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Stefan Zweig und Europa ed. by Mark Gelber and Anna-Dorothea
Ludewig (review)

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Mark Gelber and Anna-Dorothea Ludewig, eds., *Stefan Zweig und Europa*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2011, 240 pp.

Stefan Zweig und Europa contains the proceedings of a conference held in Berlin in 2009. Coedited by longtime Zweig scholar Mark Gelber and Anna-Dorothea Ludewig, the twelve essays in this collection offer new insights into the life and works of an author whose close identification with Europe is well known. As a translator and literary critic, Zweig acted early on as a cultural mediator for the works of his literary peers; during the 1920s his “Villa Europa” in Salzburg became a favorite gathering place for European artists and intellectuals; and his memoir *Die Welt von Gestern*, published just months before he committed suicide in Brazil and subtitled *Erinnerungen eines Europäers*, is in part a eulogy (and a swan song) of a continent that saw itself once again torn apart by war.

To many, Zweig will always remain the epitome of the good European—“der grosse Europäer,” in Hanns Arens’s famous phrase—who tirelessly labored to enhance understanding among the European nations and who may be regarded as an early advocate for European integration at a time of nationalism and propaganda. Such is indeed the underlying premise in many of the essays in this volume, most of them written by continental European scholars. Yet, as Karl Müller’s and Klaus Zelewitz’s contributions make clear, Zweig’s Europe tends to be troubled by the same problems and internal contradictions as the European Union. Zweig’s European anchor points are invariably France, Belgium, Germany, and (to a lesser degree) England. To the extent that he visits or writes about Eastern Europe, the homeland of his father, Zweig’s portrayals tend to be negative and caricatural. A visit to Romania prompts him to call the country “fern und lediglich,” and his portrayal of the boorish Mirko Czentovic in *Schachnovelle*, perpetuates a “balkanist” stereotype that will be all too familiar to readers of Maria Todorova’s *Imagining the Balkans*.

Even Zweig’s self-fashioning as a pacifist in *Die Welt von Gestern* warrants further scrutiny. As Michel Reâet points out in a fine essay on Zweig’s allegorical war play *Jeremias*, the author’s nominal pacifism stands in contrast with the enthusiasm that he, too, initially felt and expressed when war broke out in the summer of 1914: “Zweigs Tagebücher beweisen, dass er zu dieser Zeit ein Bewunderer der deutschen—auch militärischen—Effizienz war” (174–75). As such, the political ambivalence that *Jeremias* continues to inspire

in contemporary critics can in part be read as a reflection of its author's own rather more complicated relationship to nationalism and pacifism than what he writes in his autobiography.

To fact-check the historical accuracy of *Die Welt von Gestern* against Zweig's own diaries and extensive letter correspondence has long been a preferred method of Zweig scholarship; it continues to generate interesting results in this new volume. Mark Gelber's contribution offers a political rationale for the striking discrepancy between Zweig's unambiguously positive evocation of turn-of-the-century Berlin in *Die Welt von Gestern* and the rather more ambivalent response that emerges from letters sent from Berlin by Zweig at that time: "Zweig feiert das Berlin der Jahrhundertwende als multi-ethnische, avantgardistische und moderne Stadt und stellt die berühmte Bohèmeszene in den Mittelpunkt, um den Kontrast zur späteren Hauptstadt des Nationalsozialismus besonders deutlich zu machen" (90–91).

Another recurring method used by scholars in this volume is to consider Zweig's thinking in juxtaposition with that of his contemporaries. Rüdiger Görner considers Zweig's notion of humanism in comparison with that of Heidegger, Adorno, and Thomas Mann. Similarly, Stephan Resch retraces the development of the "Europäische Gedanke" in Zweig's writings alongside that of Richard Graf von Coudenhove-Kalergi, noting that the latter's 1923 book *Panuropa* should have been of great interest to Zweig even if no real collaboration between the two emerged. Referring to and citing from a previously unpublished letter sent by Zweig to Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1924, Resch explains how the two clashed over the very nature of European identity: "Hier zeigt sich einer der Hauptunterschiede in Zweigs and Coudenhoves Europabild, nämlich das vor allem wirtschaftlich und strategisch-politisch konzipierte Europa des Grafen und das 'kulturelle' und 'gefühlsmässige' Zweigs" (69).

Given the spectacular fall from grace that Zweig's works have suffered since the 1920s, a time when he was—by his own account—the most translated author in the world, it is not surprising to see that reception research continues to make up a considerable part of this volume. Doris Wendt's essay compares the European responses to Zweig's biography of the Austrian princess Marie Antoinette, noting that this response has always been more positive in France than in the German-speaking world. Whereas the French immediately lauded Zweig's (then revolutionary) psychologizing approach to his subject, the responses in Germany were and have remained skeptical.

(Sofia Coppola's decision to bypass Zweig's biography for her 2006 movie about Marie Antoinette might point to a similar skepticism in the contemporary United States.)

Stefan Zweig und Europa offers a well-balanced overview of the various ways in which this author's work and life intersect with the idea of Europe. It will be of value to Zweig scholars as well as to those working in the renewed political-philosophical debate over European identity, a debate from which Zweig's works have thus far been strikingly absent.

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Jonny Moser, *Nisko: Die ersten Judendeportationen*. Edited by Joseph W. Moser and James R. Moser. Vienna: Steinbauer Verlag, 2012. 206 pp.

On September 10, 1939, in Prague, Adolf Eichmann met with his friend and associate Oberführer Dr. Franz Stahlecker, head of the Security Police in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Over breakfast the two SS officers concocted a scheme to deport all German and Austrian Jews unable or unwilling to emigrate abroad to eastern Poland. Once implemented, the Greater German Reich could be "cleansed" of Jews by removing them to a "Jewish reservation" from which they would be shipped permanently to Madagascar. Two days later Reinhard Heydrich, soon to be appointed head of the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA), eagerly embraced the proposal, not least because he was aware that Hitler, Alfred Rosenberg, and Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller were discussing a "territorial solution to the Jewish question." On September 21 Heydrich authorized the expulsion of the Jews of Mährisch-Ostau and Vienna across the Vistula by means of the main railroad line in Poland.

Although Eichmann applied his ruthless administrative talents to registering Jews and organizing railroad transports, he was unable to act until Hitler and Stalin had signed a demarcation line transferring the region between the San and Bug rivers to German jurisdiction. Shortly thereafter Eichmann met with Gestapo chief Müller, who ordered him to include as many as 80,000 additional Jews from Kattowitz. Even so, it was not until October 12 that Eichmann and Stahlecker found a location for their Jewish reservation in a swampy area near Nisko, an insalubrious town on the San river. Here, between October 18 and early November 1939, over 5,000 able-bodied men and