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*The Point of View.*

**Tadeusz Zieliński on Ancient Religions**

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**Tadeusz Zieliński on Ancient Religions\***

Tadeusz Zieliński was one of the most distinguished European humanists, who had an active influence on the humanities in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the following century. His role in the development of the research on ancient culture and literature is inestimable. His studies on Homer and Cicero have long been considered to be classic achievements of classical philology. Despite that, the figure and the achievements of Tadeusz Zieliński have been relegated to back shelves or simply forgotten. This refers mainly to his studies on the ancient religion, which are among the most original, and at the same time the most controversial achievements of his research. The aim of this essay is to depict his religious studies as part of his achievement, to present its shortened analysis and to present it in comparison to the paradigms of research on the ancient religion of those times. It is my firm belief that those works were unjustly sent to the archives of ideas. Zieliński's vision of the ancient religion does not exist to a satisfying extent in the common knowledge of the European scholars researching the culture and religion of the ancient world. It is due to the language in which Zieliński was publishing his works, that is Polish.

Religious studies of Tadeusz Zieliński are not very popular among the historians of idea and historiography. Authors of biographical texts referring to this great humanist express a kind of embarrassment, and merely mention this

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part of his achievement.<sup>1</sup> In scholarly studies, Zieliński's picture of the Greek religion was synthesised in an unpublished PhD dissertation.<sup>2</sup> My study of Zieliński's vision of the Roman religion is currently in preparation.<sup>3</sup> Apart from that, only a few articles were published.<sup>4</sup> Taking into account growing interest of historians of the ancient world and classical philologists in the history of their own field<sup>5</sup>, it is a pressing research postulate to investigate all Zieliński's thoughts on the ancient religion. This outline does not aspire to fulfil this aim;

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. S. Srebrny, *Tadeusz Zieliński*, "Eos" 42, 1947, pp. 52-61; J. Niemirska-Pliszczyńska, *Wielki filhellen*, "Roczniki Humanistyczne" 9, 1960, pp. 78-79; M. Plezia, *Tadeusz Stefan Zieliński*, [in:] *Antichisti dell'Universita di Varsavia nel Novecento*, a cura di I. Bieżyńska-Małowist, Napoli 1992, pp. 47-48.

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Nieczyporowski, *Religia starożytnej Grecji w koncepcji Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, Gdańsk 1998 (unpublished PhD thesis in the collection of the Library of the University of Gdańsk).

<sup>3</sup> A. Gillmeister, *Między historiografią a historiozofią. Tadeusza Zielińskiego wizja religii rzymskiej*, forthcoming.

<sup>4</sup> A. Sowińska, *The Origins of Hermes Trismegistos and his Philosophy. The Theory of Tadeusz Zieliński*, "Scripta Classica" 7, 2010, pp. 85-89; W. Gajewski, *Obecny stan badań nad organizacją wczesnego Kościoła w świetle pracy „Chrześcijaństwo antyczne” Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, "Przegląd Religioznawczy" 3, 2002, pp. 39-50; H. Hoffmann, *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) and his interpretation of the Dionysian motifs in the Greek tragedy*, "Nomos" 41/42, 2003, pp. 85-95; *idem*, *Badania nad religiami starożytnymi Tadeusza Zielińskiego i Ryszarda Gansińca*, "Biuletyn Instytutu Filozoficzno-Historycznego WSP w Częstochowie" 9, 2002, pp. 185-190; A. Gillmeister, *Kontrowersje wokół książki „Hellenizm a judaizm” Tadeusza Zielińskiego. Polemiki chrześcijańskie*, "Scripta Biblica et Orientalia" 3, 2011, pp. 275-288; *idem*, *Kult cesarski w polskich badaniach historycznych*, [in:] L. Mrozewicz, K. Balbuza (eds.), *Świat starożytny, jego polscy badacze i kult panującego* Poznań 2011, pp. 193-204. In the current study I use the already published results of my research on Tadeusz Zieliński as the historian of religion.

<sup>5</sup> See, *inter alia*, *Franz Cumont et la science de son temps*, "Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée", 111.2, 1999; C. Bonnet, *L'Histoire séculière et profane des religions' (F. Cumont): Observations sur l'articulation entre rites et croyance dans l'historiographie des religions de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> et de la première moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, [in:] *Rites et croyances dans les religions du monde romain. Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*. Tome LIII. Vandoeuvers-Genève 2006, pp. 1-37; *Les religions orientales dans le monde grec et romain cent ans après Cumont (1906-2006). Bilan historique et historiographique*, C. Bonnet, V. Pirenne-Delforge, D. Praet (eds.), Brussels-Rome 2009; monographic issue of "Archiv für Religionsgeschichte" 5, 2003 devoted to Georg Wissowa; Ch. Stray (ed.), *Classics in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Cambridge. Curriculum, Culture and Community*, "The Cambridge Philological Society, Supplementary Volume" 24, 1999; W.M. Calder III (ed.) *The Cambridge Ritualists Reconsidered*, Atlanta 1991; R. Ackerman, *The Myth and Ritual School. J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists*, New York-London 2002. V. S. Severino, *La religione di questo mondo di Raffaele Pettazzoni*, Roma 2009; C. Santi, *La religione romana negli studi di R. Pettazzoni*, "Storia, antropologia e scienze del linguaggio" 24, 2009, pp. 173-188. Some other studies are quoted below.

it is merely an attempt to present selected motifs of his vision of the Greek and Roman religion.

1.

On the one hand, many features of Tadeusz Zieliński's biography are characteristic of Poles descended from impecunious landed gentry, as well as of those who were born in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the regions annexed by Russia during the partitions. Their life choices were divided into serving the occupant (even by undertaking office work) or preserving and maintaining patriotic traditions. On the other hand, his biography becomes (in the later period) a part of the model of scholarly education typical for the disciples of German science.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Zieliński, this influence was reinforced by the intense contacts with a German-speaking University of Tartu (then Dorpat). Taking into account that Zieliński has been to a large extent forgotten by the scholarly world, at the outset I would like to briefly relate the basic biographical data of this outstanding scholar.

Tadeusz Zieliński was born on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1859 in Skrzypczyńce (Kiev district).<sup>7</sup> Orphaned by his mother at a young age, he moved with his

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<sup>6</sup> See also G. Iggers, *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft. Eine Kritik der traditionellen Geschichtsauffassung von Herder bis zur Gegenwart*, München 1971 (chapters 4 and 5). Another interesting work in this perspective is D. Sdvižkov, *Zeitalter der Intelligenz: zur vergleichenden Geschichte der Gebildeten in Europa bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen 2006 (I used the Polish translation, Warszawa 2011).

<sup>7</sup> The biography of Tadeusz Zieliński is relatively well known, although no full study is yet in existence. Detailed information on Tadeusz Zieliński's life is found in the Polish edition of his *Autobiografia (Autobiography)*, which is frequently referred to in my study: *Autobiografia. Dziennik 1939-1944*, H. Geremek, P. Mitzner (eds.), Warszawa 2005. See also T. Zieliński, *Jak zostałem filologiem*, "Filomata" 2, 1929, pp. 70-78 and "Filomata" 4, 1929, pp. 156-163; *idem*, *Walka o autonomię szkół wyższych*, [in:] *W obronie wolności szkół akademickich*, Kraków 1933, pp. 157-166, and K. Zielińska-Kanakogi, *Mein Vater Tadeusz Zieliński. Eine biografische Skizze*, "Paleologia" 1, 1952, pp. 220-233 (*non vidi*). Regarding studies on Zieliński, see "Meander" 14, 8-9, 1959, for the fullest but still not complete bibliography of Zieliński. See also "Kwartalnik Klasycyzny" 4.3, 1930. Regarding Zieliński's private life and career, see the very interesting text by

father to Saint Petersburg, where he was educated until he turned ten. He studied under the supervision of his father, who instilled in him the passion for Latin and French and the cult of the poet Adam Mickiewicz. At that time he also developed the trait of emotional, slightly affected piousness, which was also characteristic of his scientific activities.<sup>8</sup> In 1869 young Tadeusz was enrolled to the German Saint Ann's Gymnasium. The choice of the school was connected with his father's disinclination to send him to a Russian school.<sup>9</sup> In 1873 Zieliński's father died after a serious illness. The father's loss of his job and costs connected with his illness drove the family into considerable financial trouble. Zieliński later recalled that the situation was so bad that they could not afford even the most important school books and his basic source of knowledge were the answers of his school friends, who had been asked before him.<sup>10</sup> After his father's death, Tadeusz's uncle became his custodial parent, but their contact was not very good, and the custody terminated in 1875.<sup>11</sup> Since then Zieliński had to earn his living by giving private lessons.<sup>12</sup> A year later, after passing the exam for a secondary school certificate, Tadeusz was granted a government scholarship, and in October he went to Leipzig to study classical philology. Those months spent at German universities became the basis of his scientific approach. The studies in Leipzig were crowned with a Ph.D. in classical philology based on the paper about the last period of the Second Punic War, soon

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R. Zaborowski *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) i Wincenty Lutosławski (1863-1954). Próba porównania biografii*, "Prace Komisji Historii Nauk. Polska Akademia Umiejętności" 8, 2007, pp. 33-86, with further literature; *idem, Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) – sa vie et son oeuvre*, [in:] *Annales du Centre Scientifique à Paris de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences* 12, 2009, pp. 207-222.

<sup>8</sup> M. Plezia, *Z młodości lat Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, [in:] *idem, Z dziejów filologii klasycznej w Polsce*, Warszawa 1993, p. 171.

<sup>9</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>10</sup> T. Zieliński, *Jak zostałem...*, p. 78.

<sup>11</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 35-36, cf. M. Plezia, *Z młodości lat...*, p. 174.

<sup>12</sup> W. Klinger, *Tadeusz Zieliński*, "Pamiętnik Literacki" 30, 1946, p. 436.

published by Teubner.<sup>13</sup> This paper, later considered by its author to be a “youthful work”, got a positive grade from Theodor Mommsen himself, which in an obvious way contributed to its reception.<sup>14</sup>

Afterwards, Zieliński obtained a two-year professorial scholarship, which was later prolonged by one year. During that time he was completing his education, among others, in Munich, Vienna, Rome and Naples. An interesting fact is that in the last of those cities he created his only strictly archaeological work.<sup>15</sup> He returned to Russia in 1882 and a year later he passed an M.A. examination, which in the Russian education system corresponded to the academic degree of doctor.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, he started to lecture at the university in Saint Petersburg, simultaneously keeping his post at Saint Ann’s Gymnasium, which he obtained through his old friends. Soon he started his attempts to earn the Russian Ph.D., which in today’s world would correspond to the ‘habilitation’ degree.<sup>17</sup> Based on the study of the structure of the old Attic comedy, the work was also published at Teubner’s.<sup>18</sup> It was, however, rejected by his maternal university in Saint Petersburg and, in 1886, Tadeusz Zieliński finally obtained this degree at the German-speaking university in Tartu (then Dorpat). A year later, Zieliński became an associate professor at Saint Petersburg and took over

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<sup>13</sup> T. Zieliński, *Die letzten Jahre des zweiten punischen Kriegs*, Leipzig 1880.

<sup>14</sup> Th. Mommsen, *Zama*, “Hermes” 20, 1885, p. 151. Cf. T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>15</sup> T. Zieliński, *Der Feueranbläser und der Dornauszieher*, “Rheinisches Museum” 39, 1884, pp. 73-117.

<sup>16</sup> Z. Opacki, *Relacje Tadeusza Zielińskiego z rosyjskimi uczonymi w Petersburgu w świetle jego „Autobiografii”*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów Europy Wschodniej. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Arturowi Kijasowi w 70. rocznicę urodzin*, G. Błaszczyk, P. Kraszewski (eds.), Poznań 2010, p. 242.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> T. Zieliński, *Die Gliederung der altattischen Komödie*, Leipzig 1885. Cf. T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 120-122, about its initially unfavourable opinions and later, much more favourable ones, which followed G. Kaibel’s enthusiastic remarks (“Hermes”, 24, 1889, pp. 35-66) and positive opinion of U. Wilamowitz-Möllendorf. Zieliński mentions the fact that the study provoked controversies among the scholars. Being aware of the department’s decision, F. Hörschelmann, one of the Tartu (Dorpat) scholars, secretly sent the paper for another review to E. Rhode. The positive review enabled Zieliński to complete the Ph.D. programme at Tartu (Dorpat).

the department of Greek literature. He ascended all steps of the academic and administrative career (he was also, among others, the dean of the Department of History and Philosophy), and played a certain role in the discussions about the shape of the Russian higher education system.<sup>19</sup> He retired in 1916.

After Poland regained independence, the University of Warsaw offered Zieliński the position of the head of the Classical Philology department. The offer was accepted eagerly. In his autobiography, Zieliński recalled that this position had been offered to him long before, already in 1918, and it was one of the first official decisions of the newly created university in the reborn country.<sup>20</sup> The nomination took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1920, but Zieliński moved to Warsaw permanently two years later.<sup>21</sup> In his inauguration lecture, given on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1920, he pompously stated that “if Warsaw calls, no Pole can be deaf to this call”.<sup>22</sup>

Tadeusz Zieliński quickly became an unquestioned authority of the Polish humanities of the interwar period. Frequent travels abroad and his presentation of Polish science during international conventions made Zieliński one of the most recognizable Polish researchers of the ancient world. His high rank was reflected in a number of honours granted to him by the Polish and foreign academic institutions. *Honoris causa* doctorates were awarded to him by the universities in Moscow (on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his academic career), in Athens, Groningen, Oxford, Vilnius, Warsaw, Cracow, Poznań, Lviv, Brno, Paris and Brussels. He was a member of many academies of science, in Bavaria

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<sup>19</sup> See J. Schiller, *Tadeusza Zielińskiego koncepcja reformy rosyjskich uniwersytetów*, “Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki” 51.3-4, 2006, pp. 57-89.

<sup>20</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 191.

<sup>21</sup> R. Zaborowski, *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) i Wincenty Lutosławski (1863-1954)...*, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 191.



and Great Britain among others, as well as the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome.<sup>23</sup> He also received honorary citizenship of Delphi in Greece.

In 1935, Zieliński went into Polish retirement, but since he received a degree of the honorary professor at the University of Warsaw he continued lecturing.<sup>24</sup> After the outbreak of the Second World War, during the German siege of Warsaw, Zieliński lost his flat, library and the manuscripts of the completed works. He left on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1939 for the Bavarian town Schondorf am Ammersee, where his son Feliks lived. The initial aim of his journey was Italy, neutral at the time, and more precisely Rome and Saint Stanislaus's Hospice, where Zieliński and his daughter Weronika were going to stay. Reaching Rome turned out to be impossible.<sup>25</sup> During his stay in Schondorf, Zieliński finished the work of his life, i.e. the last two volumes of the cycle *Religions of the Ancient World* concerning religion in the Roman Empire and the ancient Christianity.

Tadeusz Zieliński died on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1944 and was buried in Schondorf.

## 2.

The six-volume cycle *Religions of the Ancient World* became to Tadeusz Zieliński a peculiar *opus magnum*, the crowning of his academic path. His attitude resulted partly from the specific conditions in which the scholar completed his work, which will be further analysed below. It also became an ultimate proof of a certain synthesis of science and life, which was the humanist's pursuit for his whole life, unrealised at the beginning, but later

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<sup>23</sup> R. Zaborowski, *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) i Wincenty Lutosławski (1863-1954)*..., pp. 36-37.

<sup>24</sup> W. Klinger, *Tadeusz Zieliński*..., p. 441.

<sup>25</sup> An excellent source of information about this period of Zieliński's life are his diaries from the years 1939-1944, written in Polish and published together with the *Autobiografia*. See H. Geremek, *Wstęp (Introduction)*, [in:] *Autobiografia*..., pp. 201-244.

increasingly intentional.<sup>26</sup> The authors of Zieliński's biographies repeatedly drew attention to the commitment accompanying his scientific work, which with time did not turn into an identification with his own creation, contrary to what is claimed by some scholars<sup>27</sup>, but certainly became an element of the persistently realised life's path, characterised by a missionary character. This is how I understand the opinion of Stefan Srebrny, Zieliński's student at Saint Petersburg, and later a professor of classical philology at the universities in Vilnius and Toruń, who once said that to his teacher there had been no boundary between life and science.<sup>28</sup>

Tadeusz Zieliński divided his achievements into three periods: his German, Russian and Polish period<sup>29</sup>, although in fact these periods overlapped (especially the first two). In the letter addressed to Witold Klinger dated to 9<sup>th</sup> January 1942 (that is approximately two years before his death), he wrote that he considered *Sophocles and His Tragic Works* to be his major text in Russian, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* – in German and *Religions of the Ancient World* – in Polish (the last one was being written for 30 years<sup>30</sup>).

Zieliński was doing research on the ancient religion from the very beginning of his scientific path. The first larger studies date from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During that time Zieliński was lecturing on the history of Greek tragedy at the Bestuzhev's Higher Courses for Women.<sup>31</sup> The first independent monographic study was published in 1917

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<sup>26</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 198. Cf. R. Zaborowski, *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859-1944) i Wincenty Lutosławski (1863-1954)*..., pp. 44-48.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 47.

<sup>28</sup> S. Srebrny, *Tadeusz Zieliński...*, p. 16.

<sup>29</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>30</sup> The text of the letter is in: M. Plezia, „Dziecię niedoli”. *Ostatnie dzieło Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, [in:] *idem, Z dziejów filologii klasycznej w Polsce*, Warszawa 1993, pp. 219-220.

<sup>31</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 146.

in Petrograd.<sup>32</sup> It was a small work of popular character, published as a part of a whole cycle of papers on world religions. The character of the series most probably imposed on Zieliński the format of his work, which served as a blueprint for his next paper on the Hellenic religion, also published in Russian.<sup>33</sup> Both volumes were relatively quickly translated into Polish by Zieliński's students.<sup>34</sup> Soon after, in 1926, the first of them was published in French and English.<sup>35</sup>

Soon after *Religion of Ancient Greece* appeared in print, the "Gnomon" published a negative review of this work written by Kurt Latte.<sup>36</sup> The young scholar heavily criticised Zieliński and did not assign much value to his work. This out-and-out criticism hurt Zieliński, who was actually angry with the editorial staff for publishing it. He felt offended especially by the depreciating tone assumed by a young disciple of science towards an older and distinguished fellow scholar. According to Marian Plezia, this experience had contributed to his resignation from any attempts to translate the further parts of the cycle, which was a typical work in progress. The decision was considered to have been reinforced by the appearance of another negative mention in 1930.<sup>37</sup> Those reviews, coming from the German scientific circle, which was particularly close to Zieliński but at the same time very critical of him, influenced the changes in the structure of the following volumes and even doubled their size

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<sup>32</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religija driewniej Grecii*, Piotrograd 1917.

<sup>33</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religija ellinizma*, Piotrograd 1922.

<sup>34</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia starożytnej Grecji. Zarys ogólny (Religion of Ancient Greece. An Overview)*, transl. by Stefan Srebrny, Warszawa 1922; *idem*, *Religia hellenizmu (Religion of Hellenism)*, transl. by Gabriela Piankówna, Warszawa 1925. Polish edition of *Religia hellenizmu* was, as other volumes from the series including *Religia starożytnej Grecji* of 1937, issued under the common title *Religie świata antycznego (Religions of the Ancient World)*.

<sup>35</sup> T. Zieliński, *La religion de la Grèce antique*, trad. par A. Fischelle, Paris 1926; *idem*, *The Religion of Ancient Greece. An Outline*, trans. by G. Rapall Noyes, Oxford 1926.

<sup>36</sup> "Gnomon" 2, 1926, pp. 650-653.

<sup>37</sup> M. Plezia, „Dziecię niedoli” ..., pp. 201-202.

due to a more detailed lecture and additional scientific methods. I do not think that Plezia is entirely correct as far as the extent of negative influence on Zieliński is concerned, as much more positive opinions were also published<sup>38</sup> (although they expressed a kind of embarrassment with the author's ideas and the overtone of the work). Undoubtedly, they contributed to Zieliński's decision to hold the translations and focus on finishing the cycle, as he thought that only after reading the whole series would his aims and ideas become clear.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the outline of the history of Greek religion was also published in Estonian (1923) and Czech (1930). An interesting detail is the fact that a post-war version of the book was published in Jerusalem in Hebrew.<sup>40</sup> It should not be forgotten that *Religion of Hellenism* also existed in its original language version, i.e. in Russian.<sup>41</sup>

Published in 1927, *Hellenism and Judaism* brings, as it has already been mentioned above, a new quality to the series.<sup>42</sup> Apart from the increased size and additional footnotes, which include a vast scientific discussion, there are also the Axioms – Zieliński's methodological credo and perhaps his life credo as well; the format was finally formed. Afterward, the other volumes had a comparable size and consisted of ten chapters. The introductory ones included information about the natural environment and basic historical data. Perhaps this structure of the work originated from the popular character of the first volumes of the

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<sup>38</sup> See W.R. Halliday, review *La Religion de la Grèce antique* by Th. Zielinski, "The Classical Review" 40, 6, 1926, pp. 215-126; J.M. Linforth, *A New Interpretation of Greek Religion*, "The Journal of Religion" 7, 5-6, 1926, pp. 622-624; E.S. MacCartney, review *Religion of Ancient Greece. An Outline*, "The Classical Journal" 23, 4, 1928, pp. 306-310.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. T. Zieliński, *Przedmowa do wydania drugiego*, [in:] *Religia starożytnej Grecji. Zarys ogólny*, Warszawa-Kraków 1937, p. V.

<sup>40</sup> T. Zielinski, *Dat Yavan. Moreh derekh be-dat Yavan ha-atikah*, Yerushalayim 1951.

<sup>41</sup> Some theses from this work were included in the lecture at the International Congress of History of Religions (H. Hofmann, *Badania*, p. 187) and then published in French, see T. Zieliński, *Les origines de la religion hellénistique*, "Revue de l'Histoire des Religions" 44, 1923, pp. 1-20.

<sup>42</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm a judaizm (Hellenism and Judaism)*, vol.1-2, Warszawa-Kraków 1927.

series. Next parts, devoted to the religion of the Roman Republic, appeared in the first half of the 1930s.<sup>43</sup> Later he focused on the preparation of the two final volumes, ones about the Empire period and early Christianity. By September 1939, the study of Imperial Rome had already been written. Unfortunately, on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1939, as a result of Warsaw being bombarded by the Germans, Tadeusz Zieliński's flat, located within the area of the academic campus, burnt down. His whole library, his archives, and the already-completed parts of *Religions of the Ancient World*, as well as his research tools, were lost. I have already mentioned the war episode in Zieliński's life and his final stay in the Upper Bavaria. Soon after his son's arrival, having recovered from hardships, the aged humanist started to recreate the previously written passages. On the basis of his notes and correspondence, it can be concluded that he started to treat his work as his only aim or even a justification of his existence. He brought basic reference books from the Munich library, and after it was closed, from Leipzig and later from Göttingen. Written in such specific conditions and almost in a race with time, his works had to have another, non-scientific overtone; they included more autobiographical motifs and personal reflections.<sup>44</sup> Tadeusz Zieliński's metamorphosis was clearly visible<sup>45</sup>: he was moving from historiography to the philosophy of history. The last two volumes were not published until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia rzeczypospolitej rzymskiej (Religion of the Roman Republic)*, vol. 1-2, Warszawa–Kraków 1933-34.

<sup>44</sup> A deep and most insightful analysis of the last two volumes of the cycle can be found in M. Plezia's article „*Dziecię niedoli*”..., *passim*.

<sup>45</sup> In this context, see the very interesting remarks on the last opus of Franz Cumont, B. Rochette, *Rééditer Lux perpetua: pour qui, pourquoi?*, “Supplemento a Mythos, Rivista di storia delle religioni” 1 n.s. 2010, pp. 9-20. See M. Philonenko, *Lux perpetua. Un dossier*, “Revue d'Histoire et de Philologie Religieuses” 91, 2011, pp. 145-156.

<sup>46</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia cesarstwa rzymskiego (Religion of the Roman Empire)*, Toruń 1999; *idem*, *Chrześcijaństwo antyczne (Ancient Christianity)*, Toruń 1999.

While discussing the structure of the cycle, Marian Plezia noticed that the second and third, as well as the fifth and sixth volumes are analogous to each other. The volume about Judaism begins in one of the chapters of *Religion of Hellenism*. Ancient Christianity, on the other hand, was treated as one of the religions of the Roman Empire that deserved a separate study due to the role it had played. Plezia notices that thanks to that measure the antithesis of Judaism and Christianity, typical of Zieliński, gained clarity.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4.

Tadeusz Zieliński set the ancient religion in a broadly defined cultural system. The very titles of each volume are a methodological declaration. Tadeusz Zieliński clearly states that the centre of his scientific interests is “religion”, not “cult” or “mythology”. He considers “experience” to be a basic research category. As he wrote, “Religious feeling is a magic wand that trembles every time we pass by pure gold of religious faith, but is not stirred by lead or tinsel”.<sup>48</sup> The category to a similar extent referred to the scholar himself as to the subject of his research. It was fully expressed in the assumptions, from 1927 onward announced at the beginning of every volume. They were also added in the second edition of *Religion of Ancient Greece* published in 1937. The assumptions can be considered as a scientific credo of the great scholar, or even his life credo, to which he remained faithful.

I. Scientific research on the origin of religion, similarly to the scientific research on the origin of life, is beforehand condemned to pointlessness: *ignoramus et ignorabimus*.

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<sup>47</sup> M. Plezia, „*Dziecię niedoli*”..., p. 202.

<sup>48</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 13 (cf. footnote 34).

II. As a man who has no artistic sense cannot understand ancient art, one who has no religious feeling will not understand ancient religion.

III. Ignite a bright torch of religious feeling in your heart, but leave a dim oil lamp of denomination at home if you want the temple of ancient religion to show you its wonders.

IV. God reveals Himself in beauty, in truth and in goodness; the only perfect religion is the one that takes into account those three revelations in their wholeness.

V. The height of the religious pursuits of mankind is Christianity in its most developed form.

VI. The ancient religion is the true Old Testament of this Christianity. In fact, those assumptions, especially point no. 6 concerning Christianity originating from the ancient religion, are risky from the point of view of research practice, and permit us to set Zieliński's work in the perspective of the philosophy of history or even of theology. It is worth noticing that the second Axiom appeared already in the study of the Greek religion. However, the term "Greek" that appeared there in reference to art and religion was later changed to a more comprehensive term "ancient".

Zieliński's aim was to portray the "essence of Greek religion in the flourishing epoch of the Greek people".<sup>49</sup> To the question of where that core of the Greek thinking about gods was, Zieliński answered that it was everywhere, especially in the whole literature and epigraphic testimonies that permit us to recognise their authors' subjective literary messages, but also in the artistic tradition, extremely important due to the lack of holy books in the structure of the Greek religion. To the question of how the Greeks recognised

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<sup>49</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 6.

real religious messages<sup>50</sup>, Zieliński answered: “Yet the point is that neither the ‘Theogony’ nor any other ancient book was canonical. We possess religious feeling: what it does hesitate to accept is true, the rest is non-existent for us”.<sup>51</sup> He explained this lack of the orthodox tradition with the coexistence of three different religions which did not have an equal force. Those were the “poetic religion”, “philosophical religion” and “citizen’s religion”. This classification is a clear attempt to apply Varro’s nomenclature to the Greek religion<sup>52</sup>, although with a slightly different aim. According to Zieliński, “these three religions answer more or less to what we now call the narrative, dogmatic, and ceremonial aspects of a single religion”.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, they will be considered together, as omitting any of them or focusing only on the best known and undoubtedly most important one, the citizen’s religion, would distort the picture. This is because the Greek religion is not only about making an offering to the gods but also about watching tragic actors at the Great Dionysia. It is also about listening to the philosophical reasoning of the students of Plato, Aristotle and Zeno, as well as being initiated in the Mysteries of Demeter in Eleusis.<sup>54</sup> It is obvious that Zieliński sets the Greek religion in the cultural system, claiming that it is one of its most significant emanations.

In the case of the Greek religion, Zieliński thought that it was most clearly manifested in beauty, truth and goodness, and those three terms became a basis for the analysis. The first category, beauty, allowed Zieliński to create and apply a new term. A number of times he noticed that there were no holy

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 161.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Aug., *de civ. Dei*, 4.27. This indirectly proves that, in spite of the fact that he took into account all the differences between the Greek and the Roman religion, Zieliński treated them as one ideological entity.

<sup>53</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.



books in the Greek religion. He did not, however, assume that there was a total freedom of picturing a deity. He assumed that most Greeks pictured them similarly, thanks to the work of artists, more precisely sculptors, to whom he gave a noble appellation of the “prophets of the chisel”.<sup>55</sup> He claimed that Phidias, Alcamenes or Praxiteles accomplished a similar task for the Greeks as the Old Testament prophets did for ancient Israel, i.e. they created a coherent and in a sense orthodox representation of a deity. Since Phidias created the Olympic statue of Zeus, people have imagined the highest deity exactly as it had been represented by the sculptor. This entailed certain implications of theological and civic nature, e.g. the representation of Athena Parthenos reminded the Athenians of their duties towards a polis. Zieliński had a terminological tendency to make the Greek religion similar to the Biblical religion. He went even further, naming the sculptors working after the Peloponnesian War the “younger prophets”.<sup>56</sup>

The work of those “prophets of the chisel” was so meaningful to Zieliński that any changes in style over time he treated as “justified metamorphoses in the spirit of the religio-artistic needs of the fourth century”.<sup>57</sup> It is worthwhile to pay attention to the interesting differences between the first Polish edition of *Religion of Ancient Greece* and its English version authorised by Zieliński. Describing the transformation of Phidias’s image of Zeus into the representation of Asclepius, which was a broadly accepted process in the late 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC and early 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, Zieliński emphasised that the image had been used by Christians and in this way “the inspired thought of the greatest prophet of the deity among people –

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 69. Zieliński’s thesis may be considered controversial; yet it should be noted that it is widely considered that such a unifying role in Greek culture was played by Homer’s epics; see E. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge 1963.

<sup>57</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 71.

Phidias”<sup>58</sup> was still alive. This sentence is absent in the Oxford edition. The term “prophet” was also used by Zieliński in reference to other creators of the Greek culture, e.g. Aeschylus was to him the “prophet of Eleusis” and Pindar was the “prophet of Apollo”. Transferring the elements of the Biblical language into the Greek religious reality was characteristic to Zieliński, but it met with severe criticism, especially after the publication of *Hellenism and Judaism*. It was, of course, an intentional act, but it stemmed from the tradition of treating the authors as prophets rather than from manipulating the language.

Zieliński disposed also of the alleged fetishism in the Greek religion. He pointed out that despite worshipping statues, the Greeks were perfectly aware of the fact that an image was not a deity itself but only its representation. For a greater clarification of his thesis, he compared it with the cult of images in Christianity and said that “(...) the analogy is complete, nor is there anything strange in the fact, for here we are dealing with the ancient foundation of Christianity”.<sup>59</sup> That comment precedes some spiteful remarks directed at Protestants, who according to Zieliński were guilty of re-Judaisation of Christianity.

The Polish scholar several times emphasised the role of nature in the life of the ancient people. According to him, in Greece there “was an appropriate mingling of nature with art in general harmony of religious feeling such as Mother Earth has seen but once in her long life”.<sup>60</sup> The revelation of God in beauty was also manifested in the Greek *choreia*, which had a sacred, but also an educational and cultural meaning.

Another way of manifesting the deity was a revelation in goodness. Zieliński claims that in the pre-Homeric epoch, the deity manifested itself

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<sup>58</sup> As cited in the first issue, published in 1921 (p. 47).

<sup>59</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 76.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 83, cf. pp. 15-37.

in strength rather than in anything else, and that Homer's poems nevertheless make it possible to observe the process of the "gradual moralization of the Greek religion".<sup>61</sup> According to Zieliński, the development of the religion of Apollo played a significant role in shaping the moral aspects of the Greek religion. It contributed to an ultimate victory of the moral value – with a considerable help from the Pythagoreans, who saved it from an excessive ritualism and from focusing too much attention on the notion of *miasma*.<sup>62</sup>

The revelation of the deity in goodness by definition made it impossible to be scared of that deity. The fear of god was associated with superstition strictly because of the religion of Apollo. In Zieliński's view, "a man of normal faith did not fear his gods but loved them". The definition the Greek religion as the "religion of happiness" and the full identification of "god-fearing" with superstition<sup>63</sup> took on an additional meaning when this religion was contrasted with Judaism, portrayed by the Polish scholar as the "religion of fear". On that grounds Zieliński was criticised by one of his opponents, Szczepan Szydelski, the author of an extensive critical commentary on the first three parts of the cycle.<sup>64</sup> Szydelski contrasted Zieliński's thoughts pertaining to religious studies with the opinions of Rudolf Otto, fully expressed in the work *The Idea of the Holy*. While determining Judaism as the "religion of fear" Zieliński indeed did not take into account what he was probably familiar with, that is the numinous theory. Famous at that time and promoted by Rudolf Otto, the theory was constructed to a great extent on the basis of the material derived from the Old Testament. It might seem peculiar, but James's category of the "religious

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 123. Zieliński wrote about this in another paper, T. Zieliński, *Kultura moralna starożytnej Grecji*, Warszawa 1932.

<sup>62</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 126.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 127.

<sup>64</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska, Stary Testament i chrześcijaństwo*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie" 21, 1928, pp. 1-16. Detailed analysis A. Gillmeister, *Kontrowersje...*, pp. 278-283.

experience”, which was known to Zieliński and used by him, was consistent with the views of Otto.<sup>65</sup> Szydelski protested against contrasting Judaistic “religion of fear” with the Greek “religion of happiness”, claiming that Zieliński confused “god-fearing”, Otto’s *numinosum*, with a regular fear and anxiety.<sup>66</sup>

Tadeusz Zieliński interpreted the issue of making offerings and praying in the Greek religion as the evolution from the material character of religious ceremonies to evoking in the believers feelings accompanying the offering. In the Greek idea of the scapegoat, he saw a harbinger of “the most mysterious sacrament of the Christian religion”.<sup>67</sup>

The comments on the revelation of the deity are a conclusion of Zieliński’s thesis, finally included in the fourth Axiom. Also this aspect the Polish scholar saw as an influence of the religion of Apollo, in which the ability to prevaricate was excluded from the gods’ attributes, although it had been earlier assumed by Homer.

By analysing the issue of divination in that scope, Zieliński consistently tried to observe only positive aspects of those practices, so characteristic of the ancient times. In this way, for instance, he supposed the activity of the Delphic oracle to have been based on giving good advice and offering support to the person asking for it, while the cases of Oedipus and Croesus should be set in a sphere of legends. A believer was not cheated; he was possibly under an illusion that was cheering him up and enabled him to perform acts the effects of which he attempted to predict.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 163. On the relations and interconnection between W. James and R. Otto, see R.A. Rappaport, *Ritual and religion in the making of humanity*, Cambridge 1999 (I used the Polish translation, Kraków 2007, pp. 492-501).

<sup>66</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska...*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>67</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, pp. 131-133.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 195-196.

If it was assumed that “in god is the truth”, and “in the truth is god”, naturally also science had to come from it. Not surprisingly, Hippocrates came from a priestly family that was assigned to the service of Asclepius on the island of Kos.<sup>69</sup> After all, according to Zieliński, an important Christian conception of the Logos stemmed not from philosophy but from the Greek religion.<sup>70</sup>

This short overview of the selected passages of Zieliński’s theology makes it possible to establish the basic category of the deity which in full harmony unites in itself truth, beauty and goodness. In my opinion, some areas of the achievements of this distinguished humanist have to be determined in this way.<sup>71</sup> This ascertainment was so important to Zieliński since the assumption of the unity of those three elements finally led to acknowledging the deity’s unity; this took place in the following parts of the cycle. Another important remark is that to Zieliński, the whole Greek nature was full of deities. In his opinion, an inhabitant of the ancient Peloponnese, apart from sensing the deity in the sea, woods or the air, had a particular respect for the earth, which was to him “more than the people, for it is the source of the life of all the descendants of people living”.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, Zieliński, as a scholar, considered it important to “feel” the Greek (and Italic) nature, to become intimate with it and consequently to have the possibility of taking part in the dialogue between the past and the present.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 203.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 205.

<sup>71</sup> The theological aspect of Tadeusz Zieliński work was for the first time recognised by S. Szydelski, *Hellenizm a judaizm*, [in:] *Pamiętnik VI Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich w Wilnie 17-20 września 1935 r. t. 1 Referaty*, Wilno 1935, pp. 519-534.

<sup>72</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 34.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. W. Wrzosek, *Źródło historyczne jako alibi realistyczne historyka*, [in:] J. Kolbuszewska, R. Stobiecki (eds.), *Historyk wobec źródeł. Historiografia klasyczna i nowe propozycje metodologiczne*, Łódź 2010, p. 37. It is worth noticing that at the same time, or slightly later, similar opinions were expressed by, among others, Dilthey and Collingwood.

In the afterword to the first edition of *Religion of Ancient Greece* to be published after the war, Maria Dzielska placed Zieliński's paper in a wide historiographic context.<sup>74</sup> While discussing the above-mentioned review by Kurt Latte, she pointed out that the German scholar on the verge of his scientific career had focused on accusations of interpretative character, correct in their majority, but not on the specificity of Zieliński's work. Within that scope, his comments were hardly sophisticated epithets, such as the remark regarding "Catholicism", which to Latte was a synonym for backwardness.<sup>75</sup> Latte also drew the attention to the fact that the emotional analysis conducted by Zieliński was not well set in the "materialistic" methods of those times.<sup>76</sup> It is worth mentioning that the affection towards Catholicism, which was visibly manifested by Zieliński, could have offended the German philologists of the time whose *coryphaei* originated from Protestant background; Droysen and Mommsen were even the sons of pastors. Alexander Demandt pointed out that the process of limiting the cultural and religious history of Rome in order to highlight the Greek cultural heritage, characteristic since the time of Luther, originated from associating the Imperial Rome with the Papal Rome.<sup>77</sup> This probably had an impact also on the perception of Zieliński's writing as being confessional.

Zieliński's work seems to be interesting in comparison with the achievements of the British scholars centred around the University of Cambridge. The so-called "Cambridge School" did not create, as it is frequently thought, one research method and one methodology, even the very

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<sup>74</sup> M. Dzielska, *Kierunki badań nad historią religii greckiej i hellenizmu oraz nowsza literatura przedmiotu*, [in:] T. Zieliński, *Religia starożytnej Grecji. Zarys ogólny. Religia hellenizmu*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1991, pp. 277-296.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 278.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>77</sup> A. Demandt, *Theodor Mommsen (30 November 1817 – 1 November 1903)*, [in:] *Classical Scholarship. A Biographical Encyclopedia*, W.W. Briggs, W.M. Calder III (eds.), New York-London 1990, p. 287.

definition is only a convenient mental shortcut.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, some joint assumptions of all scholars can be distinguished, the main one being the application of the idea of progress to the research on the Greek religion. In that case, the idea was based on the progress in religious development from animism, through the veneration of the dead, fetishism and polytheism to monotheism. The division used by Edward B. Taylor was simplified by James G. Frazer to a three-step magic–polytheism–monotheism scheme.<sup>79</sup> Zieliński did not follow a common cult of genesis of that time and postulated a “horizontal”, not a “vertical” research of religion.<sup>80</sup> At the same time, he was an ardent advocate of the idea of progress in religious transformations. The fact that in his research Zieliński did not refer directly to the achievements of that methodological school is worth mentioning. In *Religion of Ancient Greece* he cited extensively the work of L.R. Farnell<sup>81</sup>, who despite being inspired by the achievements of the “ritualists” was not one himself.<sup>82</sup> It is interesting to observe what the representatives of “Cambridge School”, especially Jane Harrison, had in common with the Polish scholar: this shared point was valuing the role and recognizing the possibility of experiencing the past in the research on the cultural reality of ancient Greeks.<sup>83</sup>

At the end of these brief comments about the historiographic background to Zieliński’s work, I would like to focus on one more point. At the first sight, the image of the Greek religion, depicted with such an involvement by

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<sup>78</sup> As it is rightly mentioned in M. Beard, *The Invention of Jane Harrison*, Cambridge 2002, pp. 109-128.

<sup>79</sup> M. Dzielska, *Badania nad historią...*, p. 281.

<sup>80</sup> E.g. the subject matter of the first study in the cycle was “the essence of Greek religion in the flourishing epoch of the Greek people” (T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 6). Other volumes were constructed in a similar way: religion was investigated and described at a particular moment in history.

<sup>81</sup> L.R. Farnell, *The Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*, Oxford 1912.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. M. Beard, *The Invention...*, p. 118.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 50.

Zieliński, shows many similarities to an equally emotional vision presented by a German philologist Walter F. Otto; suffice it to recall the role that both scholars attributed to the goddess Demeter. To the Polish scholar, Demeter and her Roman counterpart Ceres were prefigurations of the Christian “Mater Dolorosa”. He dedicated quite a lot of attention to this goddess, also in the context of the Mysteries. Moreover, he paid attention to the moral aspect of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and claimed that the very act of initiation, which corresponded to the Christian sacrament of baptism, was not sufficient for the future joy in Demeter’s paradise; what was needed was also a just and virtuous life. Only by fulfilling those two conditions could one expect joy in the future world.<sup>84</sup> Zieliński developed his comments on Demeter in the second volume of the cycle, *Religion of Hellenism*. He focused there on portraying the “proselytism” of the phenomenon of the mysterious religion of Demeter<sup>85</sup>, which resulted from two characteristics of that theology. One of those was the ease with which it adapted to other cults, and the other was the energy in establishing “branches” of the Eleusinian cult.<sup>86</sup> “Proselytism” assumed also the existence of “apostles”. In the case of the cult of Demeter, it was supposed to have been Metapos, and in the case of the cult of Cybele, another goddess that played a great role in shaping a universalistic Hellenic religion<sup>87</sup>, it was Timotheus from the Eumolpus family, a priest of the Eleusinian Demeter.<sup>88</sup> He reformed the cult of Cybele in the Eleusinian spirit in Pessinus, pushing aside the orgiastic aspects in favour of moralism, in which the myth of Attis was interpreted. The role

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<sup>84</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 149-150.

<sup>85</sup> Similar term was used by Zieliński in reference to the religion of Apollo and Dionysus. Although these terms are basic in Zieliński’s conceptual framework, it is difficult to decide why he differentiated between various ancient religious practices since later he treated them as one.

<sup>86</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia hellenizmu...*, p. 23.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 64-71; see also *idem*, *The Religion...*, pp. 120-121.



of Timotheus was supposedly so meaningful that Zieliński described him as “the founder of the Hellenistic religion”.<sup>89</sup> Zieliński showed, as if by chance, that he was in favour of identifying Aphrodite with the Great Goddess. “Agdistis” allegedly was not an individual character but an cognomen of a god, and Attis was supposed to be a prefiguration of Anchises.

Another universalistic deity, in Zieliński’s conception, was Isis. Zieliński (influenced by the record of Tacitus, *Hist.* IV, 83) assigned the reformation of her cult and creation of the new god, Serapis, to Ptolemy I and a Greek and Egyptian committee appointed by him, headed by Timotheus and Manetho.<sup>90</sup> As a consequence of their actions, the Egyptian goddess was transformed into a Hellenistic goddess, another version of Eleusinian Demeter. Zieliński noticed the differences between the Hellenistic and Egyptian Isis. It was mainly the absence of the animal representation, characteristic of the Egyptian religion, and elimination of the whole complex afterlife magic. He also drew the attention to the fact that the Greeks could have treated the new goddess like the familiar Demeter, and the character of Serapis was just another stage of shaping the monotheist thought.<sup>91</sup> Also, in a developed cult personnel of Isis, Zieliński saw a possibility of personal contact between the priest and the faithful, and consequently the emergence of the idea of the priest being a spiritual father.<sup>92</sup> To Zieliński, Egyptian motifs in the cult of Isis were nothing more than decorations. This ascertainment is worth remembering, as in the contemporary literature Isis was often seen as an Ancient Egyptian goddess.

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 71.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 87-90.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 100.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 101.

Can it, however, be claimed that, in Zieliński's vision, Cybele and Isis were merely emanations of Demeter? It seems that all three goddesses were rather the emanations of one, so to speak, superior goddess – the Mother.

Zieliński attributes another important achievement to the cult of Isis and Serapis. Isis was a goddess with a strongly emphasised eschatological aspect, and the same situation appeared in the mythology connected with Serapis, who was equally a chthonic and a supernal god. It broke the dichotomy characteristic of the Greek pantheon. To the Polish scholar, this was another symptom of the Christian image of the Saviour.<sup>93</sup>

The last chapter of *Religion of Ancient Greece* Tadeusz Zieliński devoted to the notion which a few years later he expanded to a considerable volume. Conclusions presented there contributed to Zieliński's work being placed in the archives of the history of idea, at least in the Polish historiography. He wanted to answer the question why the Greek religion disappeared even though it had been the most perfect outcome of the human feeling and intellect of its time. Zieliński's response was that, in fact, the Greek religion was still alive in Christianity. Not denying ancient Judaism many moral and cultural values, Zieliński noticed that, in contrast to the Greek religion, which was very tolerant and based on heresy, i.e. free choice, it brought in a huge amount of intolerance through an exclusive treatment of the god and its believers. Later this was to turn against the Jews themselves. "This intolerance – let us say so at once – was the most fatal gift that Christianity received from Judaism," Zieliński wrote. "(...) One thing more I must remark at once: the fatal gift of intolerance, which Christianity had received from Judaism, proved to be a two-edged sword; the Christians turned it against their own masters. Herein there is a great and terrible lesson: all the persecutions of the Jews that defile the history of the

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<sup>93</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia hellenizmu*..., p. 105.

Christian religion have their source in the Old Testament. And conversely, words of tolerance in regard to them were spread abroad under the influence of a revival of the ancient view of the world”.<sup>94</sup>

Zieliński noticed that at the turn of the eras Galilee, in contrast to Judea, was under the influence of the Hellenic tendencies, and the teaching of Christ was a protest against the Judaistic understanding of the god and religion. It was consistent with the Hellenic spirit of freedom, humanitarianism and a filial attitude towards the beloved deity.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, originally, Galilee was turned to Jerusalem, and that is what Zieliński considered to be an initial “fatal Judaisation of Christianity”. Only after Christianity came out of its cradle and spread to the neighbouring regions could the “Hellenisation of Christianity” take place again. It was not, however, devoid of the Judaistic traces. At this point, I would like to cite a longer excerpt from the “Conclusion” of *Religion of Ancient Greece*:

In truth, Hellenized Christianity, unfortunately for itself, could not rid itself of the erroneous identification of its God with the God of Abraham, could not free itself from the Old Testament, that great and remarkable book, which, however can only gain in value in the eyes of a Christian if he ceases to regard it as a book of revelation. The blame was due to the Judeo-Christian delusion that coming of Christ had been foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament – a delusion so thoroughly and so mercilessly overthrown by the common labour of both Jewish and Christian investigators of modern times. The medieval Church, perceiving the danger, did all that in it lay to avoid it:

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<sup>94</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, p. 216.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217,

on the one hand, it developed the Hellenic elements of Christianity in ritual and theology, developed them successfully, at time even surpassing its model (...) and on the other hand, it tried so far as possible to make harmless the other source of its teachings. Yet it could not expel it altogether; its preservation threatened mankind, sooner or later, with the *re-Judaization of Christianity*.

This came in the sixteenth century; its name is – the Reformation.

For a second time the revelation of God in beauty was set aside (...). (A)gainst psychology, but in the spirit of the synagogue, worship was reduced to nothing but the word. Nature was once more stripped of the deity. (...) The neohumanism of the eighteenth century brought in a reaction in this field as well as in others; its approach to antiquity inevitably involved an approach to Hellenic Christianity as well. (...) The inexorable circle of evolution has been concluded, Judaized Christianity has overthrown itself in the last phase of evolution, in the school of Harnack. It has admitted the justice of the prophetic words of Goethe: ‘Gefühl is alles’. *Religious feeling is the kernel of religion; the rest is but a parable.*<sup>96</sup>

In fact, the above citation is an abbreviation of the main theses of *Hellenism and Judaism*, another part of Zieliński’s cycle after *Religion of Hellenism*.

I have already written about the third part of the cycle. It is worth adding to these comments that this volume had a totally different construction

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 221-223.

than the previous two. Apart from the developed scientific methods, Zieliński also changed his point of view on the described issue; he decided not to devote a separate work to the Jewish religion but rather to portray it in parallel to the Greek religion.<sup>97</sup>

The main thesis of Tadeusz Zieliński's work was the assumption, stated in the sixth Axiom, that the proper root of Christianity was not Judaism, but the religion of ancient Greece. That thesis had already appeared in his work on the Greek religion, but it was thoroughly discussed in *Hellenism and Judaism*. Zieliński explained the thesis through the introduction of the basic term of his religious thinking – the “psychological continuity”. This continuity, according to Zieliński, existed between the Hellenic religion and Christianity, and did not link Christianity with Judaism. In his opinion, Christianity was the coping stone of the ethical development of an ancient soul. The Greek religion prepared minds for adopting Christianity. Comparing Judaism to Hellenism was supposed to confirm this assumption. Tadeusz Zieliński pointed out that he looked at the phenomenon not from the theological, but from the historical and cultural point of view.<sup>98</sup> Not denying that the early Christians were Jewish, he stated that the rejection of Christianity by Judaism and the adoption of it by the “Hellenic and Hellenised souls” was a radiant proof of the fact that there was no “psychological continuity” between Judaism and Christianity, which was present in the relations with Hellenism. Therefore, it was justified to say that the religion of ancient Greece was better than Judaism in preparing the minds of the contemporary people for the adoption of Christianity, which was not at all different from the “height and wreath” of the development of an ancient soul.<sup>99</sup> It is worth pointing out that Tadeusz Zieliński did not look for the roots

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<sup>97</sup> In discussing Zieliński's *Hellenism and Judaism* I use sections of my articles, cf. footnote no. 3.

<sup>98</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm...*, p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

of Christianity or any direct sources of it in the ancient religions. He claimed, however, that it was Hellenism and not Judaism that aroused in the spirit of man such religious needs that could only be satisfied by Christianity.<sup>100</sup>

At the very beginning, Tadeusz Zieliński made it clear that his work was written from a cultural and historical point of view and not from a theological one. Moreover, the paper referred to the religion that was already dead. He divided the history of that religion into three periods<sup>101</sup>:

- 1) Israeli: from patriarchs to the Babylonian captivity;
- 2) Judaic: from coming back from Babylon to the demolition of the temple by Titus;
- 3) Jewish: from the demolition of the temple until the present.

Zieliński considered the middle period, Judaic, to be the most interesting one. He treated it as the most colourful period and the only one during which Judaism and Hellenism were overlapping. It was religion that became a subject of his considerations at that time. He also postulated executing a certain terminological procedure. He announced that in his work he would consistently write about “Judeans and Judaism” and not Jews and the Jewish religion. He justified the choice with his claim that the religion of the inhabitants of Judea at the turn of the eras ceased to exist, and that the Jewish religion of his time was an outcome of Hellenisation of Judaism caused by Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn, who introduced into it the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Despite those reservations, the work of Zieliński was viewed, especially by the Jewish circles, as a “truly anti-Semitic lampoon”.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia hellenizmu*, Warszawa 1925, p. 238.

<sup>101</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm...*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>102</sup> AP Kraków (State Archive in Cracow), BB 189, 3.

This opinion has been haunting *Hellenism and Judaism*, as well as its author, until this day.<sup>103</sup>

The comparison of Judaism and Hellenism worked out unfavourably for the first one of them, and Zieliński's work became a source of considerable controversy and polemics. It stirred the largest scientific and journalistic discussion in the history of the Ancient studies in Poland. Several brochures were published, and the objection to Zieliński's beliefs provided also a topic for a monograph.

The greatest outrage about the book was expressed by the Jewish circles, especially the representatives of the Association of the Jewish Humanitarian Societies "B'nei B'rith", which received another part of the religious cycle by Tadeusz Zieliński with anxiety.

As early as 12<sup>th</sup> July 1927 Julian Cohn, the president of the Warsaw branch of the Association, wrote a letter to the lodge in Cracow. He expressed there his concern about Zieliński's book, which he called "a truly Anti-Semitic lampoon", being about to be published. He stated that the rank of the scholar and his authority required a quick and adequate answer to "Hellenism and Judaism". In order to provide that answer, he offered submitting a question to the Berlin lodge of "B'nei B'rith" whether the work of Zieliński had been translated into German, and if any of the German scientists would undertake a polemics, as in Poland there was no one who would be equal to Zieliński in authority.<sup>104</sup> The answer from Berlin came soon. The work had not been translated into German, so the idea of commissioning the polemics from foreign

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<sup>103</sup> See L. Kołakowski, *Antysemita. Pięć tez nienowych i przestroga*, [in:] *idem, Nasza wesola apokalipsa. Wybór najważniejszych esejów*, Kraków 2010, p. 28; T. Kubiak, *Tadeusz Zieliński wobec dwóch rewolucji, bolszewickiej i hitlerowskiej*, "Tygodnik Powszechny" No. 10, 5 March 2000, p. 12, *contra* J. Gordziałkowski, *Antyjudajizm Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, "Tygodnik Powszechny" no. 33, 13 August 2000, p. 15.

<sup>104</sup> AP Kraków, BB 189, 3. See n. 102.

scholars failed. Perhaps it was already clear that Zieliński would not decide on translating that part of the cycle.<sup>105</sup>

In this situation, the brochure written by Mateusz Mieses<sup>106</sup> and published by the branch of the Association in Przemyśl, becoming the official voice of “B’nei B’rith”. It did not fully satisfy the Jewish circles, however since it was more important to its author to praise the Judaistic religion, simultaneously highlighting the tradition of the Jewish society throughout a few thousand of years, than to attempt to make any corrections to the views of the Polish humanist. It was supposed to debunk a distinction between the ancient and modern Judaism introduced by Zieliński and to portray the reviewed work as an anti-Semical lampoon.

As it has already been mentioned, one of the core terms in Tadeusz Zieliński’s philosophy of history was a notion of the “psychological continuity” that enabled the scholar to create the paradox stated in Axiom VI. Mieses noticed that the victory of Christianity in the Greek and Roman world had been a consequence of the fact that Judaism was a few hundred years’ old religion of clearly stated rules of faith, based on the holy books and supported by divine authority.<sup>107</sup> Psychology was not relevant to this; only firmly established structure. Elsewhere, he stressed that the trouble with the Christianisation of continental Greece contradicted Zieliński’s thesis about the continuity between the Greek antiquity and Christianity. He also highlighted the fact that Judea was Christianised to a vast extent, contrary to the opinion of Tadeusz Zieliński, who claimed that Christianity was adopted in the area of the whole

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<sup>105</sup> In the introduction to the second Polish edition of *Religia starożytnej Grecji* (Warszawa 1937), Zieliński mentioned that he had rejected the translation offer of the third volume of the cycle as he was afraid it might be interpreted incorrectly (p. VI).

<sup>106</sup> M. Mieses, *Hellenizm a judaizm. (Uwagi na marginesie książki Tadeusza Zielińskiego pod powyższym tytułem)*, Nakładem Stow. Humanitas B.B. w Przemyślu, Przemyśl 1928.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.



Empire excluding Judea.<sup>108</sup> Thus, Mieses contradicted himself, as on the same page he attempted to prove that the Jews did not adopt Christianity because of their religion, which was shaped beforehand. In his colourful narration, the Jewish polemicist contrasted Christian philosophy and ancient thought. From his lecture it could be concluded that every ancient thought placed in the system (vide Julian the Apostate) became an enemy of Christianity. He called it a “resistance of the Old Greek intelligentsia” and highlighted repressions with which the group had met.<sup>109</sup>

In the text by Mieses, the defence of Judaism with regard to theology went in three directions: 1) stating the exceptionality of the Jewish religion’s monotheism, in contrast to monolatry proposed by Zieliński; 2) stressing that Christianity originated from Judaism; and 3) proving that the Hellenic triad of goodness, beauty and truth was also enclosed in Judaism. From the methodological point of view, the criticism of *Hellenism and Judaism* was significantly weaker, in fact, only rhetorical. The main accusation was based on the lack of preparation on the part of Zieliński to undertake and discuss such a topic. As a result, the work that was published was wrongful, full of errors and distortions. Another accusation regarded an excessive use of the Biblical Apocrypha and writings from other sources than the Old Testament canon in the analysis of particular phenomena.

A huge part of Mieses’s comments is not substantial. It cannot be ruled out that apart from the personal temper, this harsh and colourful estimation of Zieliński’s work was influenced by the fact that the latter had negatively assessed an earlier book by Mieses.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>110</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm...*, vol. 2, p. 240.

“B’nei B’rith” did not resign from searching for other polemical writings, this time of a fully scientific nature. After consultations the Association decided to publish another work, written by Edmund Stein, a distinguished scholar and a lecturer at the Institute of Jewish Studies in Warsaw, who later became a famous translator, who translated the writings of Philo of Alexandria, Titus Flavius Josephus and Cicero into Hebrew. The work presented by this scholar was of higher standard than the preceding one.<sup>111</sup>

Stein started his reasoning with assessing the idea of comparing Hellenism and Judaism itself and the competence of Tadeusz Zieliński to undertake such a topic. He acknowledged the novelty of the Polish scholar’s aim, but drew attention to the fact that this objective was practically impossible to be carried out. According to him, a person working in this field would have to specialise both in classical philology and Judaism. He pointed out that despite the fact that the publication of *Hellenism and Judaism* was a meaningful progress in the research on ancient religions in the Polish science, and proved Zieliński’s great courage, the author nevertheless lacked objectivity and awareness of his own limits.<sup>112</sup> Apart from that, he considered the polemics with Zieliński’s opinions, taking place at that time, to be an important and meaningful one from the scientific and social point of view.

Stein accused Zieliński of a lack of consistency in thinking, concealments and selective and dishonest approach to the sources, inaccuracy in citing (Greek literature including) and freedom in introducing alterations in his translations.

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<sup>111</sup> E. Stein, *Judaizm a hellenizm. Z powodu książki prof. Tadeusza Zielińskiego p.t. „Hellenizm a judaizm”*), published by Związek Stowarzyszeń Humanitarnych „B’nei B’rith” w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Kraków-Warszawa 1929.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 8.

Stein stated that from the analysis of the errors made in this regard it was unquestionably clear that Zieliński did not know Hebrew to an extent that would enable scientific work and, consequently, he did not have enough competence to undertake the discussed topic.<sup>113</sup> In fact, the works of Tadeusz Zieliński, also those in the field of philology, frequently met with sceptical, if not straightforwardly negative reception. Stein used this point to highlight that his attitude to the methods of scientific work of Zieliński was not more critical than that of other scholars.

The main difference between the Jewish and Greek religion Zieliński saw in the “heresy”, a possibility of choice. Judaism was based on holy books of a revealed character. It obliged its believers to respect “lofty places” in the text and other passages not consistent with the moral feelings of that time. An ancient Greek, in contrast, could choose from his religious tradition whatever suited him and reject the rest as a poetic invention. Therefore, Stein claimed that Zieliński’s work was based on three mistaken assumptions: 1) the Greek “heresy” could not hinder the influence of the disadvantages of religion on the society; 2) the absence of possibility of choice in Judaism; 3) rejecting the role of interpretation, i.e. tradition, which in revealed religions replaced “heresy”.<sup>114</sup>

The most severe accusation with which Tadeusz Zieliński was charged was the lack of competence, objectivity and selectiveness in treating source material. The polemicist claimed that almost all citations from the Biblical writings and post-Biblical ones that Zieliński knew to be third-hand news.<sup>115</sup> To Stein, the “psychological continuity” was a vague and therefore elastic term, as it allowed for veering between source materials without facing more serious

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 16.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 32.

objections. The term was created in order to explain the paradoxical situation in which there was a need to answer the question of why the Greek religion was dead if, as Zieliński supposedly claimed, it was still alive in Christianity. As Stein later observed, “psychologism” allowed Zieliński to explain this paradox, and at the same time to demonstrate the formal character of the dependence of Christianity on the Old Greek religion. Stein thought that the author of *Hellenism and Judaism* had fallen into contradiction, as he attempted to prove the formal interrelation between Christianity and Hellenism, and the thesis stated in Axiom VI asserted the genetic relation.<sup>116</sup>

Zieliński’s *Hellenism and Judaism* aroused huge objections also in the Catholic circles. Fully fledged polemics with the work were written by, among others, the already mentioned Szczepan Szydelski, a professor at the Lviv University, or the widely respected Armenian Catholic archbishop, Józef Teodorowicz.

Szczepan Szydelski published a vast study in which he included criticism of all historical and religious views of Tadeusz Zieliński.<sup>117</sup> The direct impulse for the polemics was the publication of the third part of *Religions of the Ancient World*. The assessment of the work took Szydelski the majority of space; however, it was not such a systematic criticism as the one in the above-mentioned brochures. Szydelski paid much attention to “straightening” Zieliński’s views and devoted quite a lot of energy to this issue, considering he had already expressed his opinions on this topic earlier.

Szydelski set Zieliński’s *Hellenism and Judaism* in the current of historical and Biblical writing started by Julius Wellhausen. A characteristic feature of that school was assigning the history of religion to the category

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 52.

<sup>117</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska...* (cf. footnote 64).

of “ideological monism” borrowed from the philosophy of Hegel.<sup>118</sup> It seems that Zieliński took over this rule from the writings of Wilhelm Wundt rather than from Hegel himself.<sup>119</sup> Wundt, whose views had a great impact on thinking of the Polish philologist of “an ancient soul”, claimed that two basic views on epistemology: realism and idealism were incorrect, and proposed considering them with the use of monism, i.e. treating the entity and thought as a whole. The basis for Tadeusz Zieliński’s monism was a definition of the deity fully revealing itself in beauty, goodness and truth (see Axiom VI). This starting point of the scientific research was the foundation for one of three basic objections that Szydelski raised against Zieliński and his works. Two other accusations touched upon the issue of partiality and lack of precision in the assessment of the Greek and Judaistic religions, and using terms describing Christianity to characterise the Roman religion, which supposedly led to considering the former to be the “religion of nature”.<sup>120</sup> Szydelski’s work was focused around those accusations.

The first part concerns the criticism of monist assumptions in the thought of Tadeusz Zieliński. Szydelski considered this starting point to be wrong, as it did not lead to the discussion of a human god but only of a deity that evolved and was immanent, in contrast to the human and transcendent Judeo-Christian God.

Monist assumptions were also the explanation for the more risky intellectual constructions created by Zieliński, which concerned monotheism and polytheism. Zieliński proposed rejecting the dominant treatment of categories in religious studies as oppositions. He assumed that in the folk

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<sup>118</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia*..., pp. 163-164.

<sup>120</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska*..., p. 4.

Greek religion there was “an equality of the words *god* and *gods*”.<sup>121</sup> As the Greek philosophy had supposedly acknowledged the existence of the highest and only god<sup>122</sup> long before, the problem of the above-mentioned dichotomy was theoretically solved. Zieliński’s presenting the situation in this way met with severe criticism of Szydelski, who accused the former of agnosticism, irreligiousness and sentimentalism.<sup>123</sup> It was monism that did not permit Zieliński to observe the originality of the Judaistic religion, i.e. monotheism, and not monolatry, as it was postulated by Zieliński.<sup>124</sup> Meanwhile, according to Szydelski, the transcendentness of God and the idea of monotheism were “the only achievements of Israeli religion”.<sup>125</sup> As I have already mentioned, Tadeusz Zieliński saw religion as a part of culture, which in the case of ancient Greece he perceived sometimes in quite a narrow way – as literature, especially poetry, and philosophy. As he took this view on religion as his starting point, he could not notice the originality of the ancient Judaism (monotheism and transcendent treatment of God). At the same time, such a portrayal of the issue enabled him to describe the religious experience of the Greeks from a different point of view, which was also criticised by Szczepan Szydelski. The problem concerned giving the status of a “prophet” to artists and poets. Zieliński treated other figures of the Hellenic culture similarly, also those ones whose existence was doubted or was simply regarded as mythological, e.g. Musaeus or Orpheus. This point of view on the notion was unacceptable to the Catholic polemicist. That gave rise to accusations concerning the lack of interest in the uniqueness of the prophets’ position in ancient Israel and in the exceptionality of their

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<sup>121</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm...*, p. 47.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 43.

<sup>123</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska...*, p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> T. Zieliński, *Hellenizm...*, p. 41.

<sup>125</sup> S. Szydelski, *Religia helleńska...*, p. 14.

function in comparison with the other Semitic nations.<sup>126</sup> According to Szydelski, Messianic prophecies, monotheism and the institution of prophets are three phenomena which proved the dominance of Judaism over Hellenism. “Supernatural revelation of human God”<sup>127</sup> was contrasted with “romantic revelation of the deity in truth, goodness and beauty”. The transcendent religion was contrasted with the immanent religion.

Szydelski subjected expressions of important religious and moral significance of mysteries, especially the Eleusinian ones, to tight scrutiny. He drew the attention to the double meaning of the initiation: magical and obscene. He agreed with those scholars who thought that initially mysteries had had a magical character in order to ensure fertility, and had not required a special moral preparation of the participants, which Zieliński stressed. He also criticised naming the rites “sacramental acts”.<sup>128</sup> He drew the attention to other instances of Christianisation in Zieliński’s language, among others, to the identification, on the basis of the psychological continuity, of the figure of the Virgin Mary with Demeter through naming the latter “Mater Dolorosa”. Szydelski pointed out that in none of the ancient texts is even a trace of such a perception of the goddess mentioned<sup>129</sup>, and that this view of Demeter could be an outcome of an unintended perception of the Greek religion from the Christian angle.

With regard to size and significance, the most serious work of scientific character which came out as a reaction to Zieliński’s *Hellenism and*

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 105-107.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 122-125.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 232-233.

*Judaism* was a book written by Archbishop Józef Teodorowicz *Od Jahwy do Mesjasza (From Jehovah to Messiah)*.<sup>130</sup>

Already at the outset of his reflections Teodorowicz pointed out the greatest danger that resulted from the publication of Zieliński's work: its convergence in time with the growing anti-semitism in Europe, especially in Germany.<sup>131</sup> The Armenian archbishop set the discussed study exactly in this current. Compliments to Zieliński, who was assessed by him as a distinguished professor and an excellent Hellenist, did not soften the accusations, of which another one was that the views of the Polish scholar became a part of the current of the Neo-paganism reascent under the auspices of the Nazis. Teodorowicz was probably the only person to notice that *Hellenism and Judaism* started to live its own life, although its author should not be blamed for the ways in which his work could be used a few years after being published.

In his reasoning, Teodorowicz made an important distinction between the Greek religion and the Greek culture. He did not agree to setting the thought on religious studies in the perspective of the cultural studies – an approach that Zieliński postulated and tried to implement in life. According to the hierarch, the artistic richness of a culture greatly contributed to the diminishing of the moral values of religion itself.<sup>132</sup> He also contrasted religion with philosophy, giving a clear priority to the latter. He reproached Zieliński for a lack of criticism during the analysis of source materials and for partiality in their selection. Teodorowicz did not agree to moving from the detail to the whole. He wrote that as a man should not be assessed through the analysis of one or two character traits, but rather on the basis of the “whole picture”, so it is not possible to draw conclusions concerning the Greek gods. Teodorowicz wrote

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<sup>130</sup> J. Teodorowicz, *Od Jahwy do Mesjasza*, Poznań–Warszawa–Wilno–Lublin 1936.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. V-VI.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, p. VIII.



his comments from the confessional point of view; he subjected the main thesis of *Hellenism and Judaism*, i.e. the claim that Christianity came from the Old Greek religion, to heavy scrutiny. He ignored the “psychological continuity” postulated by Zieliński. In severe words he stated that the Christian overtones should not be seen where they do not exist and that comparisons of Greek artists or poets to Jewish prophets should not be drawn. According to him, it was an exaggeration to emphasise the role of Hellenism at the expense of the Old Testament, which was “a supernatural introduction to the New Testament”. Finally, he stressed that there was no proof that could ever convince anyone that “Christianity originated from Hellenism”.<sup>133</sup>

Tadeusz Zieliński did not withdraw from any of his assumptions<sup>134</sup>, especially from the thesis of “psychological continuity” between the Greek (and Roman) religion and Christianity. Contrary to that, he developed this thesis in *Religion of the Roman Republic*. A few times, e.g. in the introduction of the second edition of *Religion of Ancient Greece*, he expressed his feeling of being offended by the accusations. He referred to the critics in a paper delivered at the meeting of the Historical Society in Cracow on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1927.<sup>135</sup> While answering the accusations, Zieliński explained that it had not been his aim to write a history of Judaism, but that he only wanted to take a closer look at this religion through “Hellenic spectacles”.<sup>136</sup> He attempted to answer the question concerning the attitude of the Greeks to Judaism, and pointed out that the criticised work is only a part of a larger cycle, and perhaps some obscurities would be explained after publishing the entire work. He was clearly referring to a widely addressed accusation concerning his “idealisation” of Hellenism and

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<sup>133</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XI.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. T. Zieliński, *Religia Cesarstwa...*, p. 503.

<sup>135</sup> T. Zieliński, *Nauka i sentyment wobec hellenizmu i judaizmu*, “Przegląd Współczesny” 8 (71), 1928, pp. 353-370.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 359.

inequality in treating Judaism. He stated that there was no chance for idealisation, because there was no canonicity in the Greek religion, and he considered that to be a condition for its development. The situation of a pious Jew was different, as he was obliged to believe in everything included in the Torah.<sup>137</sup> How could one be sure, then, of choosing the right references to the Greek religion? According to Zieliński, the crux of the matter was a conscious implementation of the category of “sentiment” in scientific research. The feeling of sanctity of the texts he was reading was to help a scholar in making a correct assessment. He explained this on the basis of the works of Homer, in which a Greek could have found various descriptions of the gods’ behaviour. Zieliński thought that a reader of the epic was able to “feel” what was a genuine religious experience in it, and what was an anecdote or farce. He stressed that his own methodology was innovative, which might have been the reason for the difficulties with accepting it by the critics who were devoid of “a magical wand of the religious feeling”.

It is evident that the greatest controversies were aroused by the thesis of the psychological continuity between the Greek religion, or in a wider perspective, antiquity and Christianity, postulated by Tadeusz Zieliński. Zieliński was too distinguished scholar to think that Christianity “genetically” originated from the ancient religion. It is worth mentioning that he had never formulated any theses concerning such a direct genesis. He wrote, however, about the “preparation” of Christianity by the Greek and Hellenic religion, a particular *praeparatio evangelica*. This preparation was based on awakening in man’s “soul” some religious needs which were not satisfied until the arrival of Christianity. Zieliński enumerated the following issues to be solved by Christianity: 1) placing the issue of salvation of the human soul in the centre

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<sup>137</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 365, 369.

of the religious awareness by mysterious religions; 2) putting an emphasis on the cult of goddesses-mothers, seen by the scholar in the view of a suffering female human being; 3) taking to the fore the conception of the god-son perceived as a mediator between the god-father and the people (in Zieliński's conception, the position of the mediator was taken by Apollo and sometimes Hercules, who was, however, treated as an opposite example, a human-god); 4) introducing the rule according to which only the inner circle, i.e. in Zieliński's terminology only those who were exposed to sacramental acts, could obtain salvation; therefore the stress was placed on the apostolate (Metapos, Timotheus); 5) outlining the theory of the life after death; 6) accepting the rule that the deity can incarnate in a human being without losing anything from its divine nature.<sup>138</sup>

The issue of the "psychological continuity" should be considered in the context of the notions presented above. It is significant that Zieliński used psychological studies as an introduction to his work in the field of religious studies. He studied the works of Wilhelm Wundt, as well as William James, with an extraordinary insight. Borrowings from the theory of religious experience presented by the latter are clear in Zieliński's conception of "religious feeling" and the idea of the revelation of the god in the triad of goodness, beauty and truth.

The term "psychological continuity", which was so heavily criticised by Zieliński's opponents, appeared for the first time in the developed form in his work about Sibyl.<sup>139</sup> The first part concerns "préparation du christianisme dans la religion antique" and develops assumptions about the Hellenic *praeparatio evangelica* which have been presented above. The second part

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<sup>138</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia hellenizmu...*, pp. 238-241.

<sup>139</sup> T. Zieliński, *La Sibylle. Trois essais sur la religion antique et la christianisme*, Paris 1924.

(“Le fondateur de la religion hellénistique”) is a summary of the assumptions presented in the studies concerning the Greek and Hellenic religion. The third one (“La Sibylle et la fin de Rome”), in contrast, presents Zieliński’s considerations regarding eschatological aspects of the Roman religion during the reign of Augustus. Comments on “préparation psychologique” begin the first part of the study. This term was consistently used by Zieliński in his analyses. His reasoning brought him to the conclusion that the Roman religion existed until the present day and was perfectly fine under the name of Roman Catholicism.<sup>140</sup>

The last part of my considerations I would like to devote to a presentation of some elements of the vision of the Roman religion presented by Tadeusz Zieliński.

As the author himself admitted, his interpretation of the religiousness of the Romans was created as a supplement of the work of Georg Wissowa. He considered the work of the German scholar to be a conclusion of previous research and a guideline for further studies, despite the fact that he saw certain deficiencies there. The first larger study by Zieliński devoted to this notion<sup>141</sup> was supposed to “supplement” Wissowa’s study with the elements he had overlooked, i.e. religious studies and psychological background.<sup>142</sup> The German scholar did not receive the work with enthusiasm; he expressed his displeasure in a negative comment published in the second edition of his epoch-making work: that Zieliński went excessively far from the facts in his pursuit for

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<sup>140</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia Rzeczypospolitej...*, p. 5.

<sup>141</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rzym i jego religia*, Zamość 1920. The paper develops the earlier article published in Russian and German in 1903. In my paper I refer to the German version: T. Zieliński, *Rom und seine Gottheit*, [in:] *Iresione tomus II. Dissertationes ad antiquorum religionem spectans continens*, Leopoli 1936, pp. 111-153.

<sup>142</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rom...*, p. 113.

psychologisation.<sup>143</sup> Once again, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the fact which is characteristic of Zieliński: the term “cult” was omitted in the titles of his works and the term “religion” was stressed. This stems from the fact that Zieliński was interested mainly in the “psychology” of the religious experience and not in the description of the ceremonies and cult activities. He was, of course, aware of the role of the rites in ancient religions, but he claimed that the essence of religion could only be caught by adding feelings accompanying the ceremony, also the state of fear.<sup>144</sup> To him, the personal will in conjunction with the common will were the source of the “fear of god”, the basic category of the Roman theology, which made it so important to keep the rules of the ancestors. The difference between such a perception of the phenomenon and the perception proposed by Mommsen and Wissowa is fundamental. Georg Wissowa described the religious tradition of the Romans starting with the premise that it was manifested only in complicated and scrupulously kept rites which were not accompanied by the spiritual reflections. This perception of the Roman religion he certainly owed to Mommsen.<sup>145</sup> Theodor Mommsen was interested most of all in the legal aspects of cults; his starting point was the assumption that religion was an inevitable ingredient of the public law. According to him, the relations of the Romans with their gods were regulated by the same rules that were in force in the relationships between people. The search for the “divine element” in the ancient religion brought Zieliński closer to the views of Cumont. Despite the deep differences in their approach to the topic, both scholars were similar in far-reaching Christocentrism based on treating the Christian religion as a model of the religious experience with

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<sup>143</sup> G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, München 1912, p. 17.

<sup>144</sup> Cf., T. Zieliński, *Socjalizm i religia*, [in:] *idem, Kultura i rewolucja*, Warszawa 1999, p. 63.

<sup>145</sup> C. Frateantonio, *Konzepte der Independenz von Religion, Stadt und Recht bei Theodor Mommsen und Georg Wissowa*, “Archiv für Religionsgeschichte” 5.1, 2003, pp. 41–46.

a stress on the individual faith and personal contact with a god. The Polish scholar was one of few researchers of his era who tried to oppose the vision of fossilised and ritualised Roman religion. It is especially visible in the analysis of religious transformations at the end of the Republic. To Zieliński, the religious crisis in its traditional form was a fact, but, in contrast to Mommsen, he did not treat it in the categories of the servitude of religion to politics. He saw this crisis rather in the eschatological perspective as waiting for annihilation; the reforms of the first *princeps* he placed in the category of “rebirth”.<sup>146</sup>

Tadeusz Zieliński saw a huge contrast between the Greek and Roman religion. According to him, the first had a transcendent and substantial character, while the latter an immanent and actual one: “Wir sehen hieraus, dass es mit der Immanenz allein nicht getan ist: die Gottheit ist nicht in der Substanz enthalten, sondern im Akt; neben der Immanenz ist die Aktualität eine Haupteigenschaft der römischen Gottheit”. This actual aspect (from acts, not time) is the most visible in the deities of *indigitamenta*, in which two other characteristic traits of the Roman religion were expressed – fluidity and the deity’s ability to assume different forms.<sup>147</sup> Zieliński explained this on the example of germinating grain and the fluid changes of the deities taking care of this process. Supported by the terminology used by Schopenhauer, he said that “die römischen Götter sind Objektivationen des Willens”.<sup>148</sup> In this conception, a genius was a representative of the public will in a particular

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<sup>146</sup> Cf. T. Zieliński, *La Sibylle...*, pp. 97-125; *idem*, *La sacra missione di Augusto*, “Quaderni Augustei. Studi Stranieri”, 8, 1938, pp. 3-24. Cf. J. Scheid, *Religion romaine et spiritualité*, “Archiv für Religionsgeschichte” 5.1, 2003, pp. 198-209.

<sup>147</sup> About this subject in Wissowa’s work, see D. Elm, *Die Kontroverse über die ‘Sondergötter’. Ein Beitrag zur Rezeptions- und Wirkungsgeschichte des Handbuchs ‘Religion und Kultus der Römer’ von Georg Wissowa*, „Archiv für Religionsgeschichte” 5.1, 2003, pp. 67-79. In general, M. Perfigli, *Indigitamenta. Divinità funzionali e Funzionalità divina nella Religione Romana*, Pisa 2004.

<sup>148</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rom...*, pp. 114-115.

individual.

This ascertainment played a vital role in Zieliński's considerations concerning the cult of Caesar.<sup>149</sup> He saw its genesis in the cult of the genius. Augustus placed the statue of his genius in the *lares compitales* chapel in 7 BC. He also changed it into a manifestation of the common will of the citizens, substituting the genius of the Roman people.<sup>150</sup> Zieliński emphasised that this was not equivalent to worshipping Augustus himself, but contributed to the worshipped virtues being focused in the cult of his genius, and the geniuses of the following emperors (*Concordia, Pietas Augusti*).<sup>151</sup> This form of cult concerned the deity of the living ruler and not the ruler himself. On the other hand, consecration of the dead was supposed to be based on the belief that they were *fortes* and *boni*. It gave an ethical character to the Roman religion, which was juridical in nature. Zieliński did not fully free himself from Mommsen's line of thinking. The apotheosis was to be a reward for services, despite the fact that, as he ironically stated, it was still morality of legal character.<sup>152</sup> Zieliński claimed that the cult of the emperor had its roots in the Republican religion, and not in Greece. It was an innovative assumption at the time, contradictory to the opinions that the Roman religion was poorer than the Greek one, and that the cult of the ruler originated from Alexander the Great. The issue was seen mainly in political categories.

Zieliński also noticed the transformations in the cult of rulers; he tried to ignore them, however. While analysing the genesis of the cult, Zieliński omitted the person of Julius Caesar as he decided that his idolization had a particularly peculiar character; neither did he attempt to determine when it had

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<sup>149</sup> I summarize here the results of my research [in:] A. Gillmeister, *Kult cesarski...*, pp. 196-198.

<sup>150</sup> The reform is also emphasised in G. Wissowa, *Religion...*, p. 70.

<sup>151</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rom...*, pp. 140-141.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 145.

taken place. He considered Augustus to be the proper initiator of this type of cults. He devoted a considerable amount of space to Augustus, especially in the context of eschatological considerations.

While analysing the phenomena relating to the cult of the emperor, Zieliński developed and slightly modified his controversial comments regarding monotheism and polytheism in the ancient religions. This time, in order to adjust the Roman practice to Christianity, he proposed to reject the religious studies approach to those categories. Inspired by the works of Cornelius Tiele, a Dutch scholar living at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he proposed dividing religions into theocratic and theanthropic.<sup>153</sup> The first group consisted of the Semitic religions, in which the gap between the man and the deity was insurmountable. Also, there was no indirect form, such as e.g. heroes. To the second category belonged those religions in which this boundary was not clear-cut and it was possible for an entity to move from one category to another, i.e. the acts of incarnations and the apotheosis were permitted. Zieliński stressed the alleged similarities between the consecration of Caesars and the canonisation of saints in the Catholic church. It was to him another proof of the theanthropic character of Christianity and its relations with the Roman religion.<sup>154</sup> In the study concerning the religion of the Republican Rome, Zieliński ultimately rejected the polytheism – monotheism dichotomy, claiming that the religion of that period belonged to both categories because the deity was one in multiplicity and numerous in unity.<sup>155</sup>

Being opposed to the picture of the evolution of the Roman religion created by Georg Wissowa, Zieliński proposed another depiction of the changes

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<sup>153</sup> C. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, Edinburgh–London 1897, vol. 1, lecture 6. Cf. A.L. Molendijk, *Tiele on Religion*, “Numen” 46, 1999, pp. 237-268.

<sup>154</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rom...*, pp. 144-145.

<sup>155</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia Rzeczypospolitej...*, vol. 2, pp. 310-311.



occurring there. Wissowa divided the history of religion into several stages: primary religion (since the time of the kings), the period of Etruscanisation, then Hellenisation and the final collapse at the decline of the Republic. The most important to him was the first period, which resulted from the cult of genesis popular at that time. To Zieliński, in the Roman religion there were three merging currents: national, Greek and eastern.<sup>156</sup> Those currents did not unite in one trend despite the fact that they had been merging for ages. The Roman religion was developing in many directions, so it could satisfy the needs of its believers and function as the religion of the Empire.

Zieliński claimed that two “doctrines” of Hellenic religion were developed by the Roman religion and enabled the “psychological” adoption of Christianity. Those doctrines were the incarnation of the deity in a man (and the other way round), which formed the cult of the emperor, and the adaptation of the doctrine of the son of god by Rome. Similarly to Greece, it functioned in two versions – Apollo, a god-son, and Hercules, the man-god’s son.<sup>157</sup>

In a great abbreviation, this is how the impressive vision of the ancient religion appeared in a multi-volume cycle by Tadeusz Zieliński: this religion was a mediator of Christianity. This approach undoubtedly belongs to the theologising views on the ancient religion and his work should be treated as being of philosophical and historical value rather than of a purely scientific one.

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<sup>156</sup> T. Zieliński, *Rzym...*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>157</sup> T. Zieliński, *Religia Rzeczypospolitej...*, vol. 2, p. 315.

## 5.

The vision of the ancient religion presented above, in the world literature comparable only to the picture created by Franz Cumont<sup>158</sup> and Walter F. Otto, required the application of extraordinary persuasive means. Next level on which *Religions of the Ancient World* can be analysed is the study of the poetics of this work.

Tadeusz Zieliński used unique and extremely unusual method based on supplementing the lecture on the Greek religion with the study of particular phenomena in a strictly fictional way. *Klechdy attyckie*<sup>159</sup> was published in Russian and Polish. Zieliński connected the contents of the book with his considerations regarding religious studies, and gave it a significance beyond the level of fiction, similar in nature to a prophecy. *Irezyona* was supposed to play the role of a dynamic supplement to the static study of the Greek religion, in which the religious experience of the ancient people was to be depicted as a lively and actual one.<sup>160</sup>

Zieliński treated those “fables” very personally and assigned to them a huge role in propagating his ideas about the ancient religions. He stated that those stories, despite being a work of imagination, were based on motifs taken from various texts and relics of the Greek culture.<sup>161</sup>

The case of supplementing scientific contents with fictional forms is quite unique, even in the international context. While describing the process, it is necessary to point out the author’s fascination with the thought and person

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<sup>158</sup> Especially in *Lux Perpetua*, which was published after his death (Paris 1949).

<sup>159</sup> Russian edition: *Iresiona. Atticzeskije skazki*, vol.1-3, Pietrograd 1921; Polish edition: *Irezyona. Klechdy attyckie*, series 1-2, Warszawa 1922, series 3-4, Warszawa 1936.

<sup>160</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 182.

<sup>161</sup> *W promieniach kultury antycznej. Nowe prace Tadeusza Zielińskiego*, “Wiadomości Literackie” 1 (53), 1925, p. 2.

of Nietzsche, of whom such merging of science with narrative fiction was characteristic. Zieliński devoted a few outlines to the German philosopher and was generally considered to be a follower of Nietzsche.<sup>162</sup> He encountered the views of the German thinker during his studies in Germany and was faithful to him until the end of his life, which was very rare in the circle of classical philologists of that time. He recalled this humorously in his “Autobiography”.<sup>163</sup>

In his narration, Tadeusz Zieliński frequently used a technique close to the “peripatetic” dialogue. This is clearly visible in the analysis of such techniques as e.g. introducing a dialogue between a modern and an ancient man, or between two ancient interlocutors, into the narration. In both cases the judgement belongs to the reader. It seems that the idea of such an involvement on the part of the reader resembles, in some aspects, the conception of an open text by Umberto Eco. Nevertheless, it is not about the formal openness postulated by the Italian semiotician, but rather leaving “blanks” in the narration that can be filled in by the reader according to his or her feelings. Zieliński frequently used references to the reader, such as “thus, reader, we have a compact”, “very good, we will wait”, “the reader has grown weary” or “as the reader sees”.<sup>164</sup> This is not the only method of persuasion used by Zieliński. Additionally, in the discourse included in *Religions of the Ancient World* there are rhetorical questions, involving the reader in the narration, or references to created *ad hoc* “spoken” sources. All those elements gave

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<sup>162</sup> J.M. Curtis, *Michael Bakhtin, Nietzsche, and Russian Prerevolutionary Thought*, [in:] *Nietzsche in Russia*, B. Glatzer Rosenthal (ed.), Princeton 1986, pp. 331-353 (I used the Polish translation, [in:] *Ja – Inny. Wokół Bachtina. Antologia*, vol. 2, D. Ulicka (ed.), Kraków 2009, pp. 211-230).

<sup>163</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>164</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, pp. 14, 140, 30, 180. Such references are rhetorical figures commonly used by Tadeusz Zieliński. It is worth noticing that in the English translation Homeric similes, so frequently used in the Polish text, are frequently omitted.

Zieliński's work the character of a dialog. It seems that even this conception was created under the influence of the thought, or at least the style, of Nietzsche.

It is worthwhile to mention here that Mikhail Bakhtin, considered to be the father of dialogism in literature, was a student of Tadeusz Zieliński during his studies at the University in Saint Petersburg. Bakhtin treated him as one of his three most important university masters.<sup>165</sup> As James M. Curtis notices, it was the Polish philologist who taught the Russian literary scholar how to think in a Nietzschean way.<sup>166</sup> The influence of Zieliński's lectures is clearly visible in some of Bakhtin's ideas. Bakhtin's theory of genres is directly borrowed from Zieliński's university lectures.<sup>167</sup>

To continue with the issue of the poetics in Zieliński's works, I would like to focus on the analysis of the cycle in this aspect. As has been amply demonstrated before, the main thesis of those works is a methodological proof of "the creed" with a paradox of the origin of Christianity. In order to explain this risky proposition, it was necessary to use various methods of persuasion, the majority of which exceeded the standard use of rhetoric in the works of scientific nature. This made the cycle a stylistic collage. Some parts have the style of popular introductory books, while others are provided with a proper, technical scientific structure without the loss of the simplicity of the lecture itself. Thanks to that, they were still accessible to a wider audience. The fate of the last two volumes has already been mentioned. They were written in the

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<sup>165</sup> K. Hirschkop, *Historia tworzenia historii*, [in:] *Ja – Inny...*, p. 29.

<sup>166</sup> J.C. Curtis, *Michail Bachtin...*, p. 211.

<sup>167</sup> N. Perlina, *Funny things are happening on the way to the Bakhtin forum*, "Kenan Institute Occasional Papers", Washington 1989, pp. 10-11. I would like to thank Prof. Perlina for making it possible for me to use the text. Bakhtin was also inspired by *Our Debt to Antiquity*, see W.M. Calder III, D.J. Kramer, *An Introductory Bibliography to the History of Classical Scholarship chiefly in the XIXth and XXth Century*, Hildesheim–Zurich–New York 1992, p. 325. Cf. K. Clark, M. Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 30-33;

war conditions and constitute the author's spiritual testimony. Taking into account his ambitions, they should rather not be considered as the considerations connected with the philosophy of history. What is interesting is the hybridism of the genre with a simultaneous unity of the work's conception. It is worth noticing that through exceeding the boundaries of genres, Zieliński followed Nietzsche in anticipating the future conceptualisation of the philosophy of history, which appeared two generations later and caused a shift from the factual basis to the ideological basis.<sup>168</sup>

Still another aspect distinguishes the poetics applied by Tadeusz Zieliński: the use of non-scientific discourse, also in non-fictional writings. This is evident for example in the following passage from *Religion of Ancient Greece*:

(...) but we, Athenians of the fourth and third centuries, see it as it really is, a piece of fundamentally false reasoning, sometimes instinctive, but more often blended with duplicity. We really worship Pallas in the form which Phidias has created for her, but never have we ascribed to her statue the power of self-defence against the blow of a barbarian. If you maim her statue, it will be sacrilege, a sin of the same sort as perjury, disrespect for your parents, or injury to a guest; and you may be sure that the goddess will punish you for it – if not at once, then at some time in the future; if not in this world, then in the next world; if not in your own person of your descendants down to the fourth generation and beyond. And apart from that, your act will be an offence to our

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<sup>168</sup> See F. Ankersmit, *Historism and Postmodernism. A Phenomenology of Historical Experience*, [in:] *idem, History and Tropology. The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1994, pp. 182-188, which contains interesting remarks about postmodernism and historism. It is worth noticing that postmodernism with its characteristic equality of various discourses is a broad term.

religious feeling, for which we will punish you in our own name, and at once. As for your expression “the god-maker”, that is a piece of vulgar ignorance on your part.<sup>169</sup>

Elements of non-scientific language, a semi-prophetic style, strictly speaking, can be clearly distinguished. There is a structural component with a so-called messenger formula (“and you may be sure that the goddess will punish you for it”), and a cognitive component; there is a clearly stated topic concerning the notion of the man and sacrum.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, in period of the Romanticism there was a clear return to the prophetic style in literature, more often patterned on the Biblical style than on the ancient style;<sup>171</sup> good examples are William Blake, Friedrich Hölderin, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and in Poland Adam Mickiewicz; the last poet was greatly admired by Zieliński, who even conducted some lectures concerning him.<sup>172</sup> A considerable amount of Nietzsche’s writings can also be included in the genre.

The question arises whether the elements of the semi-prophetic style used by Zieliński were the only application of non-scientific discourse. The answer, in my opinion, is negative. It is due the prophetic rhetoric used by Zieliński that his narration in the *Religions of the Ancient World* cycle has many characteristic features of religious style. According to linguistic research, the most meaningful elements of this style that can be singled out are ideocentrism contrasted with anthropocentrism, psychologism and idealism in seeing the human being, a symbolic conceptualisation of the world and a communal perception of the human being connected with operating on different codes and

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<sup>169</sup> T. Zieliński, *The Religion...*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. P. Kładoczny, *Proroctwa chrześcijańskie jako gatunek mowy na tle innych gatunków profetycznych*, Zielona Góra 2004, p. 88.

<sup>171</sup> See J. Balfour, *The Rhetoric of Romantic Prophecy*, Stanford 2002.

<sup>172</sup> T. Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, p. 190.

contemplative approach towards the reality. It can also be added that dialogue, which is another characteristic feature of the religious style, has a totally different character than in the colloquial style.<sup>173</sup>

Almost all of those characteristics can be identified in the narration by Tadeusz Zieliński. The majority of them appeared already in the above-mentioned Axioms. Applications of the religious style, however, are limited to the cult situations and, more importantly, to confessional communication.<sup>174</sup> Obviously, Zieliński's writings were created outside of that context and belong to extremely different communication situations, even if it is assumed that part of his writing is theological in character. Therefore, I suggest that Tadeusz Zieliński's style should be described as a quasi-religious style.

Comments presented above certainly do not exhaust the wide range of Zieliński's poetics. It could be added that, with regard to the continuation (even a psychological one) of the ancient tradition<sup>175</sup>, which was professed by Zieliński, he very often recalled the modern poets and writers such as Shakespeare, Schiller, Goethe, Dante, but also Mickiewicz and Nietzsche. This was done in order to justify his comments of scientific character.

In the case of *Religions of the Ancient World*, we are dealing with a symphony of rhetorical means, which through various kinds of instruments created a coherent image of the ancient religion and its postulated influence on Christianity.

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<sup>173</sup> M. Wojtak, *O początkach stylu religijnego w polszczyźnie*, "Stylistyka" 1, 1992, p. 90.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 95.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. T. Zieliński, *Our Debt to Antiquity*, London 1909.

It is difficult to unequivocally assess the achievements of Tadeusz Zieliński in the field of religious studies, especially due to the fact that the first parts of the cycle were published almost a century ago. Moreover, the volumes form a category of their own. Without a doubt, the volume comparing Hellenism and Judaism did not stand the test of time, despite being quite interesting for many reasons. Still, it is worthwhile to read his studies on the Roman religion of the Republican period as well as the Greek religion. It should be stressed that Zieliński was one of the first scholars to observe and describe the uniqueness of the Greek religious experience and its universalist values.<sup>176</sup>

The last two volumes are especially unique. The situation in which they were created and the image of its creator, an old man with the mission of announcing the truths about the ancient religion, has to command at least a deep respect. I will permit myself to add a personal tone here: I have to admit that while I am reading the volumes, I see Zieliński just as he was described by his Romanian student, who saw him prostrate after the destruction of his flat and his flight from Poland: “tall, with his handsome white beard, he lay there before me like a statue of a god overturned by a tempest”.<sup>177</sup>

I’m inclined to believe that the following assessment could easily refer to the whole cycle: a reviewer of the French edition of *Religions of Ancient Greece* called the discussed study a “point of view”. *Religions of the Ancient World* are just that, a point of view of one of the last great masters of the golden age of *Altertumwissenschaften*.

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<sup>176</sup> M. Dzielska, *Badania...*, p. 278.

<sup>177</sup> E.K. Rand, *Tadeusz Zieliński*, “Classical Weekly” 33, 15 (Feb. 12), 1940, p. 170.



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