

2002

# Stefan Zweig and Russia

Lidia Zhigunova

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_theses](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses)



Part of the [Comparative Literature Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Zhigunova, Lidia, "Stefan Zweig and Russia" (2002). *LSU Master's Theses*. 1572.  
[https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_theses/1572](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses/1572)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Master's Theses by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [gradetd@lsu.edu](mailto:gradetd@lsu.edu).

# STEFAN ZWEIG AND RUSSIA

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

in

The Interdepartmental Program in Comparative Literature

by

Lidia Zhigunova

B.A., Kabardino-Balkar State University, Russia, 1996

May, 2002

Life travels upward in spirals. He who  
takes pains to search the shadows of the  
past below us, then, can better judge the  
tiny arc up which he climbs, more surely  
guess the dim curves of the future  
above him.

*Stefan Zweig*

## PREFACE

My first acquaintance with Stefan Zweig's works took place when I was a student of Germanics at the University of my hometown in Russia. It was the *Novelle* "Buchmendel" from his band "Amok. Die Novellen einer Leidenschaft".

I was fascinated by Zweig's means of expression and the vividness of his character. This great master of the word aroused my passion and I became an ardent reader of his works. Mostly they were the *Novellen*, in which Stefan Zweig fully presented his talent as a story-teller and an attentive observer of every emotional and psychological movement in the labyrinths of the human soul. Although I had a good opportunity to read Stefan Zweig's works in the original language, I found numerous translations of his works in Russian. In the Soviet era, in which I grew up, Zweig was one of the few foreign authors whose works were available at most bookstores. And, I have to admit with great pleasure, that the Russian translations are also very good, which means the psychological impact of his language was preserved. I consider it to be one of the keys to the successful reception of Stefan Zweig in Russia.

From the scarce information about Stefan Zweig given in encyclopedias or in very short and general introductions to his works, Soviet readers knew that he was an Austrian writer, a pacifist and a strong opponent of Fascism, whose life ended tragically in suicide after he emigrated to Brazil. The fact that Zweig grew up in Vienna, the city that Russians always considered as being a musical, cultural and spiritual center of Europe, was very favorable for the reception of Zweig in Russia. Russians always had a very special and unique attitude towards Austria. The Stefan Zweig scholar and translator Gennady Kagan<sup>1</sup> points in his book *Fuer und*

---

<sup>1</sup> Gennadi E. Kagan, a son of the Jewish parents was born in Brjansk (Russia). He got his PhD in Germanics in Leningrad, and worked as a professor of German language in various institutions in Leningrad. He is a translator of

*gegen Oesterreich: Oesterreich und die Oesterreicher aus der Sicht der Russen in zwei Jahrhunderten* to the centuries-long relationship between these two countries, which can be traced back to the times of Peter the Great, who started the process of the orientation of Russia towards the West European countries. Kagan expresses the idea that Austria due to its great power and prestige, which it gained to some extent in European politics had a great influence on both political and cultural life of Russia, which entered a new phase of cultural and psychological changes. Kagan draws parallels between Russia and Austria, two countries that used to be “multinational, absolutistic powers”, who survived the phase of extreme nationalism and totalitarianism in the last century.

The other fact about Stefan Zweig, which was positively accepted by Soviet readers, was his honoring of the great Russian writers such as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, whom he presented in his biographical studies and essays, as well as Maxim Gorky, who was Zweig’s contemporary and Russia’s most popular and politically influential writer. The two of them maintained personal relationships and a correspondence, which fortunately survived and will be closely considered in this study. Finally, Stefan Zweig once visited Soviet Russia and took part in the festivities dedicated to the hundredth anniversary of Tolstoy’s birth.

However, what intrigued me about Zweig’s reception in Russia was the fact that in spite of his immense popularity in that country, there was a scarcity of scholarship focused on his life and works. Most of the secondary literature devoted to Zweig’s legacy was based on a

---

the works of Austrian and German writers such as Stefan Zweig, Joseph Roth, Klaus Mann, etc. In 1991 he left the Soviet Union, and since then he has lived in Vienna, where he teaches Russian language and literature in a Rudolph-Steiner school. His autobiography appeared under the title *Die Welt von gestern – heute: Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten* in 1995 in a series of publications “Damit es nicht verloren geht...” In it he describes his struggle with Soviet authorities to get Zweig’s autobiographical book “*Die Welt von Gestern*” published in Russia. In 1996 he published a book about the centuries-long relationship between Russia and Austria. The book appeared under the title *Fuer und gegen Oesterreich: Oesterreich und die Oesterreicher aus der Sicht der Russen in zwei Jahrhunderten*.

monotonous approach. It is especially true for the Soviet era, when most critics gave a one-sided picture of Stefan Zweig, which perfectly fitted into ideological frames and met the requirements of the Soviet censors. Moreover, when in the United States I came across Zweig's autobiographical book *Die Welt von Gestern*, I then realized that not everything from Zweig's works was translated into Russian, or was translated but for some reason was not introduced to the Russian readers and the admirers of his talent. *Die Welt von Gestern*, where Zweig portrays not only his own life, but also the life of the whole generation, has never appeared as a whole in the former Soviet Union. The fate of this book in Russia is revealed by Kagan in his autobiography *Die Welt von gestern – heute: Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten*. He describes in his book a decades long struggle with Russian authorities, censors, and publishers to get Zweig's autobiography published in Russian.

So, what was it about Stefan Zweig that Russian authorities didn't like? What was the reception of Zweig in Russia? What was the perception of Russia by Zweig? How can the half-recognition and the half-acknowledgment of Zweig's talent in Russia be explained? To answer all these questions we should go a little bit back in time and make an investigation based on the available materials. After decades of hiding the truth or speaking half-truths, after severe censorship and the suppressing of individual freedom in Russia, maybe it's time to pay a tribute to the writer to whom individual freedom and truth were the highest values.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. THE RECEPTION OF STEFAN ZWEIG IN SOVIET RUSSIA.....	4
2. STEFAN ZWEIG AND MAXIM GORKY.....	14
3. THE FATE OF <i>THE WORLD OF YESTERDAY</i> IN RUSSIA.....	20
CONCLUSION.....	25
WORKS CITED.....	27
VITA .....	29

## ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to examine and to evaluate the reception of Stefan Zweig and his works in Russia, as well as the perception of Russia by Stefan Zweig recorded in his recollections of his trip to Russia in 1928, when he took part in the festivities dedicated to the hundredth anniversary of Leo Tolstoy's birth. I will also analyze the meeting and the correspondence between Zweig and Gorky, as well as the correspondence between Zweig and Romain Rolland, in which the two of them shared their views on Soviet Russia.

The study concurs that Zweig was one of the most popular and widely translated authors in the world. Russia, as well as the former Soviet Union, was and is part of that world. The main body of Zweig's works was translated into Russian. However, it was later revealed that Zweig's works were translated on a selective basis. His last and most outstanding non-fictional work, his autobiography *Die Welt von Gestern*, for instance, had never appeared as a whole in the Soviet Union. The struggle of the translator with the authorities in the former Soviet Union to get the book published will be also a topic for discussion.

## INTRODUCTION

During his life, Stefan Zweig – poet, dramatist, essayist, biographer, writer of *Novellen*, enjoyed a tremendous literary success. Zweig’s literary career started right after the turn of the century and came to an end with his premature death in 1942: he committed suicide, a fate which befell many progressive writers and artists during those extremely interesting, but at the same time extremely cruel years in the first half of the twentieth century. Zweig was a prolific writer who worked in many genres. His *Novellen*, in which he leads the reader through the intricate labyrinths of the human soul, show him as a talented storyteller and an attentive observer who was influenced by the latest developments of psychoanalysis. In his biographical studies, Zweig draws literary portraits of prominent people from the past times, as well as his contemporaries: artists, writers, political figures, and travelers. The essays<sup>1</sup>, in which he shares his thoughts and impressions about the world of his times; about the people whom he met, and the countries which he visited, present him as a passionate traveler, a pacifist, and a humanist who had a big net of relationships with the most progressive people throughout the world. Born in Vienna at the time of radical changes, Zweig tremendously enjoyed the atmosphere of that city, which before World War I became a city of artists and musicians who used to gather in the famous “Kaffeehaeuser”. There was a firm feeling of internal freedom, which allowed one to move freely, to express oneself, to create, and finally, to be politically independent. Zweig writes in his autobiography<sup>2</sup>:

There is hardly a city in Europe where the drive towards cultural ideas was as passionate as it was in Vienna. ... It was sweet to live here, in this atmosphere of spiritual conciliation,

---

<sup>1</sup> Zweig’s essays are collected in a few bands under the titles *Die Monotonisierung der Welt: Aufsätze und Vorträge, Länder, Städte, Landschaften, Zeit und Welt*, and *Begegnungen mit Menschen, Büchern, Städten*.

<sup>2</sup> Zweig’s autobiography *Die Welt von Gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers* was his last work. It was published in 1943 after his death. The autobiography is a skillful summary of an era, a portrait of the whole generation, a mirror of an age rather than of a life.

and subconsciously every citizen became supernational, cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world.<sup>3</sup>

Stefan Zweig was a citizen of the world and remains so through his literary works.

Nowadays one can find Zweig's works virtually everywhere in the world, translated into every possible language. He was very well received by the German-speaking audience, as well as by the broad international public. Randolph Klawiter, the most prominent bibliographer of Zweig's works, determined that "Zweig has been translated into fifty-five languages, of which five definitely predominate: Portuguese with approximately 276 translations; Spanish with 260; Russian with 214; and French and English with 198 each."<sup>4</sup> Of course, the numbers do not prove anything conclusively, because, aside from scholarship in the German-speaking countries, Americans, for instance, have done the largest amount of scholarship devoted to Zweig's life and work. And Zweig was not even as popular in America as he was in Russia.

Due to the fact that Zweig was and remains one of the best-selling authors in the world, a number of works devoted to Zweig reception<sup>5</sup> in various countries appeared. In those works the authors emphasize the idea that the reception of Zweig's works was not homogeneous; it had its ups and downs. Guo-Qiang Ren, for instance, in his study about the reception of Zweig by German scholarship and literary criticism, points out that right after World War II and until the beginning of the 80s Zweig was almost forgotten by the German publishers and scholars:

Von den 50er bis zum Anfang der 80er Jahre interessiert sich mit einigen wenigen Ausnahmen kein deutscher Verlag fuer Zweigs hinterlassene Werke, so dass in dieser Zeit

---

<sup>3</sup> Stefan Zweig *The World of Yesterday*, pp. 12-13

<sup>4</sup> Randolph Klawiter *The Reception of Stefan Zweig in the United States: A Bibliographical Account*. In *Modern Austrian Literature*, v.20, 1987, 3/4: 43

<sup>5</sup> Among those works are: *Am Ende der Missachtung? Studie ueber die Stefan Zweig-Rezeption in der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft nach 1945*, by Guo-Qiang Ren; *Die Stefan-Zweig-Rezeption in der UdSSR*, by Christian Nymphius; *The Reception of Stefan Zweig in the U.S. A Bibliographical Account*, by Klawiter; etc.

eine riesige Veröffentlichungslücke besteht. Infolgedessen entstand der Eindruck, als habe die Literaturwissenschaft das Kapitel “Stefan Zweig” bereits abgeschlossen.<sup>6</sup>

The situation changed at the beginning of 80s, when S.Fischer Verlag, due to Zweig’s centenary, resumed the publication of his works. The publications enjoyed an immediate success among German readers. The interest in Zweig’s legacy rose anew. The revival of the interest in Zweig and his works might mean that the “Renaissance of Zweig-reception” is still awaiting us.

---

<sup>6</sup> Guo-Qiang Ren *Am Ende der Missachtung?*; p.1

## 1. THE RECEPTION OF STEFAN ZWEIG IN SOVIET RUSSIA

...Wie kommt es, dass dieser kultivierte, patrizische Oesterreicher, der heute fuer das westliche Europa eine Instanz bedeutet und der mit Werk und Persoenlichkeit ganz ins Uebernationale vorgedrungen ist, gerade im Osten, im nationalen Russland, soviel Liebe und Verstehen findet?<sup>1</sup>

*Richard Specht*

Richard Specht asked this question in his biographical essay about Stefan Zweig, which appeared along with the famous Gorky foreword in the first edition of complete works of Zweig in Russian in 1927. This question is still central to the investigation of the reception of Stefan Zweig in Russia. Specht's essay is probably the most comprehensive and the most detailed study of Stefan Zweig's life and work, ever introduced to Russian readers.

The reception of Stefan Zweig in Russia, like in any other country, had different stages. The best evidence of that would probably be the number of printed works in different years. According to Klawiter's bibliography, the first edition of the Collected Works of Stefan Zweig appeared in 1927 in the Russian language<sup>2</sup>:

...As early as 1939 the Bermann-Fischer Verlag began to publish a collected edition of Zweig's works. Since 1981 the S.Fischer Verlag has published twenty-five volumes of an entirely new series of Zweig's *Gesammelte Werke in Einzelbaenden*. The first edition of the collected works of Zweig was, however, a twelve-volume set published in Russian between 1927 and 1932. Since then two other editions of his collected works have also been published in Russian.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> R. Specht *Stefan Cveig. Opyt charakteristiki*. In: *Sobranie sochinenij Stefana Cveiga. T.1* [russ.]; p.13-49 – Also appeared in German as a separate book: R.Specht: *Versuch eines Bildnisses*. Leipzig, 1927

<sup>2</sup> *Sobranie Sochinenij Stefana Tsveiga. Avtorizovannoe izdanie s predisloviem M. Gor'kogo i kritiko-biograficeskim ocerkom Richarda Spechta* (Collected Works of Stefan Zweig. Authorized edition with foreword by M.Gorky and a critical biographical essay by Richard Specht). Leningrad: Vremya, 1928-1930

<sup>3</sup> Klawiter, p.43

A number of sets with Zweig's selected works appeared in Russia right after World War II, in the 50s and 60s, and then in 1988, in only a one volume set.

There is no doubt that the reception of Stefan Zweig in Russia reached its highest point during the 20s. The 20s were the most significant years of Zweig in Russia. During those years his correspondence and friendship with Gorky began; he finished his essays on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, he had a very intense correspondence with the progressive Russian publishing house *Vremya*<sup>4</sup> concerning the publication of his works in Russia, and on top of this, in 1928 he visited Russia on the occasion of Tolstoy's centenary and depicted his impressions and some of his experiences in an essay called *Reise nach Russland* (Trip to Russia). All of that contributed to his fame in Russia.

The publishing house *Vremya* played a very important role in the reception of Zweig in Russia. It took seriously the interest of Russian readers in Zweig's works, and the fact that Gorky, the leading writer of the new Soviet Republic, gave a high evaluation of Zweig's talent, helped in making Zweig a success in the USSR:

...Schon 1923 war Gorky von Zweigs Werk, besonders vom *Brief einer Unbekannten*, stark beeindruckt worden und hatte einen gewissen Einfluss auf die Herausgabe einiger Novellen in den Jahren 1925-26 durch den Wremja Verlag in Leningrad ausgeübt, an den er begeistert ueber den Autor schrieb.<sup>5</sup>

The publication of Zweig's collected works and the approval of Gorky brought a lot of attention from Russian critics and scholars during those years. Also, Zweig's trip to Russia in 1928, with the assistance of the publishing house *Vremya*, increased the interest of the Russian

---

<sup>4</sup> The publishing house *Vremya* existed from 1923 until 1934. There are known 60 letters written by Stefan Zweig during the time period from 1926 to 1934. Asadovski K.M. published 18 letters in *Neue Deutsche Literatur*. Asadovski K.M. *Unbekannte Briefe von Stefan Zweig an den Verlag Wremja, Leningrad*. In *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, 1978, 26:12

<sup>5</sup> D. Prater *Stefan Zweig. Das Leben eines Ungeduldigen*, p.181

readers in the Austrian writer. Zweig expressed his desire to visit Russia in a letter to *Vremya* dated September 26, 1927:

Ich bin so viel wie fest entschlossen, im Februar oder Maerz nach Russland zu kommen, und zwar auf einen Monat und ohne jede andere Absicht, als endlich einmal das Land kennen zu lernen. ...Ich halte es fuer notwendig, dass jeder geistige Mensch, der unsere Gegenwart und Zukunft wissen will, einmal persoendlich nach Russland kommt. Wie sehr ich Russland liebe, hoffe ich neuerdings durch die grosse Arbeit ueber Tolstoi zu bekunden.<sup>6</sup>

When Zweig wrote these words he seemed to be very excited about making a trip to Russia. And, as he reports in his autobiography, he thought about it already in the year 1914, when he was working on his book on Dostoevsky. But, in that year “the bloody scythe of war had intervened” and prevented him from taking the trip. On the one hand, Zweig was always eager to go to Russia and experience for himself the country of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Gorky, the country, where from 1917 a “big experiment” was going on, the country which was enthusiastically admired by some and almost fanatically hated by others. On the other hand, he remained somewhat reserved in his attitude towards Russia. He writes about this attitude in his autobiography:

My books gained an unusual circulation there, not only the complete edition with Maxim Gorky’s introduction, but also small cheap editions at but a few kopeks, which seeped through to the widest possible public; so, I could be confident of a pleasant reception. But what gave me pause was that any trip to Russia in itself implied some kind of partisanship which forced into one either a public acceptance or repudiation...<sup>7</sup>

Zweig, who was anything but political and dogmatic, certainly wanted to avoid any “compulsory judgment.” The Tolstoy’s centenary was a perfect occasion for him, as it was removed from the political sphere. And, when *Vremya* invited him to take part in the festivities,

---

<sup>6</sup> Asadovski, p. 112

<sup>7</sup> Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, p. 328

he accepted it. The two weeks that he spent in Russia were very intense, full of events of all kinds. Describing his impressions about his trip to Russia, he wrote:

Welche Reise innerhalb unserer naeheren Welt waere heute [1928] auch nur annaeherd so interessant, bezaubernd, belehrend und aufregend wie jene nach Russland?<sup>8</sup>

In Russia Zweig found himself in a completely different world. The differences between Russia and Europe were striking:

Nicht nur die Stunde auf dem Zifferblatt muss man umstellen, sondern sein ganzes Gefuehl von Raum und Zeit, sobald man nach Russland kommt.<sup>9</sup>

He visited Moscow and noted its architectural and cultural diversity. In Moscow, for the first time, he met with Gorky, whom he admired and with whom he corresponded for a long period of time. In Leningrad, a city conceived by Peter the Great to imitate the West European cities, Zweig visited the Hermitage and met with the representatives of the publishing house *Vremya*. He then went to Tolstoy's house in Yasnaya Polyana and was so impressed by Tolstoy's grave that it inspired him to write an essay, *Das schoenste Grab der Welt* (The most beautiful grave in the world). But what aroused him most was "the people and the impulsive cordiality that welled from them."<sup>10</sup> He was amazed by the eagerness of masses to learn and by the somewhat naive desire of the leaders of the Revolution to enlighten the whole population overnight. In his essay *Reise nach Russland*, which was written right after his return from Russia, Zweig mostly depicts these themes, focusing on the sights and the cultural life of Russia. He avoids making any political statements or conclusions, as many others did, for the reason that he himself states in his autobiography:

---

<sup>8</sup> Zweig, *Reise nach Russland*, p.100

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.102

<sup>10</sup> Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, p. 335

...How small a part of this endless country I had seen in these two weeks. If I wanted to be honest with myself and to others, I could not but admit that my impression, exciting and stimulating in many a detail as it was, could yet have no objective validity.<sup>11</sup>

However, in his autobiography, which was written in 1942, Zweig condemns the Bolshevism in Soviet Russia, and even recollects an episode that happened to him during his trip to Russia. After the meeting with Russian students he found a letter that someone must have slipped into his pocket. The letter was written in French and sounded as follows:

Don't believe everything one tells you. Don't forget that with all that they show you, there is much that is not shown you. Remember that most of the people who talk to you do not say what they wish to say but only what they may tell you. We all are watched and you yourself no less...<sup>12</sup>

Zweig himself was very glad that he didn't mention this episode or any other of his observations concerning political aspects of life in Soviet Russia in the essay *Reise nach Russland*, because upon his return to Europe, as he points out in his autobiography, "much had changed in Russia" in terms of individual freedom and freedom of artistic expression. Had he been indiscreet, Russian readers might not have had the opportunity to enjoy Stefan Zweig's works, indeed, this happened with his autobiographical book *The World of Yesterday*:

...I did well with this restraint; for already after three months, much was different from what I had seen, and after a year, due to the rapid transformations, every word would have been given the lie by the facts.<sup>13</sup>

In their correspondence, Romain Rolland and Stefan Zweig often shared their views about Soviet Russia. They were divergent from time to time. But, they both were alarmed by Russia's harsh treatment of her intellectuals and the suppression of the individual freedom in the new Soviet Republic. Upon his return from Russia Zweig wrote about it to his friend Rolland in a letter dated September 21, 1928:

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 338

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 337-338

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 338

Ich habe Wohnungen gesehen in Moskau und von anderen gehoert, die nicht menschenmoeglich sind und in denen Wissenschaftler arbeiten. Aber dies der Regierung als Schuld anzumessen geht nicht an, wohl aber die voellige Beraubung der Meinungsaeußerung - Freiheit. Ich spuere genau die Grenze, die uns von diesen Menschen trennt. Sie versprachen Gleichheit, gingen aber in einem Ressentiment weiter und haben eine neue Ungleichheit geschaffen, indem sie ein (zahlenmaessig) geringfuegiges Proletariat gewaltsam hochzuechten wollen, es mit ihrer Ideologie dogmatisch binden und alles, was an freier und unabhaengiger Intellektualitaet existiert, damit unterdruecken.<sup>14</sup>

In this letter he also reports about the new educational politics of the Soviet government, which reduced the places in colleges and universities and gave the highest admission priorities to the children of workers, then to the children of peasants, and only then, the few places left, to the children of intellectuals and clerks, which, of course, was pure discrimination.

In another letter to Rolland written much later, in August 1935, Zweig, in reply to Rolland's enthusiastic account of his visit to Russia, where he was honored by receiving from Stalin the title of Citizen of Moscow, warns his friend not to be carried away by the warmth of the reception accorded to him and not to be misled by the "Elan" of the Soviet youth, which was somewhat akin to the "Elan" that has fired the "Hitlerjugend":

Ich habe nicht bezweifelt, dass die menschliche Waerme, die niergeds so maechtig und großherzig ist wie in Russland, Sie bewegen wuerde; ich war selbst ergriffen, als ich Gelegenheit hatte, dieses bewundernswerte Land zu sehen. Nein, ich zweifle nicht an dem Elan, der die russische Jugend traegt und entflammt – ich fuerchte nur, dass der gleiche Elan auch die hitlerische und faschistische Jugend berauscht.<sup>15</sup>

Romain Rolland, politically more active than Stefan Zweig, did not always share his friend's views concerning the "Russian question." Sometimes this led to a discrepancy between the two of them, but international understanding and universal peace continued to be their ideal goals.

---

<sup>14</sup> *Romain Rolland – Stefan Zweig: Briefwechsel 1910-1940* [vol. 2, 1924-1940], p.297

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 604 [the letter dated August 13, 1935]

About the restriction of individual freedom and cultural life in the Soviet Union in the years 1928 – 1929, which at the same time were the years when the reception of Zweig in Russia reached its highest point, Christian Nymphius writes in his work *Die Stefan-Zweig-Rezeption in der UdSSR* :

Die Jahre 1928-1929 stellen hinsichtlich der Rezensententätigkeit quantitativ einen Höhepunkt dar. Gleichzeitig beginnt die Einschränkung des geistigen Lebens spürbar zu werden.<sup>16</sup>

The vivid atmosphere with its diverse literary and artistic movements, which characterized the cultural life of Russia in the beginning of the 20s, gradually came under the control of the Communist party. Nymphius points to the changed tone of the forewords and reviews, which were written from the ideological angle and became much more official and reserved. The symptoms of politics interfering in the cultural life of Russia became evident and, of course, influenced the further development of the reception of Stefan Zweig in Russia.

Christian Nymphius gives a very detailed analysis of the reception of Zweig in Russia. He examines the subject in connection with the development of Soviet literary politics, which depended on the political events in the Soviet Union:

...Der Prozess der sowjetischen Zweig-Rezeption muss im Zusammenhang mit der sowjetischen Literaturpolitik gesehen werden, die ihrerseits wesentlich von politischen Ereignissen in der UdSSR abhängig war.<sup>17</sup>

Taking into consideration that the development of Soviet literature can be divided into several periods, Nymphius closely examines the reception of Zweig during each of those periods. The first period falls into the years 1923-1932; the year 1923 marks the beginning of “Zweig-Rezeption” in Russia. The second period lasts from 1932 until 1953, the so-called “Stalin-years”. The third period, a “Thaw” period, lasts from 1953 until 1964. The final period in the

---

<sup>16</sup> Christian Nymphius *Die Stefan-Zweig-Rezeption in der UdSSR*, p. 45

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12

development of Soviet literature falls into the years 1964 - 1985, the period which was followed by Perestroika. Thus, he gives a general literary-political picture of each of those periods, and how it affected the reception of Zweig.

The first period, as Nymphius pointed out, was characterized by the “vividness” of cultural life in Russia, and by the not yet restricted freedom of artistic expression, which certainly was favorable for the reception of Stefan Zweig. His trip to Russia and his position as a mediator between cultures certainly made him attractive to the Russian public. Nymphius emphasizes the variety of articles and criticism devoted to Zweig’s work and life, which mainly took the form of free discussions on the pages of various literary journals and magazines.

The second period, the “Stalin-years”, he identifies with the “grosse kulturelle Verarmung der Sowjetgesellschaft”, which occurred as a result of the “totalitarian control of cultural life in Russia.”<sup>18</sup> The publication of Zweig’s works during those years was dramatically reduced. In the period from 1932 to 1953 only two volumes of Zweig’s selected works were published (in comparison with twelve volumes published in the years 1923-1932). The secondary literature of that period had little value, because it followed the ideological dogmas and lacked freedom of expression. Many creative artists and writers became victims of Stalin’s terror in 1937/38. Nymphius also noted that in 1934 Zweig’s name, for the first time, appeared in the Soviet encyclopedia.<sup>19</sup>

The second important period of the reception of Zweig in Russia was the so-called “Thaw” period, which brought a little freedom and diversity into the cultural and literary life of Russia after the rigid Stalin-regime. The most important event of this period is the publication of

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. pp. 74-75

<sup>19</sup> *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Enciclopedia*, 1934, 60:312

the second edition of Zweig's collected works in seven volumes. Nymphius marks this period as the "Zweig-Boom" period:

Die neu entstandenen Freiraume nach dem Tode Stalins boten auch der Zweig-Rezeption guenstige Voraussetzungen fuer einen Neuanfang. Dieser setzte in der zweiten Haelfte der fuenfziger Jarhe machtvoll ein und kulminierte 1963 in der Herausgabe der zweiten sowjetischen Gesammelten Werke Stefan Zweigs. Ohne Zweifel laesst sich sagen, dass der Zweig-Boom Ende der 50-er, Anfang der 60-er Jahre begonnen hat.<sup>20</sup>

With the publication of those seven volumes of Zweig's collected works the interest of Soviet readers and scholars in Zweig rose anew. But, unlike the first period, when Zweig's works were discussed in the literary journals in the form of essays, articles, or book-reviews, the most "preferred" forms of the literary activity now became the forewords and introductions to the published works. The information in the forewords and introductions was much easy to control by the government's "watchdogs." A free discussion, certainly, was not encouraged. Thus, unfortunately during the Soviet period scholars and literary critics, with perhaps a few exceptions, drew a one-sided picture of Stefan Zweig, which fitted into the frameworks of the existing ideology. The article in *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Enciklopedia*, for instance, might be the best example of the Soviet critics' attitude towards Zweig and his works. Discussing the psychological subtleties and dramatic nuances in Zweig's novellas, the article points to the "elements of subjectivism in Zweig's world-outlook and to the uncertain influence of Freud."<sup>21</sup>

The theory of psychoanalysis was not popular in the Soviet Union, and Zweig's novellas were interpreted from the prospective of social realism. The article further says: "Stefan Zweig in his best works shows the falsehood and hypocrisy of the bourgeois ethics."<sup>22</sup> The article emphasizes Zweig's acquaintance with Russian literature, with the works of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and

---

<sup>20</sup> Nymphius , p. 94

<sup>21</sup> *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Enciklopedia*, 1957, 46:442

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p.442

Gorky, his personal relationship to Gorky, and Gorky's high evaluation of Zweig's work. However, Zweig's visit to the Soviet Union was interpreted in a way which Zweig himself consciously tried to avoid. The article says: "In the 20s Zweig visited USSR. From the 30s Zweig was a devoted friend of the Soviet Union"<sup>23</sup> (even the reference to his autobiographical book "The World of Yesterday" was made). Zweig's emigration to Brazil was considered as his "detachment from the anti-Fascist movement" and his suicide as a "weakness". Thus, the Soviet critics preferred to stick to these characteristics and the "Soviet portrait" of Stefan Zweig was drawn along these lines.

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p.442

## 2. STEFAN ZWEIG AND MAXIM GORKY

“Er hatte die halbe Welt bereist und hatte viele Sprachen gelernt, er hatte Beziehungen und Freundschaften zu den Besten ueberall angeknuepft... dieser wirkliche Weltbuerger...”

*Franz Werfel* (about Stefan Zweig)

Stefan Zweig maintained personal relationships and correspondences with many of his contemporaries: writers, artists, musicians, and politicians. Among those outstanding people was Maxim Gorky, whom Zweig considered along with Dostoevsky and Tolstoy to be one of the greatest Russian writers. In their correspondence<sup>1</sup>, which lasted from 1923 until 1936, the two of them exchanged their opinions on the books that they wrote and shared their views about the developments in the world. Since Gorky, because of his illness, had to spend most of his time in resorts in Germany, and then in Italy, he could actively participate in the literary and cultural life of Europe. During their lives, Gorky and Zweig met twice: once in 1928 in Moscow, when Zweig was invited to the celebrations of Tolstoy's centenary, and then two years later, when Zweig visited Gorky again in Sorrento and spent three unforgettable days with him. These meetings and the friendship of Gorky Zweig calls “the most valuable things.” During those meetings, their conversation was conducted in an unusual manner. Gorky didn't know any foreign language, nor could Zweig speak any Russian; therefore, they sometimes used the help of an interpreter. But Zweig points out Gorky's unique talent in conversing effectively with people. Not without reason Gorky was called the great storyteller. Zweig recalls in his autobiography:

---

<sup>1</sup> There are 31 known letters written by Zweig to Gorky and 19 letters written by Gorky to Zweig.

...It was not by mere chance that Gorky was one of the most genial narrators in world literature; storytelling to him meant not only an artistic form of expression, it was a functional emanation of his whole being. He was alive, he became one with the stuff of his narrative, and from the outset I understood him, without understanding his language, through the mobility of his face.<sup>2</sup>

To celebrate Gorky's 60th birthday, Zweig wrote a speech to honor the famous Russian writer and dedicated to him his book *Drei Dichter ihres Lebens. Casanova, Stendhal, Tolstoi*<sup>3</sup>. Gorky assisted in the publication of Zweig's works in Russia, contributing to the process of the Russian reader's familiarization with Zweig. In introduction to the Russian edition of Zweig's complete works, which appeared with the *Vremya* publishing house in Leningrad in 1927, Maxim Gorky wrote:

In Stefan Zweig verbindet sich das Talent eines tiefen Denkers mit dem Talent eines erstklassigen Kuenstlers auf eine seltene und glueckliche Weise. Er hat bereits schoene Werke geschaffen, aber wenn man ihn liest, spuert man immer: dieser Mensch ist imstande, noch mehr zu geben. Und mit jeder neuen Erzaehlung rechtfertigt er dieses Vorgefuehl des Lesers.<sup>4</sup>

Stefan Zweig described his feelings, when he first found out that Gorky was going to write an introduction to his works in Russian, in his autobiography:

...One day a letter came from my Russian publisher at Leningrad, stating that he wished to publish a complete edition of my works in Russian and asking whether it would be agreeable to me if Maxim Gorky were to write the introduction to it. Would it be agreeable to me! As a boy at school I had read Gorky's stories hidden under the desk, for years I had loved and admired him. But I had never flattered myself that he had ever heard my name, let alone that he had read anything of mine, and certainly not that it might appear important enough to such a master to write an introduction to my work.<sup>5</sup>

These words are probably the best characterizations of the relationship between the two writers: the admiration on the one side, and the acknowledgement of the talent on the other side. From

---

<sup>2</sup> Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, p.339

<sup>3</sup> Stefan Zweig *Drei Dichter ihres Lebens. Casanova, Stendhal, Tolstoi*. Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1928

<sup>4</sup> Foreword to the Russian edition of Zweig's Selected Works (1927). In *Maxim Gorki-Stefan Zweig: Briefwechsel*, p. 98

<sup>5</sup> Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, p. 321

his very first letter to Gorky, Stefan Zweig expresses his admiration to the Russian writer for his skilful portrayal of Russia and Russian people:

Ich liebe Ihr Werk unendlich: seit Jahren hat mich nichts dermaßen erschuettert wie die Schilderung Ihrer ersten Ehe in den "Erinnerungen."...Ihre *Unmittelbarkeit* ist fuer mich einzig:selbst Tolstoi hatte nicht diese Naturerlichkeit des Erzaehlens.<sup>6</sup>

...Sie [Maxim Gorky] haben das Volk aufgezeigt mit einer hinreissenden Sachlichkeit, einer ungezwungenen Ehrlichkeit, mit der einzigartigen Unbestechlichkeit Ihres geraden und menschlichen Blicks. Sie uebertreiben nicht, und Sie unterdruecken nicht. Sie sehen alles und sehen alles klar und wahr. Darum bedeutet Ihr Blick, Ihr Auge fuer mich eines der Wunder der gegenwaertigen Welt.<sup>7</sup>

It is difficult overestimate the role that Gorky played in the literary and social life of Russia. Coming himself from the "lower depths" of society he knew very well the unbearable sufferings of his own people. He sympathized with the simple man and supported the proletarian revolution because he believed that it would change the living conditions of the lower classes. In his literary creations Gorky "had the courage to speak the bitter truth about people who vegetate in flophouses and wander around in despair. He did it not to incite pity and compassion but out of his hatred of a society that can push people to the bottom of life."<sup>8</sup> Thus, Gorky created a body of literature that later become to be known as socialist realism.

Gorky considered the education of the masses his primary task as a writer. He once said: "The book is the best friend of a man." He believed that books were able to cleanse one's soul of all the ugly impressions that pitiful reality had deposited in it. Pursuing the idea of enlightening his own people, Gorky took an active part in the literary life of Russia. He edited many literary periodicals, which were designed to acquaint the Russian readers not only with their own writers

---

<sup>6</sup> *Maxim Gorky – Stefan Zweig: Briefwechsel*, p.29 [a letter from Zweig to Gorky, August 29, 1923]

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59 [a letter from Zweig to Gorky, March, 1928]

<sup>8</sup> Gerhard Habermann *Maxim Gorki*, p. 58

but also with such modern Western authors as Stefan Zweig, H.G.Wells, Romain Rolland, Henry Barbusse, George Bernard Shaw, and others. The journal “Beseda”, for instance, completely devoted to the questions of arts and sciences, was edited by Gorky and printed in Berlin. Gorky in his letter to Zweig dated September 18, 1923 asks for Zweig’s permission to translate and publish the novella *Mondscheingasse* in his journal. In this letter he also asks his friend to write an article about a contemporary German writer or about any topic of Zweig’s choosing:

...Ich bitte Sie um die Erlaubnis, Ihre Novelle *Mondscheingasse* uebersetzen und in der von mir regierten, in Berlin erscheinenden Zeitschrift “Beseda” drucken lassen zu duerfen. Und dann moechte ich Sie bitten, fuer die “Beseda” einen Beitrag ueber zeitgenoessische deutsche Dichter oder ueber ein beliebiges Thema, das Ihnen Freude macht, zu schreiben. Die Zeitschrift widmet sich ausschliesslich Fragen der Kunst und Wissenschaft, der Politik steht sie voellig fern. In ihr werden Werke von R.Rolland, Franz Hellens, John Galsworthy, Gregorio M.Sierra und noch vielen Auslaendern gedruckt.<sup>9</sup>

In Europe he worked as a general editor of another Russian journal, which was called *Lepotis*. It fought nationalism and called for peace in a Europe united and without national boundaries, which really spoke to the ideas of such progressive Europeans as Zweig, Rolland, and others. Gorky spoke passionately for pacifism and turned against every kind of oppression. He strongly condemned the new dictatorship of Hitler’s Nazism. In 1933 Germany confiscated all of Gorky’s writings, the same fate which befell the works of Stefan Zweig.

In the speech dedicated to Gorky’s 60th birthday, Stefan Zweig expresses his endless gratitude to the Russian writer for what he has done for his own people and for the whole of mankind. “You, and only you”, writes Zweig, “represent before the eyes of the whole world Russia as it is; its wealth, its race, its power, and its spirit.”<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> *Maxim Gorky – Stefan Zweig: Briefwechsel*, p.32 [a letter from Gorky to Zweig, September 18, 1923]

<sup>10</sup> Stefan Zweig *Begegnungen mit Menschen, Buechern, Saedten. Rede zu Ehren Maxim Gorkys*, p.96

Before the end of the nineteenth century Russia was not very well known in the rest part of the world. Czarist Russia closed itself to the revolutionary West and many Europeans referred to it as an unfriendly country. The situation changed dramatically when at the turn of the century the translations of Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's novels reached the Western audience. About the impression that Tolstoy's novel made in Europe, Zweig wrote: "When for the first time *War and Peace* was translated into the European languages the West was amazed that such an epic could have been created in Russia. Tolstoy revealed to Europe a source of a new power." Tolstoy and Dostoevsky influenced many writers throughout the world, including Zweig himself. About the impact of Russian writers on German literature Victor Terras, the editor of the *Handbook of Russian Literature*, writes: "With Pushkin Russian literature had reached maturity. The flow of influence was no longer only from Germany to Russia..."<sup>11</sup> Zweig stresses this idea as well, but adds in his speech: "Until the beginning of the twentieth century we knew about Russia and its people only thanks to the voices of such noblemen as Pushkin, Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Dostoevsky..."<sup>12</sup> and he further points out: "...But they made us only guess about the width and depth of the Russian soul."<sup>12</sup> And yet Gorky, whose literary activities began around the turn of the century, drew a whole new portrait of Russia: "for the very first time this unique voice came out of the mighty chest of an entire population."<sup>13</sup> Gorky drew the portrait of a Russian man in his "wholeness" and "nakedness". He depicted with documentary exactness the cruel but true Russian reality. In his letter to Gorky, dated March 1928, Zweig writes:

...Durch Sie ist die russische Welt uns dokumentarisch geworden, der russische Mensch nicht nur in seiner weiten Seele, sondern auch in seinem taeglichen Dasein, in seiner sinnlichen Irdischkeit uns nah und erschliessbar.

---

<sup>11</sup> Victor Terras *Handbook of Russian Literature*, in the section German-Russian literary relations.

<sup>12</sup> Zweig, *Begegnungen mit Menschen, Buechern, Saedten. Rede zu Ehren Maxim Gorkys*, p.97

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.101

Zweig expresses the idea that before Gorky Russian people were “dumb and speechless”, “a spirit without language”. Gorky gave them speech. He thus sent a message to the whole of mankind “from the Russian people, from the Russian proletariat, from the lower classes, from the humble and the oppressed ones.”<sup>14</sup>

Zweig highly appreciated Gorky’s contribution to the elimination of alienation or confrontation between the nations of the world, which he reached through his works. “Thanks to his works,” writes Zweig “we can now better understand Russia and its people.”<sup>15</sup> In this cultural unification of people from all over the world Zweig saw the highest destiny of an artist. He dreamed about a world united, not necessarily politically or geographically, but spiritually. Zweig and Gorky were united by their deep love of humanity and their striving for freedom and justice.

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p.98

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p.104

### 3. THE FATE OF “*THE WORLD OF YESTERDAY*” IN RUSSIA

“Es passte diesen Leuten einfach nicht, dass Zweig schon auf den ersten Seiten des Buches in ein und demselben Atem von sich als Europaeer, als Oesterreicher und als Jude, als Pazifist und Humanist sprach.... Und es passte ihnen nicht, dass er sich als Kosmopolit empfand...”

*Gennady Kagan*

*The World of Yesterday*, Stefan Zweig’s last work, is his farewell to the majestic palace of European culture. It is a skillful summary of an age, a mirror of its times, the contemplation of a free mind. Immediately after its first publication in 1944, it was translated into fourteen languages. Unfortunately, Russian was not among those languages. It didn’t appear in Russian translation until 1991. This was somewhat strange, considering the ever-growing interest of Russian readers in Zweig’s works. What took the Russian publishers so long to offer the book to the readers? The answer to this question could be found in Kagan’s autobiography *Die Welt von gestern – heute: Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten*. Kagan reports in his autobiography how Zweig’s book inspired him and transformed his life into years of struggle with Soviet authorities, censors, and publishers to get Zweig’s book published.

Kagan’s autobiographical book is an interesting account of a public and private life in the former Soviet Union. The author truthfully depicts his personal experiences and those of the Jewish and Russian intelligentsia in Soviet Russia. The book provides an insight into the cultural and academic life of Leningrad, today’s Saint Petersburg, the second largest city in Russia.

Kagan begins his book with a citation from Zweig's autobiography, drawing parallels with his own life. He, like Zweig himself, lost his country and was compelled to emigrate to Vienna, the city of Stefan Zweig. He writes in his book:

Zu keiner Stunde ist mir dabei in den Sinn gekommen, dass ich einmal selbst zu jenen Ausgetriebenen gehoeren und fuer unsichere Jahre in eben jener Stadt Asyl und Obdach finden wuerde, die nicht nur fuer mich untrennbar mit dem Namen Stefan Zweigs verknuepft ist.<sup>1</sup>

As Kagan reports in his book, his first acquaintance with Zweig's "World of Yesterday" occurred when he was a student in Leningrad. A friend of his traveled to West Germany, a rare chance that was granted to a few Soviet citizens in those times, and he managed to smuggle some books from there. Among them was Zweig's autobiography, which immediately attracted Kagan's attention. Considering Kagan's interest in the book, his friend gave it to him as a present. And, from that moment on, it was destined to influence Kagan's life:

...Mit dem Lesen des Zweigischen Buches, etwas ganz Entscheidenes in meinem Leben vollzog. Es begann eine ueberaus seltsame und verworrene, zumindest einen wesentlichen Teil meines kuenftigen Lebens bestimmende Geschichte, die fuer mich drei Jahrzehnte spaeter enden sollte....<sup>2</sup>

Kagan became obsessed with the Zweig's book. The book fascinated him. He was determined to translate it into Russian:

Dieses Buch muss ich ins Russische uebersetzen! Dieses Buch muss auch in meinem Land gelesen werden, alle meine Mitbuerger muessen davon wissen!<sup>3</sup>

But it was easier said than done. Kagan understood that it was not an easy task for the translator to transmit the subtleties of Zweig's language, the nuances of the words, the unique style of this great master of the word. On the one hand, he felt the lack of experience dealing with Zweig's language, which the Institute of Foreign Languages in Leningrad, with all its prominent

---

<sup>1</sup> Kagan, *Die Welt von gestern – heute: Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten*, p.9

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.70

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.72

teachers, couldn't possibly teach him. On the other hand, he wasn't sure how Zweig's book would be received in the Soviet Union, for the author, who himself was a Jew, openly discusses throughout his book the problems of the Jewish people, which in the former Soviet Union were considered to be taboo-questions. Kagan seems to solve his first problem with the translation, but for a considerably long time he wasn't able to overcome the second problem, connected with the publishing of the book. He made several attempts throughout 60s, 70s, and then 80s to get the book published, but they were all unsuccessful. The Soviet censorship, which "cut" ruthlessly the works of their fellow-countrymen authors, kept a watchful eye on everything that came from abroad. As Kagan points out they found something "unpleasant" in Zweig's book:

...In Zweigs Erinnerungsbuch war ihnen [den Zensoren] manches nicht angenehm, etwa seine Urteile ueber diesen oder jenen Staatsmann oder die nur wenige Zeilen ausmachende Episode waehrend seiner einzigen Reise in die Sowjetunion im Jahre 1928..., als ihm jemand einen anonymen Brief in die Jackentasche praktiziert hatte, in dem er ihn beschwor, nicht alles zu glauben, was man ihm vorfuehre. Vor allem aber, das hatte ich schon begriffen, stoerte die im offiziellen Antisemitismus befangenen Zensoren das judische Thema und die Tatsache, dass der sowjetische Leser nun erfahren wurde, dass der grosse und populaere oestereichische Schriftsteller Jude gewesen war. Und so waren die Verlage staendig bemueht, den weltberuehmten Autor nicht zu "demaskieren."<sup>4</sup>

The other big issue that Soviet censors couldn't possibly tolerate was Zweig's attitude towards Soviet Russia, which Zweig expressed pronouncedly in *The World of Yesterday*. Already on the first pages of his book Zweig condemns the Bolshevism in Russia putting it on the same level with National Socialism in Germany, both being totalitarian regimes:

All the livid steeds of the Apocalypse have stormed through my life – revolution and famine, inflation and terror, epidemics and emigration. I have seen the great mass ideologies grow and spread before my eyes – Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, Bolshevism in Russia...<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.114

<sup>5</sup> Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, p.xx

In the essay *Die Reise nach Russland*, where Zweig describes his experiences in Russia, he preferred not to make any political statements and conclusions. Unlike *Die Welt von Gestern* it was very well received by the Soviet censorship.

In 1972, after years of struggle, Kagan succeeded in publishing not yet the whole book but excerpts from Zweig's book in, a very popular Russian literary magazine, *Neva*. The excerpts appeared in the first and the third issues of *Neva* with a very short and official introduction by Kagan. He just made a little hint emphasizing the long road the book took to reach the Soviet reader by saying: "And once again after three decades we hear the voice of this remarkable antifascist – writer."<sup>6</sup> Two chapters from Zweig's book, "Paris, the city of eternal youth" and "Sunset", appeared with significant abridgement. A short notification was given as a footnote: "The chapters from the book are given with some abridgement." But even those two chapters aroused a burning interest in the Soviet readers. Kagan started to receive letters from different parts of the Soviet Union and one question seemed to be central in all those letters: when would the whole book published?

In 1987 for the first time Zweig's autobiography appeared in a book form in Moscow: it was published by the major press *Raduga*. The book includes some of Zweig's articles and essays; a foreword written by Zatonsky, an introduction written by Konstantin Fedin, in which he cited some letters written by Zweig to him; and, finally, "The World of Yesterday" in Russian translation. Again, the censors decided what the Soviet reader should read. In the line about "mass ideologies - Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, Bolshevism in Russia... "- from Zweig's autobiography, which was cited earlier, "Bolshevism in Russia", for

---

<sup>6</sup> Kagan, *An Introduction* to the Russian translation of the excerpts from Zweig's autobiography "Die Welt von Gestern". In *Neva*, 1972, 1: 65

instance, was cut out.<sup>7</sup> Or, to cite another example, the case with the note that Zweig found in his pocket during his trip to Russia, warning not to believe everything that he is told, was completely unmentioned. As a result of such cuts, which were made throughout the book, only part of Zweig's book was presented to the reader.

Only in 1991 did the book appear as a whole, without any cuts, but again with supplementary material: with a foreword and an introduction, as well as Zweig's essays on Freud and Nietzsche. And, as Kagan points out in his book, we can only hope that one day the book will appear in Russia as Zweig himself wrote it, without any supplementary materials, without comments and forewords:

Natuerlich hoffe ich noch immer, dass das Buch eines Tages in Russland so erscheinen wird, wie Stefan Zweig es geschrieben hat, ohne irgendeinen Zusatz, ohne Kommentare und fremdes Vorwort. Oder traut man ihm noch immer nicht zu, dass es fuer sich selbst sprechen kann?<sup>8</sup>

Yes, the question is: does one still think that it is incapable of standing on its own, or does one still want to prevent the Russian readers from enjoying the book and making their own judgments?

---

<sup>7</sup> Stefan Tsveig *Stat'I, esse. Vcherashnij mir: vospominania Evropeitsa*, [russ.], p.160

<sup>8</sup> Kagan, *Die Welt von gestern – heute: Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten*, p.187

## CONCLUSION

Stefan Zweig was and still is one of the most popular authors in Russia. Starting with the 20s, when he became known in Russia, his books never lacked the interest of Russian readers. The best evidence for this is the number of his published books in Russia. In the period from 1927 to 1984 at least twenty-five volumes of his collected and selected works appeared. After the year 1984 and until 1989, according to Vassilevsky<sup>1</sup>, at least one book each year appeared. With the publication of Zweig's autobiographical book in 1991 in Russia, almost everything from Zweig was translated into Russian and appeared in Russia.

Zweig's close connection to Russia cannot be denied. It started with the reading of works of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Gorky, when Zweig was a student. His fascination with the works of these great Russian writers Zweig expressed later when he himself became a writer. He presented Tolstoy and Dostoevsky in his biographical studies, and with Gorky he maintained personal relationships from the year 1923, when they started to correspond to each other, until Gorky's death in 1936. The 20s were the most significant years of Zweig in Russia. During those years he was closer than ever to the Russian public. In 1928 he visited Russia and spend two weeks there. He met with his Russian readers, visited the museums and theaters in Moscow and Leningrad; he also met with Gorky. His impressions of his trip to Russia were diverse and somewhat contradictory. He wrote about them in the essay *Die Reise nach Russland*, in his autobiography *Die Welt von Gestern* and in the correspondences with his friend Romain Rolland and others.

In the period after World War II, when the "ideological machine" in the Soviet Union was working in full swing, Zweig still remained popular with Soviet readers, but not because he

---

<sup>1</sup> Vassilevsky A., *Cveig protiv nasilia* (Zweig against violence). In *Novyi mir*, 1989, 9:261

showed in his works the falsehood and hypocrisy of the bourgeois ethics, as some Soviet critics claimed. The Soviet readers appreciated Zweig's talent as an incredible storyteller, whose novellas are able to lead them into the psychological journey through the intricate labyrinths of the human soul, who depicted the theme of love and the image of woman with such an incredible tenderness.

With the publication of Stefan Zweig's autobiography *The World of Yesterday* in 1991, the Russian readers are able to rediscover this great Austrian writer and find new facets of his talent.

## WORKS CITED

- Asadovsky, K.M. *Unbekannte Briefe von Stefan Zweig an den Verlag Wremja, Leningrad.* In *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, 26:12, 1978.
- Bolshaya Sovetskaya Enciclopedia.* USSR, vol. 60, 1934.
- Gorky, Maxim *Briefwechsel [zwischen] Maxim Gorki [und] Stefan Zweig.* Hrsg. von Kurt Boettcher, Verlag Philipp Reclam jun., Leipzig, 1971.
- , *Selected Letters.* Ed. by Andrew Barratt and Barry P. Scherr, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997.
- , *Perepiska Gor'kogo v dvuch tomach* [russ.]. "Chudozhestvennaya Literatura", Moskva, 1986.
- Habermann, Gerhard *Maxim Gorki.* Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., New York, 1971.
- Hoefert, Sigfried *Stefans Zweig Verbundeheit mit Russland und der russischen Literatur.* In *Modern Austrian Literature*, 14:3/4, 1981.
- Kagan, Gennady *Die Welt von gestern – heute. Erinnerungen eines russisch-judischen Germanisten.* Boehla Verlag: Wien-Koeln-Weimar, 1995.
- , *Vcherashnyi mir.* In *Neva* 1,3:1972. Leningrad, 1972.
- Klawiter, Randolph *The Reception of Stefan Zweig in the United States. A Bibliographical Account.* In *Modern Austrian Literature*, 20:3/4, 1987.
- , *Stefan Zweig. A Bibliography.* The University of North Carolina Press, 1964.
- , *Stefan Zweig: An international Bibliography. Addendum I.* Ariadne Press, California, 1999.
- McClain H. William *Soviet Russia Through the Eyes of Zweig and Rolland.* In *Modern Language Notes*, vol.69, issue 1 (Jan., 1954).
- Mertz, Peter *Mit Stefan Zweig durch Europa.* Pinguin-Verlag, Innsbruck, Unschau – Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1990.
- Nymphius, Christian *Die Stefan-Zweig-Rezeption in der UdSSR.* Liber Verlag Mainz, 1996.
- Prater, D.A. *European of Yesterday. A Biography of Stefan Zweig.* Oxford University Press, 1972.

- , *Stefan Zweig. Das Leben eines Ungeduldigen*. Frankfurt a. M. 1984.
- Rolland, Romain *Briefwechsel 1910-1940* (vol. 1,2). Ruetten& Loening, Berlin, 1987.
- Ren, Guo-Qiang *Am Ende der Missachtung? Studie ueber die Stefan Zweig – Rezeption in der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft nach 1945*. Shaker Verlag, Aachen, 1996.
- Terras, Victor *Handbook of Russian Literature*. New Haven, 1985.
- Tsveig, Stefan *Stat'i, esse: Vcherashniy mir – vospominania evropeitsa*. [russ.] “Raduga”, Moskva, 1987.
- Vassilevsky A., *Cveig protiv nasilia* [russ.] In *Novyi mir*, 9/1989.
- Zweig, Stefan *The World of Yesterday*. University of Nebraska Press, 1964.
- , *Die Monotonisierung der Welt: Aufsätze und Vorträge*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a.Main, 1976.
- , *Begegnungen mit Menschen, Buechern, Staedten*. S.Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt.a.Main, 1955.
- , *Laender, Staedte, Landschaften*. Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt a.Main, 1981.
- , *Drei Dichter ihres Lebens. Casanova, Stendhal, Tolstoi*. Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1928.

## VITA

Lydia Zhigunova was born in 1974 in Nalchik, Russia. She graduated from Kabardino-Balkar State University with a bachelor degree in German language and literature in 1996. From 1996 until 1999 she taught German at the International Linguistic Center in her hometown. She came to the United States in 1999 to pursue an academic career in the field of Foreign Languages and Literatures. At present she is a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in the program of Comparative Literature at Louisiana State University.