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# A Language of One's Own

*On the Linguistic Plight of Stefan Zweig's Later Writings (1934–42)*

Caio Yurgel

Aber der schöpferische Mensch untersteht anderem und höherem Gesetz  
als dem bloß nationalen.

—Stefan Zweig, *Magellan: Der Mann und seine Tat*, 1938

The great necessity of entering—and remaining as long as possible within—the momentum of writing is perhaps what kept Stefan Zweig alive in his final years. As the memory of his home and of his mother tongue started to fade from his memory, Zweig resorted to pen and paper as a means to force them back to life and, through them, also force himself back to life. The strategy worked for as long as it could, for as long as Zweig could withstand having lost what had made him a writer in the first place: his books, his confidence, his home, his language.

What Zweig lost in 1934, following Hitler's rise to power in Germany, was first and foremost his sense of self, a sense of self that had been, over the years, carefully nurtured by—and entangled with—his Viennese upbringing. In a touching text written in 1940, called *Das Wien von Gestern*, Zweig speaks at length of Vienna as a historical and cultural crossroads, a *Weltstadt* that teaches its inhabitants from an early age the secrets and pleasures of foreign customs and languages—this is why, claims Zweig, one never succumbed in Vienna to the feeling of being confined in one's own language, race, or nationality; even the German spoken in the city was softer, more musical and open than its northern counterpart, more welcoming of other intonations and inflections. It was easy for a Viennese to learn new languages, and it was not at all uncommon to spend a day in French or Italian, soaking oneself in the melody of these foreign, yet familiar, sounds (“Das Wien von Gestern” 395–97).<sup>1</sup>

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1           Therein lies Vienna's task, argues Zweig: in breathing *Weltluft*, in fostering  
 2 an inclusive cosmopolitanism and thus fomenting "eine überlegene Kultur"  
 3 capable of hindering all advances of barbarism (412).<sup>2</sup> It comes as no surprise  
 4 that Zweig valued himself—much as his beloved Vienna—as a *Weltbürger*,  
 5 comfortable in many different *milieux*, conversant in many languages, capable  
 6 of sitting down with James Joyce and discussing possible translations of his  
 7 *Portrait of an Artist* into English, French, German, and Italian—as he proudly  
 8 retells in his autobiography (366–67).<sup>3</sup> The same Zweig who then lost his  
 9 Heimat and lost his language, whose books were burned in Germany and  
 10 whose mother tongue was banned during the war in Brazil. If an exiled Zweig  
 11 wanted his letters to reach their destinations, he had to start writing them in  
 12 English or French, even if these letters were trying to convey his innermost  
 13 thoughts and feelings, thoughts and feelings he was no doubt having in  
 14 German.<sup>4</sup>

15           In his last years, Zweig was living in a permanent state of translation.  
 16 Foreign languages were both his salvation and his demise. It is this weary  
 17 feeling of both belonging to the world at large—of being a born and raised  
 18 *Weltbürger*—and no longer belonging to any specific, familiar place that this  
 19 article seeks to investigate, by way of Zweig's existentially charged encounter  
 20 with languages in his years of exile (1934–42). By focusing on Zweig's later  
 21 writings, this article seeks to pinpoint instances of the author's linguistic  
 22 plight, of his slow but irreversible descent into a multilingualism that, over  
 23 time, started to erode his confidence and belief not only in himself but also—  
 24 and most gravely—in the cosmopolitan ideals that he once identified with  
 25 Vienna. Rather than searching an explanation for Zweig's plight in the ab-  
 26 struse worlds of theory, this article seeks to show concrete instances of the  
 27 author's growing crisis of faith and self-doubt,<sup>5</sup> as the same Zweig who had  
 28 could once hold his own with James Joyce in four different languages began  
 29 to cast doubt on his control over the English language<sup>6</sup> and, ultimately, on his  
 30 own craft.<sup>7</sup>

31           The ghost of *Entfremdung* haunts Zweig's autobiography from the very first  
 32 page, as in exile he grieves over Vienna's demotion from a "supernational me-  
 33 tropolis" to a "German provincial city," as he commits to paper the revulsion  
 34 felt upon having his books burned to ashes "in the same land where [they]  
 35 made friends of millions of readers." And so, already two pages in, Zweig sets  
 36 the tone for the retelling of his life story: "And so I belong nowhere, and ever-  
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ywhere I am a stranger, a guest at best" (*Die Welt von Gestern* 10).<sup>8</sup> The autobiography's title, *Die Welt von Gestern*, seems to refer not to a world already gone but to a world the author no longer felt a part of. Although it was not for lack of trying.

Despite Thomas Mann's harsh reaction to the tragic suicide—Mann accused Zweig of cowardice—Zweig did, in his own non-belligerent way, try to intervene, to be of some use in that troubled century. Sometime during 1935 or 1936, as Zweig was already in exile between London and New York, he was engaged in conceiving a monthly literary publication that would feature articles in various languages as a means of counterattacking the vicious German propaganda with the ethical values backed by a European community of world citizens much like himself.<sup>9</sup> The project, unfortunately, never came to be, a painful realization to a man who in many ways was the very embodiment of his own project: "The more European a life a man had lived in Europe, the harder he was punished by the fist that battered Europe. [ . . . ] It was useless that I had been training my heart for almost half a century to beat as that of a *citoyen du monde*" (*Die Welt von Gestern* 369, 543).<sup>10</sup>

The failure of the project was also the failure of what Zweig had become as a human being, was yet another sign of the exhaustion and disillusion that would eventually consume him. It tore apart the lesson he had learned during his days as a young writer in Paris, "the city of eternal youth," as he calls it in his autobiography. It tore apart whatever was left of his youth, the one lesson Paris had taught this *citoyen du monde*:

I used my time in translating foreign languages, and even now I hold this to be the best way for a young poet to understand more deeply and more creatively the spirit of his own language. [ . . . ] for in this humble activity of transmitting the highest treasures of art I experienced for the first time the assurance of doing something truly useful, a justification of my existence. (*Die Welt von Gestern* 167)<sup>11</sup>

Zweig found solace, even a childlike happiness at times, in languages, as, for instance, when he received from his German publishing house, for his fiftieth birthday, a collection of his own books published in a wide array of languages—upon which he joyously wrote: "no language was absent, not Bulgarian or Finnish, not Portuguese or Armenian, not Chinese or Marathi. In Braille, in shorthand, in all exotic alphabets and idioms, thoughts and words

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1 of mine had gone out to people; I had expanded my existence immeasurably  
 2 beyond the space of my being . . . What evil could possible happen? There  
 3 were my books: could they be destroyed?” (*Die Welt von Gestern* 469).<sup>12</sup>

4 But they were being destroyed; by that time Zweig had already left his  
 5 home in Salzburg, had left behind every translation of his books aligned on  
 6 shelves he would never again lay eyes upon. From candid bliss Zweig had  
 7 been thrust into despair: “when my own works disappeared from the Ger-  
 8 man language, I could more clearly grasp [the] lament at being able to pro-  
 9 duce the created word only in translation, in a diluted, altered medium” (*Die*  
 10 *Welt von Gestern* 538).<sup>13</sup> Zweig had lost his mother tongue, and all translations  
 11 in the world seemed only to pale in comparison. But it was only due to these  
 12 translations, due to his diluted existence in other languages, that he was able  
 13 to flee Austria via London<sup>14</sup> and in 1935 board a ship bound for New York,  
 14 from where he wrote to Hermann Hesse: “my house in Salzburg [ . . . ] is  
 15 no longer a home to me; for emigration I have no talent” (*Briefe an Freunde*  
 16 264).<sup>15</sup> Zweig had been deprived of his Austrian passport, he was a *citoyen du*  
 17 *monde* who was no longer a *citoyen*, all that he had left was a truncated version  
 18 of the *monde*.

19 And so he accepted the invitation in 1936 to go to Buenos Aires, Argentina,  
 20 to take part in the PEN Congress, an activity he generally disliked. But he did  
 21 so out of a commitment to the world, despite his failed project, despite his  
 22 dwindling forces. He writes in his autobiography: “Never had it seemed more  
 23 important to me than then to support the idea of intellectual solidarity over  
 24 and beyond national boundaries and languages” (*Die Welt von Gestern* 522).<sup>16</sup>  
 25 This is, of course, the grandiose statement of a man writing his own life story.  
 26 In reality, things were much more convoluted, as he reported to his good  
 27 friend Raoul Auernheimer in a letter sent from Buenos Aires a few days later:

28 I do not know if the others feel the predicament of our situation the  
 29 same way as I do—to speak German there means to be understood  
 30 by nobody; to speak French there, where German is the official lan-  
 31 guage of the congress, means to recognize that one no longer has a  
 32 Heimat in German literature. Moreover, I did not wish to impose on  
 33 the few Jews who were present, so I kept to myself and held no lectu-  
 34 res. (Zweig, *The Correspondence of Stefan Zweig* 116)<sup>17</sup>

35 Torn between languages and their implicit ideologies, shaken by the  
 36 possibility of renewed failure, Zweig chose silence. One could interpret his  
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silence as the surfacing of his passive political stance, the same passivity that would be posthumously criticized by Thomas Mann. But it would be much more compelling to hear his silence as a bittersweet respect for language, this random, fallible set of conventions that turns every human interaction into a small miracle, the acknowledgment that a language can destroy as much as it can create. It was at this fragile, almost defeatist point in Zweig's life that Brazil entered the stage, and for a little while it gave the Austrian author a second wind, it breathed in Zweig's life a *Luft* that, if not properly cosmopolitan like that of his native Vienna, then was at least fresh enough and soft enough to reconstitute his voice. The couple of weeks he spent in Brazil after the PEN Congress of 1936 marked a new beginning in his life—but they also contained its end.<sup>18</sup>

Four years later, in 1940, Zweig returned to South America. In the meantime something had shifted within him, maybe something that Brazil had set in motion, and despite his usual languid, melancholy demeanor, there was a newfound vitality in his writing, the stubborn strength of a dying horse. It is said in South America that a horse gives all it's got until the moment it dies; it never falters, never fails. Zweig had found his way around language once again. He wrote his ex-wife, Friderike Zweig, one letter after the other relishing his success: "Yesterday I spoke French here, in Buenos Aires (and in the other places) I held two lectures in Spanish, one in English, one in German, and dozens of people wait for me . . .,"<sup>19</sup> he wrote in September 1940, and then in October: "Yesterday, the first lecture in Spanish took place under dire conditions—although of a most flattering kind. The room for 1,500 people was so packed that the police had to intervene after 3,000 people tried to squeeze their way in. [ . . . ] It is nothing short of a sensation, here, that an author should speak Spanish and, wonder of wonders, I have spoken well" (Zweig and F. Zweig, *Unrast der Liebe*, 262).<sup>20</sup>

One can easily read between the lines the weary triumph of a *citoyen du monde* reconnected to—if not *the* world at large—then at least *a* world. The brief reprieve of once again partaking in the ethical, worldly solidarity of the intellectual community he so wished to be part of. His relieved words reached Friderike in November of the same year: "I have secured a permanent visa in Brazil, so that at least I can have a land where I don't need to beg for a visa" (*Unrast der Liebe*, 265).<sup>21</sup>

Brazil had not only reconstituted his voice and provided him with a permanent visa—Brazil also gave Zweig something that the "world of

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1 yesterday” did not, and that was the feeling of living “im Werdenden,  
 2 Kommenden, Zukünftigen”—a phrase bringing to mind the passage from  
 3 Deleuze and Guattari’s *Kafka: Pour une littérature mineure* (33–34): “To write  
 4 like a dog in its hole, a rat digging its burrow. And thus to find one’s own point  
 5 of under-development, one’s own dialect, one’s own Third World.”<sup>22</sup> Zweig  
 6 found these three things in Brazil, provided one understands this “Third  
 7 World” not in terms of numbers and figures but as an invitation to another  
 8 world, not this one or that one but a third one, a world in which things are still  
 9 being created, rather than destroyed.

10 *Brasilien: Ein Land der Zukunft*, published in 1941, is a beautiful, caring  
 11 book, a book that suffers from its excessive love. The book downplays the  
 12 country’s shortcomings, while simultaneously exaggerating its paradisiacal  
 13 qualities and affable people. Instead of mass production or administrative  
 14 acumen, Zweig praises the country’s “Wille zur Verständigung und  
 15 Verträglichkeit” (22),<sup>23</sup> as he discovers his affection for a country that, despite  
 16 its diverse population, managed to bypass and ignore the European racial  
 17 obsession. It becomes clear that Zweig is using Brazil as the humanist model  
 18 against which Germany, or fascist Europe, should be compared. It is in this  
 19 sense that Brazil is a land of the future, as opposed to the European world  
 20 of yesterday. The two books should be read back to back: not only do they  
 21 complement one another, but they also reveal the extent to which Zweig  
 22 was torn, a man without a present, lost between past and future, between  
 23 his books in Europe and his freedom in Brazil, one foot on each side of the  
 24 Atlantic. In October 1941 he wrote to Friderike: “I feel inhibited in my work  
 25 in every sense. My books will hardly ever be published again in the original,  
 26 and my entire mindset and worldview is bound to a European—and even  
 27 Latin—mentality” (*Unrast der Liebe* 280)<sup>24</sup>

28 Such constant reminders of having lost his existence “in the original” and  
 29 only surviving through translation surfaces in interesting, if not unexpected  
 30 ways throughout *Brasilien: Ein Land der Zukunft*. For instance, as Zweig re-  
 31 tells the country’s colonization process, he muses, referring to the day that  
 32 the French attempted to conquer Rio de Janeiro, “whether in the future this  
 33 town is to be known as Rio de Janeiro or Henriville, and if the language of  
 34 Brazil is to be Portuguese or French”<sup>25</sup>—as if fearing that the imperialism of  
 35 the French language would somehow endanger the pacific nature of Brazil  
 36 (*Brasilien*, 58–59). But he later concludes that it is not the Portuguese spoken  
 37 in Brazil that sets the country apart from Portugal and, thus, from Europe—



it is actually the warm human contact, most often expressed in the form of a hug: “the hug [accolade] is simply a custom taken for granted among Brazilians, and the result of their innate friendliness. Courtesy is here the basis of human relationship, taking forms which we in Europe have long forgotten” (*Brasilien*, 154–55).<sup>26</sup>

Zweig is, of course, exaggerating this perceived cordiality, but it is nevertheless touching how he in his Brazilian letters equates language to human contact, as if the secret to this humanist stance were somehow hidden within the depths of the local dialect. By 1941 Zweig and Lotte, his former secretary and by then his second wife, had moved to Petrópolis, up on the mountains outside Rio, where they hired a local cook. Zweig would spend hours musing over the happiness of this barefoot woman, eventually writing to his friend Berthold Viertel: “But nonetheless she is touchingly tender of behavior, happy, grateful—ah, if only I could learn this language” (*Briefe an Freunde* 337).<sup>27</sup>

The letter was sent three months before his suicide. By then, the burden of existing with one foot on each side of the Atlantic had grown too heavy, the continental vastness of Brazil made him feel stranded, an old man in a country for young people: “we are too old to once again get used to foreign languages and lands,”<sup>28</sup> he confessed in one of the last letters sent to Friderike, a letter originally written in English (*Unrast der Liebe*, 288).<sup>29</sup>

But it would not do Zweig any justice to finish this essay on a suicidal moment. Instead, it would be best to go back to 1937, to a text he wrote as a recollection of his first years as an exile, as a guest in a foreign land. The text is called “*Das Haus der Tausend Schicksale*,” and at a certain point Zweig writes about being aboard a ship in the middle of the Atlantic, surrounded by homeless, landless people much like himself. And he admonishes you, you who have a home, you who know how this travel is going to end, to “approach them, speak to them. It is enough to cheer them if you merely go up to them, speak to them, but if you could speak to them in their own language they unconsciously draw a breath of the homeland which they have left, and their eyes light up eloquently” (“*Das Haus der Tausend Schicksale*” 360).<sup>30</sup>

Zweig resorts to the same image once again while introducing his book on the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, published in 1938. Zweig finds himself impatient, even bored, aboard a ship bound to Brazil, despite all of the amenities and comforts that are provided. And he thinks of Magellan, lost in the infinite seas exploring the unknown, and he thinks of himself aboard that ship and repeats very similar words to himself: “You know your destination;

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1 to the hour, almost to the minute, you know when you will get there; and  
 2 your coming is eagerly awaited" (*Magellan* 10).<sup>31</sup> Zweig was, at that very time,  
 3 the adrift homeless person and the valiant explorer; he was constantly trying  
 4 to negotiate this asymmetry, trying to find an answer to the question of how  
 5 to live in several languages under the crushing weight of nationalism.

6 The image could not be more fitting to wrap up this brief linguistic in-  
 7 quiry: Zweig is literally writing a book in the middle of the ocean, adrift in  
 8 the expanses of this "no-man's land," this place of transit, as if to say that if one  
 9 has no other place of belonging, no other place to live, one must live in one's  
 10 words, one must live through language. One must go through many langua-  
 11 ges before finding a language of one's own. Even if that language turns out to  
 12 be silence.

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13  
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 18 romanticism, realism, and modern and contemporary fiction in German,  
 19 Portuguese, Spanish, and Chinese. He is currently a postdoc fellow with the  
 20 Joint Program between the Freie Universität Berlin and the Peking University.

## 21 Notes

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 24 1. "Darum hatte man in Wien ständig das Gefühl, Weltluft zu atmen und nicht einge-  
 25 sperrt zu sein in einer Sprache, einer Rasse, einer Nation, einer Idee. [ . . . ] Kein Ausländer,  
 26 der nicht deutsch verstand, war hier verloren. [ . . . ] Unser Deutsch wurde dadurch nicht  
 27 so hart, nicht so akzentuiert, nicht so eckig und präzise wie das der Norddeutschen, es war  
 28 weicher, nachlässiger, musikalischer, und so wurde es uns auch leichter, fremde Sprachen zu  
 29 lernen. Wir hatten keine Feindseligkeit zu überwinden, keinen Widerstand, es war in den  
 30 besseren Kreisen üblich, Französisch, Italienisch sich auszudrücken, und auch von diesen  
 31 Sprachen nahm man die Musik in die unsere hinein." For an original take on the choice and  
 32 function of setting in Zweig's work and particularly of "the Vienna of his upbringing," see  
 Turner.

33 2. "Die Aufgabe, eine überlegene Kultur zu verteidigen gegen jeden Einbruch der  
 34 Barbarei, diese Aufgabe, die die Römer uns in die Mauern unserer Stadt eingemeißelt, wir  
 35 haben sie bis zur letzten Stunde erfüllt. Wir haben sie erfüllt in dem Wien von gestern und  
 36 wir wollen, wir werden sie weiter erfüllen auch in der Fremde und überall." The interesting  
 37 relationship between facts and fiction in Zweig's autobiography, between Zweig's Vienna  
 and the Vienna described by historians, between the "signs" and the "designata," is explored  
 at length in Galdós.

3. “Je mehr ich ihn kennenlernte, desto mehr setzte er mich durch seine phantastische Sprachkenntnis in Erstaunen; hinter dieser runden, fest gehämmerten Stirn, die im elektrischen Licht wie Porzellan glatt glänzte, waren alle Vokabeln aller Idiome eingestanz, und er spielte sie in brillantester Weise durcheinander. Einmal als er mich fragte, wie ich einen schwierigen Satz in >Portrait of an artist< deutsch wiedergeben würde, versuchten wir die Formung zusammen in Italienisch und Französisch; er hatte für jedes Wort vier oder fünf in jedem Idiom parat, selbst die dialektischen, und wußte ihren Valeur, ihr Gewicht bis in die kleinste Nuance.”

4. “Mit einem Federstrich hatte der Sinn eines ganzen Lebens sich in Widersinn verwandelt; ich schrieb, ich dachte noch immer in deutscher Sprache, aber jeder Gedanke, den ich dachte, jeder Wunsch, den ich fühlte, gehörte den Ländern, die in Waffen standen für die Freiheit der Welt.” (*Die Welt von Gestern* 572) Darién Davies makes note of the symbolic (and perverse) loss of language experienced by Zweig and how it reflected on the author’s correspondence: “Both Zweigs had to face the fact that owing to the war the market for German writing had dwindled, and furthermore, they had to write letters to their family in English to avoid the wartime censorship.” Davies 185. On Zweig’s own perception of the broader act of writing and sending letters as a hopeful device to preserve one’s sense of moral integrity, see Bohnen.

5. On Zweig’s “lack of self-confidence” in an earlier period of his life, see Steiman.

6. “Drittens spreche ich schlechter Englisch als vor drei Jahren. Ich bin von der Zeit eben wie die meisten sehr hergenommen worden und da die Intensität auf die Arbeit gehen muß, um dort das Niveau zu halten, bin ich arg erschöpft. So etwas wie Festspiele könnte ich gar nicht durchhalten.” Zweig and F. Zweig, *Unrast der Liebe* 259.

7. “Mein Unglück in diesen Zeiten besteht in dem, was früher meine Stärke war: klar und sehr weit voraus zu sehen, nicht mich selbst zu belügen und mich und andere durch Illusionen und Phrasen zu betrügen.” *Briefe an Freunde*, 345.

8. “Ich bin aufgewachsen in Wien, der zweitausendjährigen übernationalen Metropole, und habe sie wie ein Verbrecher verlassen müssen, ehe sie degradiert wurde zu einer deutschen Provinzstadt. Mein literarisches Werk ist in der Sprache, in der ich es geschrieben, zu Asche gebrannt worden, in eben demselben Lande, wo meine Bücher Millionen Leser sich zu Freunden gemacht. So gehöre ich nirgends mehr hin, überall Fremder und bestenfalls Gast . . .” The English translation provided has been checked against Harry Zohn’s 1944 edition of Zweig’s autobiography and adapted whenever necessary. All other translations are my own.

9. For an informative overview of Zweig’s activities as a mediator in European literature (his translations, adaptations, critical essays, introductions), see Zohn.

10. “Je europäischer ein Mensch in Europa gelebt, um so härter wurde er von der Faust gezüchtigt, die Europa zerschlug. ( . . . ) Es hat mir nicht geholfen, daß ich fast durch ein halbes Jahrhundert mein Herz erzogen, weltbürgerlich als das eines >citoyen du monde< zu schlagen.”

11. “. . . nützte ich meine Zeit, um aus fremden Sprachen zu übersetzen, was ich noch heute für die beste Möglichkeit für einen jungen Dichter halte, den Geist der eigenen Sprache tiefer und schöpferischer zu begreifen. [ . . . ] denn an dieser bescheidenen Tätigkeit der Vermittlung erlauchten Kunstguts empfand ich zum erstenmal die Sicherheit, etwas wirklich

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1 Sinnvolles zu tun, eine Rechtfertigung meiner Existenz.” See also Steiman’s observation that  
 2 “[Richard] Dehmel advised Zweig to redirect his energies from his own work to that of  
 3 translating foreign authors, and thus set him to the task which would preoccupy him for the  
 4 next dozen years, a task which nurtured his growing internationalism and a task in which  
 5 he continued to see his most important function, that of mediating between cultures and  
 6 bringing peoples together through their literatures.” Steiman 104.

7 12. “. . . keine Sprache fehlte, nicht Bulgarisch und Finnisch, nicht Portugiesisch und  
 8 Armenisch, nicht Chinesisch und Maratti. In Blindenschrift, in Stenographie, in allen exo-  
 9 tischen Lettern und Idiomen waren Worte und Gedanken von mir zu Menschen gegangen,  
 10 ich hatte meine Existenz unermesslich über den Raum meines Wesens hinaus ausgebreitet.  
 11 [ . . . ] Was konnte da Schlimmes noch geschehen? Da waren meine Bücher: konnte sie je-  
 12 mand zunichte machen?”

13 13. “Aber wie deutlich begriff ich, als dann meine eigenen Bücher aus der deutschen  
 14 Sprache verschwanden, [die] Klage, nur in Übertragungen, in verdünntem, verändertem  
 15 Medium das geschaffene Wort zur Erscheinung bringen zu können!”

16 14. On Zweig’s complicated relationship with England—which was nevertheless the  
 17 country that “he thought first when it became clear to him in 1933 that the time was appro-  
 18 ching when he must leave Austria”—and, to a lesser extent, with the English language, see  
 19 Prater.

20 15. “. . . mein Haus in Salzburg ( . . . ) ist mir nicht recht Heimat mehr, zum Emigranten  
 21 habe ich kein Talent.”

22 16. “nie schien es mir wichtiger als in jenem Augenblick, den Gedanken der geistigen  
 23 Solidarität über Länder und Sprachen hin zu bekräftigen.”

24 17. “Ich weiss nicht, ob die andern das Missliche unserer Situation so empfinden wie  
 25 ich—in deutscher Sprache dort sprechen, heisst, von niemand verstanden werden, in fran-  
 26 zösischer Sprache dort sprechen, wo Deutsch Congresssprache ist, anerkennen, dass man  
 27 Deutsche Literatur nicht mehr zur Heimat hat. Ausserdem wollte ich nicht, dass die wenigen  
 28 Juden, die da waren, zu stark vortreten; so blieb ich bescheiden und hielt auch sonst keine  
 29 Vorträge.”

30 18. “Mit jedem Tage habe ich dies Land [Brasilien] mehr lieben gelernt und nirgends  
 31 hätte ich mir mein Leben lieber vom Grunde aus neu aufgebaut, nachdem die Welt meiner  
 32 eigenen Sprache für mich untergegangen ist und meine geistige Heimat Europa sich selber  
 33 vernichtet.” *Die Welt von Gestern* 329.

34 19. “Gestern sprach ich hier Französisch, in Buenos Aires habe ich (und in den andern  
 35 Orten) zwei spanische Vorträge, einen englischen, einen deutsche und Dutzend Leuten war-  
 36 ten auf mich . . .”

37 20. “Gestern war der erste Vortrag in Spanisch unter reichlichen Schwierigkeiten-  
 freilich solchen höchst schmeichelhafter Art. Der Saal mit 1500 Personen war so gestürmt,  
 daß erstens sich 3000 Personen hineinquetschten und Polizei einschreiten mußte. [ . . . ] Es  
 ist eben eine Sensation hier, daß ein Autor Spanisch spricht und, Wunder über Wunder, ich  
 habe gut gesprochen.”

21. “ich habe mir wenigstens, um ein Land zu haben, wo man nicht um Visa betteln  
 muß, ein permanent Visa in Brasilien gesichert.”

22. “Écrire comme un chien qui fait son trou, un rat qui fait son terrier. Et, pour cela, trouver son propre point de sous-développement, son propre patois, son tiers-monde à soi. . . .” 1
23. It should be noted that Zweig “was conscious of the social dislocation and the disintegration of traditional values wrought by industrialization” but that he ultimately “did not question these changes” beyond what he optimistically perceived as the artist’s task, which was to find “in the new forms of the city . . . a new beauty, in her noises a new rhythm, in her confusion an order, . . . in her stammering a language.” See Steiman 105. 2  
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24. “Ich fühle mich gehemmt in meinem Wirken in jedem Sinne, in dem Original werden die Bücher vermutlich kaum mehr erscheinen und mein ganzes Denken und Betrachten ist an europäische, ja sogar lateinische Mentalität gebunden. . . .” 8  
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25. “diese Stadt [ . . . ] Rio de Janeiro oder Henriville heißen wird, ob Brasilien der portugiesischen oder französischen Sprachwelt verbleibt.” 10  
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26. “die accolade zwischen Brasilianern eine durchaus selbstverständliche Sitte ist, ein Ausstrom natürlicher Herzlichkeit. Höflichkeit wiederum ist hier die selbstverständliche Grundform menschlicher Beziehung, und sie nimmt Formen an, die wir in Europa längst vergessen haben.” 12  
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27. “Aber dabei ist sie rührend zart im Betragen, glücklich, dankbar—ach wenn ich nur diese Sprache erlernen könnte.” 16  
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28. “aber wir sind alle zu alt, um uns noch ganz an fremde Sprachen und Länder zu gewöhnen.” This letter echoes—with even more negative undertones—a previous letter Zweig had written to Paul Zech from New York in June of 1941: “Wir sind falsch gestellt in jedem Sinne; man müsste heute entweder zwanzig sein oder achtzig, das Leben schon hinter sich haben oder noch ganz vor sich. Aber eines ist uns noch geblieben, und selbst ohne ihre Wirkung hat sie ihre ablenkende Kraft bewahrt.” Zweig and Zech, *Briefe* 158. 18  
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29. Davies brilliantly locates in translation, in the act of constantly “code-switching, interpreting, and re-interpreting,” the instability and the feeling of in-between-ness (which he calls “liminality”) that burdened the Zweigs in South America: “Translation can be regarded as a liminal art of profession, independent of whether one believes the translator is a technician or a co-creator.” Davies ultimately concludes that “[l]iminality, as a transitory journey and as a phase or a state of being, can, oddly enough, be its own resolution”—a statement that captures quite well, from a theoretical point of view, the atmosphere surrounding Zweig’s last days in Brazil. Davies 185, 187. 23  
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30. “. . . tritt zu ihnen, sprich zu ihnen, denn schon dies ist Tröstung, daß Du zu ihnen trittst, und indem Du sie ansprichst in ihrer Sprache, trinken sie unbewußt einen Atemzug der Heimat, die sie verlassen haben, und ihre Augen werden hell und beredt.” 30  
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31. “Du weißt, wohin du fährst, weißt auf die Stunde genau, wann du ankommst, und weißt, daß du freundlichst erwartet bist.” 32  
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