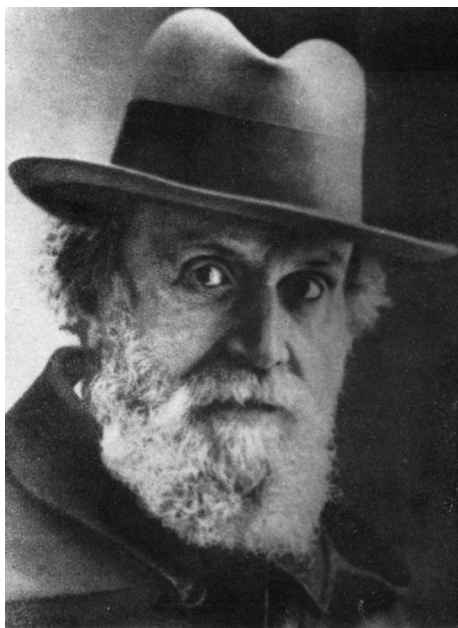


TADEUSZ ZIELIŃSKI (1859–1944)*

By

STEFAN SREBRNY

I



Tadeusz Zieliński

Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI is dead. The terrible toll of the most monstrous of wars has included him too. For in spite of his advanced years, when the war broke out, not only was he at the height of his creative powers, but also physically fit enough for others to expect him to live and work for many years to come, even though in general his constitution was not that strong. However, the siege of Warsaw, in which his apartment burnt down with all his possessions and books in it; the awful physical consequences of the nervous shock caused by that fire; the only solution left to the man oppressed by illness and homelessness, that is leaving the motherland for Upper Bavaria, where his son had settled years before; finally there the death of his beloved daughter Weronika, until her last breath his loyal attendant and

companion; all that, combined with the constant gnawing worry for his tortured country and the depressing awareness of having found a haven in the land of its oppressors – conspired to hasten the end of that greatly creative life.

* Originally published in Polish in “Eos” XLII 1947, fasc. 2, pp. 5–65.

He worked and wrote literally until the last moments of his life. Volume V of his *Religie świata antycznego* (*Religions of the Ancient World*), the volume dedicated to the religion of the Roman Empire, was lost in the fire; having soon after his exile gained the option of borrowing books by mail from the library of the University of Munich, he proceeded to reconstruct it. Of course without access to essential reference works and sources, the work was made extremely difficult; moreover not only did his health not improve, it actually got worse all the time. Even so, he completed the re-writing; the main body of the text was ready by August of 1941 and ZIELIŃSKI promptly commenced working on the notes, which, just as in the other two volumes published in print, contain a report on the scholarly foundations of the book. On 2 August 1942 he wrote to me:

I have finished volume five, *Religia Cesarstwa Rzymskiego* (*The Religion of the Roman Empire*) complete with the notes, although the latter keep growing slowly, in drips and drops. I have also begun on volume six, *Chrześcijaństwo antyczne* (*Ancient Christianity*)...

And here the tone turned heroic, and would remain such until the last of his days. “I have begun on volume six”, ZIELIŃSKI wrote, “without any false hope that I might finish it; still, I believe every page written will be regarded as wrested from the maw of Hades”. During that work he suffered increasingly frequent heart attacks, which would eventually be his death; his eyesight was deteriorating too. You could say that Hades was winning the battle.

In December of that year the fierce Hades insidiously attacked ZIELIŃSKI’S indomitable creative spirit: his daughter died. He wrote:

You better than many others know what she meant to me; was I not entitled to expect, what with my bad and ever worsening condition, that she would outlive me and until the end of my life, which is not far off, remain my guardian angel? But the unfriendly fate has denied me even that consolation, selfish though it might have been.

That blow hardly impaired his will and energy to work, although his body was growing weak. Complete the book! – That was the thought that dominated all else now that imminent death seemed certain. He made a list of people to be notified when he died; when that happened on 8 May 1944, his son would carry out his will according to that list.

Meanwhile, more and more problems assailed ZIELIŃSKI in his work; for various reasons libraries could not or would not send him more books. He did not give up. “I am not losing hope”, he wrote on 12 April 1943, “but weeks go by and my strength is running out”. Eventually it was possible for him to receive books again and his work moved forward swiftly. On 5 October of the same year ZIELIŃSKI wrote in a letter that he was working on a chapter on Saint Augustine.

I still have hope that despite all the devils, internal and external, conspiring against me, I shall be able to complete the chapter on him, and with it the book. And with it the whole six-volume work. And then I will be able to breathe a sigh of relief and say with Simeon, *Nunc dimittis*.

And so it was; on 22 December of that year, on the anniversary of the death of his daughter, “the first and so far the only reader of the last two volumes”, volume six was complete. Or at least, the main body of the text was; as late as 23 April 1944, two weeks before his death, ZIELIŃSKI informed professor W. KLINGER that he was working on revising the volume, that is, on writing notes for it.

Would the last two volumes see the light of day? That was the question that nagged him in the last moments of his life. Naturally we should do all we can to make it happen. [The volumes were eventually published, in 1999.] The great scholar, author and thinker was afraid his memory might be lost; that fear poisoned his last days in this world. Not that that fear was at all justified, of course; how could the world forget Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI, the man who played such an important role not merely in the systematic, scholarly study of classics, but also in building a culture based on connecting to it and understanding its spirit? It was in this manner that I answered my outstanding teacher’s last letter (from 3 January 1944), in which he expressed just such a fear. In reference to my translation of Aeschylus, of which I had informed him, he wrote:

I suppose [...] that against Weil you are leaving ll. 1327–1330 (ἰὼ βροτεῖα πράγματ’...)¹ to Cassandra, and against Wilamowitz, l. 1330 in its commonly accepted sense², which I apply directly to myself. The transition from good to bad fortune – σκιά τις ἄν τρέψειε – is Tadeusz Zieliński in September of 1939; the transition from bad fortune to utter annihilation – you, too, shall drown in the waters of oblivion – and this is even more painful than that³... oh how vividly I feel that in my own soul! That is the nightmare I fight with all I have. Among other things by finishing volume six, and with it the whole work [...] If only I could be certain that the last two volumes will appear, that would be a chance at victory against the waters of oblivion.

Not only must the splendid fruits of Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI’s life not be forgotten; on the contrary, in the future they need to exert an ever greater influence on and permeate ever deeper into the consciousness of both classicists and the wider circles of the society. When fearing for the future of his unpublished works, ZIELIŃSKI did not suspect that as a result of systematic destruction of Polish culture even those that had already been published in print would be obliterated with the rest of our accumulated publications, becoming unobtainable rarities. Caring after his heritage, publishing his unpublished works, reissuing the lost ones, and

¹ *Agamemnon*.

² Incidentally, I ought to mention that in this case I agree with WILAMOWITZ after all.

³ Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτίρω πολύ.

translating the so far untranslated ones that he had written in foreign languages are among the foremost needs of our cultural life.

II

To describe, analyse and characterise a phenomenon such as Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI – “*ingenium vix in singula saecula cadens*”, as rightly put in the funeral notice opening the first issue of this journal to appear after the war – in all his greatness and multilateralism would be a most difficult task, requiring much effort and study in many and various disciplines. For the disciplines he worked on, not just investigating them, but always creatively developing them and often propelling them in totally new directions, are so many that considering the present abundance of material, complexity of problems and specialisation caused by those two, in all honesty covering them all critically would only be possible after years of specialised studies. All the more so because describing, analysing and assessing ZIELIŃSKI as a mere classicist would result in a partial, one-dimensional and colourless picture, while actually he strikes one first of all with his many-facetedness and colour. The future ought to bring an extensive monograph on ZIELIŃSKI, one meant not just for the Polish but also for the international reader; and that is not merely because his work is of such pre-eminent importance in universal scholarship, but also, as I will demonstrate more than once in this paper, because despite membership in many academies and many honorary doctorates all over the world, that work has not been duly appreciated. Quite the contrary, it has been amazingly underestimated, and on many points, unfortunately often the most vital ones, misunderstood or ignored and left outside the cataloguing scope of the growing universal body of classical studies.

Naturally this brief paper does not pretend in the slightest to painting a full portrait of ZIELIŃSKI; at most, it can be considered a rough draft, incomplete, uneven and very preliminary; a posthumous remembrance of a great man whose disciple the author had the privilege to be.

The aforementioned multilateralism of ZIELIŃSKI’S research on classical antiquity lies not only in the fact that he was active in so many and so diverse fields of culture, literature, religion and history of both the Greeks and the Romans; many other eminent classicists have been multilateral in that sense. ZIELIŃSKI stands out from among them in that almost all his works, not excluding even minor, often specialised contributions, especially after he reached his mature years, were written with the big picture in mind. To a lesser or greater extent they all reflect in outline a synthetic view of antiquity in those of its aspects which are most important and most fertile from the perspective of the future of our culture. Of course, not every page nor even every larger unit of text can bear witness to that directly; it would be hard to remain constantly in touch with the vision of the enormous edifice of the whole while meticulously investigating

either the rhythm of Cicero's speeches, or the evolution of Euripides' trimeter using statistical methods. But when the arduous search is done, in both those cases the goal is higher, general and the synthetic; understanding the laws that govern the rhythm of prose leads to looking into its psychological foundations and emphasising the formal characteristics of ancient literature as a creative seed for the future. Analysing Euripides' trimeter lays the foundation for establishing the chronology of his preserved plays and numerous fragments, allowing for conclusions about the evolution of his art, thought and religious belief as one of the chapters in the "life of ideas" in the ancient world.

Life of ideas... It is a term coined by ZIELIŃSKI; I shall return to it below.

What has been said so far should be enough to demonstrate that ZIELIŃSKI could not limit himself to work intended to ring an echo in specialist circles. After all, scholars exist, even among the greatest, who spend their whole lives locked away in the quiet of their studies, constructing the edifice of knowledge in complete alienation from the world of lay-people, their only contact with their collaborators. And as long as theirs is creative work on a truly great scale, it produces values which are important not simply for further expansion within their discipline, but are deeper and broader than that, vital for building the culture as a whole. Even so, in order to fulfil their role, those values must leave the walls of the study in which they were born and reach the awareness of the public; thus there are always those more modest academics, less creative but gifted popularisers, to whom falls the role of intermediaries between the creator and the general audience. However, a great individuality such as ZIELIŃSKI has to address the society himself, address it not only through the discoveries and concepts made in his study, but also directly, through his remarkable, unique personality. ZIELIŃSKI was one of those researchers who, while they may arrive at new scholarly truth in even the most esoteric way, completely inaccessible to the uninitiated, then process and transform it themselves into values of culture. Strictly speaking, that is not "popularisation of research"; rather, it is planned, systematic work at building the culture of today and tomorrow; an attempt at impregnating the souls of one's contemporaries with priceless values obtained from the investigated material through one's own work and thought. ZIELIŃSKI devoted himself to that service with special zeal and enthusiasm, perhaps greater than that of any other outstanding practitioners of modern classics.

Not that he did so from the start. In the preface to volume one of the Polish edition of his popular articles, collected under the general title *Z życia idei*⁴ (*From the Life of Ideas*), ZIELIŃSKI said that during the first fifteen years of his academic life he did not print a single line intended as popularising. At the same time he lectured at the Saint Petersburg State University; the lectures were philological

⁴ Zamość 1925.

and strictly specialist in tone, omitting the general cultural aspect of the subject taught. They were not too popular. He wrote:

I had no reason to pride myself too much on the results of that work; as the term started, over a hundred persons would come to my lectures, but already one week later that number shrank and later into the term not more than twenty people would stay in the empty lecture hall.

I find it quite hard to believe that those are ZIELIŃSKI's words; when I enrolled at the university in Saint Petersburg in 1907, ZIELIŃSKI enjoyed the fame of one of the best and most captivating lecturers and during his lectures the rooms were always full; the same happened at his public lectures which he gave quite frequently. Well yes, but those words referred to the eighties and nineties of the previous century, and in the meantime radical change had taken place. ZIELIŃSKI wrote:

In Leipzig, when I asked my professors why their lectures, on Greek tragedy for instance, avoided its religious, ethical and aesthetic aspects, they told me: "That is felt, not spoken of". So I observed the same rule and kept silent about the most valuable aspect of classical philology, its *ideological merit*, and as a result it was not felt, classical philology was considered a "dry" subject and I had to lecture to a very small group.

That state of affairs pained and nagged him; he became more and more aware that something was wrong and that "it is a duty of scholars of the humanities to promote humanism in the society". That feeling had to and did bring about a breakthrough in which he boldly broke with tradition of university lectures in classical philology. The decisive impulse was that he "inherited" from his predecessor in the chair lectures on Greek tragedy, the same subject the traditional treatment of which he had found unsatisfactory during his own studies. He wrote:

That was a breakthrough in my career. I picked for the first time Euripides' *Bacchae* and resolved to abandon tradition this time: not to say what is usually said in introductory classes of such specialised courses, not to debate over the author's whole life or all of his works, not to go into the relative worth of the manuscripts etc.; instead, I tried to demonstrate where the *ideological* value of that tragedy lay and what I myself most liked about it. Such was my introduction. [...] I spoke with great enthusiasm; when I finished, the tightly filled room resonated with tumultuous applause of the audience.

Through that step ZIELIŃSKI was first revealed to the world as the speaker we know and will never forget; as its necessary and logical consequence the second step was to start writing popularising literature in the most sublime and noble sense of the word.

At the beginning he mostly wrote minor and major articles; with time, they were joined by extensive works containing the most basic results of his research

put in form accessible to non-specialists. Such is his extraordinarily important book on Sophocles⁵, a Polish translation of the general introduction and the specific introductions to that poet's several tragedies published in three volumes in Russian; such, too, is the abovementioned multi-volume work on ancient religions which he wrote until his last breath and himself believed the *opus magnum* of his life. Those books could not play the culture-forming role they are meant to have if they were burdened with the enormous ballast of their strictly specialised foundations; and for that reason (as well as for another, which I shall explain in a moment) the form they were given is a great advantage. Still, we must not shut our eyes to the drawbacks it also has.

In the preface to volume one of *Z życia idej* quoted above, ZIELIŃSKI had this to say among other things:

When referring to the articles in this volume as "popular scholarly", I would prefer to stress the second part of that compound. With classical philology lacking an appropriate medium in Russia, I have often been forced to publish in general-purpose monthlies, also when announcing the results of strictly academic research. Naturally it was then necessary to leave out all that smacked of the academic torch, to choose appropriate composition and style, and to replace philological justification with what one critic has called "an inner force of persuasion". Sometimes I had the opportunity to re-write such an article and publish it as research proper, with all apparatus, in a German philological journal. [...] Friends called such re-written articles "paid promissory notes", while the others were "unpaid".

So the world community of architects of classics lost a great deal of excellent research. A specialist reading such writings of ZIELIŃSKI, popular as to form, usually knows where to look for their foundations and how to reconstruct the missing logical links between them and the author's conclusions; but only provided he has himself been working on the same problem. Reading a book or article which is not directly related to his work of the moment, he will not have the time to perform the reconstruction, and so cannot be absolutely sure if all of the author's results can be considered proven. Not to mention being deprived of the advantage and intellectual bliss we almost always experience when presented with ZIELIŃSKI's philological analysis of sources and with his argument.

The other drawback is that ZIELIŃSKI's results published in basic works without full apparatus may easily be and often are attacked by people who find them unpleasant for one reason or another but cannot or will not reconstruct the scaffolding that the author dismantled once the text was ready. That applies in particular to his great work on religion, in which some claims evoke much emotion. Realising that, beginning with volume three, the first to be written in Poland and in Polish, ZIELIŃSKI began to supplement the main body of the text with notes; his intention was, if he had enough time left, to publish volumes one and two in the

⁵ *Sofokles i jego twórczość tragiczna*, Kraków 1928.

same form. But by their very nature such notes cannot be enough if they cannot employ texts in the original or their philological analysis and criticism.

That had to be said for the sake of completeness. Let me now return to the advantages.

The title given by ZIELIŃSKI to the collection of his minor popularising works, *From the Life of Ideas*, is no accident; on the contrary, it contains a very important assessment of his life's work. In the passages from the preface to that collection quoted above, we have twice encountered the concept of "ideology"; according to ZIELIŃSKI, the primary value of classical philology lies in its "ideological merit"; then in his introductory lecture on the *Bacchae* he tried to demonstrate "where the ideological value of that tragedy lay". In his book on Sophocles, the discussion of each tragedy opens with a chapter elucidating its ideas, and consequently each play receives its "ideological" name; *Oedipus Rex* is the "tragedy of destiny", *Antigone*, the "tragedy of power", *Philoctetes*, the "tragedy of truth", and so on. In the preface to his two-volume *Historia kultury antycznej (A History of Ancient Culture)*⁶, ZIELIŃSKI calls that work "a history of Greek and Roman culture from the perspective of ideological monism".

Those passages, as well as tens and hundreds of others like them, express the major line of ZIELIŃSKI's work, uniting all of his research, so diverse and branching: his point was to demonstrate the profound relationship between our symbolic culture and the culture of the ancient world; to throw a wide spectrum of light on our classical heritage, ever alive and ready to sprout anew; to impregnate our creativity for today and tomorrow. We read in the preface that I have already quoted a few times:

Since I realised the objective and nature of my interest in antiquity, it has been to me, not a quiet museum secluded from the world of today, but a revivifying spring from which I have drawn immortal ideas that to this day make the nourishment for our minds. Now, the biology and biography of those ideas – that was the magnificent edifice my imagination has sketched before me for a long time now.

That was what ZIELIŃSKI remembered at all times. In his intention, even the most specialised work was connected to that prime objective of his life. And that was why the line between scholarship proper and popularisation understood in the sense outlined above at times blurred so much as to obliterate the distinction. That is why even a learned specialist can find even the most "popular" of his works, not excluding those meant for young readers, of academic value. The author was well aware of that himself; in the afterword to parts two and four of his *Świat antyczny (The Ancient World)*⁷, he wrote:

⁶ Warszawa–Kraków 1922–1924.

⁷ Part I: *Starożytność bajeczna*; part II: *Grecja niepodległa*; part III: *Rzeczpospolita rzymska*; part IV: *Cesarstwo rzymskie*, Warszawa–Kraków 1930–1938.

The common feature of all four parts of this book is that their purpose is to provide their readers with their first contact with antiquity, and so they are primarily intended for young people. Of course, there is no upper age limit; I am not so modest as to discourage adults, and even specialists, from reading my sketches. The specialists in particular I ask to browse through my *Starożytność bajeczna* (*The Mythical Antiquity*) with kindness; they will be surprised, seeing how differently I present the myths they know from the way they are presented in other works on mythology. The reason is that, as is my principle, I based my stories on my reconstructions of lost Greek tragedies.

The conscious and consistently executed intention to present the “life of ideas” and to till the soil for them to further grow and blossom on was certainly the main, but equally certainly not the only reason behind the “popularising” form of many of ZIELIŃSKI’S writings; another reason must have been the irrepresible drive of his character to express himself, not merely through pure intellectual content, which is the only type appropriate in specialist literature, but also through the artistic form.

For ZIELIŃSKI was not just a scholar, but also an artist of the first sort. And in saying that I do not mean, not in the first place at any rate, his artistic pieces *sensu stricto*, the *Klechdy attyckie* (*Attic Legends*)⁸, a series of stories set in the mythical prehistory of Attica. For lay people those stories are fascinating and instructive, introducing them to the landscape, life, customs, beliefs, cult and rituals of Attica and presenting to them its local legends and myths in a vivid, light and picturesque form to then serve the author as material for profound discussions and ideological interpretations of Greek religion and culture. Nor do they make for any less interesting reading to a specialist who can recognise the author’s sources and with admiration, and sometimes because of an “unpaid promissory note” with sadness see the author’s amazing intuition in reconstructing the whole and, as it often seems, correctly guessing its original shape. But the realistic form of a plain “short story of manners” does not really fit the spirit of the ancient legends, or have the air of myth, or artistically harmonise with the archaic, pre-historical, poetic and fabulous material.

No, ZIELIŃSKI’S uncommon artistic sense found expression mostly in his scholarly works accessible to non-specialists. The art lies first of all in the structure of his texts, in their perfect architecture. He was a master of logical construction, of arguments deliberately selected and arranged, and of reasoning conducted consistently from the bottom all the way up via splendidly conjoined links. That internal conceptual logic is expressed externally in perfectly appropriate forms and immaculately harmonious composition resembling the divine proportions of the Parthenon. Few artists, in the usual sense of the word, can compose their works as ZIELIŃSKI could. If we add to that his extraordinarily profound intuition

⁸ Series I–IV, Warszawa–Kraków 1922–1936.

of the ancient world, excellently vivid imagination and his style, developed according to the immortal models of ancient prose, yet strikingly individual – we shall receive the concoction which makes ZIELIŃSKI’s “popular” works captivating reading, providing the reader with true artistic pleasure in addition to purely intellectual content.

Those two aspects of ZIELIŃSKI, one of a researcher, the other of an excellent writer and populariser, do not by any means exhaust his person’s complexity. I have so far omitted the characteristic which may be his most important one, and which certainly distinguishes him from all others and places him apart. ZIELIŃSKI was the “thinker” among classical philologists; truths learned through the study of classics were for him the foundation on which to build one’s world-view. More than that, ZIELIŃSKI was a passionate “preacher” of the truths he had learned and a promulgator of a new faith based on them. Those truths, obtained by him through the efforts of pure thought and research that was often painstaking, came to dwell also in his heart, becoming his most profound feelings and the motives for his life and actions. There was no gap for him between scholarship and life. Not only did he do research; not only did he teach, in the academic sense of the word, all those who were not involved in it themselves; he also taught all those who came with hearts open.

III

The vicissitudes of ZIELIŃSKI’s life were such that his scholarly and cultural activities were not confined to a single territory or nationality. Born in 1859 in the Kiev region in a Polish family permeated with Polish traditions and culture, already as a schoolboy he found himself in Petersburg in a foreign environment, which was moreover not just Russian, but mixed Russian and German. Germans made for a considerable percentage of the population of the capital of Russia at that time. They had their own secondary schools with rights the same as those of state run schools, but with German as the language of instruction and much freedom when it came to drawing up curricula; the level of education in those schools was quite high, usually much higher than in Russian gymnasia, especially in terms of familiarity with classical languages, literature and culture. It was one of such German schools that ZIELIŃSKI graduated from.

As a consequence of that close contact with German culture and scholarship (especially noting how in the field of classics in the 19th century the Germans were beyond any doubt the masters), he studied at the Leipzig University (in the years 1876–1880), where he was mostly supervised in his work by the great scholar Otto RIBBECK. After completing his doctorate in Leipzig⁹ he travelled to

⁹ His dissertation was *Die letzten Jahre des zweiten punischen Krieges*, Leipzig 1880.

Munich, where he studied primarily classical archaeology, and Vienna, to study epigraphy under the supervision of Otto HIRSCHFELD. It was because of those early years, when one learns the foundations of knowledge and methodology; years filled for the would-be researcher with unforgettable intellectual experiences; when the indestructible bonds of discipleship are tied and lasting friendships based on shared interests and studies, formed (in Leipzig ZIELIŃSKI found a close friend for life in the person of Otto CRUSIUS, later a professor at Munich); it was because of those years, then, formative for the rest of his life, that ZIELIŃSKI long remained in his research connected not only to Russia, where he would live and work, but also to Germany; that in his Saint Petersburg period he would write and publish a lot in German.

Such *curriculum vitae* did not, of course, favour any active participation in Polish academic and cultural life. But the deep connection to that culture, the feeling of belonging to it and to the nation, the love learned in his old home – all of that lived on in his soul, preparing it for the second period of his work, the Warsaw period, which was to be the time of his greatest worldwide fame, when he would become central to our classics and our effort of building a humanistic culture.

Meanwhile, in his Saint Petersburg period, ZIELIŃSKI contributed articles to our “Eos”, collaborated on a *Festschrift* for professor Ludwik ĆWIKLIŃSKI (Lwów 1902), in 1909 published in Warsaw a pamphlet entitled *Starożytność klasyczna i wykształcenie klasyczne (Classical Antiquity and Classical Education)*, and counted Adam Mickiewicz among his most beloved authors alongside various ancient ones. In the years 1915–1916 he even gave university lectures on Mickiewicz’s early period. Later, after moving to Poland, he would collect his studies into Polish literature and culture in a book and publish it under the title *Z ojczystej niwy (From the Motherland’s Fields)*¹⁰. The dedication would be: “To the Shade of Adam Mickiewicz, profound reverence for whom, planted in my heart by my father’s hand, has been my companion in the journey of this life since the dawn of my youth...”.

After completing his studies, a prolonged stay in Italy and a journey in Greece, ZIELIŃSKI returned to Petersburg. In order to be granted the *venia legendi* (habilitation) and then a chair of classical philology at the university there, he had to go through the stages of academic career required in Russia, different than in Germany, that is to obtain the degrees of master and doctor. The Russian master’s degree required a dissertation much longer and more serious than the German doctorate; a Russian doctoral dissertation was another step up from that.

And here that great scholar, who would become one of the greatest in classics in the world, ran into a completely unexpected obstacle. While still a student, he had written a competition work on the subject announced by his master RIBBECK:

¹⁰ Zamość–Warszawa 1923.

De disputationibus, quae in comoedia Attica occurrunt, or in other words on that traditional component of Old Attic comedy universally known today thanks to ZIELIŃSKI under the technical name *agon*, introduced by him. Now he made the same thing the subject of his master's dissertation; a young student's essay was evolving into an innovative analytic piece of research, the first large-scale attempt at tackling the problem of the specific form and structure of Attic comedy in the 5th century. ZIELIŃSKI's supervisor at the Saint Petersburg University, professor LUGEBIL, did approve the dissertation, but with reservations and without enthusiasm. Of course that could not lead the young scholar off the path upon which he had entered and saw new vistas opening before him; further research promised capturing the essence of the literary form of that unique phenomenon in drama and recreating the original form from which it had developed. So he kept at the problem and two years later presented the results of his work as a doctoral dissertation. But those results were too new, too groundbreaking, and the light they threw on issues so far not even realised, too unexpected, not to raise objections. And since in some details youthful enthusiasm did carry the author too far, leading to conclusions which were bold, radical and not all of them tenable, the old professor decided that enough was enough and rejected the dissertation. Such were the beginnings of the "academic career" of one of the greatest classicists.

Obviously, that failure could not change anything about ZIELIŃSKI's creative path either. He compiled both those dissertations (which had been written in Russian) into a single German book. So came into being his *Gliederung der altattischen Komödie*¹¹, epoch-making in its main conclusions (even though there were in it some lapses, which the author himself would later realise full well). ZIELIŃSKI presented it as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Dorpat (Tartu), which, while at the time part of the Russian state, had German as its language of instruction. While the professors there did not have any major reservations about accepting it, they did prefer, just in case, to request the opinion of the eminent Hellenist Erwin ROHDE. Despite certain minor reservations that opinion turned out most approving and the previously rejected candidate came to be regarded as an extremely interesting individuality and a most promising author of great talent.

Not that it meant that the success in Dorpat was accompanied by the book's victory in the general opinion of the academic world. Quite the contrary, it was given a very hostile welcome, especially in German scholarship. Reviewers and others pointed out its minor errors; criticised its ideas, some of them too risky; failed to see its groundbreaking achievements, which would only with time work their way into the consciousness of a wider audience and finally become, in many cases, the property of all, which is nameless in its attribution. Today we speak of them as self-evident, forgetting their author, who was once attacked for

¹¹ Leipzig 1885.

them. And on a number of points ZIELIŃSKI's results, certainly correct, or such at least is my opinion, have not been accepted to this day, or for more than sixty years. But I am deeply convinced that their time will come too.

I shall return to the significance of ZIELIŃSKI's research on Old Attic comedy in the next section; here I have only touched upon it in connection with the story of his life and work. But while on that subject, we have brushed against a more general issue on which I had already remarked in section II: that of almost systematic, to put it this way, lack of understanding and appreciation which his work encountered. And so before moving on, I would like to pause at that issue for a short while.

When in Vilnius in 1933 I was preparing my lectures on the history of Greek religion, naturally I had to peruse the recently then (in 1930) published, painstaking presentation of the state of research on Greek and Roman religion by Friedrich PFISTER¹². To my great amazement I discovered that in the general overview of achievements in that discipline, ZIELIŃSKI's name did not appear at all, whereas in the report on the literature published between 1918 and 1929/1930, I found only a five-line mention of the French translation of *Religia starożytnej Grecji*, ending with these words: "Das Buch kommt für uns wenig in Betracht". Such treatment of that book, which, in spite of its concise and popular form, is one of the most profound discussions of Greek religion we have received so far, can only be compared to Kurt LATTE's "crushing" review in the critical journal "Gnomon" (II 1926, pp. 650 ff.), which actually betrays a total misunderstanding of the work reviewed, with some unmistakable ill will added. Still, omitting ZIELIŃSKI in a general summary of research into classical religion is possibly even harder to understand and more shocking. True, PFISTER had not read a number of ZIELIŃSKI's works on religion printed in Polish or Russian; but he must have known the German ones, such as, to mention only these few, *Exkurse zu den Trachinierinnen*, *Die Orestessage und die Rechtfertigungsidee*, *Hermes und die Hermetik*, or *Rom und seine Gottheit*, containing concepts some of which are quite sensationally innovative, which it is in the last resort possible to disagree with or question, but which are still of enormous value in the general effort to uncover and understand that religion. Below I will still have to mention the fierce battles, protests and attacks caused by the six volumes of his *Religie świata antycznego*, but that is a different thing, to do with the great emotions aroused by some of his theses, encroaching on the domain of religious dogma or sentiment; it is much more astonishing, nay incomprehensible, that specialists should have struck off the list of researchers of ancient religions one of the greatest and most profound.

¹² *Die Religion der Griechen und Römer [...] Darstellung und Literaturbericht 1918–1929/30* (Bursians Jahresh. Suppl. CCXXIX 1930).

But that is not all. There is among ZIELIŃSKI's epoch-making discoveries the theory of "rudimentary motifs", which places in our hands a valuable tool with which to investigate and reconstruct the history of Greek tragedy. While his work containing an exposition of that theory and many excellent results of its application¹³ found an extremely warm welcome in French scholarship, and shortly before the last war there was in Germany one attempt¹⁴ at applying it, on the whole its great significance was underestimated¹⁵, and in the otherwise serious and reliable "Philologische Wochenschrift" (XLVII 1927, coll. 577 ff.) the otherwise deserved Alfred KOERTE reviewed the book cursorily, carelessly and unscrupulously, leaving out its most important points and flippantly belittling its results.

Those are only examples, very far from exhausting the subject. Eventually, too frequent repetition of such facts aroused understandable impatience in the scholar, usually not that inclined to engage in polemic, especially should it be personal, by default always kind towards everyone, always aiming at peace and harmony; for he was truly εὐκόλος, just as his favourite Sophocles was, as Aristophanes said. Out of that impatience he supplemented his selected reprinted minor works¹⁶ with polemical appendices making short work of unintelligent or unscrupulous criticism.

And now to return to the interrupted train of thought.

The Petersburg period of ZIELIŃSKI's life and work had begun. His extremely intense research was accompanied by teaching at the university, at the Institute of History and Philology, and later at the College of Higher Courses for Women. In the previous section I wrote what that teaching was like to begin with and how diametrically it changed later. That change opened before ZIELIŃSKI the door onto a new path; following it, he soon became one of the most outstanding characters in the cultural life of Saint Petersburg. An excellent speaker, whose lectures on subjects unattractive, it would seem, to the general audience, gathered large crowds; a great writer dazzling and captivating his readers with his articles, in which he explained the general cultural sense of the "dry" study of classics to the wide circles of the intelligentsia; a gifted translator of Sophocles' tragedies and Ovid's *Heroides* – ZIELIŃSKI discovered for himself a great creative role in promoting humanism in the society, in bringing it closer to the invigorating springs of antiquity. That work, which commenced under most unfavourable circumstances, in an atmosphere of clear resentment towards antiquity and classics, which, owing to the specific conditions of life in Russia at that time, was in

¹³ *Tragodumenon libri tres*, liber I, Cracoviae 1925.

¹⁴ F. STOESSL, *Die Trilogie des Aischylos*, Baden bei Wien 1937.

¹⁵ As pointed out even before the war by the outstanding Viennese scholar L. RADERMACHER in his *Mythus und Sage bei den Griechen*, Baden bei Wien–Leipzig 21938.

¹⁶ *Iresione*, vols. I–II, Leopoli 1931 and 1936 (Eus Supplementa II and VIII); volume III was planned but has not appeared.

progressive circles considered “reactionary”; that work ended in a magnificent victory: The intellectual climate in Saint Petersburg between the beginning of the century and the outbreak of World War I was permeated with a lively interest in antiquity, especially in the poetry, religion and philosophy of ancient Greece, and there can be no doubt that ZIELIŃSKI was responsible for that more than anybody else. Nor did he limit himself in his “humanising” effort to adults; he published a number of ancient texts (of Sophocles, Livy and Cicero) for school use, with commentary understood very differently from what it had been before, opening the reader’s eyes to the spiritual values of antiquity and to its humanistic universalism; and in spring of 1903 he gave a series of eight lectures for graduates of Saint Petersburg high schools, which then became *Świat antyczny a my* (*Ancient World and Us* [published in English under the title *Our Debt to Antiquity*]), his famous book translated into nearly all the major languages of the world.

Other than the large audience attending his more accessible lectures, at institutions of higher learning ZIELIŃSKI became the focus of a smaller circle of enthusiastic and dedicated students. Participants in his seminar would in a large majority become researchers themselves. It was quite common for graduates to keep attending that seminar, sometimes even after habilitation. Its level was very high; often the dissertations of its participants brought new results and were qualified for print. The atmosphere was not just intellectually exciting, but also so pleasant, warm and home-like that I do not doubt that for many participants those meetings remained among the nicest memories of their youth.

ZIELIŃSKI’s seminar had two groups: male, made of students from the university (which did not admit women), and female, from the Higher Courses. They met on Sundays at 11 a.m. in his apartment. ZIELIŃSKI lived in an old, 18th-century backyard building which belonged to the Institute of History and Philology. One left one’s coat in the hall downstairs to climb an internal staircase to his study on the first floor. It was a large room, three of its walls and part of the fourth filled with books from floor to ceiling. The door was a small rectangle cut in a smooth surface of books, with shelves not just on both sides of it, but also above. In the back, near the window there was the desk and in the middle a long table, or actually three put together, a special arrangement for the Sunday meetings, which took place at that table. But usually there was not enough room around it and the remaining participants sat in a corner to the left of the door, where there was a small round table surrounded with soft furniture; that was the so-called “colony”. Halfway through the session a door opened in the left wall, leading further inside the house, and the maid brought in tea; over that and pies they went on with the reading of a paper or with discussion.

The proper seminar only took place on every other Sunday, alternating with the so-called “circle” which read Greek poets. As a rule, participants in the seminar were also members of the circle, but not the other way round; the skill which allowed students to take part in the shared reading was not yet enough to un-

dertake independent research; thus the circle was larger than the seminar group. ZIELIŃSKI himself commented on the poetry they read; one could spend a long time telling the story of the many new, seminal ideas, the unexpected and creative approaches and associations which emerged then alongside factual knowledge, and that would still not be enough to capture the essence.

There was another institution at the Petersburg University which I must not ignore and of which ZIELIŃSKI was the head, the Students' Classical Association. All regular members of the Society were students, as were the vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer, but ZIELIŃSKI was the chairman and personally presided over all the sessions. Current and former students of the College of Higher Courses for Women also took an active part in the meetings; in the by-laws they were called "regular guests". The research reports were exactly the same in character as in "real" scholarly societies: no compilations or student essays, only actual individual contributions or serious analytic reviews of new publications. Therefore regular members rarely presented reports; most often that was done by "collaborating members", that is former members, active researchers who had already graduated from the university. The chairman was the soul of those meetings; he always initiated the discussion, summarising the speaker's argument. It is likely that all participants remember those summaries; they brought clarity, neatness and order into the detailed and specialised argument, often difficult for the audience to follow or not presented clearly enough by the beginner scholar. They made the proper foundation on which to base the discussion.

Neither the war nor the revolution interrupted the work of the seminar group, the circle or the Students' Association. But the way the political events unfolded did pull ZIELIŃSKI into a new sphere of activity. A sovereign Poland was becoming an ever more likely possibility on the horizon. Polish population in Russia was growing considerably, mostly because of the vast numbers of refugees. Saint Petersburg (which was by then called Petrograd) saw the foundation of Polish cultural institutions, such as the Society of Enthusiasts of Polish History and Literature, which organised Polish Higher Humanistic Courses. ZIELIŃSKI took an active part in those activities as the president of the Society. The Polish monthly "Myśl Narodowa" was also founded, and in it ZIELIŃSKI published papers on Mickiewicz. It was also on Mickiewicz, as I have mentioned above, that he lectured at the College of Higher Courses for Women. Finally, when Poland became independent, the University of Warsaw offered him a chair. On 22 April 1920 ZIELIŃSKI gave his opening lecture in Warsaw¹⁷.

And so a new period in his life and work began. "It is a strange thing", he wrote to me on 25 February 1921, "but it took all those terrible events to con-

¹⁷ Actually, at that point ZIELIŃSKI had not yet settled in Poland for good; he was still obliged to return to Saint Petersburg, for which he did leave in the summer of that year. It was only in the early spring of 1921 that he was able to move to Warsaw properly.

vince me that for me *extra Poloniam non est vita*". Yet the first steps he took on the soil of his ancestors involved a certain difficulty and embarrassment, certainly very painful to the great scholar and writer, now over sixty and accustomed to the infallible effect his words had in both speech and writing: the life spent abroad and for the most part in foreign circles had to impair the correctness and fluency of his Polish. ZIELIŃSKI felt that acutely. "It seems that I did not shame myself, although of course I did make errors", he wrote right after the opening lecture – he, Tadeusz ZIELIŃSKI, that excellent stylist and admired speaker! With great energy he started working on removing foreign impurities from his Polish and improving it; a few more years would go by before he would decide to publish his Polish works without friends proofreading them first. ZIELIŃSKI's aptitude for languages was very high; apart from Latin, Polish, Russian and German he wrote and published in Italian, French and English. But some Russianisms could be found in his Polish until the last; the similarity of the two languages was too much of an obstacle here.

Needless to say, those linguistic stumbles could not significantly detract from the excellent points of his style, in a way independent from the garb of language, or to weaken the effect that his literary talent had on the reader, and so after the first few years during which he struggled, ZIELIŃSKI was not just a Polish researcher but also a Polish author. And it was completely understandable that he became a member, not only of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, but also, even though his writings could not have served as models of Polish prose, of the Polish Academy of Literature.

The Warsaw period was the time of ZIELIŃSKI's greatest maturity as a scholar and thinker, and simultaneously of his greatest fame in the whole world. The resistance often encountered in the world of scholarship, particularly German scholarship, by his greatest discoveries and concepts could not, after all, stand in the way of the victory of his great individuality. His honorary doctorates and memberships in academies the world over were more numerous every year. The ceremony held by the University of Warsaw for the fiftieth anniversary of his doctorate became a huge international demonstration. Honoured at foreign universities and academic organisations, invited to lecture to many different European countries, ZIELIŃSKI always represented Polish scholarship and helped bolster respect for it. Advanced age and poor health did not diminish his astounding vital force at all. Intense research and writing did not stop him from far and tiresome travels in connection with conferences, academic ceremonies and invitations to lecture which came in droves from home and abroad; flying became his favourite way to travel.

That generous and beautiful evening of his life and work was brutally interrupted by the German invasion and capture of Warsaw.

One could have expected that long life, filled with hard work and so rich in intellectual fruits, to enjoy a serene end in the awareness of the greatness of the

work done and with the certainty of a grateful memory of the generations to come; that after ZIELIŃSKI's death it should be possible to say of him, as was once said of his beloved Sophocles,

μάκαρ [...] ὅς πολὺν χρόνον βιοῦς
ἀπέθανεν, εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ καὶ δεξιός,
— — — — —
καλῶς δ' ἔτελεύτησ' οὐδὲν ὑπομείνας κακόν¹⁸.

But that was not to be, and his magnificent, creative life was shattered by lightning. The last years of that great architect of culture, no less industrious or productive from those before them, were spent among ruins and fires, in exile, in ever increasing abandonment and loneliness. And the thought which nagged him until his last moments was that he might be defeated by the waters of oblivion.

IV

In the first period of ZIELIŃSKI's academic career, he was mainly interested, as I have already said, in Old Attic comedy.

Even though the form of that comedy is so remarkable and so different from other types of drama, before ZIELIŃSKI the matter had been barely investigated. Aristophanes' plays and the fragments of those by his predecessors and contemporaries were analysed almost solely for their references to realities. There were attempts at using them as historical sources, the opinions expressed in them were debated in detail, Aristophanes' political views were analysed, and reasons explained why this or another historical character should be mocked. The less suitable a given comedy was for political interpretation, the more scholars tried to decipher its supposed hidden message; explaining the political outlook of the *Aves* (which undoubtedly does not even exist) has consumed so much paper and ink that in the 70's of the last century a publication appeared dedicated to the history of interpreting that comedy¹⁹.

And in those rare cases when researchers did deal with Old Attic comedy as a form of art, they were under the influence of Aristotle's *Poetics* and tried to explain its peculiarities in the light of the form of tragedy and Aristotle's relevant theory. The results thus obtained were misleading, contradictory and ultimately almost worthless. ZIELIŃSKI's book heralded a new era in that regard, an era in which the technical aspects of Old Attic comedy were investigated as a phenomenon separate and in its essence independent, in spite of some partial influence, from those

¹⁸ Phrynichus, *Musae*, fr. 31 K.

¹⁹ W. BEHAGHEL, *Geschichte der Auffassung der Vögel des Aristophanes*, Heidelberg 1878, 1879.

of tragedy²⁰. He was the first to prove that analogies to the structure of tragedy were useless in researching the form of the comedies of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, and to establish separate and specific principles of composition for that genre.

Since ZIELIŃSKI's book we have known that Old Attic comedy combines two types of composition: epirrhematic and episodic. Most of the book deals with explaining the former, discovered by ZIELIŃSKI; it turns out that its basic manifestations in a play are the *parodos*, the *parabasis* and the scene of conflict, which is today commonly called the *agon* (following ZIELIŃSKI), with Aristophanes two last comedies preserving the epirrhematic type in the purest form. Epirrhematic composition involves the chorus being permanently divided into two halves answering each other; therefore ZIELIŃSKI determined that in its primitive form Attic comedy had two choruses (brought back by Aristophanes in his *Lysistrata*), and in its original, proto-Attic form the two choruses quarrelled for the play to end in their reconciliation, reunification and addressing the audience as that re-united whole in the *parabasis*.

The creative momentum with which the author stepped onto that path, certainly headed for the right destination, did however carry him too far on some points. Not all the preserved comedies have all the components of the epirrhematic composition present; in such cases ZIELIŃSKI tried to show that the play had reached us in an adaptation and in the original version none of them were missing. Those daring attempts are not always convincing²¹.

The few later works which continued ZIELIŃSKI's research on the subject, especially those by Wilhelm SÜSS, contributed many valuable additions and introduced certain corrections into his results: it turned out that the two types of composition are significant independently of each other, that Old Attic comedy combines them in many various ways, and so there is no need to assume, as ZIELIŃSKI did, a single canonical form for all the comedies. There is no need to try to prove at all cost that, say, there used to be *agon* in those comedies which in their preserved form do not have it. Still, one must not do as Paul MAZON²² does, for instance, explaining the lack of *agon* in the *Acharnenses* through the

²⁰ As I said above, that "new era" dawned slowly and encountered much resistance; actually it still has not arrived in full. As recently as a few years before the last war the great WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF expressed views on that subject which are a large step backwards from ZIELIŃSKI's discoveries.

²¹ Around 1905, as we learn from ZIELIŃSKI's *retractationes* of the book under discussion (*Iresione*, vol. I, pp. 456–68), he still intended to revise it, remove what he by then considered erroneous, and add an "inner history" of Old Attic comedy. The intention was never carried out and the "inner history" of comedy, that is the history of the evolution of its forms, has never been written. That most grateful subject awaits treatment.

²² *Essai sur la composition des comédies d'Aristophane*, Paris 1904; other than that, the book is very valuable, especially regarding the composition of prologues.

notion that when that play was staged, everybody had enough of debates over war and peace, and in the *Pax* through the idea that introducing such a quarrel into the play right before the Peace of Nicias would have been unnecessary; we need to really take to heart the notion, illustrated with ZIELIŃSKI's argument, that compositional schemata are important and constant and that there are at the very core of a literary and theatre genre certain principles of form which cannot be suspended in their effects by accidental external circumstances. Thus I could not emphasise enough how important the compositional principles discovered by ZIELIŃSKI are, also for textual criticism, especially as regards assigning utterances to personae, something the manuscripts are very undecided about; and if newer editions of Aristophanes do not take the results of his work into account in that respect, then it is a step backwards from how things were in 1885.

While working on Old Attic comedy, ZIELIŃSKI became interested in a completely different problem, namely in folk tale motifs often found in that genre. In the same year 1885 he published a short treatise entitled *Die Märchenkomödie in Athen*²³, in which he interpreted the preserved plays and tried to reconstruct others from their fragments, using the folk tales of various peoples and times. Today, when applying the comparative material of folklore in research into ancient culture and literature is perfectly ordinary, that work could not evoke a protest with its very idea or principle; but back then the concept was new, not to say revolutionary, and was for the most part given a cold welcome. His ideas for reconstruction, demonstrating real imagination and flair, are convincing in many cases and questionable in others; but the underlying concept itself was innovative and pioneering; it opened new perspectives. The short treatise did not exhaust the subject, which by all means deserves to be tackled again and given much space.

It is also in that first period that ZIELIŃSKI wrote his *Quaestiones comicae*²⁴, with the especially valuable chapter *De comoediae Doricae personis*, a reconstruction, for the most part accurate and convincing, of the traditional masks of Doric comedy, of which the well known masks of the Atellan farce are only a variation. Those results, too, have so far only been exploited in scholarship to a very slight degree.

While I definitely must emphasise the enormous and thus far underestimated importance of ZIELIŃSKI's discoveries and new concepts referring to ancient comedy, it is also necessary to admit that there are certain points on which his opponents are right. In the 5th-century Athens there undoubtedly co-existed various trends in comedy, some of which were closer to the native Attic traditions of a chorus commenting in a satirical way on recent events, while others, to

²³ An offprint from the yearly report of Saint Anna German High School (Annenschule), from which ZIELIŃSKI graduated and where he later taught; reprinted in *Iresione* (n. 16), vol. I, pp. 8–75.

²⁴ *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosvieščeniija* 1886, pp. 53–175 (= *Iresione* [n. 16], vol. I, pp. 76–189).

the Doric farce of manners, but ZIELIŃSKI went too far in deducing from that fact that there was a sharp distinction between a “higher” type of comedy practiced by Aristophanes, and a lower Dorising type of φορτική κωμωδία, which Aristophanes opposed. Certainly there were poets, such as Crates, or Pherecrates, closer in their tastes and style to grotesque of manners than to satyric-fantastic comedy, but just as certainly two separate, mutually hostile types of comedy are out of the question, as is any sharp line cutting the “higher” type off from the “lower”. In connection with all that ZIELIŃSKI fought (until the last moment, as can be seen from how he supplemented his works reprinted in the *Iresione*) a bitter battle against connecting with Aristophanic comedy the grotesque and lewd actor’s costume which we know from terracotta and bronze figurines of comic actors and from vase paintings depicting the south-Italian *phlyax* play, as well as in general against interpreting Aristophanes on stage in the manner of popular farce. In that case facts are against him, and so is the new and no doubt more apt approach to theatre ushered in by the 20th century.

In the questions of theatre as a stage spectacle in general, ZIELIŃSKI could not free himself of the 19th-century prejudice, could not go outside the limiting framework of “theatre of illusion”. Therefore his imposing achievements in the field of Greek tragedy are marred by many of his opinions on its purely theatrical aspects. He could not see an organic connection between the Athenian stage of the 5th century and the works of Athenian playwrights, just as he could not see it between the Elizabethan stage and Shakespeare’s plays. Often he would with great force oppose an interpretation of a tragic poet’s work in relation to the form and logic of the stage he wrote for, maintaining that all that counted was the poet’s “vision”, understood as his vision of actual, not of theatrical events, which ideally theatre ought to render with fully literal realism. In his opinion the production style of Athenian theatre was merely a *malum necessarium*, a result of technical conditions not allowing for full “theatrical illusion”. Actually, things were beyond doubt very different.

I believe that this 19th-century “flaw” was related to the general decline of the visual-artistic sense in that century. In ZIELIŃSKI it could have been reinforced by an individual trait of his psychological construction: as he often admitted himself, his visual memory was poor and that was probably related to the visual arts being his least favourite. His aesthetic opinions in that domain were the least sophisticated and the least interesting, whereas his knowledge of music was thorough and his love of it, profound. To apply his own terminology, he was more of a “melic” than a “plastic”.

V

The resistance encountered in the past, and even today, by some of ZIELIŃSKI’S claims about Greek comedy, can be largely explained by a lack of understand-

ing for that aspect of the history of literary genres which he sensed especially acutely: for the internal, organic evolution of their forms, independent from the conscious will of their authors, for the supra-individual traditions and trends inherent in those genres. That was greatly influenced by the views of that outstanding representative of German philology, WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, who proclaimed the principle that *personality is all* and saw nothing but personality. Now ZIELIŃSKI did not by any means play down the importance of an author's personality; on the contrary, he could emphasise and highlight it with exceptional force and suggestiveness. His reconstruction of Cicero's personality²⁵ is certainly a masterpiece of its genre. But he respected the immanent laws of form and understood that it is only at the point where those two lines cross that the essence of the literary phenomenon can be captured.

His sense for the supra-individual in the history of literature allowed ZIELIŃSKI to detect and establish with extraordinary brilliance the laws governing specific genres; needless to say under the opposing banner, that of a self-sufficient personality, any such laws must raise protests and their significance must be questioned. As ZIELIŃSKI ironically put it, modern classics is rather "nomophobic".

Another genre whose technical aspects ZIELIŃSKI looked into for its specific laws was heroic epic. That research brought forth the extremely interesting treatise, *Die Behandlung gleichzeitiger Ereignisse im antiken Epos*²⁶, where he formulated the law of chronological exclusivity. The law states that in Homer narration never returns to the starting point of a side story; two parallel and simultaneous events are always presented as if they took place one after the other. In that case his results encountered no objections and the law he discovered is today universally accepted.

ZIELIŃSKI did not write any other works dedicated specifically to Greek epic, but studies in Homer were an integral part and one of the cornerstones of many of his writings, primarily those dealing with the history of ancient religion and morality. The questions he asked and the theories he proposed in that field often required him to take a stand on the so-called "Homeric question". ZIELIŃSKI never participated in the disputes between pluralists, unitarians and those who took various intermediate positions; but certain brief expressions in popular works (e.g. in his outline of the history of Greek literature²⁷) indicate that he was quite far from present-day neo-unitarianism. In the works on religion and morality mentioned above he often referred to "earlier" and "later" parts of the *Iliad* and

²⁵ *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, Leipzig³ 1912, pp. 140–170.

²⁶ Philologus Suppl. VIII 1901, fasc. 3. An earlier work by him on the same subject is *Zakon chronologičeskoj niesovmestivosti i kompozicija Iliady*, in: *Χαριστήρια. Sbornik statij [...] w čest' F.E. Korša*, Moskva 1896.

²⁷ T. ZIELIŃSKI, S. SREBRNY, *Literatura starożytnej Grecji epoki niepodległości*, vol. I: *Zarys ogólny* (T. ZIELIŃSKI), Warszawa–Kraków 1923.

Odyssey without ever going into a discussion with the unitarian view. No doubt in that respect he remained part of the circle of an earlier generation of researchers and present-day radical unitarians could see him as not very “modern”. But the results he obtained from analysing the content of certain passages in Homer, establishing striking ideological differences between them, and his theories of lines of evolution in the sphere of religious and moral concepts can be so deeply convincing that absolute unitarians would do well to consider them and revise their views from that perspective, which they rarely take into account.

Another previously unknown law was discovered and formulated as a result of ZIELIŃSKI’s research in the field which was one of the main areas of his work, the history of Greek tragedy. I mean here the law of “rudimentary motifs”²⁸ mentioned above in section III. According to that law when a Greek tragic poet worked on a myth which had previously been used by some other author, and introduced his own modifications into the details of the plot, he never ignored his predecessor’s version completely, but rather always included it in one way or another. Rare cases of such treatment can also be found in modern literatures; in the introductory chapter, ZIELIŃSKI adduced examples from Polish, Russian and German literatures. Still, in the works of the Greek tragic poets the phenomenon was strikingly common.

There are a few ways in which such an earlier, rejected version can be included in the play; ZIELIŃSKI distinguished five groups, with the reservation that some cases can be counted in more than one group. Those five are: (1) contradiction, when the author repeats, usually without being aware of it, some detail of his predecessor’s version which cannot be logically reconciled with his own innovative one; (2) duplication, when alongside the new version, which makes active dramatic sense, the author mentions the old one too; (3) unfulfilled intention, a group with various subgroups, in which the rudimentary motif appears as an intention, which for some reason or another is not carried out, with the new motif replacing it as a significant element of the plot; (4) false information, when the predecessor’s version comes up as a groundless suspicion, an outright lie or something of that sort; and (5) hidden criticism, when the author, while replacing his predecessor’s version with his own, criticises it in the dialogue. Of course those are subtle issues, which require seasoned and careful judgement.

²⁸ The theory was developed fully and in detail in ZIELIŃSKI’s *Tragodumenon libri tres* (n. 13). Its first published draft was the paper *Rudimentarnyje motivy w griecheskoj tragiedii*, *Zapiski Impi-eratorskavo Odiesskavo Obščestva Istorii i Drievnostiej XXX 1912* (a collective work in honour of E.R. VON STERN). A passage in *Die Orestessage und die Rechtfertigungsidee* (1899; cf. its reprinted version in *Iresione* [n. 16], vol. II, p. 104, 1) indicates that the “law of rudimentary motifs” took form in ZIELIŃSKI’s mind much earlier than that. Later, he summarised his theory and illustrated its practical application in a paper given in 1926, in Brussels in French and in Oxford in English: *Pour reconstituer les tragédies perdues de la littérature grecque*, *RBPh VII 1928*; *The Reconstruction of the Lost Greek Tragedies*, in: *Iresione* (n. 16), vol. I.

For example, not every unfulfilled intention replaced with another is a rudimentary motif; it can only be established as such when it turns out that it has definitely no dramatic significance whatsoever. The correctness of that theory has been proven again and again; motifs found to be rudimentary based on analysing a play turn out to have actually been used as active by a predecessor.

In that way we gain insight into a peculiarity of dramatic technique; but it is not only in that and not even primarily in that the importance of ZIELIŃSKI'S theory lies.

We know how little of the legacy of the tragicians has reached us today; scholarship cannot do without attempts at reconstructing the unpreserved ones if we want to reach any closer understanding of the history of the genre. We find material on which to base such reconstructions in fragments, both those which come from later quotations and those we have been for the last half of a century obtaining from Egyptian papyri. Other sources include quoted excerpts from Roman adaptations, testimonies in prose authors, the mythographic tradition, and finally monuments of visual arts, such as vase paintings, sarcophagus reliefs etc. ZIELIŃSKI'S discovery opened before us a new source of material for reconstructing lost works: once we determine a motif in a preserved tragedy to be rudimentary, we can, with great likelihood at least, believe it to have come from an unpreserved tragedy on the same subject by an earlier author. Applying that method and combining its results with other data, ZIELIŃSKI reconstructed, both in the book under discussion and elsewhere, in whole or in part, the basic outlines of the plot of many lost plays, sometimes throwing unexpected light on the ideological content and artistic sense of a work which had been to us a mere title.

ZIELIŃSKI'S achievements in the field of reconstructing lost Greek tragedies are huge. His Russian translation in three volumes of all the preserved plays of Sophocles²⁹ contains in volume three also the translation of all the preserved fragments, not excluding the shortest ones, as well as the reconstruction, in so far as he deemed it possible, of the plot of the lost tragedies. Unfortunately, in accordance with the purpose of the work, which was not meant for specialists, those reconstructions could not be justified fully or precisely, so that in many cases all we have are the pure results of research the scaffolding of which the reader needs to rebuild himself³⁰. ZIELIŃSKI also did the same work for Euripides when he was preparing the posthumous edition of the Russian translation of that poet's plays by I. ANNIENSKY. Only the first two volumes came off the printing press, however; the remaining ones, including the volume of fragments, stayed in Russia in manuscript.

²⁹ Cf. n. 5.

³⁰ Nor did all those results satisfy their author years later, as he said clearly in the preface, written in 1928, to the Polish edition of the monograph on Sophocles (*Sofokles...* [n. 5], p. VI).

Furthermore, reconstructions of lost Greek tragedies make the subject matter of a large number of articles written by ZIELIŃSKI until the years right before the war, and of book three of the *Tragodumena, De Iphigeniae et Danaes mythopoeia tragica*. He was also going to include in a new edition of that book, if there was one, his other papers of related content³¹.

The book on Sophocles, mentioned above more than once, also contains, among other material, the results of reconstruction efforts. Namely, chapter two of each introduction to a play presents the evolution of its myth in its successive literary versions, most of which are lost works which the author tried to reconstruct based on comprehensive and meticulous research. It is thus a treasure trove of extremely interesting and valuable arguments and theories, for the most part compellingly convincing. Even those about which it is impossible to be absolutely sure are attractive in the intelligence of their analysis and combined use of testimonies, and in the vivid boldness of their analytic and constructive thinking.

Naturally, the importance of those “introductions”, which can easily be considered unique, does not end there. Chapter one of each deals with explaining “the idea” of a given tragedy, and with its evolution in the ancient world³²; the reader will find in there a number of fascinating approaches which often throw thoroughly new light on the history of psychological and spiritual life in antiquity. Each chapter three is an analysis of the plot of its play, exposing its inner cogs and wheels which are not always obvious in the reading and which one must discover and think through in order to fully understand and experience the poet’s work. Lastly, each chapter four sums up the results of preceding discussion and evaluates the tragedy in aesthetic terms; some of them also compare and contrast Sophocles’ take on the story with modern ones, or further develop and flesh out concepts first outlined in chapter one or two. In terms of composition those introductions are among the most splendid examples of that art, so characteristic of ZIELIŃSKI as a writer.

The general introduction to that book explains, in its first two chapters and its conclusion, what Greek tragedy is in its truest essence. It also gives an excellent, rich and precise description of the technique, composition and generally the artistic externals of Greek tragedy, particularly that by Sophocles, based on studying not just the preserved works, but also all the preserved fragments of his plays. Then it also contains a number of other new, interesting and thought-inspiring observations and statements; but its most important part is the synthetic approach: some of the most profound words that have ever been spoken of Greek tragedy.

According to those words, Greek tragedy, or heroic tragedy, is “tragedy of life”. Life in ZIELIŃSKI’s terminology was not what we are colloquially used to applying that word to, not the mosaic of petty facts of every day; rather, life is

³¹ See his *De Andromacha posthomerica*, Eos XXXI 1928, p. 33.

³² Cf. above in this section.

the “vertical line” shooting up towards the stars and the sun, as opposed to the “horizontal line”, which imposes a common level and determines what we do, colloquially, call life: the everyday, mundane existence, the world “of manners”, grey in its variety of colour³³. ZIELIŃSKI highlighted and formulated with full force the contrast between actual tragedy and drama of manners; he emphasised and explained the meaning of myth as the proper material for tragedy; myth as “the past which had never been the present”, so it does not carry the burden of the morals of any given time. The tragic poet makes mythical characters embody his premonitions of the higher kind of life, of the spirit of the vertical which burns in him.

Having thus defined Greek tragedy, ZIELIŃSKI cast it against the backdrop of the Great Dionysia, painting the Dionysian atmosphere of which the Athenian tragic spectacle would be born. The commonplace is “Dionysus’ vanquished enemy”. A tragedy of manners would have been unacceptable to people who had just experienced the first, ritual day and the first night of the festival. To them, the commonplace was only possible in comedy. And here ZIELIŃSKI offered his explanation, striking in its profundity and aptness, of the sense of Old Attic comedy as a Great Dionysia introduction to the days of tragedy: the commonplace vanquished by Dionysus was mocked at its very core. The days of tragedy which followed brought the community, freed for the short duration of the festival from the bog of the commonplace, the feeling of unity with the vertical life: a *katharsis* and sublimation of their own sufferings and passions through diffusing them in the monumental sufferings and monumental passions of the great heroic proto-models shown on stage.

In the preface to the Polish edition of the book on Sophocles ZIELIŃSKI ironically remarked that some things contained in it could seem “old-fashioned” to the critics; he meant the “dominant ideas” behind each tragedy, but also terms such as “tragic guilt” and “tragic punishment”. Both there and elsewhere with victorious irony he opposed the snobbishness of “modernity” in its treatment of literary problems; those radical revolutions that last a longer or shorter time to end in a return to the starting point of the loop. But in the same preface he does not mention it in connection with one other thing, which is however essential and would later become for him the subject of bitter quarrels.

That other thing is the strong tendency, strong especially in the interwar period, to treat Greek 5th century tragicians as stage artisans desperate for immediate effect, who did not care about the inner consistency of the plot they built or about psychological homogeneity of characters, because they were mostly inter-

³³ The Russian language here provided ZIELIŃSKI with the expressive term *быт*, which is perfectly appropriate as an opposite for his concept of “life”; Polish does not have a suitable word for it. For that reason translation is difficult here: *быт* needs to be rendered differently in different cases. Translating it into Polish as *byt* (English *existence*), as was done in the book under discussion, warps its sense completely. Actually, the Polish translation of the book leaves much to be desired in general and would have to be thoroughly revised for any new edition.

ested in the short-term effect of a scene; supposedly they counted on the “short memory” of their audience. That new approach found its most glaring expression in the scholar who more or less started it, the son of the great Hellenist, Tycho von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, who died in World War I. The book, *Die dramatische Technik des Sophokles*, appeared after his death. Zieliński opposed the point of view and conclusions of the young iconoclast, for the most part correctly. It should especially be emphasised how correct he was in requiring the researcher to consider the miming, not noted in the preserved manuscripts although it was at times of decisive importance, but possible to discover through a discerning analysis of the text. On the other hand we cannot deny that in some cases he went too far in reconstructing elements not directly visible in a given word or scene, which eliminated actual – or, in his opinion, apparent – inconsistency.

The problem of psychologism remains in organic connection with that issue, or rather is one of its parts. It was characteristic of the 19th century to approach Greek tragedy on the basis of the principle, left unsaid and so apparently self-evident, according to which there was no fundamental difference, in terms of the psychology of characters, between ancient and modern drama. The 20th century saw a sharp reaction to that view: scholars now tried to demonstrate that in order to understand Greek tragedy properly one needed to abandon the psychologistic habits formed in one by modern drama. Thus they also tried to prove that it was a mistake to look for psychological unity in the characters of Greek tragedy, and one should not, or at any rate not always, explain their lines in terms of their internal experience.

Zieliński was, so to speak, psychologically disposed throughout his scholarly outlook. He believed that scientific psychology ought to make a major foundation of research in all of the humanities. In classical philology, psychology had in his opinion been used too little in general, and lack of psychological knowledge was a serious flaw in most of even the best classicists. Μηδεις ἀψυχολόγητος εἰσὶτω, he would say, paraphrasing Plato’s famous words. No wonder then that modern antipsychologism in dealing with Greek tragedy aroused his intense protest. Again it is necessary to say that in most cases that protest was justified. Zieliński hardly claimed that Greek tragedy, specifically Sophoclean, was a form of psychological drama, that is that psychological problems stood at the centre of its concept; but he did with all force maintain and demonstrate that its characters were psychologically constructed, and the poet cared about their homogeneity and consistency based on the logic of their psychological experience. And in general he was profoundly right about that.

Still, the antipsychologist reaction did bring with it certain gains. In trying to free us from the basics imposed on us by modern drama, it revealed to us many specific characteristics of Greek dramaturgy different from what we have been accustomed to since childhood; and it made it possible for us to penetrate deeper into the distinguishing features of the artistic style of Greek theatre.

ZIELIŃSKI tended not to see those gains, even though at times it should have been perfectly possible to reconcile them with his fundamental outlook on the metaphysical sense and importance of tragedy. The Greek tragician was to him first of all a preacher of moral and religious truths; tragedy, as he put it in his book on Sophocles, “a prayer”. Antipsychologicistic observations do not always or necessarily go well with the view opposing his, in which the tragicians were “men of letters” pure and simple; often conversely they speak in favour of what he believed. Nonetheless, ZIELIŃSKI was too deeply involved with 19th-century psychologism to see beyond the unquestionable errors and perversions of that modern reaction to what it had to offer of value.

Sophocles was central to ZIELIŃSKI’S interests and work, but research on Euripides came very close. In this section I have already mentioned his attempt at reconstructing that poet’s lost tragedies undertaken in connection with a translation of his fragments. Alas, that work has to be considered lost; but we do have a number of contributions by ZIELIŃSKI, published both before and after that, dealing with reconstructing Euripides’ individual lost plays³⁴.

Euripides interested him primarily as a personality. ZIELIŃSKI meant to write Euripides’ inner-life biography, relying on a study into his preserved and reconstructed plays as an expression of the story of his spirit; death came too soon and he never did. One can find a sample of what that intended work could be in his article *L’évolution religieuse d’Euripide*, printed in REG XXXVI 1923³⁵. Unlike the authors of traditional approaches (postulating the poet’s scepticism and antitheism until a conversion, or perhaps only a surrender, in the *Bacchae*), ZIELIŃSKI distinguished two periods here. The first would be a period of a general sceptical or antitheistic attitude, when Euripides opposed the religion of his ancestors as a whole, with Apollo and Delphi at the centre of the forces he battled against; that ended in conversion after the Sicilian defeat. In the second period Euripides, already reconciled with Apollo, still had to face the world of Dionysus, contrary to that of Apollo and alien to himself; that happened in the *Bacchae*, his last tragedy, only staged after his death.

To construct the planned biography, it was first necessary to try and establish, in as far as possible, the chronology of Euripides’ works, preserved both whole and in fragments. That purpose was served by book two of the *Tragodumena*, which deals with the evolution of that poet’s iambic trimeter. Here we encounter an illustration of the extraordinary multilateralism of ZIELIŃSKI’S scholarly mind. It might seem that our great synthesiser would not decide to undertake work painstaking in the utmost, would not want to register the resolutions of arses, irrational

³⁴ As for Aeschylus, ZIELIŃSKI reconstructed his unpreserved tragedies too, on various occasions: in the work on rudimentary motifs, the introductions to Sophocles’ plays, and other contributions dealing with the evolution of tragic motifs.

³⁵ Reprinted in *Iresione* (n. 16), vol. II, pp. 239–257.

theses, caesurae etc., line after line, play after play, fragment after fragment; to list them, count them, then calculate percentages... It might, except that we have other research of that sort by him, carried out on material much vaster, so vast as to frighten when it comes to that type of study: on the prose of Cicero's speeches.

As a result of such meticulous metrical analysis, ZIELIŃSKI established four successive periods in Euripides (strict, half-strict, free and very free), and placed the preserved and lost tragedies accordingly, naturally with those plays for which dating is documented serving as beacons. For some undated ones it was possible in this way to determine approximate chronological order; for others, membership in one of the four styles, and so in a period in the poet's career. Of course, those chronological findings are not all of them certain in the mathematical sense, but on the whole they are a lasting and extremely valuable achievement which every scholar investigating the history of tragedy in the second half of the 5th century will have to make use of.

VI

ZIELIŃSKI's first printed work³⁶ dealt with Rome, and with its political history at that. The research into Livy and the Second Punic War which he did in connection with it had its echo in his later work as well. For a long time in his own works, in reviews, and in the Russian commented edition for school use of Livy's book XXI (edited later in Polish by Zdzisław ZMIGRYDER-KONOPKA³⁷), he would return to the subject. Among Ovid's works, he was especially attracted to the *Heroides*, resulting in their full poetic translation into Russian and in articles analysing their "topica and typica"³⁸. On Horace, he wrote some minor contributions and a whole book, containing his ten lectures on that poet given at the Institut Français in Warsaw³⁹. He often worked on Augustan poetry anyway as part of his research into religion, to which I shall return below. But at the central point of his studies into Latin literature, there is Cicero; writings on him are among ZIELIŃSKI's most important ones.

It all started with minor contributions: in 1893 in the journal "Filologiĉeskoje Obozrienije" he published his *Curae Tullianae*⁴⁰; in the same year in "Philologus", a contribution to an interpretation of the main speech against Verres⁴¹; in the

³⁶ See n. 9.

³⁷ *Liwiusz, Najście Hannibala na Italię (Ab Urbe condita ks. XXI)*, Lwów-Warszawa 1930.

³⁸ Words taken from ZIELIŃSKI's lecture on the *Heroides*, given in 1931 at a conference of classical scholars of the Slavic countries in Prague (Acta II Congressus Philologorum Classicorum Slavorum, Pragae 1931).

³⁹ *Horace et la société romaine du temps d'Auguste*, Paris 1938.

⁴⁰ *In M. Tullii Ciceronis orationes a Quinctiana ad Verrinam ultimam quaestiones criticae*.

⁴¹ *Verrina. Chronologisches, Antiquarisches, Juristisches*, Philologus LII 1893, pp. 248-294.

following year, a Russian commented school edition of book V of that speech, later, just as that of Livy, re-edited in Polish by Z. ZMIGRYDER-KONOPKA⁴².

But then came the year 1895, the two thousandth anniversary of Cicero's birth. In reference to that occasion ZIELIŃSKI gave in Petersburg at the Historical Society a lecture on Cicero's significance in the history of European culture⁴³. The lecture later became the basis for one of the best books on the "posthumous careers" of ancient authors and their influence on our culture, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*. In the first edition (Leipzig 1897, IV + 102 pp.), it was still just a lecture, though considerably expanded and annotated; in the second, published 11 years later (Leipzig 1908, VIII + 453 pp.), a book of serious dimensions. In the preface to that second edition the author confessed that preparing it had required of him more years than the first, months⁴⁴.

There will be more below on the element of feeling and intuition, which ZIELIŃSKI believed necessary in the effort to rekindle the past; that element permeates his own works more than any others. He had a clearly emotional attitude to the main characters of his studies, which however did not for a moment blur the strict, objective fairness of his vision, based on irreproachable logical argumentation. So it is with the hero of that particular book. As a foundation for presenting his posthumous fate, the author needed a short outline of his life, a description of his system of practical and theoretical philosophy, and finally a detailed analysis of his personality. Chapters dealing with those issues are imbued with fondness for Cicero, and that fondness makes it possible to intuit his psyche and illuminate it, so to speak, from the inside. We know that Cicero as a personality has been many times subjected by modern scholarship to very sharp, even merciless criticism. No doubt he was neither a hero nor a saint. ZIELIŃSKI did not by any means idealise him; did not turn a blind eye to his weaknesses; but in contrast with dry observation from the outside, devoid of imagination or intuition, he tried to reconstruct his personality from the inside, to feel his feelings and think his thoughts. As a result he created the masterly inner portrait I have already mentioned.

That matter deserves special attention for one more reason: it is typical of ZIELIŃSKI. Nothing was farther from him, nothing more unpleasant to him than the *a priori* unkind, suspicious, inquisitorial tone sometimes used by researchers in relation to the human objects of their study. The noble principle of Roman law, *quivis praesumitur bonus*, was observed by ZIELIŃSKI whenever he dealt with

⁴² *M. Tulliusz Cyncero. W obronie prowincji Sycylii. Mowa przeciw Werresowi (ks. V)*, Lwów–Warszawa 1928.

⁴³ Published in print in 1896 in the monthly "Vestnik Evropy", vol. II, then reprinted in the introduction to a Russian edition of Cicero's speeches (translated in part by ZIELIŃSKI), Sankt Pietierburg 1901.

⁴⁴ There was a third edition in 1912, revised and slightly modified, and a fourth in the interwar period.

people of antiquity. I hasten to add that it was only a transfer into the intellectual realm of a principle he followed in life, where he also as a rule assumed that the people he happened to encounter were *virī boni*. He burnt himself painfully more than once, but that did not change his basic demeanour in the slightest. In research, one more thing followed from it. A master of critical analysis of sources, he was against hypercriticism, or the *a priori* distrust and suspiciousness which characterise many a scholar's attitude to evidence; indeed, there are those for whom *quīvis praesumitur malus* unless, as an exception, *contrarium probabitur*. Sometimes a happy find would disprove the scepticism of the hypercritics, supporting ZIELIŃSKI's position in some dispute of years before. How glad he was then to point that out! Not because he turned out to have been right, but rather because it was a victory of another principle he formulated, paraphrasing a well known line in Epicharmus: νᾶφε καὶ μέμνασο... πιστεύειν.

That approach to historical figures, so characteristic of ZIELIŃSKI, is an expression of that ability to acknowledge greatness which all great souls possess. In the last period of his work he often expressed bitter displeasure which rose in him as he saw around him, and especially in German philology, increasingly glaring examples of hypercritically discrediting great characters and great works of antiquity. Quite correctly he saw in that a sign of a museum-goer's familiarity with monuments and the people speaking through them, of small people excited about the pleasure of finding flaws in greatness with the eyeglass of their specialist knowledge. Thus it was with great joy and appreciation that he welcomed Werner JAEGER's beautiful *Paideia*, in which great characters of antiquity undergo new and in-depth analysis, and their halos, singed by smoking desk lamps of short-sighted "scholars", regain their old lustre. "Go read Werner Jaeger!" ZIELIŃSKI called out in his review of that book⁴⁵. "There you will find a spirit who, himself great, can also see and acclaim greatness where it stands before him".

Let us, however, go back to Cicero. Ancient Christianity, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution were the successive stages according to which ZIELIŃSKI presented his hero's "posthumous history". The Middle Ages received very cursory treatment, which the author justified claiming that they brought nothing distinctly new in connection with Cicero. Even so, later, in the preface to the third edition, he himself termed that leap from antiquity to the Renaissance a serious omission, listing two others besides it: the 19th century, and the significance of Cicero in the study of the state. But not much could be done about that; meanwhile, so many new and absorbing problems had entered ZIELIŃSKI's creative horizon that in the new edition he had to limit himself to minor additions; it would have been all but impossible for him then to return to the old subject for long.

⁴⁵ Die Tatwelt XI 1935, fasc. 4.

Such as it is, with gaps pointed out by the author himself, that book amazes with the breadth and depth of the knowledge contained in it, its enormous erudition, and the mastering of its endless material. But that is not where its greatness lies; what actually distinguishes it from among many related ones is the creativity of thought springing from almost every page. It is not one of those “industrious”, useful works, valuable as treasure troves of information and material, for which we are rightly grateful to their authors and their selfless toil. No, that book by ZIELIŃSKI has to it nothing of a catalogue, nothing of an encyclopaedia; rather, it is a fascinating story from the life of culture, based on deeply thinking through the facts of that life and revealing their sense; a story in which the reader senses the current of greatness from the beginning to the end, even where it deals with seemingly petty things, and in which the reader from beginning to end remains in contact with the author’s uncommon individuality. That individuality can be felt both in the way the author sees facts and in the way they are expressed; the book is not just a work of scholarship, but also an excellent literary piece. It ought to be translated into Polish as soon as possible.

Ciceronian scholarship owes to ZIELIŃSKI more than that one monumental work⁴⁶; a central and groundbreaking role fell to him also in a very different discipline within that scholarship, that is in research into the form of Cicero’s oratorical prose. In that case ZIELIŃSKI expressed that other face of his scholarly mind we have already encountered when noting his work on Euripides’ trimeter⁴⁷: his ability to conduct with iron-willed perseverance the most meticulous and patient analytical and statistical studies in enormous material. Undoubtedly his decision to undertake work so ascetic, which must have required a great sacrifice and effort of will of a mind such as his, was caused by his aspiration, already known to us, to discover and determine laws. In reference to Eduard NORDEN’s search carried out in his book *Die antike Kunstprosa*, ZIELIŃSKI resolved to do a systematic and exhaustive rhythm-oriented study, not of selected fragments of Cicero’s prose, but rather of all his oratorical legacy. And as a result of that long and strenuous labour he created works which mark an era in research into the rhythm of ancient prose.

Those works are, first of all, *Das Clauseigesetz in Ciceros Reden. Grundzüge einer oratorischen Rhythmik* of 1904⁴⁸, and *Der Constructive Rhythmus in Ciceros Reden. Der oratorischen Rhythmik zweiter Teil* of 1913⁴⁹. In the first, as

⁴⁶ I omit here his minor contributions and reviews pertaining to Cicero, which he kept writing after 1895. I shall only mention one, popular in form but containing the results of very interesting inquiry into law and criminal procedure in ancient Rome: an attempt at reconstructing the trial of Cluentius, in whose defence Cicero gave the famous speech (*Proces karny przed dwudziestu wiekami*, an article first published in Russian in 1901, then in Polish in the book *Z życia idei*, vol. II, Warszawa 1939).

⁴⁷ Above, at the end of section V.

⁴⁸ *Philologus Suppl.* IX 1904, fasc. 4.

⁴⁹ *Philologus Suppl.* XIII 1914.

the title itself indicates, the author investigated clausulae of rhetorical periods. Such an investigation was not new in itself; but ZIELIŃSKI gave it an unshakeable foundation by determining the essence of a clausula. Namely, it had to have two parts to it: the base, which was either a cretic ($- \cup -$) or a variation on it, and the cadence, which was trochaic; and only where that bipartition is present, can we speak of a clausula⁵⁰.

Thus the most general clausula form from which all others derive, can be expressed thus: $- \cup - | - \cup, -, \cup$; ZIELIŃSKI called it the “absolute” or “integrative” clausulae. Its five variations are “strict” clausulae; those, through long syllables resolving into short ones in the base and short syllables being replaced by long ones in the cadence, become clausulae which deviate from the norm, either lighter or heavier than the strict ones in their ratio of long to short syllables. Applying those distinctions, ZIELIŃSKI carried out statistical analyses from different angles, in that way obtaining the formulation of a number of laws governing the rhythm of the speeches. The correctness of his method is especially striking when in a number of cases he reaches certain conclusions first through theoretical reasoning to then check them against the text – and find the result as expected.

In the second work mentioned above, such investigation of clausulae was extended to the whole period. ZIELIŃSKI analysed first the parts which were final in their sentences, and then all the other parts. It turns out that the same rhythmical units occurred here too, but the ratio of strict ones to others was different. Having so decomposed all of the text of Cicero’s speeches into rhythmical units, ZIELIŃSKI determined that ratio of strict to free ones, a ratio which turns out always the same whether we consider all his speeches together, or chronologically determined groups of them, or finally each speech as a single whole; and it is Cicero’s “rhythm signature”, an individual characteristic of his. Thus we are given an instrument which can resolve some controversies of the authenticity of writings attributed to Cicero or those whose authenticity is sometimes questioned. In that connection it is also understandable that discovering Cicero’s laws of individual rhythm brings many answers to questions of textual criticism⁵¹.

The peculiarities of the rhythmic flow of an author’s prose are both a result of his conscious efforts and, to an even greater extent, an expression of his individual traits independent of his will. ZIELIŃSKI determined the “rhythm signature” for Cicero; for other writers it is certainly different. The psychologi-

⁵⁰ Actually, ZIELIŃSKI formulated that law as early as three years before the first of those two books came out, in a review of Julius WOLFF’s *De clausulis Ciceronianis* (Deutsche Literaturzeitung XXII 1901, fasc. 51–52).

⁵¹ Dealt with by ZIELIŃSKI in a separate paper: *Textkritik und Rhythmusgesetze in Ciceros Reden* (Philologus XIX 1906, pp. 604–629). His work *Das Ausleben des Clauseigesetzes in der römischen Kunstprosa* (Philologus, Suppl. X 1907, fasc. 4) deals with the later history of clausulae, and their impoverishment and schematisation in the period of decline (including the so-called *Panegyrici* and Cyprian).

cal grounds of those phenomena are extremely interesting. ZIELIŃSKI, as we already know, was very much into psychology; and so he tried to shed light on those issues from that perspective too. Soon after the publication of the book on clausulae he published in “Archiv für die gesamte Psychologie” (VI 1906) the article *Der Rhythmus der römischen Kunstprosa und seine psychologischen Grundlagen*; in 1922, in “Przegląd Humanistyczny” I, *Rytmika prozy pięknej i jej psychologiczne podstawy*, where he also made use of the results contained in his book on constructive rhythm.

VII

Any scholar who, like ZIELIŃSKI, views antiquity first of all from the perspective of the “life of ideas”, whose goal it is, like his, to encompass with his understanding its whole spiritual culture and to highlight in it the basic governing lines which extend into later centuries all the way until today and further, into the future – cannot, of course, in his studies ignore matters such as the history of the morality and religion of the ancient world.

Scattered throughout ZIELIŃSKI’S scholarly and popular-scholarly work there are observations and remarks, smaller and larger pieces of intellectual constructs which were one day to fuse into one great structure: the history of ancient morality. However, such a book remained a plan never carried out; although if fate had allowed him to work in quieter times, without the breaks, obstacles and difficulties forced on him, he might have found the time for it too. In the preface, written in 1939, to the second series of his collection *Z życia idei*, he said of that book, “of which he had stopped dreaming long ago”, that he had only written two chapters of it: *Bóg i dobro (Jak moralność stała się religijną a religia moralną) (God and the Good: Or, How Morality Became Religious and Religion, Moral)* and *Powstanie grzechu w świadomości starożytnej Grecji (The Rise of Sin in the Consciousness of Ancient Greece)*. He included the former in the first (cf. n. 4), and the latter in the second series of that collection⁵². They both deal with the first preserved testimony on the evolution of the moral consciousness of the Greeks, the Homeric poems. The second revolves mostly around an analysis of the concept of ἄτη, pointing research on it in the right direction.

As can be seen from the titles, if nothing else, both works could equally well count as religious studies. We would in general be well justified in saying that problems of religion were extremely important in ZIELIŃSKI’S thinking about the

⁵² He wrote both while still in Petersburg, in 1917. The Russian version of the article on the rise of sin (*Russkaja Mysl’* VII–VIII 1917) does not have the scholarly notes of the Polish. Then there is *Rozwój moralności w świecie starożytnym od Homera do czasów Chrystusa (The Evolution of Morality in the Ancient World from Homer to the Times of Christ)*, a brief outline, a lecture given at a public meeting of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences on 11 June 1927 (Kraków 1927).

ancient world almost from the beginning of his academic career. Research in literature, and especially in tragedy, most often led him to inquire into an author's religious attitude, and his mythological investigations were usually done from a perspective which sees religious ideas embodied in the myths. And it was exactly from the angle of religious ideas and religious feelings that ZIELIŃSKI approached the problems of religion; as everywhere else, so also here the "life of ideas" and the mentality of the ancients were his main axes of focus.

In that respect he was very different from most "specialists" in religious studies; while of course he did not spurn antiquarian and archaeological material from which to reconstruct ancient cults, but rather drew on it unreservedly where he needed it, in the first place he was interested in the human mind, and in particular the minds of eminent individualities, of poets and thinkers. To use L.R. FARNELL's expression, ZIELIŃSKI was interested in "the higher aspects of Greek religion", and in its influence on the life and culture of the society. No scholar so far has brought out the role of Delphi in the history of Greek culture as clearly as he did. The matter still awaits comprehensive analysis; ZIELIŃSKI once wanted to write it, but that work too, just like the *History of Ancient Morality*, remained an unfulfilled dream⁵³.

The religious studies of the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of 20th are not overly interested in such matters, dominated as they are by the ethnological viewpoint. ZIELIŃSKI, while he did not deny the ethnological school its achievements, was far from it in all of his outlook, and even clearly inimical to it in its exaggerations. Analysing the religious phenomena of those ancient peoples which had a highly developed culture on the same level on which the religious lives of the primitive peoples are investigated provoked his criticism, violent at times, and his incisive irony. If in some cases such analogies might even be justified, might indicate the origins of the investigated phenomena latent in prehistory, what of it? They have no connection to how those phenomena were felt and understood by the people whose religious lives are to be studied, and so explain nothing.

The minds of those whose culture we honour and admire in so many of its expressions ought not to be compared to the minds of New Guinea savages, but to our own. In the Introduction to *Religia starożytnej Grecji (The Religion of Ancient Greece)*, book one of his *Religie świata antycznego*⁵⁴, ZIELIŃSKI wrote: "We shall travel to the Athens of the 4th and 3rd centuries before Christ, and try to answer the question of what our faith would be if we lived in those times with our soul and its needs". Those words summarise his attitude to the problems of ancient religion: they are to us as near as any other problems of that culture, ancestral to our own. Abstracting religion from the worth of classical

⁵³ Cf. Die Tatwelt XI 1935, fasc. 4, p. 210.

⁵⁴ 2nd edn., p. 11.

culture as a whole, or belittling it flagrantly out of proportion to other, highly esteemed aspects of that culture – result in an absurdity: in deciding that religion is “a faculty separate from other mental faculties and not related to them in any way, a kind of mental sport of the same sort as, for instance, the ability to play cards”⁵⁵. Therefore our approach to the religions of the ancient world must not, in ZIELIŃSKI’S opinion, fundamentally differ from our approach to other aspects of that world’s spiritual and mental culture: and “just as a person deprived of artistic sense cannot understand Greek art, so one without religious sense will not understand Greek religion”⁵⁶.

The above argument has two consequences: first, our culture is organically related to that of the ancient world also in its religious aspect; second, when it comes to significant study of that ancient culture, “intuiting” must necessarily complement strictly scholarly research. Below I shall return to each of them.

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To present ZIELIŃSKI’S achievements in the field of learning about, interpreting, understanding and feeling the religion of the people of antiquity, and omit nothing is a task far too daunting for a publication such as this one. Almost every page of his writings on that subject is eminently creative; even where it does not contain newly obtained facts of scholarship, we always find new ways of looking at and grouping facts which give us access to the living, beating heart of the ancient faith. Often enough it is not even possible to summarise them. After all the futile effort to do so, one simply feels like saying “Read Zieliński!” Here I shall just point out his most important specific research achievements in that field.

When still a young man, he made a discovery of enormous importance, which it would however be futile to look for in those general books on the history of Greek religion that register the findings of many scholars. It is a reconstruction based on interpreting and combining the scattered remains of old beliefs, worn down in later evolutionary stages of that religion; a reconstruction which could only be performed by a person of extraordinary intuition, imagination and keen eyes able to see the parts of a once living whole in the dead fragments strewn all over the place; reconstruction which is deeply convincing, although, out of its very nature, impossible to prove so irrefutably as to persuade even the famuli of Goethe’s *Faust*, who as a rule “see nothing but a black poodle”.

ZIELIŃSKI reconstructed the fundamental myth of the “religion of Zeus”, the earliest stage of the religious thinking of the Greeks accessible to us, a stage they must have brought with them from their Proto-Indo-European home, since

⁵⁵ T. ZIELIŃSKI, *Nauka i sentyment wobec hellenizmu i judaizmu*, Przegląd Współczesny VII 1928, fasc. 71, p. 359.

⁵⁶ T. ZIELIŃSKI, *Religia starożytnej Grecji*, 2nd edn., p. 12. Later, ZIELIŃSKI would place that sentence among the six “axioms” opening the six volumes of his work.

it overlaps with the basic myth of the Old Germanic religion. Except that there, because of the much slower cultural development, that stage is simultaneously the final one, followed by Christianity, whereas the Greek religion underwent a long evolution and its original concept changed greatly during its lifetime.

According to that original concept, Zeus, the conqueror of the dark forces of the Earth and the Titans, the founder of luminous realm of the Olympians, is threatened with doom. After the great summer of the world, a great winter must come; one day in the far future it will give way to another summer, but for now the world lives in terror of the end, of a "twilight of the gods". At that early stage the Gigantomachy lies not in the past, but rather in the terrible future. According to an ancient oracle, Zeus must look for salvation not to the gods, but to a man born of divine seed; and to that purpose he descends to a mortal woman to have a son with her. But the hostile chthonic forces are not asleep: through their perfidious plot, the future saviour dies with his task unfulfilled; and to make matters worse, his death is the doing of the divine maiden who has loved him more than anything in the world and left Mount Olympus to be his companion in his earthly toil and in the mission he was destined to carry out. That Hellenic Sigurd is known under various names in the several Greek tribes; his features can be best discerned in the Doric Heracles, but other tribal heroes, such as Achilles, Jason and Meleager, are also originally slain saviours of the Olympic world.

The myth had to be laboriously reconstructed from fragments, because, as I have mentioned above, Greek religion did not stop at that stage. The nightmare of the looming end was dispelled by the religion of Apollo, in which Zeus is eternal, the Olympic order will never fail and the saviour has already come; that saviour is indeed a son of Zeus, though not of a mortal woman; he is Apollo, who has defeated the forces of the Earth embodied by the dragon Pytho and at the spot of his victory founded his oracular capital of *Pytho*, or Delphi, whence he announces to the mortals the will of his father Zeus. Thus Gigantomachy had to recede into the past, where it has since then been a double of the Titanomachy; and a reconciliation between Zeus and the Earth replaces their former strife.

That, in the roughest outline, is what I have termed ZIELIŃSKI's discovery. And it is a discovery in the full sense of the word, since it explains crucial aspects of the history of Greek religious thought, introducing sense and order into a great many complex issues, including among them some questions related to Dionysus, a saviour of the Olympian world parallel to Apollo⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ The concept was developed by ZIELIŃSKI, complete with all the methodological apparatus, mostly in the following two publications: *Exkurse zu den Trachinierinnen* (Philologus IX 1896) and *Die Orestessage und die Rechtfertigungsidee* (Neue Jahrb. II 1899). Both were reprinted in *Iresione*, the first in volume I, the other in volume II. Besides, he dealt with the subject in a number of works more popular in character, such as *Idėja bogočelowieka w griečeskoj i germanskoj sagie* (Vestnik Evropy VII 1910), *Idea usprawiedliwienia moralnego, jej geneza i rozwój* (Z życia idei [n. 46]), *Piękna Helena* (Zamość 1920, also published in Italian in *Iresione*, vol. II) and *La Sibylle* (Paris 1924).

It should be however noted, that in his later works on religion ZIELIŃSKI never took sufficient advantage of that discovery. Volume one of the series *Religie świata antycznego*, already mentioned in this article many times, offered a view of the cross-section of the religious life and religious consciousness of the Greeks in the 4th century BC, so it gave no occasion to write more of the concept, at that time long outdated; in volume three, *Hellenizm a judaizm*, ZIELIŃSKI only touched on it where he needed it in connection with the problem of Graeco-Roman Messianism.

Now that matter, organically tied to that of the saviour hero anyway, is also one of the greatest achievements of ZIELIŃSKI's research into ancient religions. Its individual components are too well known and documented not to have long attracted the attention of scholars; but approaching them synthetically, combining them into a single consistent whole, clarifying a number of obscurities and logically connecting the scattered links are all undeniably ZIELIŃSKI's work. Many times, on many occasions and in connection with many things did he return to the last few decades of the Roman Republic, the time when people expected some disaster, the end of Rome or the end of the world – but also lived in the hope of the coming of a saviour who would begin the new cycle of time foretold by the Sibyl.

In the end the Graeco-Roman world pinned those messianic hopes on the person of emperor Augustus, who put an end to the bloody civil war, which could have ended in Rome's ruin, at the same time putting an end to the republic. But during the reign of Augustus an event took place which did begin a new cycle of time: the birth of Christ. ZIELIŃSKI demonstrated clearly and convincingly that it was that Graeco-Roman, universalistic Messianism, rather than the nationalistic Judaic one, which paved the way for Christianity.

ZIELIŃSKI wrote on the matter, either in whole or in part, in a large number of his writings⁵⁸; in spite of its conciseness, its most complete treatment can be found in volume four of *Religie świata antycznego*, *Religia Rzeczypospolitej Rzymskiej* (*The Religion of the Roman Republic*), in chapters IX and X.

ZIELIŃSKI started working on the religion of Rome very early. As early as 1903 he published a paper addressed to a wider public⁵⁹, in which he used the new, and the first truly scholarly work on Roman religion by Georg WISSOWA, to offer a profound analysis, both historical and philosophical, of its essence, trying to

⁵⁸ Among others in *La Sibylle et la fin de Rome* (Musée Belge XXVII 1923); *Dies irae*, Warszawa 1929; *L'istoriosofia greca paragonata a quella degli Ebrei* (La Pologne au VI Congrès International des Sciences Historiques à Oslo 1928, Varsovie 1930 = *Iresione*, vol. II); *Świat antyczny*, vol. IV: *Cesarstwo Rzymskie*, chapter II.

⁵⁹ *Rom und seine Gottheit* (Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung 27–39, München), reprinted in *Iresione*, vol. II.

demonstrate how the line of its evolution found its logical conclusion in Roman Christianity.

It is already there, then, that we find the idea to the realisation of which ZIELIŃSKI devoted most of his effort in the last period of his life. But there is more to that article and its Russian counterpart⁶⁰: for the first time in history, they determined the specific characteristics of the native Roman understanding of the divine. In contrast to the Hellenic transcendental substantiality, a Roman deity is immanent and actual: it manifests only in the phenomenon and only while it lasts, only in the specific, one-time act⁶¹. Thus the possibility for an unlimited proliferation of deities and discovering ever new ones; thus the always fluid processes of concepts of deities both differentiating and integrating. The Hellenisation of Roman religion brought with it an altogether different approach to those matters; but the old substrate of popular religion continued both in the feelings of the masses and in the official lore of the pontifices.

ZIELIŃSKI'S research and thought put into Greek and Roman religion, dating to such an early time, eventually found their crown in the work he sometimes called "the work of his life": the *Religie świata antycznego*.

He was perfectly aware that a full, exhaustive history of the religion of classical Greece, the Hellenistic times and the Graeco-Roman world, one encompassing all possible relevant aspects, lay in the future. He called his multi-volume work a mere "presentiment of the royal structure"⁶² that future history would be. That work owes its beginning to chance; in 1918 a Russian publishing house asked ZIELIŃSKI to write an outline of the religion of ancient Greece for a series of short outlines in religious studies entitled "The World's Religions"; that was the origin of volume one of the later six-volume book. In the preface to the second edition of its Polish translation (Warszawa 1937), the author himself said that while writing it, he "did not expect that it would be extended into a series encompassing all of antiquity". In accordance with the publisher's requirements, the book was short, so it could not possibly embrace all the evolutionary stages of Greek religion. Therefore, as I have said above, the author presented in it a cross-section of the religion of the Greeks of the 4th century BC. Later (in 1922), and likewise still in Russia, came out as its supplement *Religia hellenizmu* (*The Religion of the Hellenistic World*). It was not much longer and offered another cross-section, this one through the 1st century BC.

⁶⁰ *Rim i evo religija* (Vestnik Evropy 1903), published in Polish translation as *Rzym i jego religia*, Zamość 1920.

⁶¹ That matter was later presented by ZIELIŃSKI at its most complete and vivid in chapter III (*Święty czas; Sacred time*) of vol. IV of his series on history of religion. Kurt LATTE (already mentioned above in section III of this article) attributed ZIELIŃSKI'S observation to himself, failing to mention him altogether, in *Über eine Eigentümlichkeit der italischen Gottesvorstellung* (ARW XXIV 1926, pp. 244–258).

⁶² *Erudition und Gefühl*, in: *Iresione*, vol. II, p. 476.

Both those books have been translated into Polish⁶³. But while ZIELIŃSKI was writing the second, he conceived the idea of a whole series⁶⁴; for that reason volume two, while it has chapters on oriental religions and the interaction between Greek religion and them, it does not have one on Judaism. The encounter between the Greek world and the religion of Israel could not be omitted; but it needed to be dealt with much more amply than it was even possible with Isis or the Great Mother. The problem of that encounter, of partially and temporarily giving in to, and ultimately rejecting, the influence of Judaism was so important from the perspective of the religious history of antiquity that ZIELIŃSKI decided to devote a whole volume to it, the first to be written in Polish from the start. And that new volume grew to a size incomparably larger than that of the first two; even the main body of the text was much longer, and in addition to that, as I have already said above (in section II), it gained the rather detailed notes, in which the author justified his claims by referring to sources and argued against their different interpretations. *Religia starożytnej Grecji* is fewer than 200 pages long; *Religia Hellenizmu*, 250; but *Hellenizm a judaizm* had to be divided into two parts of 300 pages each⁶⁵. And so it would be from then on; each successive volume would have notes and, in view of its size, come in two parts. The one that came off the press before the author's death, *Religia Rzeczypospolitej Rzymskiej*, is even longer than volume three, since in its two parts taken together it extends to over 800 pages⁶⁶. In both volume three and four the cross-section is, as in *Religia Hellenizmu*, through the 1st century BC. The final two volumes, *Religia Cesarstwa Rzymskiego (The Religion of the Roman Empire)* and *Chrześcijaństwo antyczne (Ancient Christianity)*, still remain, as the reader already knows, in manuscript. [As mentioned before, they were published in 1999.]

Beginning with volume one, the author consistently follows in that work the notion I have already referred to, that is he tries to demonstrate the continuity between the religion of the Graeco-Roman world and that which, with time, took its place in the consciousness of the people of classical culture: Christianity. He tries to prove that in its fully developed form, Christianity has deeper and more essential ties to ancient Greek and Roman religious feeling and thinking than to Judaism; that the classical world was psychologically better prepared to accept it than Israel, which was actually reflected in events as the former accepted it and the latter, excluding a tiny group of converts, rejected it. And he expresses that through the lapidary thesis that the classical religion is the proper Old Testament of Christianity.

⁶³ The 1st edn. of *Religia starożytnej Grecji* appeared in 1921; of *Religia Hellenizmu*, in 1925.

⁶⁴ That plan can already be found in its totality in the introduction to the Polish edition.

⁶⁵ Both parts were published in 1927.

⁶⁶ Part I came out in 1933; part II, in 1934.

That thesis, at any rate in its concise, lapidary form, without commentary or discussion, runs counter to the teaching of Christian churches, and so it met very bitter opposition; opposition so absolute and unyielding as to be deaf to all arguments or explanations of its meaning. In vain did ZIELIŃSKI many times try to explain that he had not meant that Christianity originated in classical religion, only that there was between them a “psychological continuity”, which allowed its followers to feel and understand what Christianity was. In vain did he, with great persuasiveness and expressiveness highlight the high emotional and philosophical values of classical religion; and at the same time with profound, sincere emotion he emphasised that he was religious and a Christian to whom, as another fundamental thesis ran, listed at the beginning of each volume as one of the “axioms”, Christianity was “the pinnacle of the religious aspirations of humanity”. Nothing helped: ZIELIŃSKI was an anti-religious author, and the Hellenes, as before, “idol-worshippers”.

Volume three of the book, *Hellenizm a judaizm (The Hellenistic Religion and Judaism)* caused the most uproar. This time ZIELIŃSKI was criticised by both Christians and Jews, who felt offended with him estimating the Hellenistic religion more highly than Judaism. The attacks were passionate, rabid, often stooping to invective and crossing the lines of eristical decency; the author was accused of “loose scholarship”, and even of intentionally misrepresenting some facts. In some cases they were caused not just by the attackers’ rabidity, but also by their inadequate grounding in classical philology; when they could not on their own reconstruct the premises on which ZIELIŃSKI’s claims were based, expressed as they were in a text without strict methodological apparatus, they opposed to them as axioms the trite opinions he had corrected⁶⁷. Experts at Hebrew and Jewish studies scolded the author for certain minor errors in the interpretation of the relevant sources. Perhaps they were right; but even then, none of those errors could have significantly affected the overall state of affairs. And a third group attacked him as well, the so-called “freethinkers”, who accused him of an “unscientific” attitude to problems, that is, of approaching them from the standing point of a person who considers religious values real and lets his religious sense have a say in his reasoning. Here it was not possible to reach common ground either for, as we already know, for ZIELIŃSKI the religious sense is, quite the other way round, an indispensable element, which the scholar of religion can only do without in minor contributions providing the material for future synthetic analyses; once in uncharted territory, where the point is not merely to collect facts, but also to properly interpret them, he will be like a blind man discussing colours.

Debate, if it had been more objective, less heated, and, yes, less emotional – and here, emotions are rather detrimental – might have had certain posi-

⁶⁷ For a characteristic example, see S. SREBRNY, *Ζέβος – ιδιώτης*, *Kwartalnik Klasyczny* IV 1930, pp. 490–493.

tive results, Without, as I suppose, introducing any fundamental changes into ZIELIŃSKI's theories, for the most part excellently grounded, it might have restored optimal balance between the assessment of Hellenic values on the one hand, and oriental ones on the other. It cannot be denied that ZIELIŃSKI's profound love for the Graeco-Roman culture, rooted in some kind of intimate spiritual kinship, caused him at times to idealise that culture, and in turn to harbour a dislike for the East, which does sometimes show through his sober scholarly argumentation. The trends of modern scholarship, including modern classics, to emphasise the value of Eastern cultures were strongly unpleasant to him, arousing in him an emotional protest. Perhaps in a number of cases he was wrong, denying or belittling Eastern influence; perhaps at times he underestimated the creative potential of the Orient.

And yet there can be no doubt that he was often very much correct in his opposition against overestimating Eastern influence. That is the case with the problems of ancient Messianism; and so it is with the so-called "Hermeticism". Against REITZENSTEIN, who derived those mystical teachings of late antiquity from Egypt, ZIELIŃSKI in his magnificent article *Hermes und die Hermetik* (ARW VIII 1905 = *Iresione*, vol. II)⁶⁸ demonstrated that their origins were purely Greek and lay with the primitive popular religion of Hermes in Arcadia. The then editor of "Archiv für Religionswissenschaft" and excellent scholar of religion, Albrecht DIETERICH, supplied that article with a comment in which he indicated his disagreement; however, later times granted the victory to ZIELIŃSKI's view⁶⁹.

Let me however go back for a while yet to the battles fought against ZIELIŃSKI's theories in history of religion. Those battles go on and no doubt will. For him, as for Goethe in his *Faust*, "the religious sense is the core of religion"⁷⁰; all else is a "parable" in the same sense in which Goethe uses the word for "all that is transient". The eternal truth of matters divine is in its deepest essence unknowable; reflected in the transient human awareness, it can only be a parable, "a symbolic expression of the ineffable"⁷¹. Dogma can approximate, but can never completely overlap with that truth which is on the other side. The thing which leads humanity

⁶⁸ Published in popular form as *Hermes Trismegistos*, Zamość 1920. The last scholarly article printed before his death, written in connection with his work on volume five of *Religie świata antycznego*, also dealt with Hermeticism; it was *La Cosmogonie de Strasbourg* (Scientia LXX 1941, pp. 63–69, 113–121).

⁶⁹ In 1915, J. KROLL published his ample work *Die Lehren des Hermes Trismegistos*, the conclusions of which are exactly the same as ZIELIŃSKI's in *Hermes und die Hermetik*. However, KROLL completely fails to mention his predecessor in solving the main problem, even though he knows the article well, quoting it for minor problems of textual criticism. Another illustration of the matter already brought up here several times!

⁷⁰ *Religia starożytnej Grecji*, 2nd edn., p. 193.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

towards the heights, gradually approaching the truth but never identical to it, is, to ZIELIŃSKI, inner revelation.

Needless to say, whoever believes that dogma is not a “parable”, but rather truth written down in its exact form, a formula expressing the world faithfully and wholly, will never find a common ground with ZIELIŃSKI on issues of the study of religion.

VIII

In 1928, ZIELIŃSKI published in “Eos” the treatise *De Andromacha posthomeric*⁷². As the title indicates, the treatise deals with a specialised problem, one of the many problems of the evolution of tragic motifs which the great scholar worked on, and it cannot be discussed in detail in this brief sketch; but in its conclusions the reader will find reflections of most general and fundamental nature, added by the author, as he admitted himself, “occasione data, vel adeo arrepta”.

It is in a sense ZIELIŃSKI’s testament, passed on to younger classicists. He believed that misunderstanding and rejecting the brilliant work of NIETZSCHE’S young years, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, by WILAMOWITZ, then a beginner, but later an outstanding classical philologist in the last quarter of the 19th century and the first 30 years of the 20th, had disastrous influence on our later scholarship. In place of the old “debate over the *Eumenides*”, the debate between formalists and realists, ended definitively for the most part by WILAMOWITZ himself, who magnificently combined both those trends in his personality, there came a new, much more profound debate: to put it in the briefest manner possible, one between historical and philosophical philology⁷³. It was finding a way to end that debate that ZIELIŃSKI considered the most important problem for future classics, and he called on the youth to struggle towards it.

In those general reflections he also talked, among other things, about what he considered the theoretical foundations of the academic work of his whole life. There are two of those. I have already brought one up: it is the demand that the principles of psychology be introduced into philological research. The other is to aim at clarifying as strictly as possible how far the researcher can go in the discipline known as classical philology by means of the demonstrative force of argument (*demonstratoria argumenti vis*), and so in practice, to verify in each case as conscientiously as possible what can be proven, that is established as certain, what can only be considered likely, and what, as merely possible.

⁷² Cf. n. 31.

⁷³ ZIELIŃSKI developed that thought also in other writings, especially in his later posthumous reminiscences of WILAMOWITZ: in *Revue de l’Université de Bruxelles* XXXVII 1932, fasc. 2, and in *Wiedza i Życie* 1932, fasc. 4–5.

Indeed, the art of proof is among the strongest points of ZIELIŃSKI's works. Naturally it is mostly present where strictly scholarly form allows the author to precisely argue his case based on an analysis of the sources (cf. above in section II). Even among the greatest classical philologists, few have mastered that art in the same degree as he had. ZIELIŃSKI was quite right in pointing out that WILAMOWITZ for instance, whom he actually considered an excellent scholar, did not possess that skill.

When I say “the art of proof”, it has nothing to do with rhetorical or oratorical talent, which ZIELIŃSKI also had in a high degree. Rather, I mean the logic itself, independent of the form in which it is expressed, so that the readers or audience are indeed convinced, and if originally they had a different opinion on the matter, that they change their mind under the irresistible force of a logical proof. That they subject themselves to the extra-personal, supra-individual Logos, independent of the will, objectives, interests and feelings of the disputers, the Logos which is always the highest instance in Plato's dialogues: “It is not so because I want it so, but because Logos wants it so”, says Plato's Socrates. In that attitude ZIELIŃSKI saw one of the highest values handed down to us by the culture of antiquity, and not just an intellectual, but also a moral value. He wrote⁷⁴:

Logos faces us with serious and sometimes harsh challenges. *You must acknowledge the claim most unpleasant to yourself if it has been proven; you must forego your dearest belief if it has been disproved.* Such is the code of the thinker. If you do not follow it, you will be a sheep in a herd; a master's slave; not a free citizen of the republic of the mind.

That “code of the thinker” is part of the “tablet of Pallas”, one of the seven tablets of commandments which ZIELIŃSKI carried out of the depths of the spirit of ancient Greece to preach them to the people of his times and of the future. There is among his writings one quite unlike the others in form, a kind of a philosophical prose poem or a sage's solemn manifesto, published as early as 1905 and entitled *Vince, Sol!*⁷⁵ There, in seven tablets of commandments – of Zeus, Pallas, Heracles, Demeter, Apollo, Aphrodite and Dionysus – with the fire and solemnity of a prophet he preached truths wrested from the very heart of ancient Greece, which were to forge the soul of the contemporary person into a noble vessel of a new Renaissance, a spirit of magnificent freedom of mind, a fully harmonious personality. It would be futile to look for a more significant, more profound approach to the deepest essence of Greek religious concepts and feelings, or to the understanding of humanity based on them. ZIELIŃSKI extracted the deepest symbolic sense from the cultural facts and myths relating to the several

⁷⁴ *Świat antyczny a my*, Zamość 1922, p. 111.

⁷⁵ In volume II of the 2nd edn. of the Russian version of the collection *Z życia idei*. The work has not been translated yet into Polish or into any other language.

deities, reaching their most meaningful core, which was to serve as the foundation for a world-view and a creative attitude to life.

In order to reach such insight and understanding, it is not enough to be an expert classicist. One needs “intuition” (cf. above in section VII), one needs to get in touch with the deep-running current of the forces which shaped classical culture and made it possess such indestructible creative values so indispensable to our intellectual and spiritual development. The untiring investigator of microscopic details, the master of logical proof, the worshipper of the “tablet of Pallas” was also the advocate of the need to intuit the ancient world – if one wants to obtain meaningful knowledge of it, such knowledge as can become a creative force, shape the personality and sculpt the face of a new culture.

ZIELIŃSKI himself had that ability to intuit in an extraordinary extent. More than that, one would like to say he was as though organically predestined to be a living conductor for creative currents flowing from the ancient world; he had a natural contact with it, or, in Pindar’s words, knew much about it “by nature” – and perhaps that is why there was so often conflict between him and the “learned ones”, who “like ravens, in vain raise their voices at the divine bird of Zeus”.

The New Renaissance, for which the seven tablets of the culture of ancient Greece were to prepare the human soul, was, in ZIELIŃSKI’S thought and ardent dream, a Slavic one. He believed that the people of Europe had already been through three great renaissances of classical culture: the Carolingian, the Great (with which the word has a special connection) and the Neo-Humanistic. Creative role in them had been played primarily by the nations of Western Europe: the Great Renaissance was primarily the achievement of nations speaking Romance languages, and the Neo-Humanistic, primarily Anglo-Saxon and Germanic. The Slavic peoples had never before played a leading cultural role in Europe, and so their part in the renaissances was relatively modest too. The suns of those renaissances were in them rather reflected lights; even the Polish Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries was, despite its glories, a mere reflection of the Renaissance of the West. ZIELIŃSKI expected and believed that the Slavic nations would have their chance to pay the cultural debt incurred with their elder brethren and that in the Renaissance to come the creative role would fall to the Slavs⁷⁶.

The work of ZIELIŃSKI’S whole life always looked, as I have already emphasised many times, to the life of ideas, to the connections of our culture to antiquity, and to the immortal creative values of classical culture manifest in the past and priceless as a seed for the future. And all that gigantic effort of thought,

⁷⁶ The idea of a Slavic Renaissance returns very often in ZIELIŃSKI’S writings, and I do not doubt everybody has encountered it many times; it would be both difficult and unnecessary to list all works in which it is present. I will just mention one, in which the matter is presented in some breadth, and which is probably little known; it is the article *L’influence de la civilisation antique en Europe* (Revue Internationale des Études Balkaniques II 1935, pp. 22–40).

feeling and will took place under the banner of making straight paths for the fourth Renaissance to come.

That was the goal – the distant, sublime goal shining among the stars; there were no others. We were witnesses to a life built under the sign of “the tablet of Heracles”. A life built into something great and impressive: work for the sake of work, toil for the sake of toil; for the pure joy springing from creative labour. That toil was indeed crowned with magnificent spires of world-view and faith, but that reward was not consciously bought with the toil as if with coin; that toil also rained life-sustaining dew on others and on the surrounding life, but that was not a preconceived objective of the toil. The minor rewards and joys that life brings would always come too late, when they were no longer wanted; it was not towards them that his great, deepest love of life ran, that love which only real artists have. And, apparently to follow the resemblance all the way to the end, that creative life ended in a tragic disaster, as did that of the son of Zeus and Alcmene.