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The Poles and the Japanese in the struggle for the Soviet Far East in the 1930s *

Russian, Polish and Japanese scientists¹ have studied the above issue in the context of other problems². In contemporary Ukrainian historiography, researchers focus mainly on the social life of the Ukrainian diaspora in the Far East³. This article analyzes the plans of Polish and Japanese military circles which, while pursuing their state interests, discovered many commonalities regarding the Ukrainian issue in this region of the world in a broader anti-Soviet and pro-Promethean perspective.

The Soviet Far East was inhabited by, among others, the descendants of Ukrainians who had been resettled to the region by the tsarist authorities in the 1850s. Mass emigration of Ukrainians to this distant region of the Russian Empire began in the late 19th century, which is when the name Zeleny Klyn was coined. Zeleny Klyn covered the Amur and Ussuri regions which became the main destinations for Ukrainian migrants. In

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¹ *Neizvestnyj separatizm. Na sluzhbe SD i Abvera. Iz sekretnykh dos'e razvedki*, ed. L.F. Sockov, Moskva 2003; V.K. Bylinin, A.A. Zdanovich, V.I. Korotaev, Organizacija „Prometej” i „prometejskoe” dvizhenie v planah pol'skoj razvedki po razvalu Rossii/SSSR, [in:] *Trudy Obshhestva izuchenija istorii otechestvennykh specsluzhb*, ed. V.K. Bylinin, Vol. 3, Moskva 2007, pp. 318–414; L.V. Kuras, *Ukrainskaja jenticheskaja gruppirovka v Harbine v 1930-e gody v osveshhenii sovetskoj razvedki*, <http://vybory.org/articles/54.html> (accessed: 31 I 2018).

² H. Kuromiya, A. Peplowski, *Między Warszawą a Tokio. Polsko-japońska współpraca wywiadowcza 1904–1944*, Toruń 2009.

³ A.A. Popok, *Gromads'ko-polityczne ta religijne zhyt'tya ukrajiniv na Dalekomu Sxodi v XX st.*, „Ukrayins'kyj istorychnyj zhurnal” 1998, No. 6, pp. 54–68.

the 1920s, these territories witnessed the struggle for the creation of a united and independent Ukrainian state on the Pacific Ocean. As a result, the concept of Zeleny Klyn was expanded, covering the territory between the Baikal and the Bering Strait. Zeleny Klyn was also referred to as Green Ukraine⁴.

According to Soviet statistical data for 1926, the Soviet Far East was inhabited by around 1 million Ukrainians who accounted for 60–70% of the local population. The Ukrainian community consisted not only of displaced persons, but also deportees, including political prisoners. Laborers and individuals working for the Chinese Eastern Railway⁵ also migrated to the Soviet Far East. The migrants not only preserved the Ukrainian language and customs, but their national consciousness also grew each year, as demonstrated by the increasing number of Ukrainian schools. In 1930, 35,000 Ukrainians were deported from the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Far East as part of the dekulakization campaign. Faced with harsh living conditions in uninhabited areas, the migrants were forced to fight for survival⁶.

However, the Ukrainian colony in Chinese Manchuria comprised around 11,000 people, and it was the second largest national community after the Russians. Political activity in Manchuria began in September 1931, when all Russians were expelled from the Chinese police forces. The Manchurian Ukrainians supported the idea of creating an independent Ukraine in Zeleny Klyn as a state that would separate Russia from the Pacific. The political plans of the Ukrainians in the Far East attracted the attention of the military in Poland, as well as in Japan and Germany⁷.

In the second half of the 19th century, following the example of European countries, Japan was rapidly transformed from a backward feudal state into a modern industrial state. The Japanese Army and its intelligence and counterintelligence services were also modernized. German military officers assisted the Japanese authorities in the process of creating intelligence services. At the end of the 19th century, Japan emerged as an increasingly powerful state in South-East Asia. The country strengthened its influence in Korea and took over Taiwan after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. Siberia, the Amur Land, and Manchuria were inhabited by around 400,000 Japanese people working in trade,

⁴ A. Mamaj, *Za Sibir'ju, gde solnce vshodit, ili pochemu ne sostojalas' v Zelenom Kline vtoraja Ukraina*, https://zn.ua/SOCIETY/za_sibiryu_gde_solntse_vshodit_ili_pochemu_ne_sostojalas_v_zelenom_kline_vtoraya_ukraina.html (accessed: 12 I 2019).

⁵ V.I. Very'ga, *Vy'zvol'ni zmagannya v Ukrayini 1914–1923 rr. U dvox tomax*, Vol. 2, Lviv–Zhovkva, 1998, p. 381.

⁶ *Shho roby't'sya na Zelenomu Kly'ni?*, „Man'dzhurs'ky'j Visny'k. Organ ukrayins'koyi koloniyi v Xarbini” 1934, No. 17, p. 3.

⁷ Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe Wojskowego Biura Historycznego w Warszawie [Central Military Archives of the Military Historical Office in Warsaw] (hereafter: CAW-WBH), Oddział II Sztabu Generalnego/Głównego Wojska Polskiego [Branch II of the General Staff/General Headquarters of the Polish Army] (hereafter: O II), ref. I.303.4.5515, k. 3–9 (Ukrainians in the Far East 1931 – report by O II, n.d.).

crafts, and services. They strengthened Japan's influence in this region of the world and contributed to the development of Japanese intelligence structures.

The mid-19th century witnessed the first signs of Japanese-Russian rivalry. Strategic points such as Port Arthur and Port Talien were leased to the Russians by the Chinese government. The Chinese also enabled the Tsarist authorities to build the Chinese Eastern Railway through Manchuria as an extension of the Trans-Siberian railway to facilitate military transport.

Having recognized the emerging threat from Russia, the Japanese developed intensive intelligence activities on Russian territory. They established contacts with Russian revolutionary groups as potential allies in anti-tsarist insurgencies. Finally, the Japanese General Staff considered the Russian expansion in Manchuria and Korea to be a threat to Japanese interests, which led to the Russo-Japanese War that ended with the defeat of the Russian Empire⁸.

In their political games with Russia, the Japanese also expressed an interest in non-Russian nations of the tsarist empire. Colonel Motojirō Akashi was the Japanese military attaché in St. Petersburg in 1902–1904. After the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, he was transferred to the same post in Stockholm. Akashi was tasked with building a Japanese intelligence network in Russia, sabotaging the operations of the Trans-Siberian railway, and fueling the opposition movement within the Russian Empire. After arriving in Stockholm, Akashi maintained contacts with the representatives of the Finnish émigré community in Sweden⁹ who acted as an intermediary between the Japanese attaché and other revolutionary and anti-tsarist parties and organizations. The above enabled Akashi to establish contacts with Georgian emigrants in Paris¹⁰. Tokyo provided financial assistance to the representatives of the Georgian national movement. According to one of its representatives, the weapons and ammunition purchased with these funds were to play a significant role during the Georgian revolution of 1905¹¹.

In April 1904, Akashi began preparations for a joint conference of opposition groups representing nations incorporated into the Russian Empire to solicit their support in the fight against Russia. He received 100,000 yen from the General Staff for this purpose. The conference was not an easy undertaking due to vast differences of opinion. However, the conference was held in Paris on 1–5 October 1904, and it was attended by the representatives of 8 out of the 19 invited parties. The meeting did not bring the anticipated results. Most representatives of radical anti-tsarist opposition groups attended the follow-

⁸ H. Kuromiya, A. Peplowski, op. cit., pp. 10–16.

⁹ Finland was a part of the Russian Empire at the time.

¹⁰ G. Mamulia, *Kak samuraj stal sojuznikom Prometeja. Japono-kavkazskaja smychka v gody russko-japonskoj vojny*, „Istoricheskij Vestnik” 2012, Vol. 149, No. 2, pp. 95–99.

¹¹ G. Mamoulia, *L'histoire du groupe Caucase (1934–1939)*, „Cahiers du monde Russe” 2007, No. 1, p. 48.

ing conference in Geneva in April 1905. It was decided that large-scale uprisings would begin in the summer of 1905 on the territory of the Russian Empire, including Polish lands under Russian rule. The opposition received financial support from Japanese military authorities, mainly for the purchase of weapons¹².

The Treaty of Portsmouth, a peace agreement brokered by the US President Theodore Roosevelt, ended the Russo-Japanese War and made Korea a protectorate of Japan¹³. Japan was also granted the lease of southern Manchuria, where it operated the strategically important South Manchurian Railway. The railway was patrolled by Japanese troops that were later transformed into the Kwantung Army. The treaty also recognized Japan's claims to southern Sakhalin¹⁴. These conquests provided Japan with opportunities for further expansion.

After the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1918–1920, the Entente forces intervened in the Russian Far East to provide the Whites with support against the Bolsheviks and to protect the allied powers' interests. Japanese, American, Canadian, French, British, Czechoslovak and Chinese forces took part in military interventions. However, they were withdrawn in the face of Bolshevik troop advances in June 1920. Only the Japanese Army remained in the Russian Far East to prevent the spread of communism to Korea and Manchuria that remained under Japan's control and influence¹⁵.

In 1920, the Bolsheviks created the Far Eastern Republic (FER), a puppet state in eastern Siberia that acted as a buffer zone between Bolshevik Russia, China, and Japan. In response, the Japanese declared their support for the Provisional Government of Priamar in Primorsky Krai to maintain stability. The White Army was placed under the provisional government's command in the Far East. However, in November 1922, Japanese troops were evacuated, and Vladivostok was occupied by the People's Revolutionary Army of the Far East. Shortly afterward, the FER and its territories in Primorsky Krai were officially incorporated into the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR)¹⁶.

Japan conquered Manchuria in 1931 and established the puppet state of Manchukuo on its territory in 1932. Manchukuo comprised Manchuria and a part of Inner Mongolia. The new state remained under Japanese control, and it shared a 4,000-km-long border with the Soviet Union. Manchuria also shared a border of several hundred kilometers with the People's Republic of Mongolia, the first satellite state of the USSR. The non-aggression pact proposed by Russia was rejected by Japan.

¹² E. Pałasz-Rutkowska, A.T. Romer, *Historia stosunków polsko-japońskich 1904–1945*, Warsaw 1996, pp. 54–58.

¹³ It was officially occupied by Japan in 1910.

¹⁴ A. Gordon, *Labor and imperial democracy in Japan*, Berkeley 1991, p. 54.

¹⁵ More on this issue: J.A. White, *The Siberian intervention*, Princeton 1950.

¹⁶ W. Materski, *Bolszewicy i samuraje. Walka dyplomatyczna i zbrojna o rosyjski Daleki Wschód (1917–1925)*, Warsaw 1990, pp. 67–174.

The Soviet Union sought to avoid confrontation with Japan. According to Karol Radek, Stalin realized that the USSR was unable to run two simultaneous fronts against Poland and Japan. He categorically forbade firing at Japanese airplanes crossing Soviet airspace and prevented Soviet troops from engaging with Japanese forces in Manchuria. At the same time, the Soviet Union was rapidly arming its military and making covert attempts to increase its military presence in the Far East.

However, in 1933, Moscow adopted a more aggressive policy towards Tokyo. At the same time, the Soviet authorities attempted to take advantage of the American-Japanese conflict. Stalin succeeded in establishing diplomatic relations with the USA. Soviet secret services conducted vigorous intelligence activities against Japan. According to Japanese data, in 1937, there were 2,000 spies and 50,000 Soviet agents in Japan and its puppet state¹⁷.

Japan's policies kindled the emigrants' hope of confronting the Soviet regime. According to the literature, Kingorō Hashimoto, the Japanese military attaché in Turkey, laid the foundations for Japan's strategy towards national minorities in the Soviet Union in 1929 by. At that time, Bosphorus was one of the most important centers of emigration from the USSR, mainly from the Caucasus. The Promethean opposition movement rapidly gained ground among Polish immigrants in Bosphorus.

Hashimoto laid out a plan for exploiting Caucasian nations in the event of an armed conflict with the USSR. He believed that the Caucasus would play a very important role in the conflict because 80% of Soviet oil production came from this region. A year later, Hashimoto returned to Japan and became the head of the Russian Department at the Intelligence Department of the Japanese General Staff. In 1932, Tokyo instructed Japanese military attachés in Paris, other European cities, Turkey and Afghanistan to organize an anti-Soviet subversion campaign with the involvement of various expatriate organizations to 'destroy the Soviet Union's combat capability as quickly as possible in the event of war'. In the following year, the Japanese General Staff instructed military attachés in Europe and Turkey to solicit the support of national minorities in the USSR. The Japanese began to finance some of the emigration groups¹⁸.

However, Hikosaburo Hata, the Japanese military attaché in Warsaw, contacted Muslim community leaders, including the representatives of the Caucasus, already in 1931–1932. Japanese officers held similar meetings in other countries. In February 1933, Hata met with two Ukrainians, Roman Smal-Stocki and General Volodymyr Salskyj, as well as two Georgians, Simon Mdivani and General Alexander Zachariadze. All of them

¹⁷ H. Kuromiya, G. Mamoulia, *The Eurasian Triangle: Russia, the Caucasus and Japan, 1904–1945*, Warsaw 2016, pp. 128–130.

¹⁸ H. Kuromiya, G. Mamoulia, *Anti-Russian and Anti-Soviet subversion. The Caucasian-Japanese nexus, 1904–1945*, „Europe-Asia Studies” 2009, Vol. 61, No. 8, pp. 1421–1422.

were prominent Promethean activists. The Japanese expressed an interest in the political affairs of Ukraine and Georgia¹⁹.

Polish leaders who supported the Promethean movement had a growing interest in Ukrainians living in the Soviet Far East and Chinese Manchuria. Their spiritual leader was Józef Piłsudski who regained power after the military coup of 1926 and did not abandon his earlier plans to dismantle the Soviet Union and create nation-states merged with the Polish federation²⁰.

Prometheism was a political project that was initiated by Józef Piłsudski and implemented by the authorities of the Second Polish Republic. The movement had been created before World War I and the rebirth of a sovereign Polish state in 1918. However, the origins of the Promethean movement can be traced back to the 17th century when the growing power of the Russian Empire posed a threat to the First Republic of Poland. Prometheism also stimulated separatist movements among many Cossack émigré groups²¹. The plans to weaken Russia's influence emerged in the 18th century when the Republic became a Russian protectorate, and in the 19th century when Poland sought to regain independence²².

In 1897, the first census of the Russian Empire revealed that only 44.3% of the population spoke Russian (referred to as Great Russian in the census)²³. Ethnic Russians constituted less than half of the Empire's population. Not all areas that had been controlled by the tsarist Russia were incorporated into the Soviet Union, including Polish territories annexed by Russia, western Ukraine and western Belarus (which were a part of the Second Polish Republic), Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland. By 1937, the share of ethnic Russians in the Soviet population increased to 58%, whereas the percentage of Ukrainians decreased to 16% after the Great Ukrainian Famine. Despite the above, non-Russians were still a large part of the Soviet population²⁴.

Józef Piłsudski was aware that non-Russian nationalities residing on Soviet territory could be used to weaken the USSR. During the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War, Piłsudski wrote a memorandum to the Japanese government, outlining the opportunity to use non-Russian groups in the Baltic Region and Black Sea and Caspian Sea basins in the struggle against Russia. He emphasized that Poland should take the initiative in this fight

¹⁹ H. Kuromiya, G. Mamoulia, *The Eurasian Triangle...*, p. 139.

²⁰ G. F. Matveev, *Piłsudskij*, Moskva 2008, p. 215; idem, *Rossijsko-ukrainskij konflikt v planah pol'skoj diplomatii i voennyh krugov v mezhoennyj period*, [in:] *Rossija–Ukraina: istorija vzaimootnošenij*, eds. A.I. Miller, V.F. Reprincev, B.N. Florja, Moskva 1997, pp. 237–238.

²¹ S. Mikulicz, *Prometeizm w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 1971, p. 15.

²² V. L. Komar, *Koncepcija prometeizmu w polityce Pol'shhi (1921–1939 gg.)*, Iwano-Frankiwsk 2011, pp. 54–70.

²³ *Pervaya Vseobščaya perepis' naseleniya Rossijskoy Imperii 1897 g.*, Vol. 2, ed. N.A. Troynitskij, Sankt-Peterburg 1905, pp. 74–75.

²⁴ P. Eberhard, *Geografia ludnościowa Rosji*, Warsaw 2002, p. 92.

and take a leading position. Furthermore, he argued that if Russia were to be deprived of illegally annexed territories, it would cease to be a threatening and dangerous neighbor²⁵. However, upon advice from Britain which did not want the conflict to spread to Europe, the Japanese government rejected Piłsudski's request and limited its support to intelligence cooperation²⁶.

In the Second Polish Republic, Prometheism denoted political and military cooperation between Polish authorities, political activists, and representatives of non-Russian nations (mainly emigrants) under Soviet rule. Polish politicians and Promethean activists were interested in all nations, peoples and ethnic groups that sought independence from the USSR. Promethean activists were non-Russians who were willing to cooperate with Poles in the pursuit of freedom and 'tear Russia apart along national seams'. Above all, Prometheism was much more of an anti-Russian than an anti-communist movement, as evidenced by Marshal Piłsudski's statement that 'Russia will always be a threat to Poland, regardless of the political system that prevails in Poland, because imperialism is the most important feature of our eastern neighbor'²⁷.

Etienne Copeaux argued that Poland's struggle for independence was not the only factor that contributed to the creation of the Promethean movement. According to the French historian, the congresses of the Muslim nations in Russia, which convened in 1905–1906 in Nizhny Novgorod, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Tashkent to discuss the autonomy of Muslim peoples and their federations, can be regarded as 'a prehistory of the Promethean movement'. Copeaux also observed that the meetings of the representatives of independent republics that had emerged in 1917–1918 from the ruins of the Russian Empire also played a crucial role²⁸.

American historian Timothy Snyder observed that while the activities of the Comintern and communist parties in other countries served the interests of the Soviet Union, the Promethean movement had the moral support of Great Britain and France, as well as political and financial aid from Poland. Therefore, the dissolution of the Soviet Union had to be accelerated to promote the emergence of independent national republics²⁹.

The Polish authorities realized that the former glory of the Republic of Poland could be restored only through a system of alliances with non-Russian nations enslaved by the Soviets, in particular the Ukrainians. The advocates of Prometheism tried to use forces

²⁵ E. Charaszkiewicz, *Referat o zagadnieniu prometejskim*, [in:] *Zbiór dokumentów pplk. Edmunda Charaszkiewicza*, eds. A. Grzywacz, M. Kwiecień, G. Mazur, Kraków 2000, p. 56.

²⁶ V.L. Komar, op. cit., p. 70.

²⁷ A. Szymanowicz, *Pomiędzy Warszawą a Elbrusem i Moskwą. Aktywność niepodległościowa narodów Północnego Kaukazu i polska polityka prometejska*, Wrocław 2017, p. 8.

²⁸ É. Copeaux, *Le mouvement prométhéen*, „Cahiers d'études sur la Méditerranée orientale et le monde turco-iranien” 1993, No. 18, p. 11.

²⁹ T. Snyder, *Covert Polish missions across the Soviet Ukrainian border, 1928–1933*, [in:] *Confini. Construzioni, attraversamenti, rappresentazioni*, ed. S. Salvatici, Rubbettino 2005, p. 55.

that were dissatisfied with Soviet policies and unite them into one anti-Soviet front. The Prometheus Association uniting the representatives of Ukrainian (Petlura's men³⁰), Georgian, Azerbaijani, North Caucasian, Tatar, Cossack, Turkish-Caucasian, Ingermanlander, and Karel nationals was established in 1928 under the patronage the Polish General Staff in Warsaw.

The situation in the Far East was significant for Polish intelligence which needed information about the relocation of Soviet military units from Siberia to the western part of the USSR to assess the severity of the threat for Poland. Poles were not satisfied with the information obtained from the Japanese intelligence. In November 1932, the first Polish intelligence outpost was established in Manchuria. It operated in Harbin under the code name *Hamlet* until October 1935. Intelligence outposts under the code names *Kulis* and *Mandarin* were established in late 1936 and early 1937, respectively. Polish intelligence in Manchuria was tasked with observing Soviet and Japanese policies in the region, with particular emphasis on the military (movements of Soviet troops) in Siberia. Some employees of the Polish consulate in Harbin cooperated closely with the intelligence. Similarly to other Polish consulates, the outpost in Harbin played an important role in Polish intelligence efforts. Consul Aleksander Kwiatkowski personally managed two outposts, *Hamlet* and *Cholski*. The latter dealt primarily with members of the Promethean movement³¹.

The Polish consulate in Harbin assisted Polish military intelligence in organizing a local branch of the Prometheus Association in Manchuria. It was headed by Władysław Pelc, a graduate of the Prometheus Eastern Institute and a representative of the Promethean movement. His efforts gave rise to the creation of the Promethean branch in Manchuria on 11 November 1932³². Pelc was able to solicit the support of local Polish, Ukrainian, Georgian and Muslim émigré groups for the Promethean movement³³.

Pelc's attention focused mainly on the relatively large Ukrainian colony in Manchuria. Agency No. 2, an organizational unit of Polish military intelligence responsible for the implementation of the Promethean policy on behalf of the Polish Army, pinned their hopes on the Ukrainians³⁴. Ukrainian organizations in Manchuria were led by Ivan

³⁰ The supporters of the Ukrainian politician Symon Petlura, the commander-in-chief of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian president in 1919–1926 (in exile from 1921) were described as „Petlura's men”. Petlura was a supporter of the Polish-Ukrainian alliance.

³¹ A. Peplowski, *Wywiad polski na ZSRR 1921–1939*, Warsaw 1996, pp. 165–170; W. Skóra, *Placówki MSZ Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej w Harbinie w latach 1920–1941 na tle dziejów Chin i Mandżurii (Mandżukuo). Szkic do problemu*, [in:] *Na szlakach dwóch światów. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Jerzemu Hauzińskiemu w 45-lecie pracy naukowej i dydaktycznej*, ed. A. Teterycz-Puzio, Słupsk 2016, pp. 713–717.

³² I. Svit, *Ukrayins'ko-yapons'ki vzayemy'ny', 1903–1945. Istory'chny'j oglyad i sposterezheniya*, New York 1972, p. 119; idem, *Klub „Prometej” v Xarbinii*, „Ukrayins'ki visti” 1962, Vol. 20, p. 3.

³³ Biblioteka Polska w Paryżu [Polish Library in Paris] (BPP), Akta Władysława Pelca [Władysław Pelc Files] (AWP), ref. 1, k. 2 – curriculum vitae, n.d.

³⁴ CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I.303.4.5500, k. 81 (The situation in the Far East. A report by Władysław Pelc, dated 18 VIII 1930).

Swit and Paweł Jachno. They reported directly to General Władimir Salski, Minister of Military Affairs of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) in exile who lived in Warsaw. These organizations supported the UNR's ideology and the establishment of alliance with Poland based on the Polish-Ukrainian alliance agreement of April 1920³⁵.

Lieutenant Zygmunt Krasnowski of the 27th Light Artillery Regiment provided support to Agency No. 2 during his four-year stay in Harbin. Krasnowski left Harbin for personal reasons in an attempt to recover a large sum of money from the Chinese Eastern Railway. He was granted unpaid leave that was extended several times. The Head of Agency No. 2 took advantage of Krasnowski's travels to the Far East and gave him the appropriate instructions. The lieutenant was tasked with reporting on the operations of local Promethean groups to the Head of Agency No. 2.

Lieutenant Krasnowski stayed in Harbin twice, from July 1931 to August 1933 and from October 1933 to June 1935. At the request of Major Charaszkiewicz³⁶, the Head of Division II, Krasnowski's leave of absence was officially justified and extended during that time. In 1936, Lt. Krasnowski requested to leave the military and applied for an extension of his retirement pension for as long as he remained on unpaid leave. The Head of Agency No. 2 approved the request because Krasnowski was an official contact and was not remunerated for his mission³⁷.

In June, Krasnowski reported directly to Major Charaszkiewicz that he had established cooperation with Georgian and Tatar minorities. Contacts with Ukrainians were more difficult to establish due to their resentment of Germans and Poles. However, Krasnowski did not abandon his mission, and he organized lectures and discussions in the Polish Inn in Harbin. One of the first meetings was attended by Czechoslovak and Estonian consuls who delivered lectures about their countries. The Ukrainians were also invited. Initially, Krasnowski sensitized Polish students who visited the Inn to avoid political issues concerning Ukraine. Caution was exercised to gain the Ukrainians' trust. As a result, according to Lieutenant Krasnowski, crowds of the same young people who had published anti-Polish brochures several months earlier, attended the meetings in the Polish Inn in a friendly (at least seemingly friendly) atmosphere.

The Inn became the center of political and cultural life not only for Poles, but also for many Promethean émigrés. On 14 June 1932, Vice Consul Stanisław Baliński organized a literary meeting during which members of the local Georgian, Ukrainian, Tatar

³⁵ H. Kuromiya, P. Libera, *Notatki Włodzimierza Bączkowskiego na temat współpracy polsko-japońskiej wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 2009, No. 169, p. 117; CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I.303.4.5741, k.19, Zarys wojskowej polityki zagranicznej – a report by O II n.d.

³⁶ Head of Agency No. 2 – an organizational unit of the Polish intelligence service which supported the Promethean movement.

³⁷ CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I 303.4.5357, Termination of official relations with Lieutenant Krasnowski Zygmunt (case dated 22 I 1936).

and Polish communities read patriotic works. The meeting was also attended by most leaders of the Ukrainian movement. Krasnowski developed brief reports on several leaders, including:

1. Victor Kulabko-Koreckiy – former Deputy Minister of Post and Telegraphs in the Skoropadsky government. He claimed to be a descendant of the Polish magnate family of Korecki from Ukraine. Kulabko-Koreckiy spoke Polish and, according to Krasnowski, was a proven and loyal friend of Poland³⁸. His attempts to recover the Ukrainian House, which had previously hosted a Ukrainian theatre and school, from the Chinese authorities were unsuccessful. Krasnowski advised Koreckiy to turn to the Ukrainian Members of Parliament in the Polish Sejm who would present a petition on his behalf to a Japanese Member of Parliament in Warsaw.
2. Ivan Shevchenko was very loyal to Poland. His brothers lived in Poland. He was an active member of the Ukrainian community in Harbin. Shevchenko maintained contacts with Skoropadsky's group in Berlin.
3. Odyniec³⁹ – the president of the union of students of Ukraine at the Oriental Institute in Harbin. Odyniec previously published anti-Polish brochures, but he later attended the meetings in the Polish Inn.
4. Pasławski⁴⁰ was born in Lviv and was fluent in Polish. According to Krasnowski, he was an excellent speaker who could influence his listeners.

In addition to Georgians, Tatars and Ukrainians, the émigré communities in Harbin also included Siberian *oblastniks*⁴¹ and various Cossack associations⁴². There were also several correspondents of Ukrainian, American, Czechoslovak, and Polish magazines. Krasnowski asked Captain Charaszkievich for materials about the Ukrainian movement to further his cooperation with the group in Harbin, as well as for further instructions⁴³.

After the puppet state of Manchukuo had been created by Japan in February 1932, Division II recognized the opportunity to spread the Promethean movement to the region. This plan was supported by geographical (border with the USSR) and population factors

³⁸ According to the Ukrainian politician Volodymyr Salskyi, Kulabko-Koreckiy had connections with German military intelligence – CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I.303.4.5515, k. 24 (Gen. Salski – Attache of Japan, Maj. Yana-Gita – correspondence of 9 V 1933).

³⁹ Odyniec's first name was not indicated.

⁴⁰ As above.

⁴¹ In October 1917, the *oblastniks* adopted a declaration of independence during a convention in Tomsk. A month later, the Siberian Regional Duma was established and the Legislative Assembly of Siberia was to convene in March 1918. The Duma was disbanded twice in the first half of 1918 – by the Bolsheviks in February and later by the White Guards.

⁴² Including Amur, Transbaikalia and Ussuri Cossacks.

⁴³ CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I 303.4.5466 (Lieutenant Zygmunt Krasnowski's letter of 20 VI 1932 to Captain Edmund Charaszkievich concerning national minorities in Harbin).

(large community of Promethean émigrés). Agency No. 2 issued general instructions to promote the dissemination of Promethean ideas in Harbin and Manchuria.

According to these instructions, the headquarters or the core of the local Promethean movement were to be set up in Harbin, similarly to the movement's organizational structure in Warsaw. The headquarters would consist of five representatives of Georgian, Ukrainian and Tatar communities who would receive a monthly allowance of USD 20 each from Division II. However, the leader of the local movement had to be a Pole, preferably someone who could be fully trusted and who had lived in Manchuria since at last 1920. Obviously, this solution was implemented to prevent infiltration by Soviet agents.

The organizers had been warned that a significant percentage of the émigrés in the Far East were criminals, adventurers, political and criminal deportees, many of whom had served in the White Army, had pro-Russian sentiments and contacts with White intelligence personnel who collaborated with the Japanese⁴⁴ or the Bolsheviks⁴⁵.

The core was to be a strictly conspiratorial organization. Each member was expected to act independently and through third parties. They could perform their work in an open, semi-clandestine or secret manner to create the impression that their support for Promethean ideals was a purely personal affair.

The key mission of the headquarters was to create a cultural union of non-Russian communities in the region of Manchukuo that would disseminate propaganda on the cultural identity of the historical nations of the USSR among the Japanese, Chinese, and White Russian émigrés. Members of the core or other trusted individuals would conduct *prudent* and conspiratorial propaganda campaigns and create independent Promethean cells. Individuals could become full members of the union only after a six-month trial period.

Another scenario envisaged open Promethean activity. In this case, only some goals would be pursued in secret and only selected members of the organization would be involved in conspiratorial activity. However, this plan required a favorable political situation and the support of Manchukuo's and, obviously, Japanese authorities. Depending on the attitude of the local authorities, these efforts were to be initiated as part of an official political or cultural campaign.

The instructions also encouraged other regular activities that were characteristic of the Promethean movement, including:

- reading groups,
- establishment of weekly or monthly journals presenting information from European Promethean publications,

⁴⁴ Such as Lt. Mikulicz-Radecki.

⁴⁵ Such as Mikeladze and Melik-Vartanyantsa.

- modest self-help campaigns for low-income members and refugees from the USSR,
- recruitment of new members,
- monitoring of local political life and events that were important for the Promethean movement,
- other types of activities.

There were plans to extend the movement's reach beyond Harbin by creating open or secret Promethean branches in Manchukuo, or even in Shanghai, Tientsin, and Tokyo.

Members who wished to be transferred to the USSR first had to prove their worth on local ground. There were plans to create anti-Soviet separatist centers composed of completely independent *threes* or *fours*. Communication with these centers was limited to once a year at most, to minimize the risk of discovery on Soviet territory, which was a difficult task. These units were tasked with conducting political activities (such as printing of leaflets) in the event of repressions or political trials in the USSR. They were also expected to initiate and direct sabotage or even terrorist operations. The latter could not be planned and top-down actions.

Even more ambitious plans were drawn to reach new areas and establish new centers and cells in Buryatia, Siberia (Transbaikalia), Zeleny Klyn, Turkestan, Outer Mongolia, and later even in Ukraine and the Caucasus. For this purpose, the 'more intelligent' members who had already established effective local networks were to create new centers by changing their identity and relocating their activities abroad or to another federal state.

Funds were to be raised through voluntary taxation of Promethean supporters, contributions from members and, possibly, subsidies from Manchukuo's authorities. The plan to raise funds from illegal trade in goods between the USSR and Manchukuo and drug trafficking was even more original.

According to the author of the instructions, illegal trade could significantly facilitate 'entry into the USSR territory' and provide a cover for sensitive operations by using popular smuggling routes. Members who were apprehended at the border or in the field could evade punishment by pretending to be smugglers.

Trade in opium was an even better source of funds for the organization. The author of the instructions wrote: 'in reality, contraband trade (including opium) in the Far East is not a particularly vicious activity. I know very honest people who are capable of ideological work and who were occasionally involved in opium smuggling'⁴⁶. There is no information to indicate whether this scenario was ever implemented.

The political ambitions of the representatives of Polish authorities did not coincide with the economic and political situation in the interwar period. As a result, they were

⁴⁶ CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I 303.4.5466, Draft instruction for X. General rules and guidelines (n.d.).

forced to look for allies among the representatives of other countries. Japan could have been regarded as a natural ally because it had an interest in the territories of the Soviet Far East and Siberia. In addition, Polish and Japanese intelligence services united their efforts in the interwar period⁴⁷ with the aim of dismantling the USSR into nation states. To weaken the USSR, the Japanese considered the option of creating Green Ukraine, a sovereign Ukrainian state in the region of Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and the Amur River. In this respect, Polish and Japanese interests overlapped, and these efforts were intensified under the guise of cultural exchange⁴⁸. Therefore, Ukrainian statehood was an important issue in Polish-Japanese relations.

While supporting Polish initiatives, Japanese officials were pursuing their state interests. Japan was hoping to implement a pan-Asian doctrine based on the Japanese ideology in the Far East. Its goal was to 'unite the yellow race' and create a powerful Asian empire comprising Japan, Manchuria, and China in the first stage of the project⁴⁹. Japan sought absolute dominance in the Sea of Japan, Coral Sea, Yellow Sea, and the China Sea, as well as in the eastern part of the Asian continent⁵⁰. Given these plans, a conflict between Japan and the USSR was inevitable. The creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932 was the first stage in the implementation of the Japanese idea of Great Power and the defeat of Soviet foreign policy in the region⁵¹.

In general, the Japanese were not very enthusiastic about the Polish Promethean policy. Nevertheless, they tried to use Poles' relations with the representatives of non-Russian nations of the USSR to strengthen their influence in the immigrant environment of Manchuria that shared a border with Zeleny Klyn. In Manchuria, the Japanese intended to establish a base of Ukrainian armed forces, military training courses and paramilitary youth organizations⁵². Ukrainian immigration was to play a major role in the Far East conflict in support of Japan's interests. Petlura's men willingly agreed to cooperate, seeing it as an opportunity to revive an independent Ukraine by using Japanese military and political potential. They hoped that the impending Japan-Soviet conflict would end

⁴⁷ H. Kuromiya, P. Libera, op. cit., p. 117; CAW-WBH, O II, ref. I.303.4.5741, k. 19, Zarys wojskowej polityki zagranicznej – a report by O II, n.d.

⁴⁸ Archiwum Akt Nowych [Archives of New Records] (AAN), Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] (MSZ), ref. 6653, k. 20; *La fascisme polonais organise des bandes terroristen en Extreme-Orient*, „Le Populaire”, 7 XI 1937, p. 3.

⁴⁹ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5782, k. 619, (Major Dąbrowski's report of 9 III 1934); T. Karcaci, „Sushhnost' konfliktu na Dal'nem Vostoke, „Severnyj Kavkaz” 1936, No. 28–29, pp. 25–26.

⁵⁰ BPP, Aleksander Kawłkowski Files (AAK), ref. 1199, k. 46, Państwo Mandżu-Di-Go. Zarys historii powstania państwa, jego warunki rozwojowe i wpływ Japonii na kształtowanie się stosunków wewnętrznych oraz znaczenie doktryny panazjatyckiej – a study by O II, n.d.

⁵¹ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5569, k. 1, Obrona Mandżurii – a study by O II, n.d.

⁵² Rossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy voyennyy arkhiv [Russian State Military Archive] (RGVA), f. 461/k, op. 1, d. 1, l. 141–142, Działalność prometejska na Dalekim Wschodzie – a study by O II, n.d.

in the disintegration of the USSR into several sovereign states: Ukraine, the Caucasus, Turkestan, and others⁵³.

Polish leaders of the Promethean movement established contacts with the representatives of Japanese authorities through Petlura's Ukrainian representatives in exile. Vladimir Murskiy, a representative of the Ukrainian National Republic in Turkey, maintained contacts with the Japanese military attaché, Yamura. Yamura informed the Japanese government about the UNR's plans to create Green Ukraine. At the end of 1933, Murskiy continued his cooperation with another Japanese military attaché, Kanda. At his request, a UNR representative wrote a detailed memorandum that allowed the Soviet secret services to obtain information about the plans of the representatives of the UNR and Polish military intelligence in the Far East. Murskiy assured the Japanese that in the struggle against the Soviets, they would receive support from volunteer units composed of the Ukrainians living in the USA and Canada. The memorandum also stated that Ukrainians from Galicia and Volhynia⁵⁴ would initiate anti-Soviet actions in the interest of Green Ukraine. To implement these plans, they were hoping to receive assistance, including weapons, ammunition and military instructors, from Poland, Japan, Romania, and other countries⁵⁵.

General Volodymyr Salskyj, the former Minister of War of the UNR, played an important role in Polish-Japanese military cooperation. He established contacts with the Japanese military attaché in Warsaw, Colonel Kenzo Yanagida⁵⁶. The Ukrainian general relied on Yanagida to forward letters and memoranda detailing the prospects for the establishment of a Ukrainian state in the Far East to the Japanese. Salskyj maintained contacts with the Ukrainians in Harbin through Ilarion Kosenko, the editor of the *Трізуб* (Trident) magazine, who lived in Paris⁵⁷. The correspondence between Kosenko and Salskyj was immediately forwarded to Agency No. 2 for analysis. Following General Salskyj's orders, T. Oleksiuk prepared materials concerning the Ukrainian population in the Far East and Siberia for the Japanese. Some of them were published in the *Табор* (Lager) journal in an article entitled "Ukrainian Colonial Lands". Articles devoted to Zeleny Klyn also appeared in the journal.

General Salskyj informed Yanagida about the activities of German secret services in the Far East. The Germans established a presence in the Far East through a group led by Ukrainian hetman Paweł Skorodapsky who lived in Germany. In the summer of 1932, his emissaries, in particular Viktor Kulabko-Korecky, the former government minister of the

⁵³ *Neizvestnyj separatizm...*, pp. 76–77.

⁵⁴ In the interwar period, these regions were inhabited mainly by Ukrainians and were a part of the Second Polish Republic.

⁵⁵ *Neizvestnyj separatizm...*, pp. 278–279.

⁵⁶ CAW, O II, ref. 1.303.4.5515, k. 24 (Gen. Salski – Attache of Japan, Maj. Yana-Gita – correspondence of 9 V 1933).

⁵⁷ I. Svit, *Ukrayins 'ko-yapons 'ki vzayemy 'ny'*..., p. 99.

UNR, arrived in Harbin. Kulabko-Koreckyi launched the “Украинское слово” [Ukrainian word] newspaper in Harbin with the financial support of Germany. These activities were criticized by Promethean representatives and the UNR leadership who were afraid of losing their influence in the Manchurian colony⁵⁸. They believed that support for political movements espousing Promethean ideals could hinder the establishment of a unified anti-communist front⁵⁹.

The Japanese secret services conducted anti-Soviet operations not only in the Far East. In 1933, a Japanese mission traveled to Tehran. The official purpose of the visit was to investigate cotton plantations in Mazandaran⁶⁰ and the Soviet-Persian border for commercial purposes. According to Colonel Jerzy Grobicki, Head of the Polish intelligence outpost in Tehran, the Japanese mission was to explore the possibility of deploying sabotage units stationed in Persia against the Soviets, spreading propaganda among tribes living on the Soviet side of the border, and entering Soviet territory from Persia. These operations were to be carried out with the support of Britain whose ability to oppose Soviet influence in northern Persia was hampered⁶¹.

In the second half of 1933, the *Hamlet* outpost also reported on the rise in the activity of the Japanese intelligence service⁶². The Japanese were expanding their influence within the USSR and strengthening their assets in the Middle East and Europe. Turanism, an Asian equivalent of the Promethean movement, was gradually gaining ground in the Middle East. The Turan Association published a newspaper in Turkish and other propaganda materials. According to *Hamlet*, the Association was a ‘naive intelligence organization’ that relied on the support of Russian and Caucasian émigrés.

In Persia, Japanese intelligence officers penetrated silk trading and production companies. According to *Hamlet’s* report, there was a certain technical and tactical understanding between Japanese and British intelligence in both Turkey and Persia. Japanese military attachés doubled their efforts in the Middle East, the Balkans (especially Romania and Yugoslavia), the Baltic States, and other regions considered important to Soviet intelligence. Emigration centers and Soviet military supply bases played a key role in the Baltic region.

The Japanese also established cooperation with Estonian intelligence services upon Britain’s consent. Moreover, the immigrant groups working with the Japanese were provided with funds and sought access to the Soviet border, including through Poland.

⁵⁸ CAW, O II., ref. I.303.4.5515, k. 24 (Gen. Salski – Attache of Japan, Maj. Yana-Gita – correspondence of 9 V 1933).

⁵⁹ RGVA, f. 308/k, op. 1, d. 40, l.5 (A paper on the Promethean movement written by the Head of Agency 2 for the conference held at the headquarters of Division II of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces on 19 XI 1937).

⁶⁰ Mazandaran is a Caspian province in northern Iran (then Persia).

⁶¹ CAW, O II, ref. I 303.4.2029, A report of 10 V 1933 on the Japanese Mission to Persia.

⁶² The codename of the Polish intelligence post in Harbin, Manchuria.

According to *Hamlet*, Japan had managed to create an effective intelligence network in the Soviet Union⁶³. The Japanese also planned to establish a great Muslim alliance covering the territories between Japan and Manchuria, including Chinese Turkestan, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Caucasus, and Turkey⁶⁴.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Polish-Japanese relations were dominated by antipathy to the Soviet Union as the common enemy. The USSR was a factor that both separated and united the two countries. Above all, Japan had to gather accurate data on its north-eastern neighbor. Polish-Japanese relations involved primarily military and intelligence cooperation. Polish cryptologists were held in high esteem by the Japanese, and they shared their knowledge of Soviet codes with Japanese experts.

Senior officers of the Japanese General Staff visited Poland already in the 1920s. For the Japanese, Warsaw became an important source of information about the Red Army. This exchange of information also took place in Tokyo. Between 1925–1928, Colonel Wacław Jędrzejewicz, the Polish military attaché in Tokyo met once a week with Japanese military officials to discuss the deployment of large Red Army troops. This cooperation intensified in the 1930s. Due to a growing interest in Soviet affairs, the Japanese military attaché's office in Warsaw was expanded during that period⁶⁵.

Japanese officers Tanaka and Tominga stayed in Berlin and Paris in the 1930s. According to Władysław Pelc's notes, they were to act as observers and informers on behalf of the Promethean movement. Pelc wrote that during his stay in Berlin in 1934, the Turkish-American activist Mustafa Shokayev had contacted Tanaka three times. According to Shokayev's account, the Japanese showed an interest in Soviet social affairs to determine whether national minorities, but also Russian White émigré movements, could be used to sabotage the Red Army's operations in the event of a Japanese-Soviet war. A Japanese officer asked Shokayev whether uprisings would break out in Ukraine, Caucasus and, above all, Turkestan, in such a scenario. Shokayev answered that preparations for a rebellion in Turkestan would make sense only 'if it were to be organized and provided with material and technical support by the interested parties'⁶⁶.

Promethean activists also traveled to Japan. Tatar activist Idel-Urals Muhammed Ayaz İshaki visited Tokyo in 1933. Before the journey, he received letters of recommendation from Major Genze Yamagita of the Japanese mission in Warsaw, which were to be presented to Colonel Hikosaburo Hata who supervised Russian affairs at the Japanese Headquarters. The purpose of his visit was to organize a Turkish-Tartar emigration move-

⁶³ CAW, O II, ref. I 303.4.1976, Intensification of Japanese intelligence activities. A report generated by the *Hamlet* Polish intelligence outpost on 18 VIII 1933.

⁶⁴ H. Kuromiya, G. Mamoulia, *Anti-Russian and Anti-Soviet...*, p. 1426.

⁶⁵ E. Pałasz-Rutkowska, *The Russo-Japanese war and its impact on Polish-Japanese relations in the first half of the twentieth century*, „*Analecta Nipponica*” 2011, No. 1, pp. 26, 30.

⁶⁶ *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, ed. P. Libera, Warsaw 2013, pp. 338–339.

ment devoted to Promethean ideals. Ishaki also met with representatives of the Turkish-Tartar colony who welcomed him solemnly. The Japanese General Staff gave support to Idel-Ural activist's plans. He was allowed to organize Idel-Ural groups under the guise of cultural societies. Ishaki established the Idel-Ural Association in Tokyo and other Japanese cities, and he continued his efforts in Korea, Manchuria, and China. Soviet agents attempted to compromise Ishaki's operation during his stay in Tokyo⁶⁷.

Direct talks were also held between Polish Promethean activists and the Japanese. In April 1938, Włodzimierz Bączkowski of Agency No. 2 met with Masutarō Inoue, the second secretary at the Japanese embassy. Bączkowski supported both the Promethean movement and acts of subversion. However, he believed that both types of activity could not be combined.

In November of 1938, Tadeusz Kobylański, deputy director of the Political Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Inoue. As a result, a representative of Japan was admitted into the Warsaw Eastern Institute. In the same year, the Japanese undertook to supervise and finance Promethean activity in Eastern Russia. According to Bączkowski, Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz refused to cooperate and argued that Japan's sole goal was to build intelligence in the USSR rather than to support Poland, and that the Promethean issue was more complicated and was a part of national interest. However, the issue of cooperation between Polish and Japanese intelligence services remained open⁶⁸.

After the USSR and Poland had signed a non-aggression pact on 25 July 1932, Ukrainian émigrés in the Far East lost hope for Poland's support and turned to Japan. Their plea coincided with the plans of Japanese politicians. In 1932–1933, Japanese military attachés were instructed to establish closer cooperation with Russian immigrants. Poland concluded a formal agreement with the USSR in an attempt to conceal Promethean activities, including in the Far East. The funding for the Promethean movement was also decreased. Pelc, the main organizer of the Promethean movement in Manchuria and advisor to the Polish consulate in Harbin, came into conflict with his superiors and was forced to return to Warsaw in May 1934⁶⁹. According to General Salskyj, this was an irreparable loss, both for the Promethean movement and the UNR in the region⁷⁰. I. Swit and P. Jachno, the leaders of the Harbin branch of the Promethean movement, were unable to find a suitable replacement for Pelc. To gain favor with the Ukrainian community, the Japanese authorities were willing to make certain concessions. In 1932, they supported the establishment of the Ukrainian Public Committee headed by I. Swit and P. Jachno.

⁶⁷ Ibidem, pp. 453–458.

⁶⁸ R. Witak, *Tajne wojny służb specjalnych II RP. Działalność Ekspozytury nr 2 Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego WP w latach 30. XX w.*, Łódź 2014, pp. 175–176.

⁶⁹ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5570, k. 2–3 (Scholarship for Władysław Pelc, 16 V 1934).

⁷⁰ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5500, k. 81 (The situation in the Far East – a report by O II dated 18 VIII 1930).

The Japanese military mission financed the “Маньчжурский Вестник” newspaper with I. Swit as the editor-in-chief⁷¹. Lieutenant Colonel Hashimoto of the Japanese 10th Division was personally involved in the matter⁷². The Japanese authorities also assisted in the recovery of the Ukrainian People’s House in Harbin which had been confiscated by the Chinese in 1923⁷³.

However, the assistance from the Japanese authorities forced the Ukrainians to adopt a political agenda that was similar to the UNR’s ideology. The Japanese were not pleased with this outcome, but the UNR’s anti-Soviet sentiments supported their agenda. Nevertheless, Japan was reluctant to promote the rise of Ukrainian national awareness. Its main goal was to create a single coordination center that would control the entire Ukrainian diaspora.

On 15 February 1935, I. Swit, as the representative of the Promethean movement and the Ukrainian community in Harbin, attended a meeting with Colonel Yanagity at the headquarters of the 10th Kwantung Army to clarify the Ukrainian position. The Japanese Army was interested in using the Ukrainians, who constituted the largest non-Russian population in the Far East, in the future Japanese-Soviet War. They hoped that during the war, the Ukrainians would take control of Soviet territory in the Far East. However, during the meeting, Swit clearly indicated that the Ukrainians would never agree to play the role of a ‘paper administration’⁷⁴. However, the creation of an independent Ukrainian state in the Far East was not in line with Japanese plans. The meeting became a turning point in Japan’s policy towards Ukrainian immigrants. In consequence, the Japanese turned their attention away from the Ukrainian community associated with the UNR and towards the more radical Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The OUN was not only an anti-Soviet, but also an anti-Polish organization.

The Japanese embassy in Berlin contacted the OUN’s representatives already in mid-1935. The Japanese were eager to use the organization’s combat groups in anti-Soviet sabotage operations⁷⁵. They also conducted talks with General Kapustiansky in Paris, sotnik Jary in Berlin, and the leader of the OUN, Colonel Jewhen Konovalts. In Geneva, Konovalts attended two meetings with Colonel Tanaka, senior resident for relations with Ukrainian political groups in Europe⁷⁶.

⁷¹ W. Pelc, *Ukraińcy na Dalekim Wschodzie*, „Biuletyn Polsko-Ukraiński” 1934, Vol. 57, No. 22, pp. 4–7; CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5500, k. 102 (The situation in the Far East – a report by O II dated 18 VIII 1930).

⁷² H. Kuromiya, P. Libera, op. cit., p. 120.

⁷³ *Shho robyt'sya na Zelenomu Kly'ni?*, „Man'dzhurs'ky'j Visny'k” 1934, No. 14, p. 3.

⁷⁴ I. Svit, *Ukrayins'ko-yapons'ki vzayemy'ny...*, p. 152.

⁷⁵ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.2014, k. 28, A report developed by the *Mandaryn* Polish intelligence outpost on 4 II 1938: Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów na Dalekim Wschodzie.

⁷⁶ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5764, Activities of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists – a report by O II dated 6 I 1937.

Japan assisted Colonel Konovalts in sending members of the OUN to Manchuria. They were tasked with contacting the Ukrainians from Zeleny Klyn who served in the Red Army and political prisoners in Soviet camps. In addition to establishing contacts with the Ukrainians living in Siberia, the OUN groups were to hold political and social meetings with Ukrainian emigrants in Manchuria and to organize local cooperation with the Japanese authorities⁷⁷. The situation in the Far East changed radically when the OUN's members took control over the Ukrainian national movement. They formed organizations such as the Far East Ukrainian Sich and the Ukrainian Youth Union. Their ultimate goal was to create an independent Ukrainian state with a center in Kiev⁷⁸. Green Ukraine was to become its autonomous unit. The Ukrainian national organizations in Manchuria were placed under the command of Yuri Royo, a former Lieutenant Colonel of the Ukrainian National Army who had joined the OUN camp. He led the Japanese colony in Manchuria and the Ukrainian People's Home with the support of the Japanese authorities⁷⁹.

Ideological splits soon emerged between Ukrainian émigré groups in the Far East. Disputes arose not only between the UNR and the OUN, but also between the UNR and hetman Skorodapsky's representatives, mainly P. Jachno and I. Paslawski. These conflicts displeased the Japanese who were attempting to unite the Ukrainians in a single anti-Soviet front. They insisted that the anti-Soviet movement should unite under the leadership of the OUN as the most efficient organization⁸⁰.

The Japanese persisted in their attempts to subjugate the Promethean organization and its activists in the Far East. These efforts were intensified on 25 November 1936, when Germany and Japan signed the anti-Comintern pact. Italy joined the pact in January 1937. The secret protocol attached to the agreement stated that individual activists and the entire movement should be enticed to join the signatories⁸¹. Japanese General Sawada began recruiting Promethean activists not only in Poland, but also in Paris, Berlin, Prague, Bucharest, and Istanbul⁸². Włodzimierz Bączkowski, one of the most prominent activists, argued that Japan's political agenda was directly responsible for the failure of the Polish Promethean movement in Manchuria⁸³.

⁷⁷ M. Posivnych, *Deyaki aspekty diyal'nosti Orhanizatsiyi Ukrayins'Kykh Natsionalistiv na Dalekomu Shkodi*, <http://dspace.nbuv.gov.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/67105/05-Posivnych.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed: 31 I 2019).

⁷⁸ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5500, k. 79 (The situation in the Far East – a report by O II dated 18 VIII 1930).

⁷⁹ „Dalekosxidnyj nacionalist” 1937, August, pp. 39–40.

⁸⁰ Ibidem.

⁸¹ CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5629, k. 1, Przeciaganie prometeuszowców na stronę Japonii, Niemiec, Włoch. Informacji i stanowisko (A report of 22 XI 1937); CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5561, k. 45, Stosunki polsko-prometeuszowskie (A political paper discussing the origin of the problem, ideological assumptions, and cooperation between Polish Promethean organizations from 1939).

⁸² *Sekrety pol's'koy polityki. Sbornik dokumentov (1935–1945)*, ed. L. Sotskov, Moskva 2009, p. 293.

⁸³ W. Bączkowski, *Problem prometejski*, „Wschód” 1938, No. 1, p. 5.

The Eastern Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Agency No. 2 authorized Bączkowski to resume cooperation with the Japanese. On 1 April 1938, Bączkowski presented Masutarō Inoue, Secretary at the Japanese Embassy in Poland, with an outline of Polish-Russian relations from the beginning of the 14th century⁸⁴. During a private conversation, Bączkowski tried to convince the diplomat that Japan should assist the Promethean movement in creating a Ukrainian puppet state – Manchukuo No. 2. Inoue also met with Tadeusz Kobylański, the head of the Eastern Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs⁸⁵. The meeting could have influenced the Japanese government's decision instructing Sako, the Japanese Ambassador to Warsaw, to effect a single payment of 12,000 British Pounds to the Promethean movement in August 1938. This event was probably the last act of cooperation between Japanese and Polish Promethean movements in the interwar period.

Thus, Polish politicians supporting the Promethean movement and the Japanese Army consolidated their efforts to exploit the potential of Ukrainian émigrés in the Soviet Far East and Japanese-controlled Manchuria. The ultimate goal of the Polish-Japanese alliance was to break up the USSR into nation states. However, in September 1939, Poland was invaded by the USSR and the Third Reich, which started World War II in Europe.

In November 1936, the Third Reich and Japan signed an anti-Comintern pact against the USSR. In May 1937, Hirishi Oshima, the military attaché in Berlin, and Wilhelm Canaris, the head of Abwehr (German military intelligence), signed a German-Japanese agreement on the exchange of intelligence on Russia. Interestingly, the agreement contained an additional protocol concerning support for national minority movements in the USSR. Moreover, should one of the parties find itself at war with the Soviet Union, the other party undertook to escalate subversive operations by all possible means. The aim of the German-Japanese project was to orchestrate sabotage activities in the Caucasus that would be controlled from Turkish territory. However, Germany abandoned these plans after signing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in August 1939⁸⁶.

Most anti-Soviet operations conducted in joint effort by Polish and Japanese intelligence took place in the interwar period, especially the 1930s. These projects had been initiated already before both countries established official diplomatic relations, mainly because both states were afraid of the USSR. Polish-Japanese collaboration involved mainly the exchange of information on Soviet military potential. This cooperation continued during World War II, despite the fact that Poland and Japan fought on opposite

⁸⁴ Idem, *Luźne uwagi o pracy prometejskiej na Dalekim Wschodzie*, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 2009, No. 169, pp. 134–135; CAW, O II, ref. I.303.4.5476, k. 70–73 – a report of 1 IV 1938.

⁸⁵ H. Kuromiya, P. Libera, A. Peplowski, *O współpracy polsko-japońskiej wobec ruchu prometejskiego raz jeszcze*, „Zeszyty Historyczne” 2009, Vol. 170, p. 235.

⁸⁶ H. Kuromiya, H. Mamoulia, *Anti-Russian and Anti-Soviet...*, pp. 1427–1428, 1430.

sides⁸⁷. The two countries also recognized the potential of non-Russian minorities and were willing to exploit émigré groups in their struggle against the Soviet Union.

The representatives of nations that supported the Promethean movement were recruited by Japanese and German armies to fight against the USSR. During World War II, the Third Reich exploited oppressed national minorities in its struggle against the USSR. However, Germany was unable to make full use of these groups for ideological reasons. The Japanese did not harness the potential of non-Russian minorities in the USSR because their war effort was directed primarily against the Western Allies.

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Rossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy voyennyy arkhiv [Russian State Military Archive]: F. 308/k, op. 1, d. 40, l. 5; F. 461/k, op.1, d. 1, l.141–142.

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The Poles and the Japanese in the struggle for the Soviet Far East in the 1930s

Summary: In the period between World War I and World War II, the Japanese sought intelligence co-operation with the Polish military intelligence service to obtain information about the military potential of the USSR. These efforts led to the exchange of intelligence between the two countries. In the discussed period, Prometheism, a political concept aimed at weakening the USSR through the separation of areas inhabited by non-Russian nations from Soviet territory, became an important instrument of Poland's

Eastern policy. These nations included the Ukrainians, the Crimean Tatars, as well as the peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Finland, and Siberia. After the 1932 uprising, the Japanese created a puppet state of Manchukuo to separate the conquered territories in Korea and future conquests from the USSR which posed a threat in the north. The Japanese also relied on the non-Russian nations inhabiting mainly the Russian Far East to weaken the Soviet Union. Ukrainians living in a region known as Zeleny Klyn played a major role in Japan's plans. The Japanese considered the possibility of creating a sovereign Ukrainian state. In this respect, Polish and Japanese interests overlapped. However, in the early 1940s, Japan decided to direct its main military effort against the Western allies, and exploitation of non-Russian nations in Japan's struggle against the USSR became a marginal issue.

Keywords: prometheism, Polish-Japanese intelligence cooperation, Soviet Far East, Ukrainian diaspora in Manchuria, military intelligence (Poland), military intelligence (Japan)

Polen und Japaner im Kampf um den sowjetischen Fernen Osten in den 30er Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts

Zusammenfassung: In der Zeit zwischen dem Ersten und dem Zweiten Weltkrieg bemühten sich die Japaner um eine nachrichtendienstliche Zusammenarbeit mit dem polnischen Militärgeheimdienst, da sie erkannten, wie wenig Informationen sie über das Kriegspotenzial der UdSSR besaßen. Aus diesem Grund kam es zu einem Austausch von Geheimdienstinformationen zwischen den beiden Ländern. Zu dieser Zeit wurde der Prometheismus zu einem wichtigen Instrument der polnischen Ostpolitik, ein politisches Konzept, das darauf abzielte, die UdSSR zu schwächen, indem man ihr die von nicht-russischen Völkern bewohnten Gebiete entriss. Dazu gehörten die Ukrainer, die Völker des Kaukasus, Zentralasiens, die Krimtataren sowie die finnischen und sibirischen Völker. Nach dem Aufstand von 1932 gründeten die Japaner den Marionettenstaat Mandschukuo, um ihre Besitztümer in Korea und künftige Eroberungen von der UdSSR zu trennen, die sie von Norden her bedrohte. Die Japaner beschlossen auch, die nicht-russischen Völker, die vor allem in den fernöstlichen Gebieten der UdSSR lebten, zu nutzen, um die UdSSR zu schwächen. Die im so genannten „Grünen Keil“ lebenden Ukrainer spielten in den japanischen Plänen eine wichtige Rolle. Die Japaner zogen die Möglichkeit in Betracht, eine Art ukrainische Staatlichkeit zu schaffen. In dieser Hinsicht überschritten sich die polnischen und japanischen Interessen. Anfang der 1940er Jahre beschlossen die Japaner jedoch, ihre Hauptanstrengungen gegen die westlichen Alliierten zu richten, und die Frage des Einsatzes nicht-russischer Nationen gegen die UdSSR trat in den Hintergrund.

Schlüsselwörter: Prometheismus, polnisch-japanische Geheimdienstkooperation, sowjetischen Fernen Osten, ukrainische Diaspora in der Mandschurei, militärischer Geheimdienst (Polen), militärischer Geheimdienst (Japan)

Polacy i Japończycy w walce o sowiecki Daleki Wschód w latach 30. XX wieku

Streszczenie: W okresie między I a II wojną światową Japończycy zabiegali o współpracę wywiadowczą z polskim wywiadem wojskowym, zdając sobie sprawę z niedostatków informacji posiadanych na temat potencjału wojennego ZSRR. Z tego powodu dochodziło do wymiany informacji wywiadowczych pomiędzy dwoma państwami. W tym czasie ważnym instrumentem polskiej polityki wschodniej stał się prometeizm, czyli koncepcja polityczna, której celem było osłabienie ZSRR poprzez oderwanie od tego państwa terenów zamieszkałych przez narody nierosyjskie. Byli to Ukraińcy, narody Kaukazu, Azji Środkowej, Tatarzy Krymscy, ludy fińskie i syberyjskie. W 1932 r. Japończycy utworzyli marionetkowe państwo Mandżukuo, które miało oddzielać jej posiadłości w Korei oraz przyszłe zdobycze od zagrażającego jej od północy ZSRR. Japończycy również postanowili również wykorzystać do osłabienia ZSRR narody nierosyjskie zamieszkujące przede wszystkim dalekowschodnie tereny ZSRR. Dużą rolę w japońskich planach odgrywali Ukraińcy zamieszkujący tzw. Zielony Klin. Japończycy rozważali możliwość utworzenia pewnej formy państwowości ukraińskiej. Pod tym względem polskie i japońskie interesy się pokrywały. Jednak na początku lat 40. Japończycy postanowili swój główny wysiłek skierować przeciwko zachodnim aliantom, a sprawa wykorzystania narodów nierosyjskich przeciwko ZSRR zeszła na plan dalszy.

Słowa kluczowe: prometeizm, polsko-japońska współpraca wywiadowcza, radziecki Daleki Wschód, ukraińska diaspora w Mandżurii, wywiad wojskowy (Polska), wywiad wojskowy (Japonia)

