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# Stefan Zweig's Fear of Postcolonialism

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### The Indian Threat to England

"You cannot understand England," said [Walther] Rathenau, "as long as you just know the island, nor our continent of Europe unless you have been outside it at least once. You are a free man, make use of your freedom. [...] Why don't you go to India, and to America?" - Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*<sup>1</sup>

On July 1, 1909, in a professed act of patriotism to his Indian motherland, Madan Lal Dhingra,<sup>2</sup> a nationalist revolutionary studying in England, assassinated Sir William Curzon Wyllie, political aide-de-camp to the Secretary of State of India. Twelve days later, Stefan Zweig responded to this event in the Viennese newspaper, *Neue Freie Presse*, in an essay titled, "Die indische Gefahr für England" ("The Indian Threat to England"). As with much of Stefan Zweig's published works with political undertones, his public response is less an overt political statement—less a disapproval or sanction of Dhingra's act—than a quest to understand it: its motivations and ramifications. Twenty-seven years old and recently returned from an influential journey through India and other parts of South and Southeast Asia, the writer here is a young Zweig dealing with his own set of patriotisms to the status quo. He incorporates in this essay his own travel-induced awakening to the shortcomings of Eurocentricism as well as to the restive potential of a people kept suppressed, though he nonetheless remains reluctant to surrender his support to the liberation of England's biggest colony.

His focus consequently shifts to the moment of tension incited by Dhingra's act: the mounting British fear of an Indian uprising. In many respects, Zweig's analysis of fear is a concession to an imminent shift in balances of power. Initially, the mere possibility of British imperialism leaves Zweig in utter awe, and in his attempt to understand how a handful of merchants and a resourceful conquistador laid claim to such an immense territory, he essentializes the conquered Indian as submissive and the British ruler as edifying. In a latent comparison to Austria-Hungary which surfaces in the very last paragraph, Zweig seems to be prescribing a better way to rule, perhaps unwittingly transposing the Austro-Hungarian myth of integration onto a landscape of subjugation. In

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<sup>1</sup> "Sie können England nicht verstehen, solange Sie nur die Insel kennen", sagte [Walther Rathenau] mir. "Und nicht unseren Kontinent, solange Sie nicht mindestens einmal über ihn hinausgekommen sind. Sie sind ein freier Mensch, nützen Sie die Freiheit! [...] Warum fahren Sie nicht einmal nach Indien und nach Amerika?" (Zweig).

"Such was the challenging question put to Zweig by Walther Rathenau during a late-night conversation in Berlin. On that June evening in 1907 the two of them had talked at length about literature, politics and foreign countries [...] Rathenau said that one could only understand Britain if one had viewed the colonial system from a different perspective" (Matuschek 85).

<sup>2</sup> According to some records, his name is spelled Madan Lal Dhingra.

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this way, Zweig does criticize the British for the manner of their rule, but does not go as far as to criticize their rule itself. A blanket denunciation of British imperialism would have required a denunciation of Austro-Hungarian imperialism, as well. For a young Zweig grappling with visions of a postnational Europe and even loyalty to the Habsburg supranational myth, the collapse of the British Empire could have engendered repercussions that would split European populations asunder along nationalist lines. Through his analysis of the Indian threat to Britain, Zweig is forced to confront the limits of his own vision of a postnational Europe: Would erasing borders in the spirit of European inclusion require a supervising rule of power?

Situating Zweig's essay in the milieu of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Viennese literature helps to explain the complexity of Zweig's politically guarded response in his analysis of a squarely political act. Is Zweig's focus on fear, his reluctance either to disavow or sanction Madar Lal Dhingra's act, and his awestruck and elaborate metaphorical descriptions of British rule over India indebted to the ostensibly apolitical scene of Viennese Modernism? To what extent is Zweig's stance here actually apolitical? Even though Zweig's essay does not explicitly denounce colonial rule, I contend that it questions the viability and sustainability of the colonial system. As such, it refers to the cusp of a major geopolitical shift from colonial to postcolonial structures and begins to reflect, albeit in a Eurocentric manner, on the cultural legacy of British colonialism in India. Identifying the postcoloniality of this text reveals its self-reflective and self-critical elements as well as its incipient curiosity for visions of postcolonial hybrid cultures. Zweig's interest in and even compassion for sites of hybridity point to his pursuit in looking beyond contentious dynamics of power. Indeed, many of Zweig's fictional protagonists, including Virata of *Die Augen des ewigen Bruders* (*The Eyes of the Undying Brother*, his 1921 novella set in India), characterize the struggle to dodge conscription into hegemony.<sup>3</sup>

## Postcolonialism in the Midst of Viennese Modernism

Postcolonialism does not refer merely to ideas and things *after* the colonial era. While this field of study may have emerged at a time when even the most stubborn colonial structures were crumbling, it has expanded into a field that is difficult to define both spatially as well as temporally. The formal closure of the colonial era spanned three centuries and encapsulated variously experienced and understood relations between a great variety of colonizers and colonized peoples (Loomba 12–13). Ideologically, the term postcolonialism has been duly contested: “if the inequities of colonial rule have not been erased, it is perhaps premature to claim the demise of colonialism” (Loomba 12). Postcolonialism highlights everything from the bitter aftereffects of colonial rule in decolonized territories to the visions of postcoloniality during the colonial era itself. It includes the many ignored or misrepresented texts written during the colonial era that in fact question and criticize the colonialist hegemonic binary. These include the ever-important texts of struggle and revolt written by the colonized. But unexpected glimmers

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<sup>3</sup> Often considered a mysterious blip in Zweig's personal history, his patriotic avowal to the Austro-Hungarian Empire during WWI in fact primed a pendular swing toward his postwar disavowal of pugnacious nations and adherence to “defeatism,” an extreme version of pacifism. This 1909 essay helps to resolve that mystery, allowing us to better chart, through his thoughts on the British Raj, Zweig's troubled praise of empire.

of postcolonialism can also be found in texts written from centers of power. In the more complex colonialism of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Austria-Hungary—with its comparative lack of overseas colonies<sup>4</sup> and Habsburg myth of supranational alliance—a new approach to literature known as Viennese Modernism emerged, a major tenet of which was to cultivate freedom from inherited, oppressive political structures. A common assessment of this literary period is its disinterest in politics, but in finding unexpected glimmers of postcolonialism in the works of turn-of-the-century Viennese authors, scholars have begun to illuminate that very disinterest as self-reflection and subsequent self-critique, both hallmarks of postcolonial literature. Even Zweig who attempts to write his essay on the 1909 British-Indian conflict in a distanced, non-participatory tone makes reference to the more immediate Austro-Hungarian-Bosnian conflict of 1908–09. This reference serves as an important key to unlocking the political undertone to his essay as a whole.

Susanne Zantop and others define postcolonial literature as literature that is critical from all angles of its own position in a hegemonic system (Lützel). Drawing on this definition, Robert Lemon in his *Imperial Messages: Orientalism as Self-Critique in the Habsburg Fin de Siècle* explores how Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Robert Musil and Franz Kafka use “Oriental” themes in a self-reflective and self-critical manner. In Hofmannsthal’s early works that refer to an “Arabia” or “China,” for example, Lemon finds not only a self-reflective stance, but also a questioning of “the basic viability of imperialism and [a challenging of] received notions of national identity” (15). Likewise, Stefan Jonsson, in *Subject Without Nation: Robert Musil and the History of Modern Identity*, examines Robert Musil’s novel *The Man Without Qualities* for clues that point to postcoloniality within Viennese Modernism:

Although the Austro-Hungarian Empire had no overseas colonies, it ruled over a vast array of nationalities, and in terms of *cultural* diversity and conflict it is therefore comparable to the major colonial powers. The rapid modernization of the empire and its eventual collapse in 1918 triggered an intense intellectual activity commonly discussed under rubrics such as “fin-de-siècle Vienna” or *modernite viennoise*. Behind these labels, I would like to suggest, we find a historical experience that is structurally akin to a phenomenon that was to affect other European states only later, the experience of postcoloniality. Indeed, Austria’s postimperial culture was characterized not only by explosive conflicts between a residual feudal system and an emerging capitalist society, but also by the struggle between a crumbling imperial regime and various movements of what we today would call identity politics [...].

(x)

Jonsson goes so far as to argue that the historical foundations of postcolonialism are found in Viennese Modernism. As I explore Stefan Zweig’s essay, “Die indische Gefahr für England,” we again observe how the rumbles of revolt on the global scale reverberated among Viennese writers who began to reexamine Austria-Hungary as a colonial power.

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<sup>4</sup> Although lacking in extensive overseas colonial holdings like Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Dutch Republic and even Germany, Austria-Hungary was not devoid of overseas colonial interests, and benefitted greatly from the exploits of its European neighbors. It briefly took ownership over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands from 1778–1783 (Lodrick), claimed unpopulated land near the North Pole now known as Franz Josef Land (The Editors), and had control of concession territories in Tianjin, China from 1902–1917 (Boxer, Baruch).

Political concerns, especially in the form of self-reflective questions on ethnicity and nationhood, were not absent in this ostensibly apolitical period of cultural production.

Unlike postcolonialism, Viennese Modernism is a period of literature, art, and culture that is strongly bound spatially and temporally: 1890–1910 in Vienna. It has been argued that—especially in comparison to the “eminently political” *Vormärz* literary period—Viennese Modernism, “with its aesthetic foundation in *l’art pour l’art*, was curiously apolitical even in its passive anticipation of change” (Seeba, *Denkbilder* 28). Stefan Zweig, who considered himself a part of the intellectual milieu of Young Vienna, struggled his entire life with the extrication of art from politics.

Skipping momentarily ahead past Viennese Modernism toward the maddening end of the Great War, this struggle becomes clear in Zweig’s relationship to war. He writes, “I think I have expunged all trace of nationalism from my heart; and yet I suffer, because Austria accepts everything, because she no longer defends herself” (Prater 106). Caught in a time of violent geopolitical shifts, Zweig took an extreme stance in finding a solution to this struggle. A proponent of humanism over national patriotism, Zweig banded together with a pacifist group of writers and artists who wished to create a kind of unity outside of national concerns: Their art would be the antidote to war. But unlike the pacifists who were writing against the war, Zweig took a step further and wrote against the *idea* of war altogether: “By temperament submissive and by nature conciliatory, Zweig was repelled by the activists of peace almost as much as he was by the trumpeters of war. Having no affinity with activists in either camp, he was torn by his all-embracing but conflicting sympathies” (Steiman 74). Zweig laid out his stance in a treatise on defeatism, an extreme form of pacifism. In “Bekanntnis zum Defaitismus,” he writes, “We want neither victory nor defeat for anyone, we are enemies of victory and friends of renunciation; Europe must be released from her torment, at any price” (Prater 103). Vivian Liska, in “A Spectral Mirror Image. Stefan Zweig and his Critics,” writes, “in explaining his reluctance to take political action Zweig consistently invoked values deriving from his liberal humanist creed: freedom, dignity, and a universalist ethos that prevented him from joining warring parties or taking sides for what he perceived to be particularist causes” (Liska 211).

His stance, which went so far as to glorify the defeated (“to seek the renewal of the spirit in defeat itself”), put him at odds with his strongest pacifist allies such as Romaine Rolland, who responded, “I am no Buddhist or Tolstoyan non-resister, I do not see myself in the role of the conquered” (Prater 103). Rolland wrote in his diary: “I say to the power that hurls me to the ground: ‘You will not conquer the spirit, it will conquer you’” (Prater 103). In this manner, Zweig’s pacifist friends alerted him of the danger and impossibility of a complete separation from politics. The pacifists stood up against nationalism, whereas the defeatists ran away from nationalism, as if to say, “If we forget politics, it will cease to exist” (Steiman 73). Portraits of Zweig written in the 1980s and 1990s highlight Zweig’s continued apoliticism as irresponsible, placing him at variance with writers “in the early 1930s who were actively fighting the rise of fascism” as well as with “disappointed friends” or “emigrés [...] who were begging Zweig for help. Since that time many documents have emerged that prove Zweig’s discrete generosity and support for friends and acquaintances,

and new readings of his work have uncovered hidden political dimensions of his writings” (Liska 210).<sup>5</sup>

Returning to the prewar period, we see that Zweig's struggle between art and politics existed before his treatise on defeatism; this is apparent in some of his writings from the period of Viennese Modernism, where he fully engaged with the culture of the turn-of-the-century and all its youthful glamour. Hermann Bahr's "Die Moderne," a kind of literary appeal to painterly French impressionism, inaugurated Viennese Modernism in 1890 as "the experience of temporality, of short-lived sensation, of dream-like intuitions of the ethereal, [and] of elusive time" (Seeba 25). Bahr writes against the past, insisting on a modern ethos that dismisses the haunting ghosts of their forefathers who cannot and should not have a hold on the culture of their time. Bahr writes: "We want to shake ourselves off from the rotten past, which, long since withered, suffocates our soul with sallow leaves. We want to be the present. [...] We must grow empty, empty of all teachings, of all beliefs, of all scholarship of our fathers, fully empty. Only then can we fill ourselves up."<sup>6</sup> Arthur Schnitzler, another prominent Viennese Modernist, also lambasts the past: "The past: the most uncanny of all. This spiteful, undying past, against which one cannot revolt, but must give oneself over to like destiny."<sup>7</sup>

Zweig, then a teenager inspired by Bahr and other members of Young Vienna who were "living proof that it was not necessary to be advanced in years to be great in achievement" (Prater 10), found in the new century a hope for invigoration. Stefan Zweig and his schoolmates felt the pressure of the past that Bahr and Schnitzler were beginning to write against: "[...] the old State, ruled by an aged emperor and almost equally aged ministers, was instinctively against youth, with its desire for haste and radical change [...]" (Prater 7). But unlike Bahr's extreme case in "Die Moderne," Zweig was not opposed to all that came before him. While he may have been critical of the old State, his cherished collection of autographs of cultural icons (including at that time those of Goethe, Wieland, Anzengruber, and Beethoven) point to his inspiration from authors past (13). Indeed, Zweig was also caught up in another, quite contradictory feature of Viennese Modernism "marked by a conservative, nostalgic sense of imminent loss of trust and purpose to the acceleration of time, historical fluctuation and political uncertainty" (Seeba 25). Zweig's criticism of the past can be located in his then incipient interest for global literatures; for Zweig, a developing Paneuropean ideology became the mark of that purportedly apolitical motto of Viennese Modernism: art for art's sake. The connection between the criticism of the past

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<sup>5</sup> Liska clearly explains Zweig's professed defeatism as a bulwark against the political "contamination" of literature: "Zweig's personal wealth, his worldwide success, and his privileged social position as an influential and distinguished man of letters were held against him when he refused to join the political struggles of his time. Zweig indeed repeatedly expressed his reluctance to participate in political action and his refusal to "contaminate" literature with political concerns. He was accordingly attacked for selfishness, cowardice, and lack of solidarity with those who were less protected and fortunate than himself, with the poor and the jobless, the oppressed and the prosecuted, and above all with his suffering fellow Jews." (Liska 210)

<sup>6</sup> All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

"Wir wollen die faule Vergangenheit von uns abschütteln, die, lange verblüht, unsere Seele in fahlem Laube erstickt. Gegenwart wollen wir sein. [...] Leer müssen wir werden, leer von aller Lehre, von allem Glauben, von aller Wissenschaft der Väter, ganz leer. Dann können wir uns füllen" (Bahr 3).

<sup>7</sup> "Den umheimlichsten von allen: die Vergangenheit. Diese tückische unsterbliche Vergangenheit, gegen die man sich nicht auflehnen, die man über sich ergehen lassen muß wie ein Schicksal" (Schnitzler).

and Paneuropeanism becomes ever clearer when we observe that, later in life, Zweig confronted the past when used for deterministically genealogical or nationalistic purposes.

A young Zweig may have hoped to look beyond geopolitical and linguistic borders to think past politics. As a successful translator during the first decade of the new century, Zweig was taken by the larger Europeaness of the works he translated. Their reach beyond geopolitical borders encompassing regional ethnonationalisms coincided with his own vision of the future. His focus was on the art of the words, not dissimilar to the focus of his *Sprachskepsis* contemporaries, whose questions about identity arguably had less to do with geopolitics than with reflections on language. But even *Sprachskepsis*, a cornerstone of Viennese Modernism, was tied up with geopolitics and particularly in retrospect can be read as significantly political. For example, the lamentation over the failures of language “is undoubtedly involved in the kind of identity crisis that was experienced, recognized and often suffered [more] by Jewish modernists than by their non-Jewish contemporaries” (Seeba 40). In Zweig's case, although his Jewishness was of secondary importance, he found himself repeatedly confronted with those intent on establishing his Jewishness as integral to his identity. Indeed, later in life, Zweig fled to London soon after the *Machtergreifung* of Austria, having born witness to the destruction of his books in the Nazi book burnings. But in early twentieth century Austria-Hungary, Paneuropeanism seized Zweig's interest as a foil to identity politics that would emerge in the wake of what he and his contemporaries seemed to portend: the end of Empire.

In his autobiographical reflection on this time, Zweig situates himself squarely in the legendary cafés of Vienna, the happening local branch of Modernism. Here, in the café culture consumed with art for art's sake, Paneuropeanism was an optimistic tool to help orient the intellect. In *The World of Yesterday*, he writes:

But the coffeehouse was still the best place to keep up with everything new. [...] And so we knew everything that took place in the world at first hand [...] Perhaps nothing has contributed as much to the intellectual mobility and the international orientation of the Austrian as that he could be kept abreast of all the world events in the coffeehouse and at the same time discuss them in the circle of his friends.<sup>8</sup> (40)

The turbulence of European colonialism, however, destabilized the insistence upon and belief in a separation of art from politics:

With feverish anxiety the habitués of the coffee houses and beer gardens [...] discussed the political and military manoeuvres to the east, their music and their chess games forgotten [...] Zweig was acutely aware of the impending conflict: “I cannot explain it otherwise than by this surplus of force,” he later wrote in his autobiography, “a tragic consequence of the internal dynamism that had accumulated in those forty years of peace, and now sought violent release.” (Allday 88–89)

Zweig's hope for Paneuropeanism was confronted with questions about Europe's reach and Europe's internal divisions. Which geopolitical and linguistic borders were to be transgressed, which to be upheld? As Yōko Tawada would contentiously ask more than a

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<sup>8</sup> “Aber unsere beste Bildungsstätte für alles Neue blieb das Kaffeehaus. [...] So wußten wir alles, was in der Welt vorging [...] nichts hat vielleicht so viel zur intellektuellen Beweglichkeit und internationalen Orientierung des Österreichers beigetragen, als daß er im Kaffeehaus sich über alle Vorgänge der Welt so umfassend orientieren und sie zugleich im freundschaftlichen Kreise diskutieren konnte.” (57–58)

half century later: Where did Europe begin and end? Even if Zweig's incipient interest in a Paneuropean artistic movement was wishfully apolitical, politics crept in. As Viennese Modernism was drawing to a close at the eve of the Great War, Zweig's writings were emboldened by an increasingly political agenda.

Stefan Zweig's travel catalyzed the emergence of global politics in his purview. He traveled the world and was challenged by his encounters, often feeling an increased sense of foreignness which might belie his epistolary admission in 1909 that "The globe itself is still my homeland" (Prater 37). He traveled extensively in the first decade of the 20th century, across Europe as well as to South and Southeast Asia and Algiers. In 1911 and 1912, he travelled to the US, Panama, and the Caribbean. As the distance from continental Europe stretched, so too did his sense of familiarity. England, too, seemed notably different. People and places felt foreign to him and he felt foreign to them: a feeling that may have reached its climax in his report on Benares, India. He writes, "And foreignness, insurmountable foreignness—of all the feelings had for this people, this is my ultimate impression."<sup>9</sup> Zweig did not come away from India with the Romantic image he had been primed to receive. Instead, India awakened in him an attunement to the stark inequities that divide the world: he found the caste system of India abhorrent, and likened it to the craze for racial purity in the West.

For Zweig, Paneuropeanism signaled an end to identity politics, heralded the end of the concerns for war, for victory or defeat, for the need to defend identities wrapped up with inherited ideologies. Certainly this was a stance easier acquired from the seat of bourgeois luxury—from the cafés of Vienna far-removed from the restive territories under Viennese authority:

His mental vision of Europe was frontierless, one country blending almost unnoticeably with another; and the whole gathered together in an amalgamation of brotherhood based on an ever-increasing devotion to culture. For a while he determinedly shut his eyes to the undercurrents of discontent which had disturbed him only recently, and succeeded in deluding himself that Austria and Germany, indeed the whole of Europe, represented a social paradise even for the armies of the workless and underprivileged. (Allday 62)

Upon Zweig's return from India, the Indian nationalist that killed a British officer in London presented Zweig with a critical obstacle to his incipient Paneuropean ideology. Zweig's response in essay form seeks less to understand India or Europe per se, but to get at a beguiling and disturbing hallmark of human behavior salient for most European cultures with colonial histories: the impulse to dominate, to subjugate, to conquer, and to colonize, and the counter-impulse to overthrow, to revolt, to emancipate, and to liberate oneself. The counter-impulse is that which challenges Zweig's notion of a peaceful Paneuropean state: the postcolonial question.

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<sup>9</sup> "Und Fremdheit, unüberwindbare Fremdheit, das ist das letzte Empfinden gegenüber allen den Gefühlen dieses Volkes" ("Benares." 178).



## The Fascination with Empire

The main concern of Zweig's "Die indische Gefahr für England. (Anlässlich der politischen Mordtat eines jungen Hindu)"—"The Indian Threat to England (On the Occasion of a Political Assassination by a Young Hindu)"—is the shifting balance of power during the colonial era. It is important to note that this text, which can be considered postcolonial, is neither postcolonial in a temporal sense (it is not a text written after the end of a colonial era) nor in a wholly emancipatory sense (it is not a text that seeks to dismantle notions of hierarchical structures of power). Zweig's essay does not look upon the shifting balance of power from the perspective of anger or hope felt by those fighting for independence. Instead, this text looks upon the shifting balance of power primarily from the perspective of surmounting fear felt by the colonizer recognizing an imminent major geopolitical change. However, this text also cannot be considered colonial in a sense that it is wholly supportive of colonialism. Despite Zweig's regard for certain aspects of British rule in India, his awestruck disbelief in the sheer magnitude of the British Raj, his probing of unjust colonial practices, and his concern for the displaced "Mischling," or "mixed-blood," disclose his doubts about the efficacy of colonialism.

Zweig begins this essay with the description of a single act, the assassination by Madar Lal Dhingra of Sir William Curzon Wylie, the aide-de-camp of the British Viceroy to India. But the essay becomes an exercise in understanding repercussion, as if to recall the "shot heard 'round the world," Emerson's poetic rendition of the beginnings of the American Revolution, which was later ascribed to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and the start of the Great War. Madar Lal Dhingra's shot—indeed four shots—that killed Wylie and the two additional unpremeditated shots that struck and killed Dr. Cowas Lalcaca did not directly erupt into a full-blown uprising. Instead, they propelled the growing anti-colonialist sentiment in India and elsewhere into European awareness, portending a coming storm, feeding a hungry fear. Zweig writes, "And tremulously they now all heed the East for the arrival of a thunderous and dangerous echo from the distant, colossal realm—the long dreaded storm: the Indian insurrection."<sup>10</sup> The echoing sound of the shots that killed the aide-de-camp in London was itself an echo of a much greater rebellious force.

Zweig recognizes the complexity of the colonial relationship, but he becomes caught in the sheer possibility of colonialism, especially with regard to the rule of such a vast land and large populace as India under a few British officers. He seems transfixed by the "conquest of such a colossal realm by a handful of merchants and a resourceful conquistador."<sup>11</sup> So taken by this structure of power, he makes a visual comparison to impressive Mughal structures in order to clarify his fascination with the possibility of the British Empire: "I don't know if in India, aside from the exquisite, often dreamily beautiful structures of the Mughals there exists anything as spiritually or intellectually fascinating as the apparent unlikelihood and just as apparent actuality of the British Empire."<sup>12</sup> This

<sup>10</sup> "Und ängstlich horchen nun alle nach Osten, ob von dem fernen Riesenreiche grollendes, gefährliches Echo käme, das lang gefürchtete Gewitter: der Aufstand Indiens." (9)

<sup>11</sup> "Eroberung eines solchen Riesenreiches durch eine Handvoll Kaufleute und einen genialen Konquistador." (9)

<sup>12</sup> "Ich weiß nicht, ob in Indien trotz der herrlichen, oft traumhaft schönen Bauten der Mogulen etwas geistig Faszinierendes gibt, als die sinnfällige Unwahrscheinlichkeit und ebenso sinnfällige Tatsächlichkeit des englischen Imperiums." (11)

comparison highlights the relationship of British Colonial India to that which preceded it, Mughal India. The Mughal Empire left its mark on India, leaving behind monumental structures like the Taj Mahal that would come to represent India on a global scale well beyond Zweig's own lifetime. Indeed, of the two poems Zweig wrote reflecting on his travels to India, one is titled, "Taj Mahal." In this poem, Zweig treats the Taj Mahal not unlike his fascination with the British presence in India: The Taj Mahal is a structure that is unbelievably grandiose, a great presence that must be tempered by its *Schein*—what it appears to be—in order to comprehend it. The poem begins with the reflection of the Taj Mahal in a pond, seemingly a toy in its mirror-image miniaturization; and it ends with the petrification of emotional pain, where the Taj Mahal, shining like a tear that has turned to marble, is seemingly a dream. In the middle of the poem, however, there is an exclamation to its profundity, a command that calls its reader to recognize its architectural grandeur and that it is, in fact, an authoritative structure, not a toy, not a dream: "And behold, it is a structure!"<sup>13</sup> In this poem, the Taj Mahal is depicted as both solid and breakable, likened to delicate glass that one is afraid to shatter.

In Zweig's essay, we see an analogous depiction of the British Empire as it is compared to Mughal structures. The Empire is solid; it has an unfathomable grip on hundreds of millions of people through a minority population of stationed British officers. But it is also breakable; it has to withstand the thunder of revolt, a storm portended by Dyingra's shots. Zweig writes also of the British Empire's own structures, the unexpected architectural landscape that dominates one's arrival in India, so overpowering that from a distance, as one approaches by sea, one's first impression is of England. Though their human presence is limited, their mark is indelible:

[...] these few give present-day India its signature. The ship that steers into the port of Bombay or down the low Hooghly up to Calcutta first encounters high cathedrals, grand structures in the English Gothic style, docks like Glasgow and Liverpool: the face, the front, the first impression of the faraway is England.<sup>14</sup>

What Zweig recognizes as the appearance (*Schein*) of India is at once this image of England and the disbelief therein, indicative of the precariousness of empire. By calling attention to massive structural symbols of empires past, he is prophesying the British Empire's impermanence. Even though these structures—here, the cathedrals and docks—may remain as England's signature upon India, England's reign is bound to be hollowed out from within their very walls. Like the Taj Mahal entombing not only a dead love but also the memory of an empire at its opulent zenith, these British structures will also become tombs of a colonial past.

Zweig's fascination with the British Empire is not an unfettered approval of empire. It has more to do with its simultaneous implausibility and actuality. Nevertheless, Zweig's awestruck reaction to the British Empire is an unwillingness to recognize the problems of conquest. In order to understand the possibility of empire, he shrewdly holds India accountable for her own subjugation. He writes, "Such organization—this taming of

<sup>13</sup> "Und sieh, es ist ein Bau!" (Zweig, "Taj Mahal" 149)

<sup>14</sup> "[...] diese Wenigen geben dem heutigen Indien die Signatur. Das Schiff, das in den Hafen von Bombay steuert oder den niederen Hooghly hinauf nach Kalkutta, sieht zuerst hohe Kathedralen, stattliche Bauten im englisch-gotischen Stil, Docks wie Glasgow und Liverpool: die Front, die Stirne, der erste Eindruck gegen die Ferne ist England." (11)

formidable resistance by means of politics, force, and spiritual and intellectual superiority—is for the modern man the greatest wonder in India.”<sup>15</sup> He tries to reason through his wonder, referencing historical patterns of colonization, times when India was subjugated under the Mughals, the Mongols, the Marathas, the Persians, the French, the Portuguese, and finally the British. He concludes that the Indian, especially “the Hindu race,” is accustomed to subjugation. His reasoning therefore falls heavily on the shoulders of the culpable Indian and circumvents any blame for conquest: “For centuries this enfeebled race, due to their lack of enjoyment for meat and the passivity of their religious sensibility, has grown accustomed to being the loot of invasions.”<sup>16</sup> Here, India’s passivity has become blameworthy for its history of subjugation. In a great twist of fate, not to mention twist of connotation, India’s “passivity”—in the form of non-cooperation and non-violence—later became a key weapon in the fight for national independence.

Though he regards “the Indian” as weakened, Zweig also points to the impossibility of treating “the” Indian en masse, especially with respect to understanding an Indian perspective on the British occupation of India. Is Dhingra’s act of murder really a portent of a collective uprising, or merely the act of a nationalist fanatic? In either case, his action has led to increased tension across the board: “Once again tension has grown, an underground rumble unsettles the land. The Indian threat has woken up.”<sup>17</sup> He continues:

[...] it is not at all possible to determine whether the danger is extensively organized or isolated, dormant or primed, impossible to say how the Indian thinks about British rule, primarily because “the” Indian is a concept that does not exist. India is a conglomeration of different races. Over a hundred languages are spoken; 70 million Muslims and many million Buddhists intermingle with the Hindus; and the Hindus themselves keep unspeakable distance from each other because of the bounds of caste.<sup>18</sup>

For Zweig, the diversity of India’s populace makes the formation of a unifying anti-colonial group unimaginable. Whereas previous failed uprisings, like the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, had been formed on the basis of religious intolerance, a new uprising seeking success would require unification across religious, caste, and racial lines. According to Zweig, the British held onto the concept of “the” Indian for ease of suppression. For this very reason, the act of one Indian nationalist was cause for great alarm: “One recognizes India’s restlessness taking root more and more robustly only in the increasing restlessness of the British—in the concessions by the government and in the forecast of

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<sup>15</sup>“Diese Organisation, dies Bändigen eines ungeheuren Widerstandes durch Politik, Gewalt und geistige Superiorität, ist für einen modernen Menschen das größte Wunder in Indien” (11).

<sup>16</sup> “Seit Jahrhunderten ist diese durch Mangel an Fleischgenuß, durch die Passivität ihres religiösen Empfindens geschwächte Rasse gewohnt, die Beute von Invasionen zu sein.” (13)

<sup>17</sup> “Aber wieder ist die Spannung gewachsen, unterirdisches Rollen erschüttert das Land. Die indische Gefahr ist wach geworden.” (12)

<sup>18</sup> “[...] es ist kaum möglich, zu bestimmen, wie weit sie organisiert oder vereinzelt, untätig oder vorbereitet ist, unmöglich zu sagen, wie der Inder über die englische Herrschaft denkt. Vor allem weil “der” Inder ein nicht existierender Begriff ist. Indien ist ein Konglomerat differenter Rassen. Über hundert Sprachen werden gesprochen, 70 Millionen Mohammedaner, viele Millionen Buddhisten sind den Hindus eingesprenkt, die Hindus selbst durch die Schranken der Kasten in unsagbarem Abstand von einander gehalten.” (12)

assassinations.”<sup>19</sup> A new uprising would require the very kind of unification that the British have used to keep the Indian under control.

## Terrorism, Fear, and Nationhood

The massive, unidentifiable threat that Stefan Zweig highlights in his analysis of England's reaction to Madar Lal Dhingra's act is not just representative of the threat gripping Europe in the early twentieth century alone, it is analogous to threats of terrorism in the early twenty-first.<sup>20</sup> Just as a terrorist act is deemed a powerful threat to national security, so too was Dhingra's act deemed a threat to imperial security. Drawing a comparison between the British reaction to Dhingra's act and contemporary reactions to acts of terrorism not only exposes a common fear, but also questions the very borders that modern nation-states seek so direly to protect.<sup>21</sup> When Dhingra was placed on trial, eighteen days after the assassination and six days after Stefan Zweig's essay appeared in *Neue Freie Presse*, he pleaded not guilty, even though he admitted to having killed the aide-de-camp. He pleaded not guilty on the grounds that he did not view his act to have been a crime. In his view, the assassination was justly executed as an act of patriotism to his country. He sought no defense lawyer because he did not “acknowledge the authority of the Court” (*MADAR LAL DHINGRA*).<sup>22</sup> He asked, instead, if his act was considered unjust, how did the British view their own killings of Indian people? Here, in full, is the provocative statement he presented at his trial:

I do not want to say anything in defence of myself, but simply to prove the justice of my deed. As for myself, no English law court has got any authority to arrest and detain me in prison, or pass sentence of death on me. That is the reason I did not have any counsel to defend me. And I maintain that if it is patriotic in an Englishman to fight against the Germans if they were to occupy this country, it is much more justifiable and patriotic in my case to fight against the English. I hold the English people responsible for the murder of 80 millions of Indian people in the last fifty years, and they are also responsible for taking away £100,000,000 every year from India to this country. I also hold them responsible for the hanging and deportation of my patriotic countrymen, who did just the same as the English people here are advising their countrymen to do. And the Englishman who goes out to India and gets, say, £100 a month, that simply means that he passes a sentence of death on a thousand of my poor countrymen, because these thousand people could easily live on this £100, which the Englishman spends mostly on his frivolities and pleasures. Just as the Germans have no right to occupy this country, so the English people have no

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<sup>19</sup> “Daß Unruhe im Lande stärker und stärker wütht, erkennt man eigentlich nur an der steigenden Unruhe der Engländer, an den Konzessionen der Regierung und dem Wetterleuchten der Attentate.” (13)

<sup>20</sup> In early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe, “terrorism” was on the rise, especially in Russia and neighboring nations. The blood of government officials and civilians marked political unrest in the years before and after the Revolution of 1905.

<sup>21</sup> By no means is this comparison an exoneration of acts of terrorism. On the contrary, such a comparison is intended to question the militant nature of acts implemented by powerful nation-states in the name of security, justice, and goodwill.

<sup>22</sup> In light of this, we see how Zweig may have incorporated Dhingra's denial of British authority into *Die Augen des ewigen Bruders*, when the criminal is brought to trial before Virata.

right to occupy India, and it is perfectly justifiable on our part to kill the Englishman who is polluting our sacred land. I am surprised at the terrible hypocrisy, the farce, and the mockery of the English people. They pose as the champions of oppressed humanity—the peoples of the Congo and the people of Russia—when there is terrible oppression and horrible atrocities committed in India; for example, the killing of two millions of people every year and the outraging of our women. In case this country is occupied by Germans, and the Englishman, not bearing to see the Germans walking with the insolence of conquerors in the streets of London, goes and kills one or two Germans, and that Englishman is held as a patriot by the people of this country, then certainly I am prepared to work for the emancipation of my Motherland. Whatever else I have to say is in the paper before the Court I make this statement, not because I wish to plead for mercy or anything of that kind. I wish that English people should sentence me to death, for in that case the vengeance of my countrymen will be all the more keen. I put forward this statement to show the justice of my cause to the outside world, and especially to our sympathisers in America and Germany. (*Madar Lal Dhingra, Killing > Murder, 19th July 1909.*)

In his short statement (after which the judge found him guilty of murder and sentenced him to death), Dhingra points to the reality and history of oppression that can no longer be discarded as the irrational delusions of a fanatic. Indeed, Dhingra's special emphasis on the deaths of his countrymen, the habit of siphoning capital out of India to support the wealthy standards of life in England, the exploitative luxuries of the British living in India, and even the analogy to the threat of German occupation are all topics Zweig covers in his own essay, written before Dhingra's statement was given. Dhingra was not relating unknown problems. He had indeed become, as Zweig suggests ominously at the beginning of his essay, the echo of a revolution that had already begun: "And tremulously they now all heed the East for the arrival of a thunderous and dangerous echo from the distant, colossal realm—the long dreaded storm: the Indian insurrection." Dhingra's statement upset centuries of British control beginning with the arrival of the East India Company in 1612 and lasting through the subsequently more entrenched establishments of Company Rule and the British Raj.

Although his tactics remain questionable, even condemnable in comparison to the efficacy of Gandhian nonviolent noncooperation, the retrospective lens of a postcolonial world makes it difficult to disagree with the Dhingra's embattled plea for emancipation. While nonviolent methods of resistance are touted as an ideal, many modern nation-states that fought for freedom from the clutches of colonialism nonetheless eulogize their violent beginnings and praise their militant heroes. In *War Talk*, Arundhati Roy's collection of political essays, she reminds us that many power-hungry countries have rewritten their histories to emerge unsullied from a more contestable past (87). At one point, she reaches to Noam Chomsky's essay, "The Manufacture of Consent," to uncover a persistently censored facet of U.S. American history: the slaughter, decimation, and dispersal of indigenous people in "one of the greatest exercises in genocide in human history" (86–87). Roy does not spare her reader her indictment of the nation-state founded on silenced histories of violence. Not surprisingly, she is a hugely controversial figure in India, and her politics are branded as hysterical and particularly anti-national. In her response to accusation of being anti-national, she writes:

While this accusation does not fill me with indignation, it's not an accurate description of what I do or how I think. An anti-national is a person who is against her own nation and, by inference, is pro some other one. But it isn't necessary to be anti-national to be deeply suspicious of all nationalism, to be anti-nationalism. Nationalism of one kind or another was the cause of most of the genocide of the twentieth century. Flags are bits of colored cloth that governments use first to shrink-wrap people's minds and then as ceremonial shrouds to bury the dead. (47)

These controversial writers are refusing the complacent support that nation-states demand of their citizenry. To be clear, they do not in any way make allowances for terrorism. On the contrary, in an article written for *The Guardian* in the wake of the 2008 bombings in Bombay, Roy writes, "Terrorism is a heartless ideology" ("The Monster in the Mirror"). However, what Roy asks is that we place terrorist acts within their historical, geographical, and economic contexts in an attempt to understand why they are launched, even if we may never understand those who have no respect for human life. She warns against thinking of a terrorist act as merely "a hateful, insane scourge that spins on its own axis, in its own orbit and has nothing to do with the world around it" ("The Monster in the Mirror"). Such thinking spurs retaliation, begins wars. Instead, she insists, "The only way to contain (it would be naïve to say end) terrorism is to look at the monster in the mirror" ("The Monster in the Mirror"). It would be inordinately sweeping to claim that the modern-nation state is solely responsible for terror. Nevertheless as Roy argues, if we look in the mirror and see therein the insidious monster of nationalist ideology, we may then be unafraid to think in ways that undermine the oppressive nationalist structures of which we are part.

In this way, by relating colonialism/postcolonialism to nationalism/postnationalism, I leave this section with a series of questions that might help us understand young Zweig's reluctance to condemn the British Empire's grip on India. Will there be a world that will look upon acts of terrorism as having been, like Dhingra's act was to Zweig, an echo of a great revolution in the name of a postnational world? Without being immediately restrained by national governments informed by mass surveillance, what would a nonviolent rebellion against the border-patrolling, fear-mongering, and even war-instigating modern nation-state look like? Is it still too naïve—or dangerous—to venture to think past a world of nations into which we are born and which we are taught to accept? In a hundred years, or a thousand years, will our national narrative sound as inescapable as the colonial narrative that ruled for centuries? What power of world organization would emerge in a postnational world? Are we merely caught in an endless series of hegemonic shifts? How will we be seen to have shown compassion to those from whom we take, whom we exploit, we oppress, we bomb? Will we look back and view our victimization in the wake of acts of terrorism as hypocritical?

## The European Master Narrative

Dhingra, like many who were instrumental in paving the road to Indian independence—Gandhi and Nehru included—was a student at a British university. The British-educated Indian, according to Zweig, was learning the very language of power being used against him. While profusely extolling British cultivation of an otherwise dim-witted people, Zweig still blames the British for their own veritable sense of surmounting fear. Evocative

of the contemporary admonition of the international weapons trade that inevitably invites wars back to the doorstep of the weapons supplier, Zweig writes,

Who, then, causes this undeniable restlessness and discord, which is more palpable year after year? As paradoxical as it sounds: the British themselves and precisely through their efforts. They cultivated the Indian with respect to world trade, industrialism, education; they made them ripe and thereby handed them the very weapons against British rule.<sup>23</sup>

Zweig recognizes that the British have lost their grip on the crown jewel of their empire, for their generosity has awakened the national sentiment—“das nationale Gefühl” (17): “The educated and the well-to-do among the Indians are the real enemies of the British. Nothing undermined the position of England like the very generosity and zeal with which they spread European values among the Hindus.”<sup>24</sup> In this vein, Zweig nurtures a European master narrative which can be traced through Hegel’s writings on Eastern cultures and Kipling’s line turned racial phenomenon of the “white man’s burden.” Citing a list of financially, commercially, and culturally successful changes, Zweig asserts that British sovereignty has, in fact, brought an everlasting benefit to India: “One can easily assert that never—under no other conquering force—was it so good as for the population of India.”<sup>25</sup> He extols the British for everything from establishing an extensive rail network to building hospitals, from attenuating poverty and increasing wealth to teaching the tolerance of women and lower castes, from instituting justice to demonstrating incorruptibility: “For even the most irascible and hostile cannot deny the grand cultural achievements of the British in India.”<sup>26</sup> Such a belief in a beneficial British presence is neither unique to Zweig nor to a European perspective, and can be found in the arguments between Indian nationalists deciding the nature of an independent India or in the dialogues of well-to-do British-sympathizing Bombayites in Salman Rushdie’s novels. As history marches forward in the ostensibly postcolonial world, we are also goaded to salvage the “good” from colonialism, to think of what colonization has offered former colonies in terms of advancement, progress, health, wealth, and global relevance.

The most difficult challenge faced any cultural theorist or essayist, Zweig included, is to express disagreement with and especially disapproval of another culture’s ways of being without taking on the rightfully problematic “white man’s burden.” It seems, however, that Zweig, at this early point in his life, takes on that burden fully, and the postcolonial moments of self-reflection and self-critique come not from a petition to colonialism but the recognition of colonialism’s imminent end. He seeks, then, to understand the escalating fear of Indian independence by answering why the British are failing to keep “the Achilles

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<sup>23</sup> “Wer verursacht also diese nicht abzuleugnende Unruhe und Mißstimmung, die von Jahr zu Jahr fühlbarer wird? So paradox es klingt: die Engländer selbst und eben durch ihre Bemühungen. Sie haben den Inder zum Welthandel, zum Industrialismus, zur Bildung erzogen, sie haben sie reif gemacht und ihnen damit selbst die Waffen gegen die englische Herrschaft in die Hand gegeben” (15).

<sup>24</sup> “Die Gebildeten und die Vermögenden unter den Indern—sie sind die wirklichen Feinde der Engländer. Nichts hat die Stellung Englands so untergraben als gerade die Generosität und der Eifer, womit sie in Schulen europäische Bildung unter den Hindus verbreiteten” (16–17).

<sup>25</sup> “Man kann ruhig sagen, daß es niemals, unter keinem der Eroberervölker, den Einwohnern Indiens ähnlich gut gegangen ist” (15).

<sup>26</sup> “Denn selbst der Gereizte und Feindliche kann die grandiose Kulturleistung der Engländer in Indien nicht verringern” (14).

heel of England”—“die Achillesferse Englands”—under control (20). Within this inescapable framework, Zweig finally writes more in the critical, yet sympathetic vein readers of Zweig have come to expect from his writings. His descriptions of “the colored soldier” and “the mixed-blood”—“farbiger Soldat” and “Mischling”—are key examples of a kind of sympathy bound to a belief in colonialism.

Zweig's sympathy for the “farbiger Soldat” who is not trusted with loaded weapons and artillery is a means to understand less the plight of the discriminated soldier and more the fear of mutiny. How can a native soldier, the “Eingeborener,” after the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, be trusted with a loaded gun (20)? In this essay, Zweig implies a change to this discriminatory practice. If trust can be gained between the high-ranking British officers and their Indian militia which would require trusting Indian militia with weapons, then the fear of mutiny might be expunged. The possibility of mutiny would be replaced by trust. In this instance, in order to remedy discriminatory practices, Zweig does not advocate democracy but recommends a way to uphold and secure hierarchy, to reestablish trust in British power. To be sure, Zweig is critical of the opulence of the British presence; he is critical of the British need for expensive comforts and entourages of servants, and he is especially critical of the British lack of integration: “For this is the tragic error of the British, that even today, after one hundred fifty years, they have still remained in India a caste above the castes.”<sup>27</sup> But even if opulence and a lack of integration are criticized, the tragic element here—to underscore the point that Zweig is making in his essay—is not that the British have remained a caste above the colonized (Zweig never calls for them to step down), but that such a hierarchy will be impossible to maintain unless they do a better job as colonizers. The actual tragedy, according to Zweig, is that the British power is under attack; they are guilty, “die tragische Schuld der Engländer,” not for their lack of humanism, but for bringing about their own demise.

Zweig's comments on the “Mischling,” “Half-Cast,” “Mischblut” (18)—the children of British officers and Indian women—highlight his concern for those whose ties are hybrid, for those whose sense of *Heimat* might be torn between a colonial power and a colony. Zweig reports that while they might lead worry-free lives as students in England, upon their return to India they are shunned, for they can neither fully integrate into the dominant British establishment nor into the families of their Indian mothers. Their in-betweenness is a problem for distinguishing a national consciousness. Where do they fit amidst the calls for independence under the *swadeshi* slogan, “India for Indians”—“Indien für Inder?” (18). Pointing to an important distinction between India and other British colonies, Zweig shows how the hybrid British-Indian lingers in unfortunate homelessness:

For the British have never become Anglo-Indians; they have always remained British. Unlike in America, Australia, and Rhodesia where they have amalgamated themselves or have settled, they live like deportees over there [in India] and count down the years to homecoming [...] For them, *Heimat* still means England.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> “Denn das ist die tragische Schuld der Engländer, daß sie heute, nach hundertfünfzig Jahren, in Indien immer noch eine Kaste über den Kasten geblieben sind” (18).

<sup>28</sup> “Denn die Engländer sind nie Anglo-Inder geworden, sind immer Engländer geblieben. Nicht wie in Amerika, Australien, Rhodesia haben sie sich amalgamiert, sind sie seßhaft geworden, sondern wie Deportierte leben sie dort [in Indien] und zählen die Jahre der Heimkehr [...] Heimat heißt für sie immer noch England” (18–19).



While Zweig does not explicitly advocate a rebellious solution to the plight of the Mischling or to Indians under British rule, his essay shows us that he favors the latter of the two options being entertained by the British Parliament: either annihilate all revolutionary feelings or afford true equal access to British citizenship. Neither option would abolish colonial rule.

## Conclusion

Despite reports to the contrary—including his own—Zweig's incipient interest for internationalism was political. Prior to writing "Die Gefahr für England" Zweig had stayed in England twice (1904 and 1906) and left both times with an increased sense of foreignness (Prater 29–33). If his personal distance from the British is used to argue in favor of his apolitical investment into an analysis of the *fear* of hegemonic restructuring (and less the restructuring of hegemony itself), we need only look to the end of his essay to argue for Zweig's strong, yet surreptitious personal and political investment into the question of colonialism and the fear of postcolonialism. The essay as a whole is clearly political, especially with regard to young Zweig's racist views on Indian cultural subjectivity. Nevertheless, Zweig's identification with a Paneuropean ideal that excludes England informs the distanced tone of this essay, which carries a non-participatory sentiment: that of the non-British, non-Indian writer thinking about the escalating British-Indian conflict. For Zweig, "England was not then, and never became in his eyes, a part of Europe, the Europe whose intellectual unification was to be his highest aim and the connecting thread of his life's work" (Prater 33). As a result of this outside perspective, he allows himself to be caught up in wonder at the multiple layers of foreignness with which he is confronted. Zweig is in awe of the political, colonial phenomenon happening beyond his political concerns, and is concerned with figuring out how this system functions practically. But one illuminating moment in his essay shows us that even his distanced, wonder-filled tone is not immune to concerns closer to home.

At the end of the essay, Zweig writes, "Only when one does not overlook the dread of the Indian threat can one understand the British dread of the German war or the intervention in the Bosnian crisis for the benefit of the Muslims."<sup>29</sup> We can read here the relation he draws between the British fear of an Indian uprising to the British fear of an impending German War (anti-German sentiment escalated after an Anglo-French diplomatic alliance, the Entente cordiale, was drawn in 1904), which reflects his own feelings of isolation in England as a German-speaking visitor. But the more important relation he draws here is to the Bosnian crisis of 1908/09, which ushered in the change from Austro-Hungarian administration to the complete annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina through military force, the expansion of empire, and the deepening of an already strained colonial relationship. As he identifies this relation, he inadvertently connects British colonialism with Austro-Hungarian colonialism. He also discloses his political stance by stating that military, colonial intervention in Bosnia is "for the benefit of the Muslims." With this observation, Zweig's entire essay examining British fear can be read as an extended analysis of the

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<sup>29</sup> "Nur wenn man die Furcht vor der indischen Gefahr nicht übersieht, kann man die Furcht Englands vor dem deutschen Krieg, die Intervention zu Gunsten der Mohammedaner in der bosnischen Angelegenheit verstehen" (21).

surmounting fear in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Zweig's reluctance to openly advocate for Indian independence therefore only buttresses his faith in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Possibly to his chagrin—although most of Zweig's biographers argue that “[f]or the greater part of his life Stefan Zweig regarded [...] his Austrian nationality as scarcely more than an administrative formality” (Prater 6)—Zweig's pre-WWI exercise in understanding the repercussions and fear of a colonial uprising are sooner salient for Zweig's immediate political setting than for the British-India conflict he so carefully analyzed.

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