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**„THIS INTELLECTUAL WORLD HAS  
TO ITSELF, THAT SOMETIMES IT BECOMES  
FOR THE SOUL, WHAT AIR, FOOD AND  
DRINKS ARE FOR THE BODY” – BIBLIOPHILE  
IN EXILE. LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE  
OF GUSTAW ZIELIŃSKI**

**„Ten bowiem świat intelektualny ma to do siebie, że czasem  
tym się staje dla duszy, czym są dla ciała powietrze, pokarmy  
i napoje” – bibliofil na zesłaniu.**

**Korespondencja literacka Gustawa Zielińskiego**

**Abstract:**

Zieliński wrote in a letter to Orpiszewski: “since we have inadvertently entered into literary correspondence with each other, it will be a pleasure for me to extend it, considering it is a subject that I have always liked to talk and write about.” He was a book lover from his early youth. This is evidenced by the notes published in the youthful *diary* (Gustaw Zieliński *Diaries of My Life* ms. 777. Department of Special Collections, Zielińscy Library in Płock). He did not abandon this passion during his Siberian exile. Literature, not only in his case, but also other exiles, became a kind of sacrum, and brought the illusion of normality. Hence, the

substantial role played by the exile book collections. The role of Piotr Moszyński, or the successor to his initiative, Onufry Pietraszkiewicz, has been recognised in this matter. Zieliński did not create a large collection of books during the exile. He did not do that until he had returned. But the correspondence with Orpiszewski shows how he helped the exiles staying in provinces remote to Poland, to satisfy their need for contact, not only with Polish literature though, and his correspondence reflections are becoming notes from a literary critical discussion.

**Keywords:** literary criticism, exile, libraries and exile collections

**Abstrakt:**

Zieliński w liście do Orpiszewskiego napisał: „Ponieważ niechcący weszliśmy z sobą w literacką korespondencję bardzo mi przyjemnie będzie nadal ją przedłużyć, tym więcej, że to jest przedmiot, o którym zawsze i rozprawać i pisać lubiłem”. Miłośnikiem książek był od wczesnej młodości. Świadectwem tego są zapiski zamieszczone w młodzieńczym Dzienniku (G. Zieliński, *Dzienniki mojego życia*, Dział Zbiorów Specjalnych. Biblioteka im. Zielińskich w Płocku, rkps. 777). Na syberyjskim zesłaniu pasji tej nie porzucił. Literatura, nie tylko w jego przypadku, ale i innych zesłańców, stawała się swoistym sacrum, przynosiła iluzję normalności. Stąd ogromna rola, jaką odgrywały zesłańcze księgozbiory. Znana jest w tej dziedzinie rola Piotra Moszyńskiego czy spadkobiercy jego inicjatywy Onufrego Pietraszkiewicza. Zieliński nie stworzył na zesłaniu ogromnego księgozbioru. Uczynił to dopiero po powrocie. Ale korespondencja z Orpiszewskim pokazuje, w jaki sposób pomagał zesłańcom przebywającym w oddalonych od Polski guberniach zaspokoić potrzebę kontaktu i to nie tylko z polską literaturą, a jego korespondencyjne refleksje stają się notatkami z dyskusji krytycznoliterackiej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** krytyka literatury, zesłanie, biblioteki i księgozbiory zesłańcze

Zieliński, in a letter to Orpiszewski, wrote: “Since we have inadvertently entered into literary correspondence with ourselves, it will be a pleasure for me to extend it, moreover, it is an object that I always liked to talk about and write about.”<sup>1</sup> The letter comes from the time of exile, the time that was filled: horticulture in summer, “reading and chess” in winter (f. 11r).

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<sup>1</sup> *Gustaw Zieliński to Ignacy Orpiszewski*, Department of Special Collections, Zieliński Library in Płock, MS 795, f. 13r Later, with descriptions of the collection used, I put only

Gustaw Zieliński is not a figure from the first line of Polish writers, so it may be worth remembering that he was born in January 1809. He was therefore a contemporary of Słowacki. His talent did not match the talent of Słowacki, and also biographically he was closer to a son of Mother-Pole, rather than to a romantic poet. Because as a student at the University of Warsaw, he participated in the November Uprising. To avoid being incorporated into the tsarist army, his uncle Józef gave him the property of Kierz (Skepe community). Here, Zieliński completed his literary interests and wrote. However, he did not avoid the fate that awaited for him. He was arrested for helping a wounded partisan from Artur Zawisza's Zaliwszczycy unit, imprisoned in the Warsaw Citadel in 1833, and a year later (in 1834) convicted to settle in Western Siberia. Initially, he was in Tobolsk, where he became friends with Konstanty Wolicki and Onufry Pietraszkiewicz. Then he was transferred to the town of Ishim – the planned place of his exile. There he read a lot and wrote. There, he created *Kirghiz*, released in 1842, which is considered as last of the romantic poems. After his return to the country (in 1842), Zieliński, although he spoke about himself “the greatest enemy of businesses,” he took care of the landed estate inherited from his uncle Józef. “The greatest enemy of businesses,” was the greatest friend of books, and this – one would like to say – from always, at least from early youth, which is evidenced by the notes posted with the youthful *Diary* (Gustaw Zieliński *Diaries of My Life* MS 777. Zielińscy Library in Płock). He did not abandon this passion during his Siberian exile.

It is the period of his exile, that I want to deal with in particular, although it is only after his return from Siberia and for many years he created a book collection that became the origin of the Płock Scientific Society Library. Zieliński, therefore, did not create the collection in exile. He used the libraries of Adolf Januskiewicz and Onufry Pietraszkiewicz. What did he read and how did he deal with the lack of “food for the soul” in exile?

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the card number. In the case of other collections of this library – I use the abbreviation: ZL, after which I mark the manuscript and card number.

In 1962, Janusz Pieniżek in *Blok Notesie Muzeum Literatary* presented, what he stressed in the title, “Sybirian Literary Correspondence”. It was about Orpiszewski’s letters to Gustaw Zieliński<sup>2</sup>. My text complements that publication. It contains a review of not only extracts, what did the predecessor, but full copies of Zieliński’s letters to Orpiszewski.

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Mentioned at the beginning, chess, were quickly abandoned by Zieliński, because: „[...] about a dozen players can be counted here, however, between them, you will not find a competitor worthy of me, so I do not play much, once because of victory without struggle, is like triumph without glory, and secondly, that the local players admit that with me they do not have the satisfaction of playing chess. Therefore, the most important of my winter employment is literature (f. 12r)”.

He read a lot. The first literary letter to Orpiszewski was filled with reflection on “the inexhaustible number of French romances and memoirs, which now, almost everyone write in France” (f. 12v). He decided, however, that only some are noteworthy<sup>3</sup>. This, as he wrote: “the type of historical sources”, was characterized by the fact that for the most part they are: “[...] pearls scattered in large masses of rubbish and till you read some interesting detail, you have to wade through the ocean of dry, boring concepts, sad descriptions, infinite dialogues, all of which strive only for this purpose, to show the public that the author took a big role in accidents of some country or nation or that he was a great, brilliant man of his age, but finally it shows that he was a butler, secretary or other small figure (f. 12v)”.

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<sup>2</sup> J. Odrowąż-Pieniżek, „*Stuck to Life*”. *Literary letters of Ignacy Orpiszewski to Gustaw Zieliński (1835-1843)*, „Blok-Notes Muzeum Mickiewicza” 1963, no. 2.

<sup>3</sup> „[...] namely works of: Suchet, Fain, Arnauld [!], *Femme de qualité*” (f. 11v). Luis Gabriel Suchet, *Memoirs of the war in Spain, from 1808 to 1814*, vol. 1-2, London 1829; Agathon Jean François Fain – most probably published, when the author was still living: *Manuscrit de l’an 1814, trouvé dans les voitures impériales prises à Waterloo* (Paris, 1823). And the rest of his memoirs, published after his death in 1836. Antonie Vincent. Arnault, *Vie politique et militaire de Napoléon... Ouvrage orné de planches lithographiées...* vol. 1-2, Paris 1822-1826; Étienne-Léon de Lamoignon-Langon, *Mémoires d’une femme de qualité, sur Louis XVIII, sa cour et son règne*, 1829.

He also informed that in the “our” library – in other words the book collection of Januszkiewicz, the letter was already sent from Ishim, he found at least „[...] around 80 volumes of various works of this kind”<sup>4</sup>. Focusing on the French literature, he did not ignore the romance genre that was still popular at that time, because the Ishim library had works of “all young French authors” (f. 12v), works in which: „[...] you can see a lot of fire, imagination, even poetry, but often disposes of their knowledge of characters, good taste and even sense. They all rushed to the road that Byron showed them, but mostly imitate his mistakes, unable to ascend to his beauty and are for the most part, if I can use that expression, compilers of eyesore, monstrous shapes and the most hideous crimes that they bring in pretty good colours on the stage. Sometimes we even have to ask, what a thought, what a purpose, so strange and sometimes so outrageous to show the world a picture. However, you can find many pleasures by reading some pieces of Victor Hugo, Dumas, Balzac and others, namely *Notre Dame*<sup>5</sup>, *Isabel de Bavière*<sup>6</sup> and *Scènes de la vie privée*<sup>7</sup> (f. 12r)”.

Such remarks, for the first time included in the cited list, and filling the literary correspondence with Orpizewski, can not be overestimated. The

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<sup>4</sup> For example, he mentioned: „Prince Du Barry, Cardinal Pacca, Marchioness de Crequy, Princess Abrantes Lavallete, Constanta, Bouriena [...]” (f. 11v.). Perhaps, exiles had: *The authentic memoirs of the countess de Barre (Du Barry), the french king's mistress, carefully collated from a manuscript in the possession of the dutchess of Villeroy [Texte imprimé]*, by sir Frances N, London 1771; Bartolomeo Pacca – author of memoirs from the nunciature period in Cologne and Lisbon: *Memorie storiche di monsignor Bartolomeo Pacca ... sul di lui soggiorno in Germania ... in qualità di nunzio apostolich*, Modena 1836; Renée-Caroline-Victoire de Froulay de Tesse marchioness de Créquy, most probably her *Souvenirs de la marquise de créquy 1710 à 1802*, which began to be published in Paris in 1834. Full work consists of 10 volumes; Laure Junot d’Abrantès – *Mémoires historiques sur Napoléon Ier, la Révolution, le Directoire, l’Empire et la Restauration Paris 1831-1835; Memoirs of Count Lavallette*, vol.1-2, London 1831; Louis Constant Wairy *Mémoires de Constant, premier valet de chambre de l’empereur, sur la vie privée*, Paris 1830; Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne – what author of the letter, has in mind, is most probably, the first edition of memoirs in French: *Mémoires de M. de Bourrienne, ministre d’état sur Napoleon, le directoire, le consulat, l’empire et la restauration : avec des notes ajoutées des mémoires de Napoleon écrits à St. Hélène, des mémoires du duc de Rovigo, de celles du general Rapp, de Constant, et des plusieurs autres sources authentiques*. Paris: Colburn et Bentley, 1831, 10 volumes;

<sup>5</sup> Novel of V. Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* – first edition, Paris, 1831.

<sup>6</sup> A. Dumas, *Isabel de Bavière*, Paris 1835.

<sup>7</sup> H. Balzac, *Scènes de la vie privée*, Paris 1832.

literate, erudite, and bibliophile who remains in exile, presents his position, consistent with the opinions functioning in the then critical-literary discussions, opinions, which, importantly, he could not know. The only periodical, upon which he could build, and correct his literary taste, was reaching the exiles *Saint Petersburg Weekly*. Reaching, often with a lot of time slip and not always complete. However, the quoted opinions testify to Zieliński's excellent literary sense and the great aesthetic sensitivity.

Certainly it resulted from him, being a person of wide reading – because any of the European literatures was unknown to him. He knew German, French and English literature. Bulwer's romances<sup>8</sup>, he considered them "well written", and he valued the most: „[...] the last work [of Bulwer] entitled *England and the English* – because the author wrote about his country and his compatriots, he was able to paint their character and habits. The exact picture gives different parties and people a more accurate influence on the fate of this nation, having and impartially evaluating the fetuses of the latest English writers. He, you can say, was the first who guessed beauty in the dramas of Byron, which were considered the subordinate works of this great master for a long time (f. 12r)".

It was not possible for him, to put even a small view on each of the works in correspondences. Firstly, due to the fact that [...] the volume of the letter did not allow it, secondly, what the sender humbly remarked: "that I do not feel this strength in me so that I can accurately and multilaterally assess the news" (f. 12r). It seems, however, that not only the strength but also the knowledge enabling thorough criticism of the text, were possessed by him. Perhaps, a bit by modesty, probably also the volume of the letter, it was usually limited to enumerating interesting works, a bit accurate describing only the most valued by Zieliński<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> British politician, poet and writer.

<sup>9</sup> „To the best works read here, I count the *History of Philip August* by N. Capefigue, one of the first French historians, Memoirs of younger member of Trelawney family, friend of Byron, Corsair, full of delightful pictures and lofty poetry, Dumas's dramas, giving the author the right to take a place between the more accurate tragics, in which he especially aims, colour, rapid development of action and dramatic effect, poetry of Victor Hugo, namely his *Les Orientales* and *Odes*, in which he is incomparable. Romantic Spain by Telephora da Tnieba, where in beautiful tales we can see the life of this romantic nation,

He felt the greatest deficiency in relation to his reading of Russian literature. I think that this type of confessions are only a nod to the censors. Especially, as he immediately commented on similar “regrets” that „[...] it is impossible to only take care of it where there are so many and so important in different languages” (f. 12v). In later correspondences, he added only some information that he is reviewing the periodicals there – the journals published by the Ministry of National Enlightenment – *Moskwitianin* and *Sowriemiennik*<sup>10</sup>, is following historical articles of Pogodin, and he reads texts of Gogol, and Lugansky<sup>11</sup>, Osnovyanenko<sup>12</sup> and critical articles by Shevryyov<sup>13</sup> (f. 40 r)”.

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from the Moorish rule, to Philip V. Miss Staël Holstein on Germany, which first assessed the beauty of German literature (or even WA Szlegel [!], Benjamin Constant helped a lot) and now I am reading the *History of France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century* wrote by Lacretel, one of those interesting works that can no longer be laid down once the reading begins. I can not ignore the *Journey to the East*, namely to the *Tomb of the Saviour* held, one by Mrs Michaud and Poujoulat, the other by Lamartin. Particularly the last one is likable by this beautiful Christian poetry, which in all his writings appears, though it does not abduct us with the thoroughness of its remarks and observations, it delights with the beauty of the enchanting surroundings, landscapes and descriptions.”(f. 12r). v. *Histoire de Philip-Auguste*, vol. 1-4, Paris 1829; Edward John Trelawny, *Adventures of a Younger Son.*, Paris 1833; V. Hugo, *Les Orientales*, Paris 1829; Madame de Staël, *De l’Allemagne*, Paris 1813; August Wilhelm von Schlegel; Henri Benjamin Constant de Rebecque; *Histoire de France pendant le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle par M. Lacretelle*, Paris 1808-1826; Michaud (in cooperation with J. J. F. Poujoulatem) he published a collection of sources for the history of crusades (*Bibliothèque des croisades*, 1822) V. J. Ruskowski, “Adam Mickiewicz and the Last Crusade”, *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1993, no. ¾, p. 44; *Voyage en Orient*, vol. 1-4, Paris 1835.

<sup>10</sup> *Sowriemiennik* – (Russian: *Современник*) – a Russian literary and social journal, published in St. Petersburg with breaks in 1836-1866. Until 1843, it was a quarterly and later a monthly. Founded and run by Pushkin, and after his death by Pyotr Pletnyov. v. *The Great Universal Encyclopedia of PWN*, vol. 10, Warsaw 1967.

<sup>11</sup> Namely Vladimir Ivanovich Dal (Russian. Владимир Иванович Даль) pseud. Luhansk Kazakh, b. 22 XI 1801, Luhansk, d. 4 X 1872, Moscow, Russian lexicographer, writer and ethnographer; From 1838 a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Science; main works: *Tolkowyj słowar’ żywego wielikorusskiego języka* (vol. 1-4 1863-66, extended edition 2 and 3 ed. J. Baudouina de Courtenay 1903-09 i 1912-14); collection of Russian proverbs, (*Posłowicy russkiego naroda* 1861-62), fairy tales; stories maintained in the poetics of a natural school; ethnographic and linguistic works . V. <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/Dal-Wladimir-I;3890348.html> Access 05.02.2018.

<sup>12</sup> Hryhory Kvitka – Osnovyanenko – Укр. Григорій Квітка-Основ’яненко (1778-1843), lit.pseud. Hrychko Osnovyanenko – Ukrainian prose writer, playwright, journalist, literary critic. Biography in: *Енциклопедія історії України*, vol.. 4, Київ 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Stepan Shevryyov (1806-1864) – a Russian critic, literary historian, poet, one of “lubomudrov” and translator. Co-publisher (together with M. P. Pogodin) of the *Moskwitianin* magazine, one of the editors of the *Moskowski wiestnik* magazine. Friend of Mickiewicz

In the abundantly cited above, the first “literary” list of Zieliński, which I managed to find, the sender announced that maybe another time “about the details of literature will be written”, because “[...] through my stay in Siberia I read 280 volumes of various works, excluding newspapers “(f. 12v). And that he had something to write about, you can be sure<sup>14</sup>.

The letter fell on fertile ground, because the recipient – Orpiszewski eagerly undertook a literary discussion and in the very next letter (Ishim, 17/4 October 1837) Zieliński answered: „Beloved Ignas! Since we have inadvertently entered into literary correspondence with me, it will be nice for me to continue to extend it, the more it is an object I always like to talk about and write about. I regret that you are in a place so little abundant in books, I understand your desire for your growing spread of acquired messages (f. 13r)”.

It is still necessary to explain – why Orpiszewski? Certainly a humanist, because he graduated from the Faculty of Law and Administration. A friend of Zieliński from the provincial school in Płock – where both of them developed their literary passions. But also an exile ... This was not only Orpiszewski’s problem behind the Ural, but most of exiles, this problem was time. Free time. Exiles read a lot of. Examples can be multiplied; Felińska, Sabiński and others. In addition, they were friends, they knew each other, so probably also because of him Zieliński was sending his critical literary reflections. It was particularly intense when the sending of the books themselves were already difficult.

In the following letters, Zieliński often focused on the French literature. However, he avoided an unequivocal evaluation. He saw so many contradictory opinions that it was difficult to say something firm. He

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during his stay in Moscow. V. A. Mickiewicz, *Letters Part II: 1830-1841*, vol. XV, ed.. M. Dernałowicz, E. Jaworska, M. Zielińska, [in:] id., *Works. Anniversary Edition*, ed. Z. J. Nowak et al., Warsaw 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Many letters contain similar passages: From our literature, I read recently the *Diaries about Queen Barbara* issued by Michał Baliński – very interesting, based on a hundred, if not more, contemporary letters of Zygmunt August, Radziwiłłs, brothers of Barbara, Barbara herself, a courtier Dowojny and a writer Koszucki taken from the Radziwiłł’s Archive. I also read the third volume of Odyniec’s translations, containing the *Corsair and Heaven and Earth* of Byron, the excellent translation (f. 40r).



wrote: “[...] some praise, others chastise, some will admit it more than one deserves, others, raised with the spirit of the party, do not see beauty, or at least they do not want to see it. In this sentences confusion, having read various criticisms of French, German, English, Polish writers, when fewer votes are **for**, and more **against**, I have taken the following comments (f. 14r)”.

He admitted that there must be some element in French literature that makes these works widely read. Because when: „Delilles, Marmonteles, Krebilions<sup>15</sup> are rotting on the shelves of bookstores, the writings of Balzac, Eugene Sue, V. Hugo, Dumas are passed from hands to hands and are all in heat of discussions “(f. 14v). He decided these elements are: „[...] excellent poetic beauties in their works noticeable. They accuse them about the immorality, monstrous images, scandals and corruption. But to tell the truth, it is not a picture of humanity – and if today’s writers are repeating the veil covering the human heart more, there are more defects than virtues, and these defects or crimes in real ones paint our features. Who should be guilty that the human race has come to this state, that not only that one does not think to improve, but also do not dare to look in the mirror that reflects his character so faithfully. It is not my intention to take on the defense of today’s French literature (f. 14v)”.

Perhaps more at that time he was fascinated with German literature. He enthusiastically accepted the work *Die Deutsche Litteratur*<sup>16</sup> by Wolfgang Menzel. This author – according to Zieliński – having almost forgotten that he is a German, very conscientiously reveals his opinion about whole German literature. What was it? – quite shocking. Zieliński wrote: „How many notabilities here he shattered with one stroke of his pen, even despite the voice of all Germania. These gods Jan Müller<sup>17</sup> – Hegel – Goethe – are in his opinion only blockheads. He admits to the latter a great

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<sup>15</sup> Claude-Prosper Jolyot de Cr billon – French writer. Author of fashionable romance novels in his era, devoted mainly to libertine salons in France of the 18<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>16</sup> *Die deutsche Literatur*, Stuttgart 1828.

<sup>17</sup> Zieliński wrote about: Johannes von M ller, *Der Geschichten Schweizerischer Eidgenossenschaft*, Stuttgart 1832-1833.

talent, great mastery, but he accuses that he was the first to infect Germany with this sentimental effeminacy, which he gave in his *Werther* [...]. He judges authors not only from their writings, but even from their lives. To Jan Müller, who, like a chameleon, changed colours in his political life, he throws great errors in his *Swiss History*. [...] Müller, having filled his work with pompous expressions, Freicheit und Vaterland knew where dexterity could be flattered brazenly by the aristocracy and its superstitions. All such errors, did not escape the watchful eye of the German critic, and according to him, and Goethe is not free from the above accusations. [...] But too small is the space of the letter, so that you can treat such huge items extensively. I will only tell you that Mentzel has just opened my eyes and let me know what true German literature is, what neither Ms. Staël nor Lerminier<sup>18</sup>, or even *Lexikon* did show me.

That's all about Germany (f. 13v-14r)".

However, he did not keep this word. In another letter, he returned to discussing German literature. This time he did not reach for new things, but for criticized Goethe. He reached for the older work, because, as he said, again somewhat contrary to the remarks contained in the earlier parcel "there is no state of expiration for beauty" (f. 40r). He reached for *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. He did this to check the words of "our [Polish] Arch-poet, to check whether in fact Goethe should be known in original. Just after reading the book, in his letter he noted: „*Werther* must be read in German, no translation is able to give charms, simplicity, poetry of this masterpiece. By reading, you think you see that you know people working in this little drama. You feel with them, you suffer with them (f. 40r)".

He could not write about our Arch-poet for obvious reasons, which does not mean that in his literary letters, Polish literature was absent. Already in the first one, this literature was represented by the work titled *Literature and Criticism* by Michał Grabowski, which was released a few months earlier. The work is in fact important and known and with many 'feathers' dismantled. I do not intend to introduce Zieliński's detailed

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<sup>18</sup> Most probably, he is thinking about Eugène Lerminier.

comments more extensively. On the other hand, there are absolutely priceless excerpts in which he abandons the role of the reporter in favour of subjective feelings and writes about Grabowski's work: „The first part is a strange beauty, because in addition to the advantages of language and style, it has the greatest, that is deeply conceived and developed logically (which very rarely happens with us). Hence, this work, which is in no way inferior to the works of German deep thinkers, has the superiority of easy expression over them. And the author provides a good place between our writers. If times will allow me, I will try to give you a general outline of this work and some exceptions (f. 14r)”.

The extracts will soon become a frequent occupation of Zieliński as Orpiszewski's correspondent. The latter, displaced from Yeniseysk, since then, his contact with literature and the Polish word was not only difficult, but it became almost impossible. Therefore, Zieliński, having learned about the transfer of a friend, in a letter written from Ishim d. 6 March / 22 February 1838, declared: „When I read that you are resettled from Yeniseysk to a distant area, I felt sorry for you and I decided, if not for the body, at least will give Your soul such food, while taking into account that you would never forget to read in Polish, so I send you *Saint Petersburg Weekly* for the whole year 1837, consisting of one hundred complete numbers (f. 15r)”.

Parcels were rare, and Zieliński often shared his literature with a friend “in a nutshell”, in the form of extracts. It was extremely important for Orpiszewski. Zieliński therefore sent the full works. „I will not give you details about Kraszewski, you know them from *Weekly*, a young writer with great abilities, with a passion for work and a true German perseverance. With multilateral news, he throws himself blindly at everything. Critic, poet, historian. Who knows if this last role does not suit him the best. His historical passages are a great advantage, his *History of Vilnius* is to be the most outstanding product. [insertion: I am sending you one of I. Kraszewski's poems, ‘Always Together’]<sup>19</sup>. This is the elegy that Grabowski considers

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<sup>19</sup> “Who will refuse the beauty of this paragraph, it is the true language of the heart, the language of the suffering soul. It seems that we share the feelings of the poet, when he tells us his naively frank and sad sorrows. However, the truth is greater, that it is not enough to

as the most perfect in our language, elegy from the feelings that the poet painted] (f. 21v)”.

The most extensive excerpt comes from the *History of Polish Literature* by Michał Wiszniewski, a work which Zieliński recognized as the most important for our literature published so far: „The author, who is a professor at the University of Cracow, has already been honoured with the works he has published: 1. *Ba[k]on Method of Translating Nature*<sup>20</sup>; 2. *Characters of Humans' Reasons*<sup>21</sup>; 3. *Monuments of History and Literature*<sup>22</sup>. For twenty years he had been collecting materials, which had considerable value as far as the access to Czacki's collections was concerned. Now with a university library at hand, he was rich in manuscripts and began to publish his story. Three volumes have already come out, the first two of which covered the Piast era, before the recent time I received – and I am thinking of talking about them here (f. 41r)”.

The extract includes ten written on both sides cards attached to the letter. Zieliński presented the plan of the work and the objectives guiding

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be an inspired poet, you need to have the power to embody the word, you need to know poetry-art. This is what Kraszewski does not get above all, I am not talking about the above poem, because I consider it the best [!] of all his poetry, but of his other attempts. You read, you like it, but you feel the lack, some lack of creative power – the deficiency of what delights, raises in poetry, and the poem will not be weak, but it lacks the sounds that would speak to our soul; there is some exaggeration in it, an exaggeration of words that weaken our impression and thought which will strike us by discussing it, developing it further, it weakens, slackens and loses its entire effect – so indeed Kraszewski is only a poet of prose, he feels strongly, but he can not sing these feelings with the language of the gods. And the lute in his hand, is not in the hands of an expert master, to which every soul of the listeners would be tuned, from which inspiration would come, like a stream from mountains falling off, it tear off, carrying with it, feelings of the whole crowd like leaves of plants growing on the shore taken by water to the depths. You considered this lack of forms to express yourself as a lack of nature, that more than one can be a closed poet, silent, as you call him, who, having picked a rich, bubbling imagination from nature, can not publish it with a living language, can not think of it he is kneading and digesting with material shapes, he can not put it into words, neither in canvas, nor in marble, nor in a lute. He lives and dies unknown – it is true. But it seems to me that this remark can not apply to Kraszewski's poetry. It seems to me that in him, from two heavenly gifts, namely, reason and imagination, the first took over the last one, constrained its flights and he subjected the hottest heartrails to a scalpel of cold analysis. A happy poet whose cold reason, did not kill the fiery imagination (f. 24v-r).

<sup>20</sup> M. Wiszniewski, *Bacon Method of Translating Nature*, Cracow 1834.

<sup>21</sup> Idem, *Characters of Humans' Reasons*, Cracow 1837.

<sup>22</sup> Idem, *Monuments of History and Literature*, vol. 1-4, Cracow 1835-1837.

the author. He added his marginal notes to the extracts. He decided that Orpiszewski, although in this way, should be given to the work about which *Saint Petersburg Weekly*: „had already made a mention many times, but in such a way that nothing could be learned from it, and the general praise, shyness of taking on the work of deeply looking at his subject, a sound and accurate judgment, and extensive erudition all sparked curiosity. Because, to tell you the truth, we need a huge amount of information to appreciate the literary phenomenon here. It seems to me that the strength of today’s critics is not yet fully ready (f. 41v)”.

The fact that they were really conducting a critical correspondence **dialogue** – they point out: “Your comments on our current literature, namely the three writers who are ancestors of our literature, I read with pleasure, what is more I completely share your opinion” (f. 21r) or longer reflections of Zieliński: „I am surprised that you did not pay Your attention to the article by Mr. Żochowski<sup>23</sup> about electricity considered to be the beginning of all the phenomena of our sphere. It is an object coming from the limits of fiction, but it is always important. At today’s state of European civilization, scholars working at the field of exact and speculative sciences abandoned the ancient routine, translating themselves through signs and symbols understood only by the initiate to what kind of science. Today, every writer wants to be understood by the general, he explains his ideas in an easy and popular way. I count the articles of Mr. Żochowski for this order. They are written in a beautiful, clean, easy to understand language, but that would be the smallest advantage of these articles. The great, radiant thought in them is predominant, he wants to demolish the old theories, to create a new physical world on the new system. I am very happy with the talent of Żochowski, which I take from a few exceptions. I am curious about the work itself<sup>24</sup>, whose subscription he has already announced, and

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<sup>23</sup> Józef Żochowski was a regular collaborator with *Saint Petersburg Weekly*. He published in the section: Natural Sciences. In no. 56-58 from 1839, he announced: “Translation of common wind and periodic winds – as well as translation of common current and periodic currents based on Amper electric streams.” Probably this article Zielinski had in mind.

<sup>24</sup> J. Żochowski, *Physics*, vol. 1-2, Warsaw 1841-1842.

in which, in the first part, he is to talk about physics, on what extent it is today; in the second one will be the refutation of today's system of physics, in the third the new physics of the Author himself, on the new supported system (f. 21v-22r)".

And although often in the letters we find the formula: "enough about literature ..." it still stands out in the foreground. The letters show that Zieliński was an attentive reader and sympathizer of the *Saint Petersburg Weekly*. Despite the problems with sending the magazine, he did not only read it willingly, but often made his opinions based on texts published there. By *Weekly* he introduced Orpiszewski to such works as: *Historical Picture of Literature and Science in Poland etc.* published in Vilnius by Jocher<sup>25</sup> and *History of Polish Literature* by Wiszniewski<sup>26</sup>. Following *Weekly*, the then Vilnius, because of the multitude in the original works going out there, he described as "the focus of our literature, more important than Warsaw" (f. 28r) and brought the novelties, original texts and translations published there. Many parts, whenever there was an opportunity – were sent to Orpiszewski<sup>27</sup>.

These literary letters can be named such, because there is also a completely different, functional use of the literary text. The description of the Siberian aura contained in Orpiszewski's package, gave Zieliński

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<sup>25</sup> A. B. Jocher, *A bibliographic and Historical Picture of Literature and Science in Poland Since the Introduction of Print to it, Until 1830*, vol.1-3, Vilnius 1840-1857.

<sup>26</sup> M. Wiszniewski, *History of Polish Literature*, vol. 1-10, Cracow (1840-57).

<sup>27</sup> With another list "[...] you will pick up newspapers and books, namely:

1) 17 Newspapers from this year. They come from 'Barrow' from Sawicki, I do not know what kind of contract you have, if you send back them, do it directly to the name of Sawicki.

2) Seven issues from section about Willemain [!] Under the title *Cours de Litterature Française professé par M. Villemain a la faculte des lettres de Paris*. Admittedly, these are only nicks, because after the first four numbers, there are 5, 6, 7, 8 missing and only 9, 10, 11 are there, but the rest is missing also. However, from these snippets you can give an idea about the author and the method of his lecture. There are many interesting places, and Villemain's name counts today among the literary qualities of our century. You can keep this little thing at home and give it back when God allows to see you and to embrace on the banks of the Vistula.

3) a novel with a verse called *Kirghiz*, this is a book sent to you from the author as a gift. Since, above-mentioned books will reach your hands, let me know when you will collect them (f. 39r-v).

literary reflection. In 1841, he wrote from Ishim: „You scared me with the description of your last winter and flood. Although the last one was to present a charming view, but Krasicki says in one of his letters. With all this, spectacles are very large: Like Etna with her fires, Like sudden earthquake, Like the flame of an apartment, Like the downpours of the riverside, Like the elements in their dispute, Like broken winds, the sea All this is great, but watching the fire, disturbances, floods best In a very humble place From a distance, upstairs<sup>28</sup> (f. 34 r)”.

With time, library supplies began to end. Zieliński wrote: “I only eat inanimate fruits, of what was first read. I take novelties in periodical, in Moscow published under the title *Москвитянин*<sup>29</sup> (34v) . In other place: „[...] all literary resources have ended. I read what was here, and if now I rarely find out any new book, it’s just like hungry teeth, one, two and three, and is gone. In this state of affairs, I can not be afraid of mental indigestion, and if the comparison does not hurt, now I have the face of the great Boa snake, who once a month comes with appetite, then he breathes and digests only (f. 39v)”.

Not having any new books, Zielinski turned for old literature. The libraries operating at the exile gave such a chance, they were able to take modest scientific initiatives. Zieliński decided to lead a study of Polish literature of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, he used intensively not from the local library, but from the Pietraszkiewicz’s collection, becoming a frequent correspondent and one of the most active readers of his collection. In one of the letters addressed to Pietraszkiewicz, Zieliński wrote: „I think that now, by reducing the number of Polish readers, many books have to go back to your collection. Of these, I would ask: 1. Maciejowski’s: *The History of Slavic Legislation*, everything that this author wrote – the most important would be his *Memoirs*, which he pseveral years in 2 volumes in Warsaw. 2. Baliński’s: *History of Vilnius*. 3. Gołębiowski’s, if they are: *About Dress in Poland*

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<sup>28</sup> I. Krasicki, ‘To S\*\*\*\*’, [in:] ‘Poems with Prose’, [in:] *Ignacy Krasicki – Ten Volumes in One*, Paris 1830, p. 158.

<sup>29</sup> *Москвитянин* – scientific-literary magazine published in Moscow by M. P. Pogodin in 1841-1856.

and *Houses and Manors*. 4. Łukaszewicz's: *On the Churches of the Czech Brothers*. 5. *Villagers Song from the Nemunas*. Besides, if you have in your collection *Poezye* by Jan Kochanowski, Jędrzej Kochanowski's *Jerusalem*, Kraszewski's *History of Vilnius*, *Memoirs* by Ambroży Grabowski published last year in Cracow, so I would ask for it, and also everything that Wójcicki published. The most-important ones are: *Memoirs About Queen Barbara*, published in two volumes by M. Baliński and *Stańczyk's Chronicles*, a jester of King Sigismund, published by Kraszewski. – These two works, at any cost, I need to have”<sup>30</sup>.

The librarian did not discourage his work, although he was aware that the collections held would not fully meet the expectations of the person concerned. However, what he could, he tried to serve, while assessing the collection of books: „The great and enormous intention of working on the history and literature of the 16<sup>th</sup> century will not find much resources in the scanty library, accidentally without any plan gathered, and in Polish works very poorly provided. Do not, however, take it to the account of reluctance, that I do not approve of your undertaking, beautiful and glorious, extensive and work and many books requiring, and rather, complaining falls out that I can not attach to it, as I understand the extent of the object . However the enormity terrifies, and the scarcity of books at every step will be noticed, do not give up your thoughts once and for all, it will grow up, mature and will bear fruit with longer valuation. [...] All my books are for your services and who can have more rights to demand that I give them to the mind who see the 16<sup>th</sup> century vision in his head. As you ask me, I will send everything that I will only have (LE I, 115-116)”.

Literature of Sigismund's era in Poland, delighted Zieliński. He found much pleasure in reading the *Sermons* of Fr. Piotr Skarga and the *Jerusalem Liberated* with “firm, pure, poetic written language” (f. 37v). Opposed to them was the work *The World Partially Reviewed* by Daniel

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<sup>30</sup> *Philomaths Archives. Letters from the Exile, vol. 1. : Circle of Onufry Pietraszkiewicz and Cyprian Daszkiewicz*, collected, edited and prefaced by Z. Sudolski in cooperation with M. Grzebień, Warsaw 1999, pp.262-263, 265. Later, abbrev. LE is used, after which page is marked.



Bratkowski: „It is collection of poems like epigrams and episodes with heavy jokes, unbearable, with Polish language, full of macaronic words, with an obscene and uncharacteristic style like day and night with the works quoted above. To give you a better idea, I place one of the snippets chosen by chance (f. 37v-38r)”.

He sent a poem “Hunting”, which revealed the gradations of the disappearance of literature and customs in the beginning of the Sigismund era, but also made him realize how quick and at the same time profound the revival of the beautiful Polish language was. The testimony of the process was again the extracts from these works – excerpts from the translation of *Jerusalem* and the beautiful sermons of the King Sigismund’s III preacher, earlier sent to Orpiszewski.

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Yes, it was such about literature in exile. A few months after his return, in May 1843, to the same addressee, reporting on his actions taken around the end of court cases, the subject of which was still the leased property, he wrote from Płock the place of their school friendship: „I will say about myself that I am in constant motion. Within a few months, I went from one extreme to the other. From book life, quiet literary life – to a life, full of activities, troubles and movement. I have taken up significant leases, in addition to farm employment, I have been burdened by procedural interests that keep me still on the wagonette. Warsaw, Płock, Lipno, Skępe – places of my stay. [...]. I do not have even time to think about literature – barely, only a few minutes for the newspaper (f. 53r-v)”.

„Within a few months, I went from one extreme to the other. From book life, quiet literary life [...]”. A big farm and more extensive “interests” – Skępe, leased at that time, mercilessly taking away the time that the writer had once, caused the temptation to use it otherwise. In a letter from Warsaw, addressed to the wife of Urszula Zielińska, in April 1845, he complained: „Dear Urszuleczko! [...] If you look me back, believe me that I am constantly thinking of escaping Warsaw, I miss you so much and the peace,

that I can never find in a terrible destiny in my life. No one can be a bigger enemy of businesses than I am, no one can have them more than me now”<sup>31</sup>.

Skepe estate, which he initially leased, and in 1847 he inherited it, was quite extensive, and with the passage of years, the property grew larger. Zieliński received the lands, not only did he saved them from the threatening bankruptcy, but he expanded it by introducing exemplary administration in the goods. In his forests he created a modern forestry farm. Zieliński’s correspondence, addressed to various recipients from the moment he returned to Poland after eight years of exile, until 1861, the moment when he leaves the country to take care of his health<sup>32</sup>, going on a journey through European spas, or as others prefer to think: cutting off from the organisation and participation in the upcoming uprising, it is filled with relations about organizing business interests. For example: in October 1844, he described his previous day to his wife, who remained in Łążyna: „From the morning, I am still busy like in a plow, count after count, I do not know whether I will finish till the evening. Tomorrow, I am going to regulate my border with my neighbours to end the misunderstandings that have taken place. The mass of letters was also waiting for me here, all of them refer to the different ones businesses”<sup>33</sup>.

[April 20] / May 2, 1857 to a friend-exile, and currently tenant of lands, Orpiszewski: „Dear Ignacy. I had a visit by carpenter Wurzbacher<sup>34</sup> and he declared that after counting, he would be able to accept to do cubic ell<sup>35</sup> of the foundation and wreath with his people for 24 groszy. For this price, I agreed and you can make a contract with him. [...] Tomorrow I will talk to the forest inspector about the tree needed for this building (f. 68v)”.

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<sup>31</sup> *Gustaw Zieliński’s Letters to Urszula Zielińska from Ramoccy*, Zielińscy Library in Płock, MS 795, f. 332r

<sup>32</sup> He wrote to Orpiszewski on July 14, 1861: “I am now going abroad for few months, to save my health, I’m almost getting in, being in the shortest possible words I want to close the answer” (f. 69r).

<sup>33</sup> *Gustaw Zieliński’s Letters to Urszula Zielińska from Ramoccy*, op .cit., f. 320 r.

<sup>34</sup> An unidentified person.

<sup>35</sup> Cubic – in the shape of a cuboid or other simple geometric solid. From Latin. cubus – brick, cube.

Literary subjects were rarely undertaken in these correspondence conversations.

The exile correspondence with Orpiszewski, shows how the literature, not only Polish one, helped the exiles staying in provinces far away from Poland, to survive this difficult time, but also how it was present there, how it reached and functioned in the far away exile. The correspondence reflections used above, bring mini critical literary discussions. Literature, not only for Zieliński, but for many exiles, became an escape from the exile reality, brought the illusion of normality. Hence, the role played by the exile collections can not be overestimated. The importance of the initiative of Piotr Moszyński, or the heirs of these collections – Onufry Pietraszkiewicz or Adolf Januszkiewicz is known. Less Gustaw Zieliński's – not here as a bibliophile, but a book lover, and perhaps, a better researcher and critic of literature. And such a role – to this man-institution – a writer, a bibliophile, a social worker, a judge, a landholder, a historian ... is rarely or not at all attributed, and it seems that this title is fully deserved for him.

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