

## Prometheanism and Great-Power Politics

*Hiroaki Kuromiya*

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 took everyone by surprise. All of the constituent republics of the Soviet Union became independent states almost by default. The collapse realized one of the most important aims of the Promethean movement: the creation of a buffer zone between Poland and Russia in the form of the independent states of Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania (although the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad oblast – formerly Eastern Prussia – still faces Poland, directly from the east). Yet this realization had little to do with the ideas of the Promethean movement per se, in the sense that the nominal independence of the constituent republics had been laid down by Stalin himself. It should be reminded that it was Stalin, who in 1945, insisted on the membership of Ukraine and Belarus in the United Nations, suggesting that they were “independent” states within the Soviet Union. Indeed, the independent states which the Soviet Union broke up into had already existed as constituent republics of the Soviet Union.

Nonetheless, Russia itself did not disintegrate. Many groups whom the Promethean movement supported (the Don and Kuban Cossacks, Northern Caucasian groups, Tatars—those in Idel-Ural in particular, and others) did not gain independence. For these people, the new Russian Federation was not so much different from Soviet Russia. The wars in Chechnya that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union highlight this issue well. Moreover, in Asia, the collapse of the Soviet Union changed virtually nothing in terms of the complex national configuration. Although the People’s Republic of Mongolia may no longer be a Soviet satellite state, the Mongolians have been divided among three states: Russia, Mongolia, and China.

What, then, was the contribution of the Promethean movement? No doubt, it contributed a great deal to keeping alive the ideas (and to a lesser extent, the movements) for independence of the Soviet national minorities (although the movement itself did not survive World War II, when Poland was destroyed and eventually absorbed into the Soviet bloc). Before World War II, it also offered a sizeable and respected counterweight to chauvinistic trends existing in Poland by advocating a liberal approach towards the problems of national minorities within the country.

All these contributions are important and in many respects remarkable, yet one cannot ignore the fact that the fate of the Promethean movement (and many other movements) remained firmly at the mercy of international politics.

Without either overstating or understating the contribution of the Promethean movement to the post-Soviet international order, it is important to note that international politics was defined largely by the Great Powers. In fact, it still is, as is obvious to any keen observer of international politics.

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The plight of modern Poland was so intractable that it became known as the “Polish Question”, even becoming the butt of jokes. Alluding to the alleged penchant of the Poles, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill remarked, in a conversation with Stalin in Moscow in October 1944, that when two Poles get together, regrettably they only fight. Stalin responded to Churchill in an equally disingenuous manner: “If a Pole is by himself, he’ll start a fight with himself.”<sup>1</sup> The “Polish Question” lay at the center of the struggle for war and peace in the 1930s. Hitler was bent on destroying Poland and – in the end – Stalin joined him in doing so. Britain and France may have entered the war to protect the independence of Poland, but they soon disappointed the Poles with their lukewarm support; support that was promptly destroyed by Hitler and Stalin.

Later, after Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union, when Stalin needed Poland’s support, he was willing to make concessions. For instance, in a meeting with Polish representatives in December 1941 in Moscow, Stalin somewhat ambiguously acknowledged that L’viv, taken by the Soviets in 1939, was a Polish city. Because Stalin’s position was to unite the Ukrainians into a single Ukrainian republic within the Soviet Union (as he indeed did in 1939, after destroying Poland), Władysław Anders complained to Stalin regarding pro-German Ukrainians in L’viv. Stalin responded duplicitously: “They are your Ukrainians, not ours. We’ll work together to obliterate them!”<sup>2</sup>

A relatively small country, Poland was clearly at the mercy of the Great Power to its east. This was the difficult position from which the Promethean movement wanted to break free of. Yet those countries in support of Poland and its Promethean ideas had their own political agendas. Already by the mid-1930s, France, which had traditionally played the role of Poland’s protector, was no longer accommodating of Poland’s position of “balanced diplomacy,”

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<sup>1</sup> O. A. Rzheshhevskii, *Stalin i Cherkhill* (Moscow, 2004), p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> “[T]o byli wasi Ukraińcy, nie nasi. My ich, wspólnie, zniszczymy” W. Anders, *Bez ostatniego rozdziału* (Newtown, Wales, 1950), p. 123. Later Stalin “reviewed his claim to the Ukrainians and White Russians who had lived in eastern Poland and said, quite calmly that he had ordered the execution of 20,000 Ukrainians who had been collaborating with the Germans and later captured by the Red Army. ‘We have put another 200,000 Ukrainians in our own army. Everything is settled.’” S. Mikołajczyk, *The Rape of Poland: Patter of Soviet Aggression* (New York, 1948), pp. 99-100.

which it regarded as being held too rigidly.<sup>3</sup> Fearing the threat of Germany, France opted for an alliance with the Soviet Union (the 1935 Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance), although this was merely a marriage of convenience. Moreover, the 1932 Non-aggression Pact between Poland and the Soviet Union had already made it difficult to promote the Promethean movement. With the 1935 Franco-Soviet treaty, France's support of the Promethean movement became virtually meaningless. The death of Józef Piłsudski in 1935, the most important leader of the movement, was an equally heavy blow. Funding became scarce. By the late 1930s, in the face of energetic anti-Soviet movements supported by the Axis Powers (Germany and Japan in particular), the Promethean movement faced a crisis, from which it would never recover.<sup>4</sup>

The arrival of war changed everything. The idea of the Promethean movement may not have been destroyed, but Poland was. In the end, the Great Powers decided the fate of Poland, the outcome of which satisfied none of the movement's goals. True, one could question whether Poland was capable of solving its own national minority problems (Ukrainians and Belarusians in particular) peacefully and satisfactorily at the time. In any case, the "Polish Question" was only resolved to the contentment of the Great Powers, or more accurately of one Power – the Soviet Union, whose demands were accepted by the other Powers. Although this story is well-known, one need remember that as far as Poland was concerned, Great Britain and the United States accepted Stalin's position regarding Poland's provisional government and its future territory at Teheran and Yalta, without much resistance and without the input of the Poles.<sup>5</sup>

During World War II, for both Britain and the United States, friendly relations with Moscow were more important than the "Polish Question." In October 1944 in Moscow, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Prime Minister of the Polish government in exile in London, was shocked to learn that Britain and the United States had let Stalin have his way over the future territory of Poland (the demarcation of Poland and the Soviet Union along the Curzon line). In response to Mikołajczyk's protest, Churchill replied: "If you think you can conquer Russia, well, you are crazy, you ought to be in a lunatic asylum. You would involve us in a war in which twenty-five million lives might be lost. You would be liquidated. You hate the Russians. I know you hate them. We are

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<sup>3</sup> See F. Dessberg, *Le triangle impossible: Les relations franco-soviétiques et le facteur polonais dans les questions de sécurité en Europe (1924-1935)* (Bruxelles, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> G. Mamoulia, *Les Combats indépendantistes des Caucasiens entre URSS et puissances occidentales: Le cas de la Géorgie (1921-1945)* (Paris, 2009), pp. 178-190.

<sup>5</sup> For the painful discussion in 1945 between Churchill and Stanisław Mikołajczyk over this matter, see S. Mikołajczyk, *The Rape of Poland*, pp. 93-99 and 116-120.

very friendly with them, more friendly than we have ever been. I mean to keep things like that. I tell you, we'll become sick and tired if you continue arguing. We shall tell the world how unreasonable you are. We shall not part friends."<sup>6</sup> As an Englishman present at the exchange observed, "This was not diplomacy. Nor did it intimidate Mikołajczyk."<sup>7</sup>

Churchill knew that his position meant tragedy for Poland. Nevertheless, maintaining the alliance with the Soviet Union was his top priority. Smaller nations like Poland and minor national groups were not. In his world, there was no room for the realization of Promethean ideas.

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When European affairs of the period are examined in the light of Asian affairs, the determining factor in the politics of the Great Powers in establishing the world order becomes even clearer. The issue of Asia is all the more important because of its virtual absence in the study of European history.

Asia's colonial history is quite different from that of Europe's. "Captive nations" in Europe (under the Austrian, Russian and Ottoman Empires) were largely liberated as a consequence of World War I. In Asia (as in Africa), however, western colonialism remained firmly entrenched. Japan's rise as an imperial power in the late nineteenth century changed the balance of power in Asia, just as the rise of a united Germany did in Europe after 1871.

Japan's rise was initially supported by Great Britain and the United States. Britain concluded an alliance with Japan— a non-European power — for the first time in the modern age in 1902, as a counterweight against Russian interests. As for the United States, in exchange for Japan's non-interference in the Philippines (an area of intense US colonization), the US gave tacit agreement to Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. Yet, as was clear from the United States' position during the Russo-Japanese peace negotiations in 1905 (held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire), the US was equally concerned about Japan's expansion into China and beyond, at the cost of their own interests in Asia. In the wake of World War I, British and American concern over Japan's growing power in Asia led to the formal abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1923, and increasingly tense relations between the US and Japan.

Unlike the western imperial powers, the Soviet Union championed the cause of national liberation in Asia. Moscow was anti-imperialist, but was hardly non-imperialist itself. It considered Outer Mongolia (which nominally became independent of China after the 1911 Xinhai Revolution in China) its

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<sup>6</sup> Churchill *Taken from the Diaries of Lord Moran: The Struggle for Survival 1940-1965* (Boston, 1966), pp. 214-15.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

own “satellite state”. In 1924, after a complex process of conflict and negotiation with China, Outer Mongolia became the People’s Republic of Mongolia with Moscow’s support. Moscow controlled the People’s Republic of Mongolia ever more tightly. Moscow also repeatedly intervened in China. In support of China’s revolutionary struggle, Moscow initially promoted the Kuomintang-Communist united front. When it collapsed in 1927, Moscow supported the Communists through the Comintern. The Soviet Union kept control of the China Eastern Railway, a legacy of Russian imperial colonial rule. In 1929, Moscow even sent military forces to fight against the Chinese warlord, Zhang Xueliang, to keep colonial control of the railway. In 1929, Moscow also sent its military forces to Afghanistan in support of the pro-Soviet, King Amanullah Khan.<sup>8</sup>

Japan was not much better. Unlike Moscow, though, Japan did not champion the cause of national liberation in general, but that of the liberation of Asia from the rule of Europe’s colonial powers. This exempted Japan’s own colonialism; acting towards other Asian nations like any other colonial power. In the wake of victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan’s prestige as the liberator from Western colonialism reached a high point in many parts of the world. Ottoman Turkey, for instance, was eager to open diplomatic relations with the rising new Asian power, as a force to emulate, and as a counterforce against Turkey’s long-time adversary, Russia. Yet Japan demanded precisely the same unequal treaties from Porte, as a pre-condition to diplomatic relations. As a result, the two countries did not open formal diplomatic relations until the 1920s.

At any rate, Japan continued to promote its “Promethean-like” movement in Asia. Even before the Russo-Japanese War, Japan worked to use Mongolia (Inner and Outer) as a buffer state; an independent state under Japan’s aegis. Japan also paid close attention to minorities within Russia. For example, the Imperial Japanese Army courted Russian Tatar Muslims. In 1909, “Ibrahim” (Abdrashid Ibragimov or Abdürreşid Ibrahim, 1857–1944), a Tatar from Western Siberia, had meetings with Japanese military intelligence officials in Tokyo.<sup>9</sup> During the civil war, in the wake of the collapse of the Russian Empire and the October Revolution, Japan was tellingly more supportive of Grigorii Semenov than it was of Admiral Kolchak: Semenov, partially

<sup>8</sup> V. Boiko, “Sovetsko-afganskaia voennaia ekspeditsiia v Afghanistan 1929 goda,” *Aziia i Afrika segodnia*, 2001, no. 7, pp. 31-37.

<sup>9</sup> *Nihon Rikugun to Ajia seisaku: Rikugun Taishō Utsunomiya Tarō nikki*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2007), pp. 235-36, 243, 321 and vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2007), p. 248. See also A. Ibrahim *Un Tatar au Japon – voyage en Asie (1908-1910)*, tr. and ed. F. Georgeon (Arles: Actes Sud, 2004).

of Buryat-Mongol origin, supported pan-Mongolism (i.e. the breakup of the former Russian Empire in the east), whereas Admiral Kolchak dreamed of the resurrection of the Russian Empire. Similarly, Japan also supported Siberian independence movements. Of course, none of these came to fruition, in part because Japan's partners never fully trusted Japan, suspecting it of hatching imperialist schemes.

However, during this period of turmoil in Russia, Polish-Japanese cooperation against Moscow resumed after it had been discontinued at the end of the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. For instance, Japan sent Captain Masataka Yamawaki to Warsaw in 1919, to re-establish formal contacts with the Polish military.<sup>10</sup>

Japan's interests in Asian minorities as buffers against the Soviet Union also conflicted with China's sovereignty. Japan had long eyed not only Inner Mongolia, but also Xinjiang (Chinese Turkestan), an area mostly inhabited by Muslims. Xinjiang's importance to Japan was that its conquest would have opened a direct route straight into the heart of the Soviet defense industry in Western Siberia and in the Urals (including the Kuzbass area). Japan justified such a scheme under the guise of liberation. After all, China, like the old Ottoman Empire and the old Russian Empire, was still an empire – however rapidly declining. Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet were China's "colonies." From the perspective of China's minorities, the break-up of China was inevitable and desirable, and Japan promoted itself as a force to be used for this purpose.

Had it not been for Japan's imperialist schemes, that is, had Japan developed a liberal, truly emancipating conception of national questions in Asia, could an Asian version of Prometheism have been accepted by the Western powers, just as the Poland-sponsored Promethean movement was backed by France and Britain? It is highly unlikely. Woodrow Wilson may have been a "great" politician, advocating the principle of "self-determination" for nations, yet when Japan tried to include a clause for racial equality in the Versailles peace treaty, the Western political leaders, including Wilson himself, rejected it. They advocated self-determination for Europeans, but colonialism for Asians, Arabs, and Africans.<sup>11</sup> Britain, France, the United States and Japan all rejected China's demand for the abolition of unequal treaties and extra-territorial privileges. Only the Soviet Union renounced extra-territoriality (although it continued

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<sup>10</sup> H. Kuromiya and A. Peptoński, *Miedzy Warszawą a Tokio: Polsko-Japońska współpraca wywiadowcza 1904-1944* (Toruń, 2009), p. 49 and Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska, *Polityka Japonii wobec Polski, 1918-1941* (Warszawa, 1998), p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> M. MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York, 2002), pp. 306-21.

to intervene politically and militarily in China).<sup>12</sup> Under these conditions, an Asian version of Prometheanism, if such had even existed, could not have succeeded. Japan's hypocrisy was a complicating factor: by allying with the Entente, Japan took possession of Germany's colonies in Asia after World War I (China's Shandong province and some German islands in the Pacific) with the support of the Western nations.

Japan did win some concessions from the Western powers, though they conversely dashed Japan's ambitions to be regarded as an equal. For example, at the Washington Naval Conference in 1921-1922 – the first disarmament conference in modern history – Japan was made to eat humble pie, as they were forced to return Shandong to China, and accept a treaty that kept Japan's naval forces inferior to that of Britain and the United States. In addition, the United States gained a negotiating advantage at the conference, having earlier broken Japan's diplomatic codes.<sup>13</sup> Japan now had reason to believe that it was surrounded by unfriendly and even hostile western powers on all sides (particularly the United States, Soviet Union and Great Britain).

Thus, in the 1920s, for Japan, the Soviet Union was no longer the only (or even the major) potential foe. The Imperial Japanese Navy did not regard the Soviet Union, with its meager naval forces in the Far East, as a major power to be reckoned with. Instead, they considered the United States the major threat to Japan's interests. The Japanese Army, however, still considered the Soviet Union an immediate threat from the north, especially in Manchuria and Mongolia. The Japanese Army took the question of Asian "captive nations" seriously. Its vision for dismantling the Soviet Union included the Caucasus, thus potentially competing (if not conflicting directly) with the Polish-sponsored Promethean movement.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, Japan's impatient and unwise moves in Asia (which emanated from its hypocritical stance towards other Asian nations and a siege mentality) sealed its fate and the fate of other Asian nations under Western colonialism. The turning point was Japan's invasion of Manchuria (north-eastern China) in 1931 (the "Mukden Incident") and the set-up of a puppet government there (Manchukuo) the following year. This was alarming to western colonial powers, especially the United States, which retained vital interests in China's vast markets and its resources. Japan's easy conquest of Manchuria emboldened Ja-

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<sup>12</sup> See B. A. Ellman, "The End of Extraterritoriality in China: The Case of the Soviet Union, 1917-1960," *Republican China*, 21:2 (April 1996), pp. 65-89 questions the view that the Soviet Union actually renounced extraterritoriality in China.

<sup>13</sup> See H. O. Yardley, *The American Black Chamber* (Indianapolis, 1931).

<sup>14</sup> See H. Kuromiya and G. Mamoulia, "Anti-Russian and anti-Soviet Subversion: The Caucasian-Japanese Nexus, 1904-1945" *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61:8 (2009), pp. 1415-1440.

pan regarding the prospect of conquering China proper. Indeed, in early 1932, some conspirators within the Japanese military forces deliberately engineered an incident in Shanghai to provide a *casus belli* for military intervention in a city where the Western powers had much greater stakes (including extraterritorial) than they did in Manchuria (some people suspect that this incident was a Chinese Communist provocation). The First Shanghai Incident led the Western powers to believe that Japan indeed had a master plan to conquer China proper.

Japan's adventure in China led to what might be called an informal and virtual united front against Japan between the United States and the Soviet Union – the resumption of American-Soviet diplomatic relations in 1933. President Franklin D. Roosevelt used the *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow, Walter Duranty, to present the Soviet Union in the best possible light to the American public to facilitate the US recognition of the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup> Thus, Duranty became an apologist for Stalin and when millions of people were dying from hunger in the Soviet Union in 1932, Duranty repeatedly denied the existence of famine.<sup>16</sup> There is testimony that Duranty regularly reported to the Soviet secret police in the 1930s.<sup>17</sup> Roosevelt also mobilized the services of Armand Hammer. It is now believed widely that Hammer was a Soviet agent (or at least an agent of influence for the Soviet government), as he often worked as its mouthpiece in the US.<sup>18</sup> Ostensibly, Roosevelt's rationale was that the recognition of the Soviet Union would boost trade and help to improve an American economy still reeling from the Great Depression. In fact, the real reason was to use the Soviet Union to offset Japan's growing power in the Far East.<sup>19</sup> In 1934, Karl Radek, who was then serving as Stalin's "personal diplomat," frankly stated that Moscow's intention was to sabotage US-Japanese relations.<sup>20</sup> It is significant that Stalin transferred the Soviet Ambassador to Japan, Aleksandr Troianovsky, from Tokyo to Washington, to become the

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<sup>15</sup> T. Tzouliadis, *The Forsaken: An American Tragedy in Stalin's Russia* (New York, 2008), pp. 55-59.

<sup>16</sup> See S. J. Taylor, *Stalin's Apologist: Walter Duranty, New York Time's Man in Moscow* (New York, 1990).

<sup>17</sup> C. Blumay and H. Edwards, *The Dark Side of Power: The Real Armand Hammer* (New York, 1992), p. 48.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> On the US, see B. Farnsworth, *William C. Bullitt and the Soviet Union* (Bloomington, 1967), ch. 5 and on the Soviet Union, see Stalin's coded telegram on Litvinov's visit to the USA, Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv sotsialno-politicheskoi istorii (RGASPI), f. 558, op. 11, d. 82, l. 43 and the Politburo directive to Maksim Litvinov (25 October 1933), f. 17, op. 162, d. 15, l. 119.

<sup>20</sup> RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 792, l. 1.



first Soviet Ambassador to the United States. Roosevelt, in turn, made every effort to buy the confidence of Stalin and it was Japan that was really at the center of this American-Soviet rapprochement.

Thus, in Asia, a kind of “collective security” formed against Japan that involved the Soviet Union and the United States (and China). True, it was not a formal arrangement, but similar to the type that Maxim Litvinov strove for, but ultimately failed to create in Europe against Nazi Germany. In this case, Moscow was much more successful.

The American-Soviet “united front” signified that Japan’s ambitions in Asia were destined to fail. Confronted by this perceived “siege” by the Great Powers, Japan became disoriented. Stalin aptly noted in 1939: “As a result of the now two-year-old war with China which hasn’t been won, Japan has lost its balance and begun to get nervous and act out of gear, now attacking Britain, now the Soviet Union, and now the People’s Republic of Mongolia. Its action has no reason. This has revealed Japan’s weakness. Its conduct may unite all others against it.”<sup>21</sup>

Great-power politics in Asia sealed the fate of the Japanese-generated “Promethean” movements. In the end, the Soviet Union added to its territory through agreements with Britain and the United States at the three big war summits in Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. Moscow acquired Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands as a result of Japan’s defeat, and in violation of the 1941 Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact. Finally, Moscow managed to enable Outer Mongolia to become officially independent of China. Moscow may have had a similar scheme regarding Xinjiang, but if it did, it was not successful. The Western powers renounced their extra-territorial claims in China during World War II and allowed China to preserve its territorial integrity, as they considered China’s unity indispensable as a force against Japan.

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World War I largely broke up the “prison of nations” in Europe (in the Austrian and the Ottoman Empires in particular). The collapse of the Russian Empire, however, was far from complete, providing a political basis for the Promethean movement. France, Britain and even Germany implicitly supported the movement as long as they regarded the Soviet Union as their foe. After Józef Piłsudski’s death in 1935, the movement began to lose momentum. The fate of the movement was finally sealed when London, Paris and Moscow formed an alliance against Berlin. Poland found itself sacrificed to the interests of the Great Powers. István Deák once said of Hungary’s experience of World

<sup>21</sup> *Zhonghua min guo zhong yao shi liao chu bian—dui Ri kang zhan shi qi. Di 3 bia, Zhan shi wai jiao* (Taipei, 1981), p. 425.

War II: “In Hungary, at least, one of the things history teaches Hungarians is that it is a terrible mistake to be a small country in Central Europe.”<sup>22</sup> It was also a lesson Poland learned.

The Asian case is even more revealing. Well before the Pacific War began, the Great Powers (particularly the Soviet Union and the United States) formed a united front against a power (Japan) bent on subverting the colonial order in Asia. In an effort to preserve their interests, they contained the only Asian power that was capable of challenging them and ended up preserving the largest Asian empire (China) intact. The stark contrast with Europe cannot be overemphasized. It was only after the Chinese Communist Party took power, that the Western Powers began to question China’s occupation of non-Han territories (particularly Tibet). This time, however, there was little ground for “Asian Prometheanism” to succeed.

Both Poland’s old Rzeczpospolita and Japan’s Great East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere are things of the past, although it is necessary to point out that they were different entities that took place at different periods in time. Now, both Poland and Japan are comparatively small countries. They were the only countries (exempting Nazi Germany) to take up the challenge to subvert the Soviet Union from within. They were overruled by the Great Powers. In modern times, imperialism is decisively on the decline, but what about Great-Power politics? The Great Powers are likely to overrule the vital interests of smaller states for some time to come. This is one lesson Promethean movements must teach today’s world.

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<sup>22</sup> I. Deák, J. T. Cross, and T. Judt (eds.), *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath* (Princeton 2000), p. 68.

## Prometeizm i polityka wielkich mocarstw

*Hiroaki Kuromiya*

Upadek ZSRR w 1991 roku i uzyskanie niepodległości przez jego składowe republiki zrealizowało, w pewnym sensie, cele prometeizmu. Teraz Związek Radziecki już nie istnieje, jego wschodnie i południowe granice są niepodległe, stwarzając wokół Rosji rodzaj strefy buforowej. Jednak nadal pozostaje wiele pytań. Po pierwsze na ile stabilne są te nowo niepodległe państwa? Po drugie, czy w Rosji, nadal największym państwie na świecie, pozostają grupy narodowe/etniczne które odmawiają uznania rosyjskiej władzy? Czy Rosja jest w stanie stworzyć stabilny organizm polityczny? Po trzecie, gdzie w Azji zrealizowane zostały cele prometeizmu?

Rezultaty zakończenia zimnej wojny z pewnością miały pozytywny efekt dla średnich i małych państw. Jednak w Azji koniec zimnej wojny nie przyniósł praktycznie żadnych zmian w złożonej konfiguracji narodowościowej tego kontynentu. Jest to w dużym stopniu wynik tego w jaki sposób wielkie mocarstwa rozgrywały między sobą „kartę azjatycką”, w szczególności w związku z faktem, iż komunistyczne Chiny, w przeciwieństwie do Związku Ra-

## Прометеизм и политика великих держав

*Хироаки Куромиа*

Распад Советского Союза в 1991 году и получение независимости соседних республик, в некотором смысле, реализовали цели Прометеизма. Теперь Советский Союз больше не существует, ее восточные и южные границы являются независимыми, создавая вокруг России своего рода буферную зону. Тем не менее, многие вопросы все еще остаются. Во-первых, насколько стабильны эти новые независимые государства? Во-вторых, существуют ли в России, по-прежнему одной из самых больших стран в мире, национальные/этнические группы, которые отказываются признавать российскую власть? Сможет ли Россия создать стабильный политический организм? В-третьих, где в Азии достигнуты цели Прометеизма?

Результаты завершения холодной войны, конечно, оказали положительное влияние на средние и малые страны. Но в Азии, конец холодной войны не принес практически никаких изменений в сложной этнической конфигурации континента. Во многом это результат того, каким образом великие державы разыгрывали между собой «азиатскую карту», особенно с учетом того, что коммунистический

dzieckiego, nie upadły a przekształciły siebie w jedną ze światowych potęg.

Artykuł analizuje politykę wielkich mocarstw – ZSRR, USA, Wielkiej Brytanii, Francji, ale również Chin i Japonii, oraz jej wpływ na losy narodów zniewolonych przez Sowietów, a także Polski. Autor rozważa jak w sytuacji rozgrywek wielkich potęg politycznych można było w praktyce realizować idee prometeizmu. Zwraca szczególną uwagę na sytuację w Azji.

Badanie tego w jaki sposób Związek Radziecki, Chiny i USA starały się przejąć kontrolę nad Azją ma ogromne znaczenie dzisiaj, ponieważ świat, włączając w to Europę, w dalszym ciągu w dużym stopniu kontrolowany jest przez mocarstwa. Prometeizm i polityka wielkich mocarstw może udzielić nam kilku dobrych, historycznych lekcji.

Китай, в отличие от Советского Союза, не то что не развалился, а превратил себя в одну из мировых держав.

В статье анализируется политика великих держав - СССР, США, Великобритании, Франция, а также Китая и Японии, и ее влияние на судьбы порабощенных Советами народов, а также польского народа. В статье рассматривается, как в ситуации конкуренции великих политических сил, можно было на практике реализовать идею Прометеизма. Автор обращает особое внимание на ситуацию в Азии.

Изучение того, как Советский Союз, Китай и Соединенные Штаты стремились взять под контроль Азию, имеет большое значение сегодня, потому что мир, в том числе Европа, по-прежнему в значительной степени контролируется сверхдержавами. Прометеизм и политическое прошлое великих держав могут дать нам некоторые хорошие исторические уроки.

