor a renowned artist, Arthur Fellig a press photographer who worked with Stanley Kubrick, and Naftali Herz Imber who wrote the lyrics for the Israeli national anthem and eventually settled in New York.

when his father was appointed as the consul general in Montreal.¹¹⁸ This upbringing allowed him to intuitively understand the principles of Polish diplomacy, Prometheanism, and the ethnic diversity of the Soviet Union.

Brzezinski corresponded with Giedroyc, the editor of *Kultura*, up to the late nineteen-nineties. They began working together in the 1950s and Brzezinski even financially supported *Kultura*. In a letter in 1999, Giedroyc gave Brzezinski an update on the situation on the ground in Belarus and noted that the Polish Institute in Minsk had published parts of *The Grand Chessboard*. Giedroyc noted that Brzezinski had penetrated even the “black hole” of Belarus and this would likely lead to a lengthy discussion.¹¹⁹ This contact with Giedroyc was another way for Brzezinski to come into contact with the ideas of Prometheanism.

Brzezinski has a long history of calling for a foreign policy based upon principles and aims of Prometheanism. This began in the 1940s while he worked on his Master’s degree. His thesis was entitled *Russo-Soviet Nationalism*. In it he wrote that, “nationalism is becoming a constantly greater force in even the most hitherto backward Union Republics, and is developing decentralizing tendencies and challenging the Russian supremacy. This constitutes a direct danger to the USSR.”¹²⁰ Furthermore his recommendation at the conclusion of his thesis called for a western based Promethean-like organization. He wrote that, “The Western world has at its disposal all the means to

¹¹⁸ “Tadeusz Brzezinski; Former Polish Consul General,” *The Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1990, http://articles.latimes.com/1990-01-13/news/mn-145_1_consul-general.

¹¹⁹ The black hole reference is an illusion to a section of *The Grand Chessboard* where Brzezinski described the Russia as a geopolitical black hole; Jerzy Giedroyc, “Sytuacja na Białorusi,” April 9, 1990, <http://static.kulturaparyska.com/attachments/ed/83/cad0966d7f6212ae943140828f7c3d64cddb55ed.jpeg>.

¹²⁰ Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Russo-Soviet Nationalism* (Montreal: McGill University, 1950), 145.

create a multi-national anti-Soviet version of the Comintern - and its appeal would be exceedingly powerful... Russo-Soviet Nationalism and what we believe to be true Freedom will clash someday - and understanding the component elements of Russo-Soviet Nationalism may help a great deal the cause of Freedom.”¹²¹ Brzezinski wrote in 1969 that, “We still live in the age of nationalism, and... it is going to be exceedingly difficult for the Soviet Union to avoid having some of its many nationalities go through a phase of assertive nationalism... I frankly do not see how the central authorities in the Soviet Union will be able to avoid having a prolonged period of fairly difficult relations with the non-Russian nationalities.”¹²² This is exceedingly similar to Piłsudski’s Promethean plan, a non-Russian ethnic organization designed to promote independence movements in the Soviet Union.

Under Carter, with Brzezinski as his principle adviser on foreign affairs issues, the United States began to change course and began taking steps towards breaking up the Soviet Union along ethnic lines. Biographies of Brzezinski as well as summaries of his foreign policy repeatedly stress that he advocated the liberation of ethnic groups within the Soviet Union as a way of relieving if not ending the communist threat to the United States. Repeatedly historians stress his contribution to getting policies that help foster non-Russian nationalism in the USSR implemented. For example, his biographer Andrzej Lubowski wrote that, “As opposed to other noted Kremlinologists, Brzezinski always knew that the Soviet Union was no monolith, and that ethnic problems were one of the

¹²¹ Brzezinski, *Russo-Soviet Nationalism*, 146.

¹²² Zbigniew Brzezinski, “Concluding Reflections,” in *Dilemmas of Change in Soviet Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 160-161.

main weakness of the Soviet super-power.”¹²³ Justin Vaisse wrote that “above all he stressed the multiethnic configuration of the Soviet Union, an issue he had been highlighting since the 1960s. Describing the ‘national problem’ as the ‘Achilles’ heel of [Gorbachev’s] perestroika.”¹²⁴ He further added that “Few Western analysts at the time ascribed much political importance to Soviet nationalities and ethnic groups, but Brzezinski raised the issue”¹²⁵ His biographers agree that he consistently argued from 1949 till the end of the Cold War that the Soviet Union could be torn apart by the forces of nationalism. Another important point to make is that if this was obvious or common knowledge to the United States foreign policy establishment then it would not be an important or notable item for historians and biographers to notice, let alone be one of the highlights of his career.

Brzezinski’s proposals met with resistance. While in hindsight the importance of liberating the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union clearly seems like a good end-goal for the Cold War, the State Department and the CIA opposed the breakup of the Soviet Union. Brzezinski described working with Carter to implement Peaceful Engagement like this:

He bought my commitment to human rights and I shared his, except that mine had a special twist when it came to the Soviet Union. Carter was initially hesitant but eventually approved my recommendation that we undermine Soviet cohesion by supporting the national aspirations of the non-Russian peoples in the Soviet Union—even though the State Department came in with a counter-recommendation not to do it, which they justified on grounds that were

¹²³ Andrzej Lubowski, *Zbig: The Man Who Cracked the Kremlin*, trans. William Brand (New York: Open Road Distribution, 2011), “Free of Illusions.”

¹²⁴ Quoted by Mark Kramer, “Anticipating the Grand Failure,” in *Zbig: The Strategy and Statecraft of Zbigniew Brzezinski*, ed. Charles Gati, Kindle Edition, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

¹²⁵ Quoted by Kramer, “Anticipating the Grand Failure.”

unbelievable. State maintained that just as there is an American nation made up of people of different ethnic origins, there is a Soviet nation made up of people of different ethnic origins. I remember asking someone at State, “Do you happen to know what language the ‘Soviet nation’ speaks? Is it the Soviet language?” There is no common language. The Ukrainians speak Ukrainian. The Turkmanis speak Turkman. The Kazakh speak Kazakh, and the Balts didn’t consider themselves to be part of the Soviet Union. This is not America where we individually adopt the American version of English as a common language.¹²⁶

Several points stand out here. Even as late as the 1970s the United States State department did not understand that the Soviet Union was comprised of many different nations and was vulnerable to breakup along ethnic lines. It took a Polish American to finally convince the United States establishment that the Soviet Union was not Russia and that it was not an ethnic monolith. Despite bureaucratic resistance the United States did eventually take steps to foster the national aspirations of the non-Russian groups in the USSR, just like Piłsudski tried to do.

Robert Gates’ account of these efforts in his memoirs corroborate Brzezinski’s description of events. Gates described how Brzezinski “was deeply interested in exploiting the Soviet’s nationalities problem. He wanted to pursue covert action in that arena.”¹²⁷ His efforts were foiled by the resistance of the CIA and the State department. While the full scope of the measures he called for were never fully implemented, “Brzezinski, with Carter’s support, had set forth an ambitious agenda of covert action to stir up trouble inside the USSR... there was a significant increase in the quantity of dissident and Western information and literature smuggled into Eastern Europe and the

¹²⁶ Quoted by Charles Gati, *Zbig: The Strategy and Statecraft of Zbigniew Brzezinski*, Kindle Edition, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), “Preface.”

¹²⁷ Gates, *From the Shadows*, 93.

USSR.”¹²⁸ From Gate’s recollection of events it is clear that Brzezinski advocated for a policy influenced by Piłsudski’s program and that he met with resistance but ultimately got part of his program across.

Brzezinski did not convince Carter to give his full support to ethnic independence movements in the Soviet Union but he did successfully implement other covert actions that undermined the Soviet Union. He was particularly successful in his covert religious policies. The rise of Islamic opposition to the Soviet Union that Brzezinski hoped would eventually spread north from Afghanistan in to the central Asian Soviet Republics is a notable example. Brzezinski stated in an interview that:

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention... The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam war. Indeed, for almost 10 years, Moscow had to carry on a war unsupportable by the government, a conflict that brought about the demoralization and finally the breakup of the Soviet empire.¹²⁹

This does not mean that Brzezinski created the Taliban to destroy the Soviet Union or that he lured the Soviets into Afghanistan but it does show that he understood that religion as well as nationalism could destabilize the Soviet Union.¹³⁰ This was

¹²⁸ Gates, *From the Shadows*, 94.

¹²⁹ Bill Blum, trans., “Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Adviser in ‘Le Nouvel Observateur’ (France),” *Free Republic*, January 15, 1998, <http://www.counterpunch.org/1998/01/15/how-jimmy-carter-and-i-started-the-mujahideen/>.

¹³⁰ The interview was originally published in French and then translated back into English. The translation makes it seem like he was causing events rather than reacting to them; See: John Bernell White, “The Strategic Mind of Zbigniew Brzezinski: How a Native Pole Used Afghanistan to Protect His Homeland”

another aspect of how United States policy bears resemblance to Prometheanism, as well as an older Polish strategy, that Brzezinski utilized.¹³¹

The fall of the Soviet Union did not end Brzezinski's calls for action by the United States that paralleled important elements of Prometheanism. His magnum opus, *The Grand Chessboard*, is full of advice that Piłsudski would have approved of. The book's thesis is that United States security requires the country to maintain its primacy in Eurasia. In the section dedicated towards how to handle the ex-USSR, Brzezinski repeatedly states that United States security would be greatly aided by an independent Ukraine, the most important plank of Prometheanism. For example, "Ukraine, a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard, is a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire."¹³² He further added that, "if Moscow regains control over Ukraine, with its 52 million people and major resources as well as its access to the Black Sea, Russia automatically again regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state... Ukraine's loss of independence would have immediate consequences."¹³³ The using the same logic that underlined Piłsudski's Kiev campaign Brzezinski stated that the independence of Ukraine represented a "vital geopolitical setback for the Russian state... The loss of Ukraine was geopolitically pivotal, for it

(Master of Arts in Liberal Arts, Louisiana State University, 2012), http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-04252012-175722/unrestricted/WHITE_THESIS.pdf, 82.

¹³¹ Brzezinski's relationship with Pope John Paul II as well as the public meeting he and Rosalyn Carter had with Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński during President Carter's trip to Poland are other examples of his understanding of how religion could be a useful tool against Soviet power; "Carter: 'U.S. Will Never Start a War,'" *Daytona Beach Morning Journal*, December 31, 1977.

¹³² Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 46.

¹³³ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, 46.

drastically limited Russia's geostrategic options. Even without the Baltic states and Poland, a Russia that retained control over Ukraine could still seek to be the leader of an assertive Eurasian empire."¹³⁴ Prometheanism for Brzezinski was not just about ending the Cold War, it meant maintaining the gains after the collapse of the Soviet Union and preventing a resurgence of Russian power.

Carter's failed reelection bid did not end the Promethean presence on the National Security Council. After Ronald Reagan's election Richard Pipes continued Brzezinski's program of breaking apart the USSR. Richard Pipes is a scholar of Russia born in Poland to an assimilated Jewish family. He is the son of Marek Pipes who served in Pilsudski's Polish Legions.¹³⁵ The Pipes family fled Poland in the early months of World War II. Richard Pipes helped to mobilize the resources of the United States against the Soviet Union as one of leading figures of Team-B project in the 1970s. He served under President Reagan as a member of the National Security Council, holding the post of Director of East European and Soviet Affairs. Brzezinski, as President Carter's National Security Adviser, formed the Nationalities Working Group (NWG) which he dedicated to the idea of weakening the Soviet Union by inflaming its ethnic tensions. Richard Pipes took over the leadership of the NWG in 1981. Due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the focus of United States Prometheanism transitioned to Central Asia rather than Ukraine. In 1984, Pipes predicted Muslims in the Soviet Union would "explode into

¹³⁴ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, 92.

¹³⁵ Anna Żebrowska, "Żyłem. Wspomnienia Niezależnego , Pipes, Richard," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, November 29, 2004, <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75517,2419172.html>; Mirosława Pindór, "Pierwszy Obywatel Cieszyna," *Bielsko.biala.pl*, January 6, 2014, <http://www.kalendarz.bielsko.biala.pl/artykuly/41/pierwszy-obywatel-cieszyna>.

genocidal fury” against Moscow if properly encouraged.¹³⁶ The focus on Central Asia, is in keeping with the historic scope of Prometheanism under Pilsudski which also featured a Central Asian division.

While not as prolifically Promethean as Brzezinski, throughout his career Pipes also called for the independence of non-Russian ethnicities in the Soviet Union. For example in 1984 he wrote that “The key to peace, therefore, lies in an internal transformation of the Soviet system in the direction of legality, economic decentralization, greater scope for contractual work and free enterprise, and national self-determination.”¹³⁷ Pipes then went on to call for a Promethean-like movement that would help break up the Soviet Union along ethnic lines, “The West would be well advised to do all in its power to assist the indigenous forces making for change in the U.S.S.R. and its client states, forces that are eating away at the Stalinist foundations of communist regimes.”¹³⁸

Policies similar to Prometheanism did not end with the collapse of the USSR. Brzezinski’s ideas, allies, and disciples were influential in shaping United States foreign policy after the end of the Cold War. For example, in 1991 George Bush declared in Kiev that the United States did not support the idea of an independent Ukraine a few weeks before the vote on independence. After the Cold War ended and the risk of a direct confrontation with the nuclear armed USSR receded, the United States could be bolder in supporting nationalists in the former Soviet Union. For example in 1996, the Secretary of

¹³⁶ Richard Pipes, *Survival Is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America’s Future* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 185.

¹³⁷ Richard Pipes, “Can the Soviet Union Reform?,” *Foreign Affairs* 63, no. 1 (Fall 1984): 59.

¹³⁸ Pipes, “Can the Soviet Union Reform?,” 61.

Defense William Perry stated that, “I cannot overestimate the importance of Ukraine as an independent nation to the security and stability of all Europe.”¹³⁹ Compare this to the “Chicken Kiev” speech by President George Bush in 1991 when he stated that the United States did not support the breakup of the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁰ The breakup of the Soviet Union did not mean the end of Promethean ideas in the United States in fact it made it clear that the United States was in a stronger position in Eurasia than before.

Polish Americans in influential positions continued to call for the United States to capitalize on the fall of the USSR by integrating its former republics into western security structures like NATO. This is similar to what Piłsudski hoped to do with the nations that he hoped to break free from Moscow’s control in the 1920s. For example, Ian Brzezinski, son of Zbigniew Brzezinski, served as an advisor to the Ukrainian National Security Council and also as a foreign policy advisor to Senator William Roth, who in 1996 became the President of NATO’s parliament.¹⁴¹ In 1996 the United States’ highest ranked military official the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was General John Shalikashvili who was born in Warsaw and was the son of a prominent Promethean recruit in the Polish military. These are all posts that influence United States policy towards Ukraine. Both Ian Brzezinski and John Shalikashvili called for NATO enlargement and the incorporation of former Soviet Republics in NATO. As this would

¹³⁹ Linda D. Kozaryn, “Sowing Seeds of Peace in Fields of War,” *U.S. Department of Defense*, June 7, 1996, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=40802>.

¹⁴⁰ George H.W. Bush, “Chicken Kiev Speech,” *Wikisource.org*, August 1, 1991, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Chicken_Kiev_speech.

¹⁴¹ In this video Ian Brzezinski discusses his service in Ukraine and his hopes for Ukraine to join NATO. In this video he also discusses his family’s ties to Ukraine and his grandfather’s service in the Promethean movement as part of Poland’s diplomatic mission to the temporarily independent Ukraine. His knowledge of this also shows that the commitment to Prometheanism was carried on by the family; Uploaded by selfrelianceUAFUCU, “Assessing NATO Ukraine - Ian Brzezinski - NATO Perspective; Chicago Conference,” *Youtube.com*, May 23, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj-eSub2R5o>.

reduce the Russian sphere of influence, it is how the United States carries out its Promethean agenda.¹⁴²

Jan Nowak is another example of a Polish refugee who used Promethean reasoning in the post-Cold War United States. Nowak was a Polish Home Army veteran, the head of the Polish section of Radio Free Europe, an advisor to the National Security Agency, President Reagan and President Carter. He worked with Zbigniew Brzezinski since the 1950s. After the end of the Cold War he called for the inclusion of Poland and Ukraine into NATO. “The enlargement of NATO is a key to the future cooperation between NATO and Russia. Any attempt to accommodate Russian nationalism would produce the opposite effect. Only the admission into NATO of all aspirants in the area between the present border of NATO and Russia may direct Russian resources and energy into the solution of its internal, highly critical problems.”¹⁴³ Once again, the independence of Ukraine ensured by its inclusion into NATO is portrayed as vital to United States security.

In addition to these high profile examples there were other lower level contacts between the United States and Prometheanism. The intelligence agencies of the United

¹⁴² For John Shalikashvili’s role in NATO enlargement see, Roy Kamphausen, “The Life and Legacy of Gen. John M. Shalikashvili: An Interview with Andrew Marble, Shali Biographer,” *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, August 10, 2011, <http://www.nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=164>; And see, Olivia Katrandjian, “Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Dies,” *ABCnews.com*, July 23, 2011, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/gen-john-shalikashvili-chairman-joint-chiefs-staff-died/story?id=14144386>; For Ian Brzezinski’s continued campaign to get Ukraine into NATO see, Ian J. Brzezinski, “Three Ways NATO Can Bolster Ukraine’s Security,” *The Washington Post*, March 24, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/three-ways-nato-can-bolster-ukraines-security/2014/03/24/452e80fa-b369-11e3-8020-b2d790b3c9e1_story.html; For a pro-Russian summary of the role of Brzezinski’s sons in the enlargement of NATO see, Daniel Zubov, “Brzezinski Family Business – Cold War,” *Sputniknews.com*, August 28, 2014, <http://sputniknews.com/columnists/20140828/192431312/Brzezinski-Family-Business--Cold-War.html>.

¹⁴³ Jan Nowak, “Russia: Isolation or Cooperation?,” *Vital Speeches of the Day* 65, no. 12 (August 15, 1999): 649–51.

States kept records about Prometheanism. Johnathan Levy for this thesis, *The Intermarium, Wilson, Madison, & East Central European Federalism*, examined over one hundred declassified documents from the CIA, US Army Counter-intelligence, and the FBI as well as conducting interviews with former intelligence officials. He concluded that after World War II the CIA and other organizations recruited former Prometheans to act as anti-Soviet agents. American intelligence agencies have been in contact with individuals involved with Prometheanism since at least 1947.¹⁴⁴

One of the main reasons why the United States incorporated parts of the Promethean agenda is because it is strategically beneficial to do so. Therefore Polish Americans who called for the liberation of non-Russian nations and their orientation to the West were not going against the best interests of the United States. The logic behind weakening Russia for the United States also shows that these ideas rose to prominence due to their merit and not because of an effective ethnic lobby.

To understand Prometheanism's relevance to the United States it is important to be grounded in geopolitical theory and strategic thinking. In 1919, the British strategist Sir Halford Mackinder dubbed Eurasia the "World Island" due to its central strategic importance in the world and geopolitical thinkers have been using his phrase ever since. This idea has since helped to shape United States foreign policy. For example Zbigniew Brzezinski in *The Grand Chessboard* argues that the United States' security and status in the world require that no other power be able to dominate the Eurasian landmass. Eurasia is largest, most populous, richest, and in aggregate most powerful continent on Earth. If any single power were able to dominate Eurasia then the United States would be unable

¹⁴⁴ Levy, *The Intermarium*, 69.

to maintain its position in the world.¹⁴⁵ If either Germany had triumphed in World War II, or the Soviet Union prevailed in the Cold War and spread their influence over Eurasia, then the United States would have been faced with a rival capable of harnessing resources that would far exceed the capacity of the United States and the entirety of the Americas to match. The idea that the United States cannot exist as an island removed from the world and hope to survive by hiding behind the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans has been widely held by Washington since the 1940s.¹⁴⁶

The need to prevent a single power from controlling Eurasia is not a new nor a transient idea. It actually predates the rise of the United States to global preeminence, having first been articulated during the height of the British Empire by Mackinder. He wrote that, “If the whole World Island, or the larger part of it, were to become a single united base of seapower, then would not the insular nations be out-built as regards ships and out-manned as regards seaman?”¹⁴⁷ American leaders understood this in the lead up to the United States’ entry into World War II. Admiral Stark wrote President Roosevelt that if Nazi Germany successfully managed to consolidate its grip on Eurasia then, “the problem confronting us would be very great; and, while we might not lose everywhere, we might, possibly, not win anywhere... in these circumstances we would be set back upon our haunches. Our war effort, instead of being widespread, would then have to be

¹⁴⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, “A Geostrategy for Eurasia,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 5 (October 1997): 52.

¹⁴⁶ See G.R. Sloan, *Geopolitics in United States Strategic Policy, 1890-1987* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1988).

¹⁴⁷ Halford John Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1942), <https://books.google.com/books?id=yW4BUP7ns94C&printsec=frontcover&dq=Democratic+Ideals+and+Reality&hl=en&sa=X&ei=wxqyVJz2L47ioATY4oCoBQ&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=world%20island&f=false>, 49.

confined to the Western Hemisphere.”¹⁴⁸ Obviously this dealt with Nazi Germany and not the Soviet Union, but the reasoning is the same. If either of those powers controlled Eurasia the resources of the United States might not be sufficient to fend them off. When the USSR replaced Germany as the main threat to security of the United States in the eastern hemisphere, it would only be logical to find a policy to weaken that competitor from the inside out.

In the post-Cold War world this analysis is still valid. Alexandros Petersen argues precisely this in his book, *The World Island: Eurasian Geopolitics and the Fate of the West*. After writing why United States influence in Eurasia is important for its national security he goes on to propose two main models of how the United States can limit the power of Russia and China. Petersen uses two main models for the United States moving forward, George Kennan’s Containment and Josef Piłsudski’s Prometheanism. In *The World Island* he argues that Piłsudski’s ideas should be a part of the “basis for informing today’s Western strategy in Eurasia.”¹⁴⁹ The first sentence of Zbigniew Brzezinski’s *The Grand Chessboard* reads, “Ever since the continents started interacting politically, some five hundred years ago, Eurasia has been the center of world power.”¹⁵⁰ He goes on to warn that even after the end of the Cold War “it is imperative that no Eurasian challenger emerges, capable of dominating Eurasia and thus also of challenging America.”¹⁵¹ Therefore, even though the Russian Federation and China do not pose the same level of

¹⁴⁸ Harold Stark, “Plan Dog,” *FDR Presidential Library*, November 12, 1940, <http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/psf/box4/a48b01.html>.

¹⁴⁹ Petersen, *The World Island*, “Chapter 4.”

¹⁵⁰ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, xiii.

¹⁵¹ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, xiv.

imminent danger to the United States as did Nazi Germany with its Japanese allies or the Soviet Union did, United States security still demands involvement on the Eurasian landmass.

The idea that Piłsudski or the Second Polish Republic have been influential in helping shape United States foreign policy is not as farfetched as it sounds at first considering the impact immigration has had on the United States. Immigrants have been highly influential in helping craft United States strategies. Notable foreign-born Secretaries of State include Henry Kissinger and Madeleine Albright. Over the course of United States history twenty foreign born individuals have been appointed to cabinet positions.¹⁵² Additionally, the United States has two foreign born National Security Advisors, one foreign born Director of the Central Intelligence, one foreign born Director of National Intelligence, and three foreign born Ambassadors to the United Nations.

Several citizens of the Second Polish Republic who immigrated to the United States reached positions of influence. Some of these Poles, if counted by birthplace and not ethnic background, rose through the ranks in the United States military. For example, Hyman Rickover, “the father of America’s nuclear navy,” and the longest serving sailor in United States Navy history was born in Poland in 1900. He is one of only four people to ever win two Congressional Gold Medals. Rickover also won a Presidential Medal of Freedom. The first foreign-born Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili was born in Poland in the inter-war era. His father was a Georgian exile who came to Poland as part of Piłsudski’s attempts to gather nationalists in Poland from various non-

¹⁵² This began early on, in the Treasury Department most notably. Both Alexander Hamilton and Albert Gallatin were foreign born Secretaries of the Treasury.

Russian Soviet ethnicities. Polish exiles, along with other communities such as Ukrainians, also aided the United States during the Cold War by providing perspective and intelligence as well as acting as a source of operatives. These examples show how immigrants can and frequently do reach highly influential positions in the United States establishment. The individuals who spread Promethean ideas were therefore part of a larger important immigrant community.

While there have been influential Americans who called for greater Promethean-like activities, the United States has not adopted the program in full. This is because, while it is logical for the United States to want to manage Russia's ability to recreate its empire, it is dangerous to do so. Robert Gates notes in his memoirs that throughout the Cold War, State Department reservations prevented full scale support for nationalist agitation in the Soviet Union and Russia. According to Robert Gates the State Department argued that "ethnic and nationalist forces were likely to be among the violent and divisive forces in the world... State also appeared concerned over the relationship of promoting these divisions to U.S. human rights policy... I must admit State was quite farsighted in its concerns."¹⁵³ Counsellor of the Department of State Robert Zoellick during towards the end of the Cold War said that "We do not support the 'break-up' of the Soviet Union, and I cannot, speculate on the criteria of circumstances under which the U.S. might 'recognize' the independence of entities that might emerge... there is a different situation, obviously with the Baltics, whose aspirations for independence we back."¹⁵⁴ While there has been some United States support for Chechnya, it has not

¹⁵³ Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of the Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*, 93.

¹⁵⁴ Haran, "Disintegration of the Soviet Union and the U.S. Position on the Independence of Ukraine."

made any difference and fears of terrorist blowback will likely prevent any additional help in the future. The United States has provided resources to both Ukraine and Georgia but neither of those nations are in NATO and the United States stepped aside and watched as Russia took portions of their territories.

There were influential Polish American members in a lobby that called for Promethean measures to be taken by the United States against the Soviet Union and Russia but there are other lobbies that shape US foreign policy as well. Henry Kissinger for one has consistently called for a more measured policy towards the Soviet Union and Russia. He ushered in the era of Détente when he served under Presidents Nixon and Ford. Recently in response to the Crimea Crisis of 2014 he has also taken a moderate stance.¹⁵⁵ Prometheanism was and remains an influential idea in the United States even though it is not well known but it has not determined the foreign policy of the United States. United States took approaches other than Prometheanism to contain the USSR and Russia. Kissinger and others like Stephen Cohen are examples of influential Americans who do not support a Promethean agenda. Just like in interwar Poland when Piłsudski's rivals the National Democrats did not supported Prometheanism, there was and is no consensus in the United States about continuing with a Promethean agenda.

¹⁵⁵ Henry Kissinger, "To Settle the Ukraine Crisis, Start at the End - The Washington Post," *The Washington Post*, March 5, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.

CONCLUSION

During the chaotic years after the Russian Revolution as the Bolsheviks attempted to assert their control over the territory of the Russian Empire, many ethnic groups and nations declared their independence. Poland, among others, managed to keep their independence until World War II began. Józef Piłsudski as the leader of the Second Polish Republic sought to secure Poland's newly won independence by helping neighboring nations, such as Ukraine, also break away from Russian control. His efforts to do so are known as Prometheanism. Using both overt and covert means, Prometheans attempted to liberate captive nations all across Eurasia. They did not succeed in their efforts thereby allowing the USSR and Germany to jointly conquer Poland in the first weeks of World War II in Europe.

The Polish state that backed Prometheanism may have ended in 1939 but the strategic logic of Prometheanism did not become less relevant. Many of the nationalists gathered in Poland and Poles who took part in Prometheanism fled to western countries after the war. These exiles took their experiences and talents with them. In foreign lands these émigrés modified and adapted the core principles of Prometheanism to the Cold War era world. Some were able to rise to positions of prominence that allowed them to influence the foreign policies of the United States and post-communist Poland.

Jerzy Giedroyc was one of the key figures in the survival and transformation of Prometheanism. In the inter-war years he worked as an editor who helped explain the

logic of Prometheanism to Poles. After the war he settled in France and began the journal *Kultura*. In the pages of this publication he developed a foreign policy orientation that Poland should follow. Just as the Promethean movement strove for the liberation of Poland's eastern neighbors, *Kultura*'s writers called for Poland to recognize Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine as nations equals to Poland and worthy of independence. According to Giedroyc, just like in the inter-war years, Poland's own autonomy would best be secured after the fall of communism by having a string of nations buffering Poland from Russia.

Kultura influenced Polish politicians, and as soon as communism fell in Poland they began to act in the manner called for by Giedroyc and his writers. From 1989—1991 Poland faced many foreign policy challenges. Poland had to manage the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces and to secure its western border with a soon to be reunited Germany. On top of these challenges Poland also encouraged the Lithuanian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR to declare their independence. Polish leaders did this by congratulating any step those countries took towards declaring themselves to be sovereign states. Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union Poland still pursued a strategy that resembled Prometheanism. Poland supported both Ukraine and Georgia when their leaders sought to orient their nations westward and join the European Union and NATO. Presidents of both Ukraine and Georgia lauded the aid Poland gave their countries. Prometheanism, or at least the logic behind it, therefore still animates Polish foreign policy. There is a direct line of continuity between the program in the interwar years and Polish foreign policy after 1989.

The link between Prometheanism and the foreign policy of the United States is not as strong it is in the case of Poland but it is there. After the onset of the Cold War the United States needed policies to “contain” the USSR. Some in the United States did not merely seek to contain the Soviets; they wanted to remove the threat they posed all together. Since a direct confrontation with the USSR carried the risk of a nuclear holocaust the United States needed covert ways to undermine the Soviet Union. Prometheanism fit the bill perfectly. During the Eisenhower administration the United States declared its support for the liberation of captive nations inside the USSR but this was mere rhetorical flourish until Zbigniew Brzezinski became President Carter’s National Security Advisor. He and other Polish Americans called for the United States to adopt measures much like those of Piłsudski’s Prometheanism. The United States has taken steps to bring former Soviet Republics into western organizations such as NATO and therefore out of the Russian sphere of influence. The United States has also provided some aid to independence movements inside the Russian Federation.

There are several reasons why Prometheanism influenced the foreign policy of the United States. One is that the strategic goals of the United States, such as limiting Russian power and influence, are well-served by such a program. Furthermore, due to the United States’ generally friendly relations with Russia from the Revolutionary War to the end of World War II, the United States foreign policy establishment did not have much experience in trying to contain Russia when the Cold War began. There simply was not a lot of native experience in the United States when it came to managing Eurasia, due to isolationist policies prior to World War II. East European immigrants helped to fill this

void and disproportionately shaped the foreign policy of the United States during the Cold War.

Overall Prometheanism's record is mixed. On the negative side, Prometheanism did not save the Second Polish Republic. On the other hand the reformed version of Prometheanism in the pages of *Kultura* as carried out by the Polish government in early years after the fall of communism largely succeeded. The decision to treat Ukraine and Lithuania as legitimate nations and drop all territorial claims strengthened their hands in their struggle against Moscow and allowed Poland to have constructive relations with them. It was and remains a dangerous course of action. Fear of those dangerous outcomes is why the US never fully committed itself to a Promethean agenda. According to Robert Gates the State Department argued that "ethnic and nationalist forces were likely to be among the violent and divisive forces in the world... State also appeared concerned over the relationship of promoting these divisions to U.S. human rights policy... I must admit State was quite farsighted in its concerns."¹⁵⁶ It is important to consider these dangers when considering the legacy of Prometheanism.

Studying the legacy and evolution of Prometheanism shows how refugees and immigrants change both the country of origin and the host country. The post-war evolution of Prometheanism is a powerful example of the Transatlantic exchange at work. The influx of Polish émigrés into the United States in the 1940s, in time for the beginning of the Cold War, led to the rise of leaders in the United States who had a different perspective on the Soviet bloc. These Polish Americans helped to shape the policies of the United States in profound but sometimes overlooked ways. The *Kultura*

¹⁵⁶ Gates, *From the Shadows*, 93.

community and even the career of Ian Brzezinski show how immigration can be viewed as a two way process and not a one way flow of people. In those cases the ideas that changed the country of origin were first formulated in other lands.

Prometheanism should be viewed as part of larger history of Polish strategy. It sprang from long standing Polish policies whose origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages. Just as Prometheanism did not spring froth from a vacuum after World War I, it did not fade to nothing after World War II. The government of Poland adopted a modified version of Prometheanism after the fall of the communist government. This shows that the foreign policy of the Second Polish Republic was not hopeless and doomed to failure. The Republic's strategies required more time to succeed than was available but they were not foolhardy.

APPENDIX

Photo Gallery

Photo Gallery

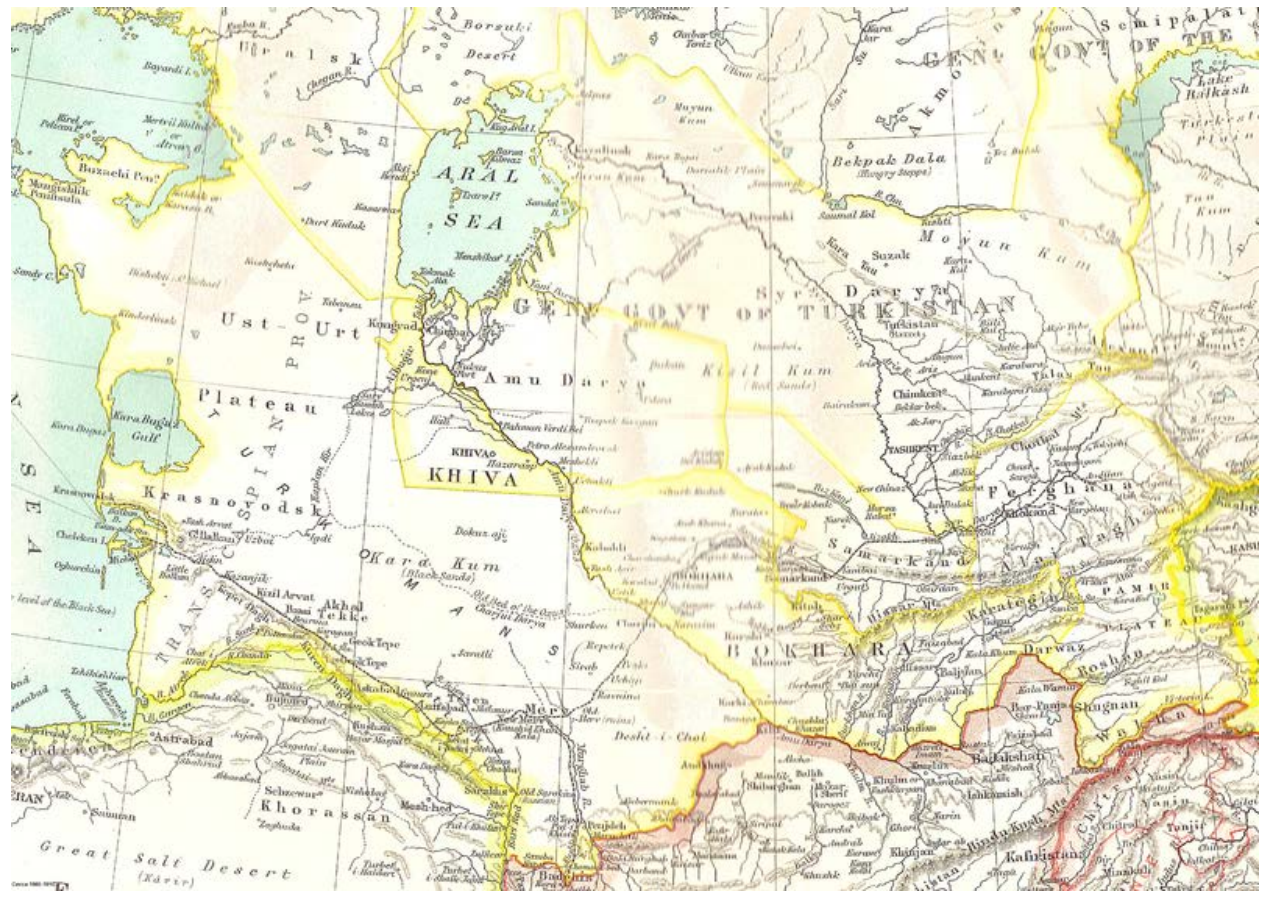


Figure A.1: A map showing the nations of Central Asia during the time of the Russian Empire in 1903.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ John Bartholomew & Co, *The XXth Century Citizen's Atlas of the World* (London: George Newnes Ltd., 1903), 133.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:XXth_Century_Citizen%27s_Atlas_map_of_Central_Asia.png.



Figure A.2: This map shows the territories of Ukraine in 1918. It also shows the regions in southern Russia and the Caucasus that broke off before the Bolsheviks established their authority over the area. The territories of the Don and Kuban Republics can also be seen although they are not marked as independent territories.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ “Dismembered Russia — Some Fragments,” *The New York Times*, February 17, 1918, http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?_r=1&res=9903E1DE113FE433A25754C1A9649C946996D6CF.



MAP SHOWING APPROXIMATE POSITIONS OF BOLSHEVIST AND ANTI-BOLSHEVIST FORCES ON ALL THE FIGHTING FRONTS IN RUSSIA, (MARCH, 1919)

Figure A.3: This map shows the approximate positions of the forces in the Russian Civil War in 1919. The temporarily independent Don Republic and the Mountain Republic can be made out on this map. Here the those areas are shown as the territory north of the British controlled zone in the Caucasus and south of the Bolshevik controlled territory between the Black and Caspian seas.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ Uploaded by OttomanReference, "File:ApproxPositionsWWI-1919.png - Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia," *Wikipedia*, May 5, 2007, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ApproxPositionsWWI-1919.png>; Original image by The New York Times, "Military Positions in the March of 1919," *New York Times, Current History 1919 (Volume X, P. 262)*, 1919, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ApproxPositionsWWI-1919.png>.



Figure A.4: Another map, this one from 1919, showing Ukraine, the Don, Kuban, Georgia and other temporarily independent countries before the creation of the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ MaGioZal, "Europe Map 1919," *Wikipedia*, November 3, 2007, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_map_1919.jpg; Based on a map published by the London Geographical Institute.



Figure A.5: Poland and Lithuania under the early Jagiellon dynasty. This map show the territorial extent of the kingdom and grand duchy at the time. Piłsudski hoped to create a state whose borders resembled the above through the *Intermarrium* federation.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ Uploaded by Poznaniak, "Mapa Polski Za Panowania Władysława II Jagiełły (1386 - 1434)," February 7, 2010, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Polska_1386_-_1434.png; Based on the image found in *Ilustrowany Atlas Historii Polski* (Warsaw: Demart, 2006).



Figure A.6: Symon Petlura leader of the Ukrainian People’s Republic talking with Polish General Antoni Listowski in 1920 during the Polish-Soviet war and the height of Polish efforts to free Ukraine from Russian control.¹⁶²

¹⁶² “General Antoni Listowski (pierwszy Z Lewej) Podczas Rozmowy Z Atamanem Semenem Petlurą (drugi Z Lewej).,” *Zbiory NAC on-Line - Prototyp*, 1920, <http://audiovis.nac.gov.pl/obraz/61500/1f6c11ec3942555b2fe55abf52ecd754/>.



Figure A.7: Polish tanks taking part in the War for Latvian Independence. Poles considered this to part of the Polish Soviet War. It also shows how Polish military aid did help other nations win their independence.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Unknown, "Polish FT-17 Tanks of the Polish 1st Tank Regiment during the Battle of Dyneburg," *Wikimedia.org*, accessed February 3, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ft17_dyneburg8.jpg.



Figure A.8: The statue of Prometheus in Tbilisi, Georgia.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Vladimer Shioshvili, "Amirani - Georgian Prometheus," 24 November 2007, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amirani_-_Georgian_Prometheus.jpg.

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