



<https://doi.org/10.16926/trs.2024.09.16>

Received: 30.05.2024

Accepted: 20.08.2024

Elżbieta HURNIK

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7990-726X>

Uniwersytet Jana Długosza w Częstochowie (Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Poland)

The World That No Longer Exists. On the Memoirs of Otto Friedlaender, Stefan Zweig and Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński*

Abstract: This article focuses on the memoirs of writers connected with Vienna in their youth, namely Stefan Zweig and Otto Friedlaender, as well as Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, who is associated with Cracow. The considerations are based on references to the findings of geopoetics, the problem of place and autobiography. The writers' memoirs deal with the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, covering various aspects of the social life of the time, material and spiritual culture and established customs. The memoirists also record changes in artistic life, introduce literary groups and circles and well-known figures of the time. They are both observers and participants in the life of the turn of the century, and their accounts are treated as memoirs, sketches, reports and autobiographies.

Keywords: autobiography, turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Vienna, Cracow, space.

The return to the years of one's childhood and youth is an important topic in literature and one of the markers of autobiography, which opens up a wide range of problems and introduces readers to genres, worldviews and

* This text is an expanded version of an article "Wczorajszy świat Tadeusza Żeleńskiego-Boya i Stefana Zweiga," submitted to a post-conference volume devoted to Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński's work: *Klasyk mimo woli. W 150. rocznicę urodzin Tadeusza Żeleńskiego-Boya* [A Classic Despite His Will. On the 150th Birth Anniversary of Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy] (Seria: Krytyka XX i XXI wieku), forthcoming, Kraków: TAIWPN "Universitas," 2025.

aesthetic issues. Writers invoke the past world in literary works, diaries and memoirs, not only to reconstruct the route of their own lives, but also to recreate the climate of the times in which they grew up, matured and formed artistically. In this sketch, I refer to selected authors who represent the memoir trend in Austrian and Polish literature in the first half of the 20th century, namely Stefan Zweig, Otto Friedlaender, who were associated with Vienna in their youth, and Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, who lived in Cracow before the First World War. Their early years coincided with the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, a period of time when Europe was undergoing significant changes in its political, moral and social life, and at the same time a variety of aesthetic currents were born, which resulted in a wealth of developments in literature and art. Friedlaender, Zweig and Boy-Żeleński are the authors of memoirs of their youth, which are also treated as a kind of autobiography. The analogies between the books of these writers are prompted by the observations contained in them of the world in which they are rooted – the place in which they lived, society and artistic circles – which sometimes unexpectedly converge, although each of the authors' modes of writing are expressions of their individual artistic personalities.

In memoirs, which reconstruct the events of the past, we are dealing with the activation of memory, and this category is presented as paramount in the narrative.¹ At the centre of attention of memoirs are various areas of space, mainly urban, which, alongside ways of experiencing space, are depicted by the writers; the tools for studying them are suggested by geopoetics. Place is an important factor in the formation of a writer's personality and, as these memoirs prove, an area to which he or she constantly returns.² Małgorzata Czermińska writes that the 'autobiographical place' influences the subject, who reconstructs this place and shapes his or her identity. These are important issues, especially when comparing the culturally distinct spaces that emerge from the autobiographical records that are the subject of the attention of this sketch.

In Austrian writing, there is a clear nostalgic current, based on exposing a vision of the lost past that is associated with the final chapter of Austro-

¹ Cf. Elżbieta Rybicka, "Geopoetyka (o mieście, przestrzeni i miejscu we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach kulturowych)" [Geopoetics (on the City, Space and Place in Contemporary Cultural Theories and Practice)], in *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy* [Cultural Theory of Literature. Main Concepts and Problems], eds. Michał Paweł Markowski, and Ryszard Nycz (Kraków: Universitas, 2006), 479.

² Małgorzata Czermińska, "Tożsamość kształtowana w pamięci miejsca" [Identity Shaped in the Memory of Place], in *Kulturowa historia literatury, Cultural History of Literature*, eds. Anna Łebkowska, and Włodzimierz Bolecki (Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2015), 146–160.

Hungarian history, when the imperial monarchy (a dualistic state from 1867), with its elaborate political and administrative structure³, was in decline. A prominent representative of this trend in literature was Joseph Roth, the creator of mythicist prose.⁴ The material and spiritual culture of Vienna, which was the centre of European aestheticism at the turn of the century, its topography and traces of centuries-old history, are also an area that is observed in various studies of the city's past, in anthologies, albums, selections of texts by publicists, writers and columnists, which are united by a common place – Vienna. Among such works there is a collection of works and memoirs (excerpts) by selected writers, starting with Adalbert Stifter, published in 1991, which depicts the atmosphere of old Vienna; it bears a title referring to Zweig's book – *Wien von gestern*.⁵ The memoirs here cover both the centre and the outskirts of the city, for example Grinzing, Dornbach and Simmering. Some areas of the city have lived to see separate monographs, such as Hernals – a district gradually changing its character from rural to industrial and mainly inhabited by workers at the turn of the century.⁶ Changes in the landscape of Vienna are also reflected in albums, for example, a publication devoted to the Währing district; the surviving photographs reflect the character and history of the former suburb with rich traditions, which over time gained the status of an affluent district of the city.⁷ The processes taking place in Vienna were the result of general civilisational changes in Europe and the world; the Habsburg capital was subject to them like other European cities, but the different socio-cultural and political conditions of each of these centres influenced variations within the material and spiritual culture, as well as the formation of the identity of the participants of social and cultural life.

Vienna is the place where Stefan Zweig, who was born there in 1881 into the family of a wealthy Jewish industrialist, both spent his youth and formed his cultural identity. He studied art history, philosophy, German and Romance studies; in 1904 he earned a doctorate in philosophy from the Uni-

³ Stanisław Grodziski, *Franciszek Józef I* [Francis Joseph I] (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich - Wydawnictwo, 1983), 100–102.

⁴ Stefan H. Kaszyński, "Joseph Roth (1894-1939)," in Stefan H. Kaszyński, *Krótką historia literatury austriackiej* [A Short History of Austrian Literature] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2012), 185. See also in this publication: "Od literatury w Austrii do literatury austriackiej. Przedmowa" [Preface. From Literature in Austria to Austrian Literature], 9–30.

⁵ *Wien von gestern. Ein literarischer Streifzug durch die Kaiserstadt*, collected and narrated by Heinz Gerstinger (Wien: J&V Edition, 1991), 9–190.

⁶ Maria Kinz, *Damals in Hernals...* (Wien: Dachs Verlag 1993), 5–8, 26.

⁷ *Währing 1880-1930. Album*, eds. Helfried Seemann, and Christian Lunzer (Wien: Verlag für Photographie, 1996), non-paginated.

versity of Vienna on the basis of a thesis on Hippolytus Taine. He travelled extensively in Europe (Belgium, France, England, Italy and Spain) and went on expeditions to other continents (Africa, Central and North America and India). After the outbreak of war, he worked at the Ministry of War, at the press desk. In 1917 he went to Switzerland for two years, and upon his return he settled in Salzburg. After Hitler occupied Austria, he emigrated to England, in 1940 to the USA and the following year to Brazil. The political situation in Europe caused Zweig to become deeply depressed; in 1942 he and his wife committed suicide in Petrópolis near Rio de Janeiro⁸.

During his youth, Zweig participated in the cultural and artistic life of Vienna; in his later years he became a well-known author of novellas and novels, as well as a close observer of political and social life, anxiously following developments in Germany, Austria, and Europe. His memoirs *Die Welt von gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers* were published posthumously in 1944 in Stockholm, by an émigré publishing house.⁹ This book, as Stefan H. Kaszyński points out, is largely (almost half) devoted to the time before World War I; in it the writer recreates facts from his private biography and situates them against the background of public life at the end of the Habsburg monarchy, presented in a nostalgic manner.¹⁰ Zweig's memoirs are considered an autobiography, as well as a literary "testament" of the writer, with which, as Marek Zybura writes, "he bade farewell to the former cosmopolitan Europe of universal cultural values, buried under the rubble of the nationalist cataclysms of both world wars".¹¹

In Zweig's life, a turning point was the incorporation of Austria into the Reich in March 1938. It marked a caesura in cultural life; many intellectuals

⁸ Maciej Ganczar, "Literatura emigracyjna po 1938," in Maciej Ganczar, *Historia literatury austriackiej* [History of Austrian Literature] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2016), 254–255; Stefan H. Kaszyński, "Psychoanaliza – Stefan Zweig (1881–1942)" [Psychoanalysis – Stefan Zweig (1881–1942)], in Stefan H. Kaszyński, *Krótką historia literatury austriackiej* [A Brief History of Austrian Literature], 208–210; *Deutsche Literatur in Schlaglichtern*, eds. Bernd Balzer, Volker Mertens, in collaboration with other contributors and editors of Meyers Lexikon (Mannheim-Wien-Zürich: Meyers Lexikonverlag, 1990), 420, 423, 428.

⁹ Stefan H. Kaszyński, *Krótką historia literatury austriackiej*, 211. In this encyclopaedic German study, the word *gestern* [yesterday] contained in the title of the memoirs is capitalised (*Die Welt von Gestern*), which reinforces the meaning of past time. See *Hauptwerke der österreichischen Literatur. Einzeldarstellungen und Interpretationen*, ed. and essay by Ernst Fischer (München: Kindler Verlag, 1997), 467, 646.

¹⁰ Stefan H. Kaszyński, *Krótką historia literatury austriackiej*, 211.

¹¹ Marek Zybura, [entry:] "Zweig Stefan," in *Pisarze niemieckojęzyczni XX wieku. Leksykon encyklopedyczny PWN* [German-language Writers of the 20th Century. PWN Encyclopedic Lexicon], ed. Marek Zybura (Warszawa-Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1996), 350.

left the country at that time, not only because of where they came from, as Stefan H. Kaszyński writes, but also “as a sign of protest against Nazi practices”. In addition to Zweig, those in exile included Robert Musil, Hermann Broch, Franz Werfel, Joseph Roth and Franz Theodor Csokor.¹² Otto Friedlaender, the author of a memoir about turn-of-the-century Vienna metaphorically entitled *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt. Bilder aus dem Wiener Leben um die Jahrhundertwende 1890-1914*, also refers to this date. Friedlaender confesses at the outset that he wrote down his memoirs shortly before the outbreak of and during World War II (December 1938 – August 1942), in order to revisit the Vienna of his youth amid the darkness of war and record a bygone era.¹³ The past in the memoirs of both writers is presented nostalgically, and at the same time with a certain dose of subtle irony, characteristic of Austrian authors. Zweig described the state as “Die Welt der Sicherheit”, everything seemed permanent, and the state guarded this permanence; at the same time, he stressed that the prevailing belief at the time that one could protect oneself from bad luck was illusory and dangerous.¹⁴ In his book, Otto Friedlaender wanted to return to the old Austria, to its daily life, customs, customary life – the way he remembered them, without embellishing or distorting anything. He asserts this in the *Vorrede*, describing his book as “eine Reportage über eine vergangene, in Vergessenheit versinkende Zeit.”¹⁵

In his memoirs Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński recalls the years of his youth, which he spent in Cracow, a city located in the Habsburg monarchy, but these conditions rarely become the focus of attention, penetrating rather in the form of details of Cracow life scattered in sketches. He was born in 1874 in Warsaw¹⁶ into a family with artistic traditions; he was the son of a composer and a writer. He graduated from the Jagiellonian University with a degree in medicine and worked as a doctor for some time, while participating in the artistic life of turn-of-the-century Cracow. He made his debut as the author

¹² Stefan H. Kaszyński, *Literatura austriacka dwudziestego wieku* [Austrian Literature of the 20th Century], in *Pisarze niemieckojęzyczni XX wieku. Leksykon encyklopedyczny PWN*, XIV.

¹³ Otto Friedlaender, “Vorrede,” in Otto Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt. Bilder aus dem Wiener Leben um die Jahrhundertwende 1890-1914* (Wien: Ring Verlag, APA), non-paginated [8].

¹⁴ Stefan Zweig, *Wczorajszy świat* [The World of Yesterday], trans. Maria Wiśłowska (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1958), 12–14.

¹⁵ Otto Friedlaender, *Vorrede*.

¹⁶ Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, [entry:] “Żeleński Tadeusz, pseud. Boy,” in *Literatura polska. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny* [Polish Literature. An Encyclopedic Guide], vol. 2, ed. Julian Krzyżanowski, from 1976 Czesław Hernas, et al. (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985), 696–697.

of sonnets that conformed to modernist poetics and had satirical cabaret lyrics. After being mobilised, he was employed as a railway doctor until the end of the war; only after the war did he devote himself entirely to literary work, and during the interwar period he gained fame as a literary and theatre critic, publicist and translator. His fate was sealed in the first years of the Second World War in Lviv, where he died in 1941.

A few years older than Zweig, Boy-Żeleński published his notes on Cracow and the bohemian community, to which he belonged as a young man, in the pages of the magazines *Kurier Poranny* and *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* between 1930 and 1931. They were published in a separate edition of *Znaszli ten kraj?... (Cyganeria krakowska)*, comprising a series of 17 sketches (Warszawa 1931). Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, writing about Boy-Żeleński's memoirs, emphasised the colourfulness of the description in depicting the artistic life of Cracow at the turn of the 19th century, the bohemianism of Stanisław Przybyszewski, the literary and painting circles centred around the *Zielony Balonik* cabaret, and pointed out the features of poetics based on sentiment and humour. The writer witnessed and participated in the events described, quoted anecdotes, and created portraits of well-known figures such as Henryk Sienkiewicz, Stanisław Wyspiański, Witold Noskowski, Stanisław Tarnowski and others.¹⁷ Each sketch bears a title, usually metaphorical, indicating the subject matter taken up in it or the figure presented, for example, *Jan Apolinary*¹⁸ (the reference is to a famous confectionery shop, which was founded by Jan Apolinary Michalik). When writing down his memoirs, Boy-Żeleński was already a mature author, summarising the last stage of his life, important in his private biography.¹⁹ In some sketches, the author clearly indicates the need to return to the past and record figures, events and institutions, for example in the memoir dedicated to the conservative daily newspaper *Czas*, which was strongly 'intertwined' with the writer's life. Boy-Żeleński's returns to the past are, first and foremost, returns to the flowering of cultural life, in which he was a participant, and the images of old Cracow become the backdrop against which these changes take place. He metaphorically refers to them in one of his sketches as "the wind over Cracow"; he calls his writing an essay, while at the same time jokingly admitting to a 'propensity for storytelling'.²⁰ The sources of his nostalgic attitude bring

¹⁷ Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, [entry:] "Znaszli ten kraj?... (Cyganeria artystyczna)," in *Literatura polska. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny*, vol. 2, 690.

¹⁸ Tadeusz Żeleński (Boy), "Jan Apolinary," in Tadeusz Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1962), 131.

¹⁹ Tadeusz Żeleński (Boy), "Zakrystia," in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 34.

²⁰ Tadeusz Żeleński (Boy), "Wiatr nad Krakowem" [Wind over Kraków], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 64.

the memoirs closer to Zweig's account; Friedlaender appears as an observer rather than a participant in past life, although he knows it well.

Zweig, Friedlaender and Boy-Żeleński grew up and matured in politically and socially different centres. After all, between the 'wealthy capital of the monarchy', as Tomasz Weiss writes in his book about the *Zielony Balonik* cabaret, and 'poor Cracow' there was a gulf;²¹ these differences are confirmed by the rich literature on the social and national structure of the two cities, statistics and population.²² Writers took part in the cultural life that developed exuberantly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as later, in the interwar period. Zweig and Boy-Żeleński were fascinated by French literature. In his youth, Zweig translated poems by Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine and Émile Verhaeren,²³ a Belgian poet who wrote in French, a Parnassian and a Symbolist. Boy-Żeleński's ties with France, his several trips to France and, above all, his immense translation work are known from various sources. Dominika Niedźwiedź, writing about the writer's travels to France, states that during the 38 years of his adult life (1900-1938) Boy-Żeleński visited France almost ten times.²⁴ Agata Zawiszewska recalls that he considered both popularising French literature and translating an important task, and points to Boy-Żeleński's statements about the beginnings of his fascination with French works.²⁵

From the memoir records of the writers under discussion, images of the past from several decades ago emerge. Authors associated with Vienna present a solid foundation of the social life of the time, on which customs, fashion, forms of ritual and beliefs were based. Friedlaender arranged his own memoirs into three books, putting them in thematic order. In the first book ("I. Buch"), he depicts the landscape of old Vienna and the prevailing tranquillity, unhurried lifestyle, which differentiates the city from other bustling European metropolises (like Paris), describes the streets, the Ring, the fa-

²¹ Tomasz Weiss, *Legenda i prawda Zielonego Balonika* [Legend and Truth of the Green Balloon] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1976), 24–26.

²² Cf. Michael John, Albert Lichtblau, *Schmelztiegel Wien einst und jetzt. Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart von Zuwanderung und Minderheiten*, with an introduction by Erich Zöllner (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 1993).

²³ Ganczar, "Literatura emigracyjna po 1938," 254.

²⁴ Dominika Niedźwiedź, "Autokreacje" [Autocreations], in Dominika Niedźwiedź, *Jak Tadeusz Żeleński stworzył Boya. Strategie, Autokreacje, Wizerunki* [How Tadeusz Żeleński Created Boy. Strategies, Self-Creations, Images] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka, 2022), 166.

²⁵ Agata Zawiszewska, "Le plaisir du text po polsku. O języku krytyki literackiej Tadeusza Żeleńskiego-Boya. Biada literaturze, gdy przestaje budzić namiętność," [Le plaisir du text in Polish. On the Language of Literary Criticism by Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy. Woe to Literature when it Ceases to Arouse Passion], *Literacje*, no. 3, (2013): 35.

acades of the houses, and emphasises the multinational character of the city. He presents the imperial royal residence and portrays the emperor, whose lifestyle and work, habits and behaviour are observed by the entire city. Several pages are taken up with a description of Corpus Christi, which the author calls the most beautiful holiday of the year; the following pages deal with the principles that guided the Emperor's rule ("Regierungsmaximen") and present a collective portrait of Viennese people. The second book ("II. Buch") is devoted to the social structure of Vienna; the author discusses issues such as states, classes, larger and smaller national and religious groups in turn. The third book ("III Buch") consists of descriptions of Viennese life: customs, the Viennese dialect, women and the fashion of the time, domestic servants, family life and love life, rest and travel of Viennese people, social life, balls, cafés, spiritual life, diseases, rites of death and burial.²⁶

The range of issues covered is impressive; the writer tried to cover attentively all aspects of life at the time, and did so with language full of humour and melancholy at the same time. He weaves anecdotes and statements by well-known figures into his account, for example the words of Clement Metternich referring to the national character of the capital: "Wien gehört noch zu Europa, aber auf der Landstraße fängt Asien an".²⁷ The nostalgic attitude towards the past is clearly drawn here, and is reinforced by the way the narrative is presented. Friedlaender's language draws attention with its artistic expressiveness and characteristic syntactic formation. The author uses expressive means, thanks to which he recreates the topography of Vienna in an almost painterly manner, while at the same time giving his account poetic qualities. The style of the story proper to him is evidenced by the first three paragraphs, which begin with the sentences: "Wien ist eine stille Stadt", "Wien ist eine alte Stadt", "Wien ist eine Märchenstadt [...]".²⁸

Stefan Zweig bases his vision of the past on the belief that old Austria provided the conditions through which human desires and expectations could be fulfilled. The writer recalls the motto of life at that time, which perhaps worked best in Vienna: "das Leben geniessen"; it was served by venues and centres of social life that were famous throughout Europe. On the model of this motto, an analogous one was introduced: "Leben und leben lassen", which was adopted by all social strata.²⁹ Zweig focuses on the ways in which different communities coexist, the customs and ceremonies that unite them, and attitudes towards the past and present. He characterises the love of mu-

²⁶ Cf. Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt...*, 11–345.

²⁷ Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt...*, 12.

²⁸ Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt...*, 11–12.

²⁹ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 39.

sic and theatre as having their roots in the Baroque *joie de vivre* that characterised Vienna after the Turkish danger was averted. He notes with reverence the names and events associated with musical traditions, such as Beethoven playing at the home of Count Lichnowsky, Haydn being hosted by the Esterházy family (a family of Hungarian origin), or the premiere of Haydn's "The Creation" within the walls of the old University of Vienna.³⁰ What emerges from such records is the topography of Vienna, in which places associated with culture (residences, buildings, cultural institutions, for example, the Burgtheater) played an important role, as well as establishments that offered their regulars good wine, beer, cakes and pies. The capital is a city that creates the conditions for a carefree and pleasure-filled existence, and its residents are gourmets who enjoy life.

Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński creates images of old Cracow, its location, community, political and economic situation and monuments on the basis of vivid comparisons and metaphors, vivid descriptions and wittily formulated diagnoses of social life. In one of his sketches, he describes late 19th century Cracow as perhaps the only 'aristocratic settlement' in Europe at that time, which he justifies by the feudal traditions of Austria, the rural nature of the country, and the lack of industry and commerce in the city.³¹ In addition to the aristocracy separating themselves from the residents of poor Cracow by staying in their palaces and clubs, there was a bourgeoisie, which was conservative and lived "in the Biedermeier style", as well as the lower classes.³² Boy-Żeleński recreates the topography of Cracow (the Market Square, the churches, the Planty), by using vivid images; he compares the city's traditions and customs with Paris and Lviv, and points out significant differences between them, to conclude that Cracow is a 'peculiar creature', a city living with the memory of its cultural past.³³ In the style of a storyteller, he wittily and vividly demonstrates that in the old Cracow there was a struggle between the walls and the people living there, there was a constant confrontation between the inhabitants and tradition fixed in stone, restraining the development of modern forms of social life. This argument and the concluding question about the possibility of existence in a city where the walls lurk in the lives of residents,³⁴ has a clearly defined purpose: to present the activi-

³⁰ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 26–27.

³¹ Żeleński (Boy), "Pański Kraków" [Your Cracow], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 23.

³² Żeleński (Boy), "Prawy brzeg Wisły" [Right Bank of the Vistula], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 9–10.

³³ Żeleński (Boy), "Prawy brzeg Wisły," in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 8–9.

³⁴ Żeleński (Boy), "Mury i ludzie" [Walls and People], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 15, 21.

ties of the cabaret *Zielony Balonik* as a way of freeing themselves from the domination of walls and the burden of tradition.

Against the backdrop of Cracow rooted in history and living in the past, the writer presents the beginnings of a new cultural formation, which was Young Poland – theatrical, literary, musical and artistic; the city transformed into an area of new art. Tracing Boy-Żeleński's relationship with Young Poland, Andrzej Z. Makowiecki distinguishes three stages: the first is his direct participation in the life of Cracow's bohemians, the second stage is marked by the return in his memoirs to the 'country of his youth', both in part of *Ludzie żywi* (in the sketches on Przybyszewski) and in the book *Znaszli ten kraj* [You Know This Country], and the third becomes an attempt to give a historical and literary account of a bygone era. Makowiecki emphasises the "anecdotal and myth-making character"³⁵ of the memoirs, thus indicating an important distinguishing feature of them. At the same time, he notes the lack of a clearly reconstructed social background, economic conditions, politics or issues concerning aesthetic struggles.³⁶

Reading the memoirs of these diarists proves that they became primarily chroniclers of the moral and cultural life of the time. They depicted the love of all ceremonies and celebrations, developed perhaps throughout the monarchy and the cult of public spectacles into which church and court ceremonies were transformed. Friedlaender, as I noted earlier, wrote about the grandiose, lavish Corpus Christi processions, referring to the holiday as "der Hofball Gottes" (in reference to "Hofball des Kaisers").³⁷ Zweig, too, noted the Viennese predilection for festivities, for theatricality in public life, and thus for processions on Corpus Christi Day, military revues, and court orchestra performances that combined colour, sound and music.³⁸ Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński claimed that in Cracow the cult of all festivities was developed like nowhere else and played a very large role in the life of the urban community. Even the seasons of the year were determined by rituals: visiting graves, May Day services, Corpus Christi, the fun associated with the "lajkonik", garlands, shepherdess and other festivities, through which a sense of decorum developed. The rituals in Cracow were also, as the writer emphasised, patriotic in nature; the city became the scene of national celebrations.³⁹

³⁵ Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, "Boy a Młoda Polska" [Boy a Young Poland], in Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, *Wokół modernizmu. Szkice* [Around Modernism. Sketches] (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1985), [33].

³⁶ Makowiecki, "Boy a Młoda Polska," [46].

³⁷ Friedlaender, "Fronleichnam," in Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt....*, 35.

³⁸ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 31–32.

³⁹ Żeleński (Boy), "Prawy brzeg Wisły," in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 11–12.

The authors of the memoirs also devote attention to an important aspect of the collective life of the time, which was the customs related to the organisation of funerals, which were surrounded by worship and characterised by splendour. The funeral ceremony was particularly elaborated during the reign of Maria Theresa, who transformed her mourning after the death of her spouse, Francis Stephan (in 1765), into a kind of spectacle for the court entourage and subjects.⁴⁰ Claudio Magris (in his book *Donau*) recalls the words of Alfred Polgar: “Sterben und sterben lassen”, referring to the motto “Leben und leben lassen”, which lead the author to reflect on life and death, to consider Viennese cemeteries such as Sankt Marx-Friedhof or Friedhof der Namenlosen, where the corpses of people fished from the Danube were buried.⁴¹ As Hilde Schmölzer demonstrates, in the Viennese tradition death occupies a special place, it is a kind of art; the author traces this theme in history, in the Baroque tradition, in funerals celebrated by the Habsburgs, in burial services, and in descriptions of epidemics (“Der schwarze Tod”).⁴²

Life and death complement each other, and the equalisation of all in the face of death is a motif that has run through European literature, culture, and iconography for centuries. It is firmly rooted in Austrian culture, as also evidenced by memoirs. Stefan Zweig writes about how Viennese people had the desire to have a dignified funeral (“schöne Leiche”) after death, with a procession and pomp; it became a spectacle for the living.⁴³ An elaborate description of the customs surrounding funerals and the associated requiem is included in Friedlaender’s memoirs. As early as the introduction, the author introduces a vivid comparison based on the obituary formula; he writes that in March 1938 the remnants of old Austria left “nach langem Leiden”, and Vienna began to resemble the apartment of the deceased, which was occupied by strangers.⁴⁴ In the third book, the subject he discusses is the illnesses of the Viennese, which were, above all, perpetuated by the customs of the time, the ways in which the sick were treated by those around them; he does this by means of dialogues between patients, doctors, and family members introduced into the memoirs. Focusing on death, which the Viennese wish to plan as a great celebration while still alive, the author notes the finer details of the funeral rites and links them to deeply rooted traditions and attitudes

⁴⁰ William M. Johnston, *Österreichische Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte. Gesellschaft und Ideen im Donauraum 1848 bis 1938* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1992), 176.

⁴¹ Claudio Magris, *Donau. Biographie eines Flusses*, trans. Heinz Georg Held (Wien: Zsolnay Verlag, 1988), 223.

⁴² Hilde Schmölzer, *A schöne Leich. Der Wiener und sein Tod*, mit Illustrationen aus dem Wiener Bestattungsmuseum (Wien: Verlag Kremayr & Scheriau, 1980), 7–159.

⁴³ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 31–32.

⁴⁴ Friedlaender, *Vorrede*.

in the Viennese community; he believes that he who does not love life does not revere death either.⁴⁵

Zygmunt Nowakowski wrote vividly and humorously about Cracow funerals and the place they occupied in the life of the city in his memoirs written in exile. He stressed that they were part of life and even established the order of the day; Cracow lived with funerals and lived from them.⁴⁶ Boy-Żeleński, writing about Cracow, recreates first of all its specific aura, resulting from its location, its proximity to the lazily flowing river, its confinement within the ancient walls, which caused an 'infection' of sadness, translating into a 'subdued' life, an existence without surprises and opportunities for change.⁴⁷ These ways of description are significant in developing reflections on the changes that took place in the city at the turn of the century. The writer constructs many accounts of Cracow's cultural life and art on the basis of vivid opposites, pictorial contrasts, highlighting the differences between what was found and new impulses and directions in art and cultural life. He wrote about Wyspiański, who was a pupil of Jan Matejko and in a sense a continuator of his historical school, and who soon found his own artistic path and introduced new means of expression, noting the transformations taking place within Matejko's and Wyspiański's models: from the "pride-blooded" faces of magnates to the anaemic girls coming from the basements.⁴⁸

From the pen of Stefan Zweig emerges the rich cultural life of Vienna at the turn of the 20th century; the cult (for centuries present in Viennese culture) of the dramatic arts and the artist intensifies at that time. The pride of the city was the Burgtheater, and actors such as Josef Kainz, widely known and loved by Viennese audiences, court artists and opera singers were known and recognised on the street by every passer-by.⁴⁹ Zweig identified himself with the representatives of the new tendencies in literature, with the group of writers of "Young Vienna", which included Arthur Schnitzler, Richard Beer-Hofmann, Peter Altenberg and Hugo von Hofmannsthal; the writer stressed that through subtle artistic means they caused Austrian culture to acquire a European character⁵⁰ for the first time. The author draws attention to the contribution of Jews to the creation of Vienna's culture.

⁴⁵ Cf. Friedlaender, "Krankheiten," "Der Tod", in Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt...*, 325–345.

⁴⁶ Zygmunt Nowakowski, *Mój Kraków i inne wspomnienia* [My Cracow and Other Recollections] (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Interim, 1994), 61–63.

⁴⁷ Żeleński (Boy), "Prawy brzeg Wisły," 9.

⁴⁸ Żeleński (Boy), "Pański Kraków," 33.

⁴⁹ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 28, 208–211.

⁵⁰ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 62–64.

These included the writers mentioned, as well as composers such as Goldmark, Mahler and Schönberg, visual artists, architects and journalists.⁵¹

The memoirs mention the café, which was a meeting place for artists and was one of the most important cultural institutions at the turn of the century. The café had a long history, dating back to the end of the 17th century, but the peak of its popularity was in the second half of the 19th century.⁵² Cafés sprang up everywhere in the world, including the larger and smaller cities in the Austro-Hungarian area, but Zweig believed that Viennese establishments could not be compared with any other. They were accessible to everyone, created an environment for the regulars to learn about the world through magazines, and strengthened bonds between people. The writer calls the cafés a “democratic club”, where one could read Viennese magazines over coffee, as well as German, French, English and other magazines from different parts of the world, get news about people and events, discuss issues with other regulars and thus develop intellectually.⁵³ Friedlaender spreads before the reader a detail-saturated picture of Viennese establishments, their regulars and prevailing customs. He convincingly and at the same time humorously proves that the café is in Vienna what the Agora is in Greece; it is “das Laster” of the Viennese, because few alcoholics and morphine addicts live in the city, but there are many thousands of “Kaffeehaussüchtige”.⁵⁴

Cracow’s coffeehouses played a similar role to that of Viennese establishments or those springing up in other regions of the monarchy; they were an environment that fostered the development of culture, the search for artistic inspiration and the consolidation of social ties. In his memoirs Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński depicts the various establishments (“Rosenstock”, Schmidt, “Paon” and others) and the character and regulars of each of them. Newspaper readers, loners feeling the absence of their own authentic lives and people who discussed literature, painting and philosophy, all came to the café, which offered daily and weekly newspapers in various languages. The writer calls the cafés “forges of the intellect” and “schools of dialectics”, which he compares to the Athenian ones; he also notes that their regulars were not only philosophers and writers, but also ordinary officials.⁵⁵ The phenomenon that was

⁵¹ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 35–37.

⁵² Cf. *Wien und seine Kaffehäuser. Ein literarischer Streifzug durch die berühmtesten Cafés der Donaumetropole*, ed. Petra Neumann (München: Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, 1997), 7–362.

⁵³ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 55–56.

⁵⁴ Friedlaender, “Kaffeehaus,” in Friedlaender, *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt...*, 316, 314.

⁵⁵ Żeleński (Boy), “Kuznie intelektu” [Forges of the Intellect], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 122–130, quoted 122–123; see also Żeleński (Boy), “Jan Apolinary,” 131–140.

the café at the turn of the century also gives an idea of the place of women in society at the time. Viennese establishments were open to men; women, mainly from the artistic community, went there rarely. Otto Friedlaender believed that because women started to attend cafés, the charm (“Zauber”) of the establishment disappeared.⁵⁶ Cracow cafés are compared by Boy-Żeleński to a monastery, because one can find only men in them, immersed in piles of newspapers.⁵⁷

Each of these memoirists reveals his own attitude towards the city where he spent the years of his youth, his attitude towards the past, tradition, the system of values in force at the time, and aesthetic canons. Compiling the memoirs of writers associated with the culture of different nationalities, who witnessed and participated in the events depicted, it is important to remember their different pedigrees, their identification with particular social and peer groups, and their ways of belonging to the world of culture. Zweig was born, artistically shaped and spent a good part of his life in the city, which he saw as a place that enabled different lifestyles and creative activities. At the same time, as Stefan H. Kaszyński states, the writer is a broad-minded intellectual, writing more about representatives of European culture than about Austrian and German authors, which is probably why he gave his book the subtitle *Erinnerungen eines Europäers*.⁵⁸

The First World War put an end to the Empire; the world in which Zweig and Friedlaender were rooted ceased to exist. The outbreak of the war, Zweig recalls, was greeted by young Austrians as a chance for a change in a life that ran on a fixed course and offered no chance for change; so they set out for the front as if it were a romantic male adventure.⁵⁹ However, after the war ended, Austria was reduced to the size of a small state. Thus, during the First Republic, the recent past was treated as a paradise lost, and the “empty place” left by the multinational state began to be filled by a mythologised past, a “prolongierte Monarchie”⁶⁰ came into existence. Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński began his work and participated in the cultural life of Cracow at a time when Poland did not have its own statehood. Recalling the dates of the creation of the cabaret *Zielony Balonik* and its end (1905–1912), which are simultaneously the dates of the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and the Balkan War, he searches for a deeper meaning in this coincidence. In 1905, the mood that led to important events and to Poland’s regaining of

⁵⁶ Friedlaender, “Kaffeehaus,” 317.

⁵⁷ Żeleński (Boy), “Kuźnie intelektu,” in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 122.

⁵⁸ Kaszyński, “Psychoanalysis – Stefan Zweig (1881–1942),” 211.

⁵⁹ Zweig, *Świat wczorajszy*, 274–275.

⁶⁰ Milan Dubrović, *Veruntreute Geschichte* (Wien—Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1985), 25.

freedom prevailed; perhaps, as the writer ponders, the cabaret's activities, based on carefree games, rejected the relics of the time of captivity and heralded freedom.⁶¹

It is impossible to read these memoirs without considering their historical context, which is an important frame of reference for the entire cultural formation and worldviews of the writers. The memoirs of Zweig, Friedlaender and Boy-Żeleński, called autobiographies, reportages, sketches, and works close to novels, record a world that has passed and which the writers describe and bid farewell to with reverence. However, these are farewells to different realities: a different vision appears from the perspective of *finis Austriae*, and another in the final chapter of the history of Cracow, then still part of the monarchy.

Translated by Anna Wylężałek and David Lilley

References

- Czermińska, Małgorzata. "Tożsamość kształtowana w pamięci miejsca." In *Kulturowa historia literatury*, edited by Anna Łebkowska, and Włodzimierz Bolecki, 146–160. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2015.
- Deutsche Literatur in Schlaglichtern*, edited by Bernd Balzer, and Volker Mertens in collaboration with other contributors and editors of Meyers Lexikon. Mannheim–Wien–Zürich: Meyers Lexikonverlag 1990.
- Dubrović, Milan. *Veruntreute Geschichte*. Wien–Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1985.
- Friedlaender, Otto. *Letzter Glanz der Märchenstadt. Bilder aus dem Wiener Leben um die Jahrhundertwende 1890–1914*. Wien: Ring-Verlag [APA].
- Ganczar, Maciej. "Literatura emigracyjna po 1938 roku." In Ganczar, Maciej. *Historia literatury austriackiej*, 231–269. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2016.
- Grodziski, Stanisław. *Franciszek Józef I*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo, 1983.
- Hauptwerke der österreichischen Literatur. Einzeldarstellungen und Interpretationen*, edited and with an essay by Ernst Fischer. München: Kindler Verlag, 1997.

⁶¹ Żeleński (Boy), "Wielki Kraków" [Great Cracow], in Żeleński (Boy), *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*, 159.

- John, Michael, and Lichtblau, Albert. *Schmelztiegel Wien einst und jetzt. Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart von Zuwanderung und Minderheiten*, with an introduction by Erich Zöllner. Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 1993.
- Johnston, William M. *Österreichische Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte. Gesellschaft und Ideen im Donaauraum 1848 bis 1938*. Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1992.
- Kaszyński, Stefan H. "Literatura austriacka XX wieku." In *Pisarze niemieckojęzyczni XX wieku. Leksykon encyklopedyczny PWN*, edited by Marek Zy-bura, X-XIV. Warszawa-Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1996.
- Kaszyński, Stefan H. "Psychoanaliza – Stefan Zweig (1881–1942)." In Kaszyński Stefan H. *Krótką historia literatury austriackiej*, 207–212. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 2012.
- Kinz, Maria. *Damals in Hernals...* Wien: Dachs Verlag, 1993.
- Magris, Claudio. *Donau. Biographie eines Flusses*. Translated by Heinz Georg Held. Wien: Zsolnay Verlag, 1988.
- Makowiecki, Andrzej Z. [Entry:] "Żeleński Tadeusz, pseud. Boy." In *Literatura polska. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny*, vol. 2, edited by Julian Krzyżanowski, since 1976 Czesław Hernas, et al., 696–697. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985.
- Makowiecki, Andrzej Z. "Boy a Młoda Polska." In Andrzej Z. Makowiecki. *Wokół modernizmu. Szkice*, 33–53. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1985.
- Niedźwiedź, Dominika. "Autokreacje." In Niedźwiedź, Dominika. *Jak Tadeusz Żeleński stworzył Boya. Strategie, autokreacje, wizerunki*, 135–176. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka, 2022.
- Nowakowski, Zygmunt. *Mój Kraków i inne wspomnienia*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Interim, 1994.
- Rybicka, Elżbieta. "Geopoetyka (o mieście, przestrzeni i miejscu we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach kulturowych)." In *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*, edited by Michał Paweł Markowski, and Ryszard Nycz, 471–490. Kraków: Universitas, 2006.
- Schmölzer, Hilde. *A schöne Leich. Der Wiener und sein Tod*. Mit Illustrationen aus dem Wiener Bestattungsmuseum, 7–159. Wien: Verlag Kremayr & Scheriau, 1980.
- Währing 1880-1930. Album*, edited by Helfried Seemann, and Christian Lunzer. Wien: Verlag für Photographie, 1996.
- Weiss, Tomasz. *Legenda i prawda Zielonego Balonika*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1976.
- Wien und seine Kaffehäuser. Ein literarischer Streifzug durch die berühmtesten Cafés der Donaumetropole*, edited by Petra Neumann. München: Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, 1997.

- Wien von gestern. Ein literarischer Streifzug durch die Kaiserstadt*, collected and narrated by Heinz Gerstinger, 9–190. Wien: J&V Edition Wien, 1991.
- Zawiszewska, Agata. "Le plaisir du text po polsku. O języku krytyki literackiej Tadeusza Żeleńskiego-Boya. Biada literaturze, gdy przestaje budzić namiętność." *Literacje*, no. 3 (2013): 31–39.
- Zweig, Stefan. *Świat wczorajszy*. Translated by Maria Wisłowska. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1958.
- Zybura, Marek. [Entry:] "Zweig Stefan." In *Pisarze niemieckojęzyczni XX wieku. Leksykon encyklopedyczny PWN*, edited by Marek Zybura, 350. Warszawa–Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1996.
- Żeleński (Boy), Tadeusz. *Znaszli ten kraj?... I inne wspomnienia*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1962.

Świat, którego już nie ma. O wspomnieniach Otto Friedlaendera, Stefana Zweiga i Tadeusza Boya-Żeleńskiego

Abstrakt: Przedmiotem uwagi badawczej w artykule są wspomnienia pisarzy związanych w młodości z Wiedniem: Stefana Zweiga i Otto Friedlaendera oraz Tadeusza Boya-Żeleńskiego związanego z Krakowem. Rozważania prowadzone są w oparciu o odwołania do ustaleń geopoetyki, problematyki miejsca, autobiografii. Wspomnienia pisarzy dotyczą przełomu XIX i XX wieku, obejmują różne aspekty ówczesnego życia społecznego i towarzyskiego, kultury materialnej i duchowej, utrwalonych zwyczajów. Pamiętnikarze rejestrują także zmiany zachodzące w życiu artystycznym, przedstawiają grupy i środowiska literackie oraz znane postaci tego czasu. Są jednocześnie obserwatorami i uczestnikami życia przełomu wieków, a ich relacje traktowane są jako wspomnienia, szkice, reportaże, autobiografie.

Słowa kluczowe: autobiografizm, przełom XIX i XX wieku, Wiedeń, Kraków, przestrzeń.

Eine Welt, die es nicht mehr gibt. Über die Memoiren von Otto Friedlaender, Stefan Zweig und Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński

Abstract: Gegenstand der Forschung in diesem Artikel sind die Memoiren von Schriftstellern, die in ihrer Jugend mit Wien verbunden waren: Stefan Zweig und Otto Friedlaender, sowie Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, der mit Krakau verbunden war. Die Überlegungen stützen sich auf die Erkenntnisse der Geopoetik, das Problem des Ortes und die Autobiographie. Die Memoiren der Autoren beziehen sich auf die Wende vom 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert, sie behandeln verschiedene Aspekte des gesellschaftlichen Lebens jener Zeit, der materiellen und geistigen Kultur, der gängigen Bräuche. Die Memoirenschreiber halten auch die Veränderungen im künstlerischen Leben fest, stellen literarische Gruppen und Kreise sowie bekannte Persönlichkeiten der Zeit vor. Sie sind gleichzeitig Beobachter und Teilnehmer am Leben der Jahrhundertwende, und ihre Berichte werden als Memoiren, Skizzen, Berichte und Autobiographien behandelt.

Schlüsselwörter: Autobiographie, Jahrhundertwende, Wien, Krakau, Raum, Geopoetik.