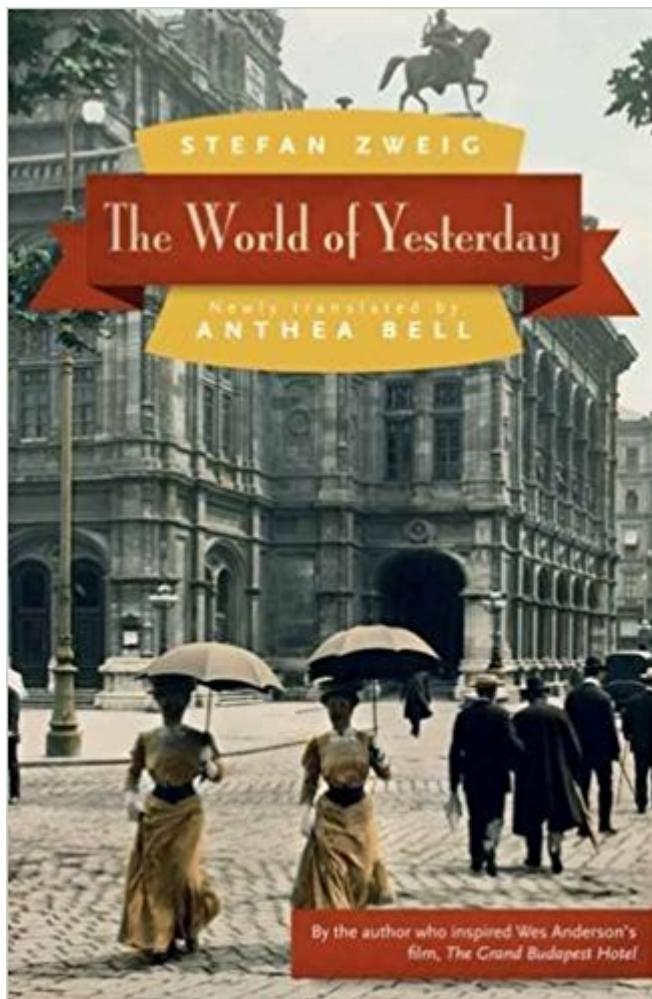


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# The World Of Yesterday



## Synopsis

By the author who inspired Wes Anderson's film, *The Grand Budapest Hotel* Written as both a recollection of the past and a warning for future generations, *The World of Yesterday* recalls the golden age of literary Vienna—its seeming permanence, its promise, and its devastating fall. Surrounded by the leading literary lights of the epoch, Stefan Zweig draws a vivid and intimate account of his life and travels through Vienna, Paris, Berlin, and London, touching on the very heart of European culture. His passionate, evocative prose paints a stunning portrait of an era that danced brilliantly on the edge of extinction. This new translation by award-winning Anthea Bell captures the spirit of Zweig's writing in arguably his most revealing work.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The autobiography of the internationally famous biographer and dramatist is a chronicle of three ages: the golden days of Vienna that ended with World War I; that war and its aftermath; and the Hitler years. Three ages do come to life in Zweig's book." —Publishers Weekly (Publishers Weekly)  
"When I opened it, I immediately felt that rare thrill one experiences when meeting a great book." —Newsday.com (Newsday.com)  
"A searing memoir." —Intelligent Life (Intelligent Life)  
"The World of Yesterday is one of the greatest memoirs of the twentieth century, as perfect in its evocation of the world Zweig loved as it is in its portrayal of how that world was destroyed." —David Hare, award-winning playwright and director of film and theater (David Hare)  
"The World of Yesterday is ostensibly an autobiography, but it is much more than that. In this remarkably fine new translation, Anthea Bell perfectly captures Stefan

Zweig's glorious evocation of a lost world, Vienna's golden age, in which he grew up and flourished. •Ronald Harwood, award-winning author, playwright, and screenwriter (Ronald Harwood) "The very success with which this book evokes both the beauty of the past and the fatality of its passing is what gives it tragic effectiveness. It is not so much a memoir of a life as it is the memento of an age, and the author seems, in his own phrase, to be the narrator at an illustrated lecture. The illustrations are provided by time, but his choice is brilliant and the narration is evocative." •New Republic (New Republic)

Stefan Zweig (1881–1942) was an Austrian novelist, journalist, biographer, and playwright prominent in the 1920s and 1930s. He is the author of several books, including the novels *Beware of Pity* and *Confusion of Feelings* and the biography *Conqueror of the Seas: The Story of Magellan*. Anthea Bell has translated many French, German, Danish, and Polish literary works into English. Her translations include Wladyslaw Szpilman's memoir *The Pianist*, W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*, and numerous works of children's literature.

This is a very good primary resource if you are interested in Viennese culture around the turn of the 20th century. Zweig is a storyteller and not a historian, so he makes the information easy to understand and digest. This is not a textbook, but his feelings show through on every page. Having grown up in both the beauty of that city and the devastation to the Jewish community with the antisemitism that took hold in Vienna in 1905, Zweig gives us a unique view into the society which changed so dramatically, from a deep appreciation of the many Jewish families that supported the arts and life in Vienna, to a complete rejection of their own neighbors. The way he tells the story, it feels like it was just yesterday. It's sad to think that he finished this book with more of a feeling of hopelessness than one can glean from the pages.

This is a glorious book. I bought it after learning that "The Grand Budapest Hotel" a movie that seemed to me frantic and silly claimed to be based on Zweig. Zweig could employ a light touch, but he was basically a serious man. This memoir traces the life of a man, Austrian by birth, but pan-European in sensibility, who was propelled through life by a love of art, music, literature, and creative people- and yet tells of a man who lived through the horrors of World War I and took his own life early in World War II. It is a tribute to a time of gaiety, of creative energy, of the naive belief that joy lasts. It moved me to the core of my being. It is an education to read it; it is also a thrill.

After reading George Prochnik's wonderful and engrossing book, "The Impossible Exile", I started reading "The World of Yesterday" on my Kindle to see the story in Zweig's own words. Then I bought the print version (paperback) to continue my relationship with Zweig and his life experience on closer terms. I've also ordered a book of his stories. This super-literary man packed everything possible in the his 60 years, describing the highs and lows of the Golden Age of Vienna. He witnessed so many historical moments first hand and correctly predicted much of our world as it has turned out since 1942. This includes the fate of nationalism and the appalling situation in Israel/Palestine today. I'd like to give the book 10 stars to indicate the two versions I bought. You would really want to know this man!

The opening chapters of The World of Yesterday offer a marvelous portrait of life and culture in Europe during the years before the two world wars, focusing particularly on Vienna, where Zweig grew up. Then comes the unravelling of civilization. Zweig, himself a dramatist and story teller, knew many of the most important figures in European culture--poets, musicians, sculptures, and painters--and his book chronicles how many of them responded to fascism. Zweig and his wife took their own lives in 1942, not living to see the end of the process that destroyed yesterday. By the way, the recent film The Grand Budapest Hotel is based on a story by Zweig.

From a childhood and young adulthood, Zweig carried us through WW1 & WW2 living the life of an intellectual poet and top notch writer. I was enthralled in the early chapters with his crystal clear sentence and paragraph structure. Recommend this book to everyone that loves clarity. Sadly he gave it up in later life.

A grand tour of a gone world, by a writer for whom individual freedom and European unity were the highest values. But: the translation shown in the Look Inside feature is not the translation in this edition. I brought that point to 's attention in July (2016). It's especially confusing, as both the older and newer translations are from the same press.

Stefan Zweig was one of the most popular writers in Europe between the World Wars and was a devout pacifist and internationalist. His work was banned by the Nazis and he fled to England, finally committing suicide in Brazil during the height of World War 2. His oeuvre is impressively large and wide ranging, but is rather obscure these days. "The World of Yesterday" is a great introduction to this unjustly neglected writer and his times. Incidentally, Wes Anderson's 2014 film, "The Grand

"Budapest Hotel" is based on this book and other writings of Zweig. Well worth reading.

One of the best books I have ever read! Stefan Zweig is so intelligent and multi-cultural, he met everybody who was anybody in the arts in Europe, England and many in the USA from the turn into the 20th century to 1941. He could discuss with most in their own language whether German, French, Italian, English. An absolutely amazing mind and such a wide field of interests and very able to write about the times with clarity. I am so glad I discovered him.

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