

Przyjacielowi z ławy uniwersyteckiej

MOJŻESZOWI POMERANZOWI

ofiarowuję

“I dedicate this book to my
university friend—MOJŻESZ POMERANZ”

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Foreword:

Ksawery Pruszyński

We, Polish people, have special reasons to promote the State of Israel. We have fought for too long time for a state of our own not to understand such a fight, when undertaken by others. We know unfortunately better than many other nations what it means for a nation to have a state of its own. Our nation knows the gas chambers like the Jewish people did and our nation has not forgotten, like some others, the sad lesson of this war.

—Ksawery Pruszyński, speech delivered at the UN as chairman of the United Nations Subcommittee Number One on Palestine in November 1947¹

In his relatively brief life, Ksawery Pruszyński (December 4, 1907–June 13, 1950) embodied the tragic fate of Poland in the first half of the twentieth century. He was born into a noble family near the village of Wolica Kierekieszyna (today Volytsya-Kerekeshyna) on the Zbrucz River in southern Volhynia (Ukraine). The founder of the village was a Tartar, Kierekiesza, and the area was characterized by its mixture of religions and ethnicities. As Pruszyński himself put it:

I came into the world at a crossroad of worlds and times, cultures and beliefs, languages and races, classes and nations, on a snowy December day in a blizzard, when a sleigh was sent for the Jewish “barber”—the doctor was already there, but courtesy required the presence of the barber.²

1 This speech is reproduced as it was delivered in Pruszyński’s characteristic English.

2 Quoted in Józef Hen, *Nie boję się bezsennych nocy* (Czytelnik: Warszawa, 2001), 23.

This area, part of Tim Snyder's "Bloodlands," saw considerable violence in the twentieth century. When Pruszyński was barely three, his father Edward was killed, probably in a clash with a horse thief. His mother Anna was a member of a magnate family, the Chodkiewiczzes, who had fallen on difficult times, which was why they were willing for her to marry Edward, who was thirty-five years her senior.³ She was now responsible, on her own, for bringing up her two sons, Ksawery and his younger brother Mieczysław.

In 1918, during the Russian Civil War, Anna was forced to flee the area with her sons and settle, in somewhat impoverished circumstances, in Kraków; there, and with her family's help, she was able to support herself by giving French lessons. After the Treaty of Riga, which ended the Polish-Soviet war, all the Pruszyński properties were located within the Soviet Union. Pruszyński always had a powerful sense of being a "boy from the Kresy" and clearly greatly missed his lost "little homeland." When he served in the Polish consulate in Kiev in 1933–1934, he went illegally to Wolica Kierekieszyna, only to find that nothing remained of his family's wooden manor house. He was certainly very conscious of his roots. As he told Józef Hen, a Polish Jewish writer with whom he became friendly in the Soviet Union during the war, what inspired all his writing was "[a]bove all the fact that the past of the Rzeczpospolita [pre-partition Poland-Lithuania] was our past."⁴

Pruszyński completed the first part of his secondary education in Żytomierz and continued it at the Jesuit school in Chyrów (now in Ukraine), near Przemyśl, one of the most prestigious in Poland. He then studied law at Jagiellonian University, specializing in medieval German law under a leading conservative historian Stanisław Estreicher, working briefly as his assistant. While at university, he was president of the Akademickie Koło Kresowe (Academic Club of Those from the Kresy) and joined the organization *Myśl Mocarstwowa* (Aspirations to Great Power Status), which sought to recreate the political tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He was also hostile to antisemitism. According to Janusz Roszko, "he actively opposed the fascist takeover of higher education and defended his colleagues who had a 'Semitic' appearance against pogroms and the violence organized by student corporations."⁵ His defense of Jewish students is also confirmed in

3 See Anna Pruszyńska, *Miedzy Bohem a Sluczq* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2001).

4 Hen, *Nie boję się bezsennych nocy*, 26.

5 Quoted in Jarosław Kurski, "Pruszyński, Ksawery (1907–1950)—pisarz, reporter, dyplomata PRL," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, April 18, 1998.

his mother's autobiography and by his brother Mieczysław in his memoirs.⁶ He even fought a duel with an Endek MP, Aleksander Zwierzyński.

An academic career was not to his taste, so Pruszyński began working, first as a proofreader and then as a reporter, for the long-established Kraków daily *Czas* in which Estreicher wrote frequently.⁷ It had once been the organ of the Kraków conservatives who in the 1860s had condemned national uprisings as doomed to failure and advocated a compromise with the Habsburgs. In its offices, Pruszyński also rubbed shoulders with the elderly Michał Bobrzyński, one of the architects of Galician autonomy and a former governor of the province. In 1930, he made his debut as a reporter with a series of articles from Hungary and two years later produced a book *Sarajewo 1914, Shanghai 1932, Gdańsk 193 . . .*?⁸ which argued that the unsettled situation of Gdańsk/Danzig could spark off the next world war. He then moved to Wilno and began to work with Stanisław Mackiewicz, editor of the conservative daily *Słowo* (The Word). Two years later he moved to Warsaw as the paper's correspondent in the capital. At this time he married Maria Meysztowicz, whom he had met as a student. A member of a landowning family, her father, Alexander Meysztowicz, was a conservative who had become minister of justice after Piłsudski came to power in the coup of May 1926.

Throughout the 1930s, Pruszyński travelled in Poland and Europe, publishing in, among other journals, *Bunt Młodych* (Rebellion of the Young) and its successor *Polityka*, edited by a group of self-described young conservatives, whom he had come to support. A key figure in the group was Jerzy Giedroyc, who after the Second World War was the founder of the Paris-based émigré journal *Kultura*, which was a major contributor to the attempts to rethink Polish politics in the country's new situation. Also influential were the Bocheński brothers, Aleksander and Adolf, with whom the Pruszyński brothers were friendly. At this stage, Pruszyński was an enthusiastic supporter of Piłsudski, describing in *Czas* his meeting with the marshal on November 29, 1931 (as he pointed out in his article the anniversary of the 1830 uprising) as part of a youth delegation. They agreed that their shared background in the Kresy made

6 See Mieczysław Pruszyński, *Migawki wspomnień* (Warszawa: Rosner & Wspólnicy, 2002).

7 *Czas* (The Time)—a Polish daily of patriotic and broadly conservative outlook, launched in 1848 when Kraków was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, continued being published there until 1934, then from 1935–1939 in Warsaw.

8 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Sarajewo 1914, Shanghai 1932, Gdańsk 193 . . .* (Warszawa: Dom Książki Polskiej, 1932).

them superior to other Poles. Pruszyński also explained that, as someone from Ukraine, he was there when the marshal “came to Kiev to liberate my country.”⁹

In 1933 Pruszyński travelled to Palestine; the resulting book *Palestyna po raz trzeci* (Palestine for the Third Time),¹⁰ published here for the first time in English, made him a popular and respected journalist. In 1936–1937 he spent six months in Spain reporting for the liberal *Wiadomości Literackie* on the Spanish Civil War; in his articles, he attempted to be fair to both sides. He was fascinated by the atmosphere in republican Madrid. As he wrote in October 1936, “Madrid is more revolutionary than Moscow, more fanatical than Mecca, lives a more intense life than New York.”¹¹ Although he was skeptical of the chances of the revolution proving successful, he saw it as the result of the centuries-long oppression of the Spanish peasantry. For a moment, the peasantry was able to experience freedom and dignity. At the same time, he was well aware of the violence which accompanied it, graphically describing the mass executions carried out by the republicans and the lack of reaction they evoked among the public. Indeed, the central theme of his reportage was the contrast between the elevated goals of the revolution and its grim reality. It was criticized by some of his former allies among the young conservatives as naïve and *Czas* broke off relations with him.¹²

Pruszyński now became increasingly disillusioned with the conservative character of Polish political life, dismayed by the growing antisemitism and anti-Ukrainian sentiment in the country during the 1930s. This is reflected in the articles he published in *Podróż po Polsce* (A Journey through Poland)¹³ in which he addressed these questions, as well as unemployment and the radicalization of the countryside. He argued that what was needed for the impoverished peasantry in Poland was not land reform, which would barely alleviate its sufferings, but large-scale industrialization as had occurred before the First World War. As he put it, “[t]he Poznań area and Chicago are the only places where a genuine Polish class revolution has taken place, where the

9 Ksawery Pruszyński, “W Belwederze,” *Czas*, December 3, 1931.

10 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Palestyna po raz trzeci* (Palestine for the third time) (Wilno: Dom Książki Polskiej 1933).

11 Quoted in Piotr Osęka, “Ksawery Pruszyński—legendarny reporter,” *Polityka*, June 25, 2010.

12 His articles were published as *W czerwonej Hiszpanii* (In Red Spain) (Warszawa: Rój, 1937), translated into Spanish as *En la España roja* (Barcelona: Alba, 2007). Extracts from it were reproduced in Pete Ayrtton, ed., *No Pasaran!: Writings from the Spanish Civil War* (London: Serpent’s Tail, 2017).

13 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Podróż po Polsce* (A Journey through Poland) (Warszawa: Rój, 1936).

peasant has achieved equality and is to be found in shops, banks, law offices, and in school and university. . . .”¹⁴

This view was also reflected in Pruszyński’s report “Przytyk i stragan” (Przytyk and the Market Stall) on the June 1936 trial in Radom of those responsible for the anti-Jewish violence in Przytyk in March of that year:

The “Przytyk war,” the pogrom, the affray which took place here, was a conflict between two groups united by poverty, the poorest of the two nations involved. An outside observer would find it hard to explain what these peasants hoped to gain from taking over Jewish Przytyk, what explains the envy [of their impoverished neighbors] which motivates these people living in miserable hovels.¹⁵

For Pruszyński, in other countries and in Poland in the nineteenth century, the problems of the countryside had been solved by peasants moving to the towns and finding new opportunities there. Jews had also moved up in the social order. This was no longer occurring in Poland: “Here the development of industry is at a standstill and the annual increase in employment opportunities is minimal in relation to the growing number seeking work. . . . There will be no new generation of Kronenbergs or Blochs [nineteenth-century Jewish industrialists].” People from the countryside who would have been employed by such industrialists now found themselves in brutal competition with poor Jews. Hatred was spreading uncontrollably throughout the country.

Pruszyński now felt increasing sympathy for the views of Bobrzyński and the Galician conservatives, about whom he wrote two articles at this time.¹⁶ Above all, he valued the willingness of the adherents of the Kraków school, the *Stańczycy*, to express their strong opposition to the complacency and self-satisfaction of most Poles in the face of the obvious defects of their society.

These issues and the need to reestablish a democratic system were also aired in the short-lived biweekly *Problemy*, which Pruszyński founded with his brother and Adolf Bocheński. In addition, he prepared a manuscript on

¹⁴ Quoted in Osęka, “Ksawery Pruszyński.”

¹⁵ Ksawery Pruszyński, “Przytyk i stragan,” *Wiadomości Literackie*, July 12, 1936, <http://retropress.pl/wiadomosci-literackie/przytyk-stragan/>.

¹⁶ Ksawery Pruszyński, “Michał Bobrzyński,” *Słowo*, no. 187 (1935) and “Zaduszki wielkiego pisma,” *Wiadomości Literackie*, no. 50 (1938), both reproduced in Ksawery Pruszyński, *Publicystyka*, vol. 1, 1931–1939: *Niezadowoleni i entuzjaści*, ed. Gotfryd Ryka and Janusz Roszko (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1990).

Volhynia (Wołyń— a region inhabited by both Poles and Ukrainians) which was ready to be printed in 1939 but was unfortunately lost during the war. He and Adolf Bocheński had even developed a quixotic scheme of embarrassing the government by courting imprisonment in its concentration camp at Bereza Kartuska. Pruszyński now decisively broke with the thinking of the *Mysł Mocarstwowa* group, seeing the hollowness of the pretensions to Great Power status of the Poland of the colonels who had taken power after the death of Piłsudski in May 1935. As he wrote in 1936:

In the midst of all the hullabaloo and shouting, the deep conviction that we are marching forward, that we are a power, that we are solving the problems of the countryside, that we are strengthening our state, that we are promoting and encouraging its development, we are gradually, inevitably, falling into a pit.¹⁷

These views were reflected in the cycle of articles he wrote for the large circulation *Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny* on the breakup of Czechoslovakia, which were in sharp contrast to the government propaganda praising the acquisition of the Zaolzie region as an indication of Poland's Great Power status. Pruszyński's friend Moses Pomeranz remembers his shocked reaction to seeing Polish troops entering Czechoslovakia: "That's the end of Poland."

In 1940. Pruszyński fought in the Battle of Narvik as an ordinary soldier in the Brygada Podhalańska, subsequently bringing his platoon to Marseille. For his actions in the campaign, which he described in his book *Droga wiodła przez Narvik* (The Road Led through Narvik), he was awarded the Krzyż Walecznych (Cross of the Brave). In *Polish Invasion*,¹⁸ he gave an account of the Polish soldiers in Scotland. Already at this stage he had come to the conclusion that the United Kingdom would not "die" for Polish Wilno or Polish Lwów, since, in his words, "the English are at war with Germany, and as regards Russia, they would give much to draw that country into the war on the side of England."¹⁹

17 Quoted in Osęka, "Ksawery Pruszyński."

18 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Polish Invasion*, trans. Peter Jordan (London: Minerva Publishing Co., 1941).

19 Ksawery Pruszyński, "Sprawa o której się nie mówi, a o której powinno się krzyczeć," *Wiadomości Polskie*, no. 5 (1941), in Ksawery Pruszyński, *Publicystyka*, vol. 2, 1940–1948: *Powrót do Soplicowa*, ed. Gotfryd Ryka and Janusz Roszko (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1990), 100, 104.

When the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Pruszyński was asked by General Władysław Sikorski, prime minister of the Polish government in London, to accompany him to Moscow to meet Stalin and to visit the camps where a Polish army was being created. He served as press attaché in the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev, where foreign embassies had been relocated because of the German threat to Moscow, and edited its journal *Polska*. He described his experiences in *Russian Year: The Notebook of an Amateur Diplomat*,²⁰ which included a stay in a peasant's hut and a state dinner with Stalin at the Kremlin.

In 1942, after a severe attack of typhus, Pruszyński was forced to return to London. He was now convinced that the Polish government should seek an agreement with Stalin. This was partly the result of his disillusionment with the government-in-exile. He had already produced a pamphlet attacking the accounts of the September campaign of 1939 produced by General Mieczysław Norwid-Neugebauer and Colonel Roman Umiastowski in *Księga ponurych niedopowiedzeń: 1000 mil od prawdy* (The Book of Miserable Failures: 1000 Miles from the Truth).²¹ He was aware that the world of the past, of the Second Polish Republic, could not be resurrected. As he wrote in the article "Nasze niebezpieczeństwo" (Our Insecurity), there will be no "new First Brigade [the anti-Russian military formation created by Józef Piłsudski], nor a new Second Brigade . . . these lines of division are gone forever."²²

In his article "Puścizna czasów saskich" (The Legacy of Saxon Times), Pruszyński expressed his bitterness at the intrigues and atmosphere within the emigration, the "little London ghetto."²³ His words were harsh:

In Poland, as we know, it is not wars which are well organized but calumnies. . . . Poland has paid a heavy price for regarding independent thought and freedom of speech as luxuries. There are some luxuries that Poland cannot afford. Poland cannot afford the luxury of national megalomania. Poland cannot afford the luxury of cheap patriotism [*tromtadracja*], the luxury of burning incense, the luxury

20 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Russian Year: The Notebook of an Amateur Diplomat* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1944).

21 Ksawery Pruszyński *Księga ponurych niedopowiedzeń: 1000 mil od prawdy* (London: M. I. Kolin, 1941).

22 Hen, *Nie boję się bezsennych nocy*, 22.

23 Ksawery Pruszyński, "Wobec Rosji," *Wiadomości*, October 4, 1942, <http://retropress.pl/wiadomosci-polskie/wobec-rosji/>.

of bootlicking . . . and, above all, Poland cannot afford the luxury of not thinking.²⁴

His disillusionment also extended to interwar Poland. He now observed that in that state, there had been no place for his birthplace because it lay “beyond the Zbrucz.” He went on: “Sometimes, when I think of the pacifications of the Tarnopol region, of Bereza and Łuck, of the Orthodox Churches blown up in 1938, of Hrynki and many, many other matters, I think that it was better that there was no such place. . . .”²⁵

Pruszyński’s decision to call for an understanding with the Soviet Union meant breaking with his former anti-Soviet views. In the pamphlet *Wola władzy* (The Will to Power, 1936), he had justified the Polish involvement in the conflict with the Soviets in 1920:

We see our struggle at Radzymin [a battle that took place between August 13 and 16, 1920 and was one of the main Polish victories in the 1920 war] as both just and natural. In the eyes of the West, it is often a justification for calling Poland the gendarme of Europe, the hireling of capitalism, the lackey of foreign powers.²⁶

In Paris in 1940, in his article “Wilno and Lwów,” he had defended the 1921 frontiers of Poland: “These territories constitute nearly half our territory, their inhabitants constitute half the population of our state. We are linked by centuries, not by force . . . [Wilno and Lwów] are like Edinburgh to the British or green Alsace to the French.”²⁷ In May 1941, in “Ultra-red rays,” he had compared the Stalinist attempts to Sovietize Poland to those undertaken by the Empress Catherine “Instead of having to submit to the rod of absolute monarchy, it is submission to the rod of the proletarian dictatorship.”²⁸

Pruszyński now called for an agreement with Russia which “will always be our neighbour.”²⁹ “Poland cannot fight on two fronts . . . the fate of Poland will be decided in the pine woods of Karelia and the dusty roads around Smolensk,

24 Ibid., 30, 31.

25 Ibid., 24.

26 Ibid., 28.

27 Quoted in Kurski, ‘Pruszyński, Ksawery (1907–1950).’

28 Quoted in *ibid.*

29 Ksawery Pruszyński, “Wrażenia rosyjskie,” *Wiadomości Polskie*, no. 1 (1942) quoted in Pruszyński, *Publicystyka*, vol. 2, 171.

Orsza, and Mozhaysk.”³⁰ He set out his new point of view in a polemical article “Wobec Rosji” (Dealing with Russia), published in *Wiadomości*, which had been reestablished in London on October 4, 1942:

From the beginning of this war, the majority of the Polish nation—and at present the overwhelming majority—is suffering not at the hands of Russia but of Germany and is suffering ever more bitterly, ever more painfully. Germany is the occupier. Germany is the enemy.³¹

The Russians had also suffered terribly at the hands of the Germans and this would provide the basis for a Polish-Russian understanding.

Now praising Roman Dmowski, the former leader of the right-wing National Democrats who had died in January 1939, someone he had long harshly criticized for his understanding of the need for the Poles to compromise with Russia, whatever its political system, Pruszyński argued that the Polish eastern territories would have to be renounced in return for access to the Baltic and Wrocław. Already while in Kuibyshev, he had encountered Polish communists whom he knew from Wilno and had told one of them, Jerzy Putrament, “If you agree to give up Wilno and Lwów, at least demand Wrocław and Szczecin.”³² He was now convinced that the West would not support the Polish cause. In his story written in 1945 “The Shadow of Georgia,” Pruszyński describes the fate of a fictional exiled prime minister of that country. When asked why he had given up the political struggle, he told his interlocutor (Pruszyński), “I gave up because I stopped believing. . . . I didn’t only believe in Georgia, I believed in the West.”³³

Pruszyński knew these views would be anathema to those who had been deported or imprisoned by the Soviets. He sought justification for them in his own actions: fighting, as a tanker, in General Stanisław Maczek’s 1st Armored Division in the battle at Falaise on August 1944, in which he was seriously wounded; and, as a writer, publishing a pamphlet using the historical example of Count Alexander Wielopolski to support his position.³⁴ He clearly identified strongly with the margrave, who had stressed the need in the 1860s to compromise with Russia and avoid an insurrection. Only partly in jest, Pruszyński signed his name as “Ksawery Wielopolski” in one of his letters to his friend the

30 Ksawery Pruszyński, *Margrabia Wielopolski*, 2nd ed. (Warszawa: Pax, 1957), 26–27.

31 Pruszyński, “Wobec Rosji.”

32 Quoted in *ibid.*

33 Quoted in *ibid.*

34 Pruszyński, *Margrabia Wielopolski*.

journalist Stefania Kossowska during the battle of Falaise.³⁵ There was a family history here, since the grandfather of his mother Anna had been a strong opponent of the 1830 and 1863 uprisings. According to Anna's memoir:

My grandfather Mieczysław was a strong opponent of the national uprisings of 1830 and 1863 and of Konarski's conspiracy [an attempt to foment an insurrection in Galicia in 1839], which facilitated the Russification of Volhynia and of the Kresy as a whole from the Dvina to the Dniepr. He was a supporter of the accommodationist policies of Wielopolski. He often said, "If they make a revolution in the Kingdom of Poland, the Polish peasant will survive, but what will remain here?—only the Ruthenian peasant." . . . [A]s a result he would not allow his sons to go "to the forest."³⁶

In Pruszyński's view, his critics had underestimated the ability of the Soviets to defeat Hitler. In addition, the war had changed the Soviet Union, which in the future would, he hoped, be ruled by the officers of the Red Army. He had been struck by their "intelligence, independence of thought and solid understanding of the situation." They were marked by their "social conscience, praiseworthy restraint in their manners and modesty."³⁷ It would be possible for Poland to live in good neighborly relations with a Russia ruled by such men.

Pruszyński was well aware that the policy of giving up areas east of the Bug for territorial acquisitions in the West would be unpopular among Poles. To carry it through, one required a strong individual: "One needs a Chrobry, a Peter the Great, a Kemal Pasha, who can take on his shoulders decisions for the whole nation and for centuries; it is necessary to cut and break."³⁸

His disillusionment culminated in his throwing in his lot with the communist-dominated government of Poland, partly as a result of the persuasion of Jerzy Borejsza and Oskar Lange, key figures in that government. In taking this decision, Pruszyński was motivated by his patriotism and belief that he could contribute to the rebuilding of his country; he had no sympathy for communism. He returned to Warsaw in September 1945 on one of the first flights from London to Warsaw and was appointed in November of that year as councilor in the Polish embassy in Washington and then as representative of Polish People's

35 Quoted in Kurski, "Pruszyński, Ksawery (1907–1950)."

36 Anna Pruszyńska, *Między Bohem a Śluczą*, 49.

37 Pruszyński, "Wobec Rosji," 231–232.

38 Ibid, 235.

Republic at the newly formed United Nations. In 1947, he headed one of the subcommittees of the UN Special Committee on Palestine; when the resulting UNSCOP proposal was put to the vote as Resolution 181, calling for the partition of Palestine, Pruszyński made a historic speech in its support. At this stage, he seemed to be finding a place in People's Poland. His works were reprinted in large editions and he also now ventured into fiction, publishing two impressive collections of short stories *Trzynaście opowieści* (Thirteen Stories, 1946) and *Karabela z Meschedu* (The Sabre from Mesched, 1948).

The euphoria did not last. In 1948, Pruszyński was appointed Polish ambassador to the Netherlands. His posting there was certainly a demotion—the Soviets seem to have disapproved of his strongly pro-Israel stance at the UN. Czesław Miłosz described Pruszyński's move to the Hague as “placing him on a sidetrack.”³⁹ Pruszyński himself wrote to his friend Antoni Słonimski in a parody of a letter written to the tsar by a nineteenth century Russian diplomat posted to the Hague: “This town is the most boring in the world. Please, Your Highness, send caviar, vodka, and three horses.”⁴⁰

Pruszyński's situation was becoming increasingly difficult as Poland became more and more Stalinist with the intensification of the Cold War. He would probably soon have lost his position and might even have been threatened with a political trial. Certainly he had been told by Jerzy Borejsza that the security services were trying to make a case against him on the grounds that he had been working for Polish intelligence in Madrid in 1936.

He decided to return to Warsaw and was killed on June 13, 1950 in a car accident in Rhynern, south of Hamm, about fifty miles northeast of Düsseldorf. Some have claimed this was not an accident, but was a murder organized either by those in the emigration who resented what they saw as Pruszyński's betrayal or by Stalinists in the Polish government who did not regard him as trustworthy. However, he was well known to be a poor driver and was clearly preoccupied with his situation—it was probably an accident. What made this event even more tragic was that he was returning to Warsaw for his wedding with the twenty-seven-year-old poet Julia Hartwig, with whom he had been involved since 1948 when they had met in the Polish embassy in Paris and with whom he had travelled through France and the Netherlands.

39 Quoted in Anna Legeżyńska, “Julia Hartwig. Wdzięczność,” *O.pl*, July 24, 2017, <http://magazyn.o.pl/2017/anna-legezynska-julia-hartwig-wdzieczosc/#/>.

40 Quoted in Kurski, “Pruszyński, Ksawery (1907–1950).”

Józef Hen observed of Pruszyński's death: "In June 1950, on a German road, there died an outstanding writer, only at the beginning of his creativity. Alongside the death a year later of Borowski (whom he admired) the departure of Pruszyński was the most painful blow to our postwar culture."⁴¹ Antoni Słonimski, the poet and literary critic, who knew Pruszyński well, summed him up as follows: "He was the star of Polish prose, or perhaps its comet who shone brightly but whose path it was difficult to predict. We do not know what its final orbit would have been when it fell to the earth with the heat of youth still unextinguished."⁴² Pruszyński was clearly one of the creators of the Polish school of reportage and his work was highly praised by Ryszard Kapuściński, a leading member of that school. It is our hope that the publication of his perceptive and prophetic account of the Jewish settlement in Palestine and of the incipient Arab-Jewish conflict will make him better known in the English-speaking world.

—Antony Polonsky

41 Hen, *Nie boję się bezsennych nocy*, 32.

42 See "Biografie niezwykle: Ksawery Pruszyński," Polskie Radio, last modified December 4, 2007, <https://www.polskieradio.pl/8/195/Artykul/173742,Biografie-niezwykle-Ksawery-Pruszyński>, accessed March 29, 2020.

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