

## TRANSLATIONS

### BOOK I

[inside front cover] Hermann Zapf  
Nuremberg-South · Gartenstadt · 48 Minerva Street

1-1

To remain pure and to mature —  
that's the most beautiful and most difficult art of living.

Walter Flex / Weimar · Spring 1941

1-2

Goethe's summer house in Weimar

1-2 verso

Pentecost 1941

1-3

[Song from the operetta *Monika*, text by Hermann Hermecke, music  
by Nico Dostal] Sunday, the 8th of June 1941

Homeland, homeland, I think of you now and forever, my  
dear homeland, homeland, where I was well and happy!  
Homeland, native soil, I am far away and all alone,  
If only I could once, just once, enjoy your quiet shelter.  
At night in my dreams, your stars shine down on me,  
and I think of you from far away, oh how I long for you!

Homeland, homeland, my beloved tranquil valley,  
my beautiful homeland, homeland, I salute you a  
thousand times!

Home, I hear your bells ringing, home, I hear your call,  
Home, I want to sing your songs, home, I long for you!  
[I] Wish to see your mountains just one more time,  
to walk hand in hand with my beloved through the  
peaceful valley of my home!

Where the green meadows stretch between mountains,  
forest and field,  
Home, I yearn for you, you are my happiness, you are my  
world!

Homeland, homeland, I think of you now and forever, my  
dear homeland, homeland, where I was well and happy!  
Homeland, native soil, I am far away and all alone,  
If only I could once, just once, enjoy your quiet shelter.  
At night in my dreams, your stars shine down on me,  
and I think of you from far away, oh how I long for you!  
Homeland, homeland, my beloved tranquil valley,  
my beautiful homeland, homeland, I salute you a  
thousand times!

1-4

14 June 1941

1-5

A people is rich as long as it honors, with abiding love, the standards of beauty its artists have created through centuries, as long as it lives by and re-creates these standards day after day, not as if they had originated centuries ago, but only yesterday and today.

Thoughts about the introduction of Antiqua as the German standard typeface (from a book about Japan by Dr. Hauenstein)

1-5 verso

Weimar 15 June 1941

1-6

21 June 1941

1-7

Whatever happens  
May it all be a blessing to you. Hölderlin

1-7 verso

On 22 June 1941

1-8

June 1941

1-9

Only you can prove, what you really are and when destiny tries to subjugate you, conquer it in return through what you are. There is no adversity that is stronger than you. You alone are your destiny. Others may help you and serve you, but no one, not even a friend, can wrest destiny from you.

Th. W. Elbertzhagen

1-10

Cut the roses  
when they are in bloom;  
Tomorrow is not today.  
Don't let a single hour get away,  
time is fleeting.

1-11

Michelangelo  
*Si come nella penna e nell'inchiostro*

Just as there are three styles within pen  
and ink, there are forms concealed within marble.  
They may be elaborate or ordinary  
depending on how our minds draw them out.

Likewise, perhaps, the heart in your breast contains,  
as much as pride, that simply-made garment,  
the soft and gentle feeling of love,  
even if I haven't known how to draw it out.

Animals, herbs, words and marble are  
bursting with the power to heal.  
If they could speak like we do, they would all speak  
imploringly.

Perhaps, in my case, all the power and what has healed me  
is hidden within you. Adapted by Rainer Maria Rilke

*1-11 verso*

Weimar 28 June 1941

*1-12*

When what we want doesn't happen, then something  
happens that is better. Luther

*1-13*

Happy is he  
who forgets,  
that as a civilian  
he was once somebody...

Never puff yourself up!  
Don't do more than you have to...

Never again feel the pain of  
that clamoring riot around you,  
The sound is rough but hearty  
And you can think whatever you want!

During military drills,  
When you, sweating, trot and turn,  
Never show your superiors  
What you secretly think about it!

I have polished and cleaned  
And was the busiest of all.  
Yet, it was to no avail,  
I stuck out again. —

I can work like a horse  
And diligently fulfill my duty:  
I can't seem to please anybody!  
It is my destiny to stick out! PFC Helmut O. Wegener

*1-14*

July 1941

*1-15*

*Frankfurt on the Main*

Frankfurt, beautiful Frankfurt,  
your image, your breath lives radiantly inside of me,  
Each passing day stirs the quiet fire —  
And all my hopes belong to you.

Alas, all the joyful hours are so far away,  
The familiar houses, the flowers, the Main:

You are like music dying away in the night—  
When will I be under your sun again. July 1941

1-16

View from military parade ground at Ohrdruf in Thuringia

1-17

Out of a sheer desire to ponder, how many diligent hands  
and minds it takes to create one single beautiful letter  
that awakens a stronger sense of community than all the  
dialectic of all the world's do-gooders.

Richard Dehmel in December 1918

1-17 verso

On a visit to the German Book Trade Museum in Leipzig  
on 9 August 1941

1-18

*Uta*

Witnesses of a long gone era, who have turned to stone,  
Silently you dream away your souls into the gray future

1-18 verso

Naumburg on 10 August 1941

1-19

. . . yet I will never forget you  
no matter how far I travel, beautiful Main! and  
your banks, full of delight . . . Hölderlin

1-20

Frankfurt on the Main

1-21

Nothing can take our love and belief in our country from us;  
We were sent to preserve—and to shape—it.

Should we die, the duty goes to our heirs:  
To preserve and to shape it: Germany shall not die!

Heinrich Spitta

1-22

It is as though the world existed only for those who are  
rude and arrogant and those who are quiet and reasonable  
have to beg for a little place by the grace of God. Goethe

[The last two pages of this sketchbook had been excised by Zapf for  
framing; they are reproduced at the end of this facsimile, not in the  
original order]

1-23

5–6 June 1941 The baroque Belvedere Palace near Weimar

1-24

Potsdam Sanssouci

[inside back cover] Gunner Hermann Zapf · 2nd Light  
Artillery Replacement Division 73 · Weimar

## BOOK II

[inside front cover] Hermann Zapf

2-1

Making letters in any form is to me the purest and greatest pleasure, and in innumerable situations and circumstances in my life it was to me like a song to the singer, like a picture to the painter, or what a cry of joy is to the happy, or a sigh to the distressed— it was and is the happiest and most complete expression of my life.

Rudolf Koch 1932 / Weimar · 7 October 1941

2-2

The Roast Potato Pub in Weimar

[Literally “The Roast Potato Room,” but bars and pubs are called “Stube.” This might be a joke about the barracks, or perhaps what soldiers get to eat and their general living conditions. Sign on the table says: Room 53.]

2-3

Diotima!

Let me be thankful for this day,  
That you have blessed, with your love, your goodness.  
Let me have the belief in the future,  
that you’ve given me, in my work, in my life.  
Stay with me and lead me, like before,  
upwards to beauty, to purity, to the light. —  
Diotima, I thank you. 16 November 1941

2-3 verso

... 18 and 19 November 1941

2-4

*Wartime Christmas 1941*

Even though I’m far away, even though you are not here; —  
Look, the same stars are above you and me.  
They transmit my greetings and bring your answer back  
to me;  
Until after long anxious days, I happily rush to you.

Hans-Ulrich Röhl

2-5

Man is led to his fate along mysterious paths  
with an invisible string;  
Yet God watches over him  
And miraculously the thread untangles Lessing

[Incorrectly attributed to Lessing. It is actually a quote from Schiller’s *Turandot*]

2-5 verso

On 8 December 1940

2-6

Jüterbog, the 23rd of January 1942

1941

I’ve kept on going

Through the course of this year,  
I've suffered much hardship  
And have often given up hope!

But still I will not stop,  
The new year beckons –  
Hopeful, I will move on  
Until it sets again.

1942                      Arnold Bohs

2-7

In every year, his spring,  
balmy and light, will surely bloom,  
Take heart, you won't miss  
This one either, great and bright.  
It is certainly there,  
at the end of your path,  
You feel it below,  
And it dawns above.    L. Uhland

2-8

If people know each other  
by their inner merits  
they can joyfully call  
themselves friends    Friedrich Hölderlin  
Frankfurt on the Main · Sunday, 11 January 1942

2-9

On sentry duty at the train station in Forst Zinna on  
25–26 January 1942    At night at 2.30

2-10 / 2-11

*In memory of my time in the Weimar orderly room*

The orderly room is one of the most controversial sections of the military. The infantryman considers it the root of all evil. Whoever sits within it, is of the opinion that without the orderly room, there would be no military.

The field infantryman says tersely and brutally: The men in the orderly room spend their time, sitting on their asses, loafing around, to a certain extent with the permission of the higher-ups and on scientific grounds.

The man in the orderly room, on the other hand, lives in the rock-solid certainty that only a select, intelligent part of humanity has been given such nerves-of-steel, to be able to survive the orderly room.

Yet, for opportunistic reasons, he declares that, as opposed to all the real paper-pushers, he would willingly pay something extra, if instead of the damned paper war, he could serve in the field. But even he doesn't believe that the others believe it.

The head of the orderly room is naturally the chief of the whole unit, but this isn't really noticeable. That's

because—when he isn't out with the unit—he is ensconced in a little cabin. He isn't seen. And if, perhaps, he is seen inside, then it doesn't seem right either. The chief's room is namely a place, that is only experienced while standing at attention. With eyes riveted straight ahead, there is just enough time, to register that a desk stands there and the chief is sitting at it. There is neither time nor the freedom to move around to explore the room any further. For one thing, while standing at attention, the eyes may not wander around. And for another thing, such an audience demands all the attention one can muster anyway. The whole intellect has to be focused on giving a little "Yes, Sir" or "No, Sir" the necessary conviction to avoid having to present a lengthy defense. Otherwise, the meeting can easily go wrong.

Like I said: the soldier has a deep-seated aversion to the orderly room and everything associated with it. That's why he lets himself be seen there as little as possible. Yet, sometimes, there is no way to avoid it. And when he does report to the orderly room, it is possible—even without seeing his rank and service insignia—to pretty accurately guess how long the soldier has been serving.

The younger soldiers stand silently at attention, until being asked a question. Their salute is more well-intended than perfect.

The man who has already served for some time, clicks

his heels together so forcefully that the plaster comes off the walls and with such routine that one doesn't notice the accumulated energy that lies dormant between his heels. It all looks so natural and easy. He barks out his report at a speed of 80 knots and only those used to such a verbal display are able to make sense of it.

Those soldiers with a little moss already growing on them, the older ones, think their years of service entitles them to act less formally, (but only if the Sergeant Major is not sitting in the room.) They enter the office with a "Heil!" or similar greeting and informally lean on the divider that's usually there, to put forth their request.

The very long-serving—comprised only of corporals and other NCOs— enjoy an unspoken privilege. In groups of three to five, they are allowed to meet in the orderly room and on this holy ground, share their adventures from their day off amid bursts of laughter and knee slapping. Only the Sergeant Major can occasionally, with a few curses, throw them out. Unfortunately the poor private can't do that. He has to practically crawl into the earpiece, if he wants to understand what the guy at the other end of the blower wants from him.

Human nature reveals itself in the orderly room. As it does before the clerk at the unit roster. The unit roster is the weighty tome that includes all the data and particulars of every soldier. One category supposedly lists a

soldier's specific talents and skills, from a driver's license to a secret specialized training. And curiously, as they might admit themselves, soldiers can be divided into two groups. The first group turns out to be a collection of universal geniuses, for the enlistment of whom the High Command cannot congratulate itself enough. The list of their skills does not even fit on the mingy form sheet. Those are the diligent soldiers who have long felt the field marshal's baton stirring in their knapsack.

Their counterparts are the cautious soldiers whose fetish it is to be average. They live—not only as soldiers—according to the principle: Keep a low profile and always disappear into the crowd. That is why they make an effort to have as many “no,” “none,” or negative entries in the official record as possible. Even if they have already attended three different courses.

It is a common misconception that the Sergeant Major is the most important person in the orderly room. That is not correct. The heart of the orderly room is the person deciding about leave requests. It is advisable to get on his good side early on. Soldiers have even more respect for him than they do for the bookkeeper. Why? The state will always provide money. Soldiers will get paid even if they got drunk, shot badly or repeatedly looked bad at roll call. The paycheck is always forthcoming, but not leave. There are a thousand reasons for leave to be denied. Maybe

there is something to be answered for. And when isn't there something to be answered for? And it doesn't only rest with the Sergeant Major. There are a lot of superior officers. A comrade on sentry duty may suddenly fall ill. There can also be an order from above regarding how many men may go on leave at the same time. None of this happens with money. It comes as regularly as the tides rise and fall. Leave days, however, are like a mirage. Don't dare to believe it, until you're sitting on the train. And that is why soldiers don't butter up the bookkeeper quite as much as they do his Highness, the man in charge of leave applications.

The Sergeant Major comes in many forms. In the past, he had a frightening tangle of barbed wire under his nose and had, if nothing else—to put it politely— a portly figure. Today, in most cases, the beard is no longer necessary, but the idea that a Sergeant Major has to have a bit of a belly seems to persist, likely because the celebrated speeches of such a figure demands exceptional resonance. However, a thunderous organ doesn't make all the difference. On the contrary, experience has shown that slender Sergeant Majors are just as able to cancel leaves as portly ones. And that those who are small and slight and only sputter can be even more terrifying. Thus, the belly is nothing but a garden-variety visual trick.

When the duty roster says, “9–11 drill for all soldiers (including those in the orderly room),” it is one of the battery’s greatest joys. Whoever can manage it, watches with active interest from the corridor window, as the spectacle unfolds below. He will not fail to call over passing comrades, who for some inexplicable reason have not heard the sensational news. A soldier is accosted to sharing everything, even pleasures, with his comrades.

Conversely, if the Sergeant Major is on leave and has appointed a staff sergeant to fill in for him, it is a high time for the denizens of the orderly room. They get the staff sergeant on the phone for every single request they receive. If a decision has to be made, they come up with a truckload of rules and regulations, all of which need to be taken into consideration. If he needs a certain document, they make him realize how long it takes to locate the right one among the wealth of material, even in an office as well organized as theirs. Every routine question, which they usually respond to themselves several times a day, they bring to his highest attention. And instead of letting him enjoy his afternoon nap, they send him pesky petitioners.

In short, they show him what an orderly room is really like, until he groans for the 98th time in a single day “I’ll

go crazy”. He praises the Lord when the Sergeant Major returns after two weeks.

Yet maybe, the cure has been so effective that he will defend the orderly room against all malicious accusations at least for the next four weeks.

PK [Propaganda Kompanie] –  
War correspondent Werner Thieke 7-8 February 1942

2-12

Jüterbog 22 February 1942

2-13

28 February 1942

2-14

*Home*

Come what may! —

As long as you live, it is day  
And let it be known to the world,  
If you are with me, I am at home.  
When I see your lovely face,  
I don’t see the shadows  
Of the future. Theodor Storm

2-15

Berlin 14 March 1942 Cathedral

2-16

22 March 1942 Dijon · Rue Berlier

2-17

Fontainebleau 31 March 1942

2-18

Paris Pont Alexandre III 1 April 1942

2-19

The Thinker Auguste Rodin 1880

2-20

It is more important for the artist to approach the ideal, which he carries inside himself and is his own, than to record the fleeting ideal that nature may offer.

In precisely this, that only a specific person and not the majority of people has an ideal view of nature, lies the proof that beauty is created by the artist's imagination and because he follows his own genius. Delacroix

2-20 verso

Visiting the Rodin Museum and the Louvre in Paris on 1 and 2 April 1942

2-21

Headquarters of the Corps-Mapping Detachment 535 in Dijon, Rue d'Assas 18, from 20 March 1942 to 10 May 1942

2-22

My work station in Dijon.

2-23

But we are given  
nowhere to rest,  
the suffering people  
dwindle and fall  
blindly from one  
hour to the next  
like water hurled down  
from cliff to cliff  
year after year into uncertainty

From Hölderlin's *Hyperion*

2-24

Akebia quinata Dené Japan

[inside back cover] (Map Making) IV / Art[illery] Training  
Reg[imen]t (motorized) Jüterbog Field Post Office  
Number 35070

### BOOK III

[inside front cover] Corporal Hermann Zapf 25188

3-1

If you knew, how rudely even cultivated people  
behave towards the most valuable works of art, you  
would forgive me for not making mine available to the  
crowd. Goethe, *Elective Affinities*

3-2

Chalon-Sur-Saône  
Tour de Coco l'ouvrier, Impasse de la Gravière  
26 April 1942

3-3

Used book sellers along the Quai de Montebello  
16 May 1942

3-4

*On the Bay of Biscay*  
Pines, palm trees, southerly beach,  
the land cradles itself, rippling with blades of grass.  
O, how gloomily you wandered!  
Blooming gorse covers you now.  
Glimmering quartz crystals glow in stone.  
Fragrant resins envelop you.

You feel the tree rooted deeply within.  
Longing and dreams gently trickle away.

Is that still your heart that beats here?  
Is that still the pain that moves you?

Wave after wave ventures and spumes –  
How life glows on the edge! Kurt Kölsch  
Bordeaux · June 1942

3-5 verso

On R&R in Pyla sur Mer near Arcachon from 7–10 June

3-6

Bordeaux 2 July 1942

3-7

1943  
In St. Sulpice & Cameyrac (Gironde) at the home of  
Mr. S. Rouzier and his first-class Bordeaux white wine  
from the 1930s

3-8

Biarritz 16 April 1943 "les trois Couronnes"

3-9

Memories are the only Paradise,  
that we can't be driven out of. Jean Paul  
8 December 1943

3-10

12 Unter den Platanen, Frankfurt am Main, after the  
daylight air raid on 29 January 1944

3-10 verso

(My apartment)

3-11

That I am happy, take things easy  
Live fast, that is my good fortune and I wouldn't  
exchange it  
For the safety of the tomb. Do I live only  
to think about living?  
Shouldn't I enjoy the present moment  
in order to get to the next? Should I then waste this one, too,  
with worries and fears? If you  
take life too seriously, then what good is it?  
If the morning doesn't awaken us to new joys,  
if the evening doesn't leave us with a desire to hope  
is it really worth getting dressed and undressed? Does  
the sun shine on us today so that we can think about  
what happened yesterday  
and predict and correlate, what cannot be predicted or  
correlated: the destiny of tomorrow?  
As if led by invisible spirits,  
the sun-steeds of time break away with the light carriage

of our destiny and there is nothing left for us to do but  
to courageously  
hold fast to the reins and now right, now left to steer the  
wheels away  
here from the rock, there from falling. Where it's going?  
Who knows? He can hardly even remember where he  
came from. From Goethe's *Egmont*

3-12

On the Garonne [River]

3-13

*Memories*

The Northeast blows  
My favorite among winds  
Because it promises seamen  
A fiery spirit and a good voyage  
But now, go and greet  
The beautiful Garonne,  
And the gardens of Bordeaux,  
Where the path runs along the steep bank  
And the brook plunges  
Deep into the current  
And a noble pair of oak trees and silver poplars  
Look down from above;  
I still remember well

How the canopy of  
A forest of elm trees dips toward the mill  
And a fig tree grows in the courtyard.  
On holidays, dark-skinned women  
Walk on the silken earth,  
And in March  
When night equals day,  
Cradling breezes  
Heavy with golden dreams  
Waft across the unhurried paths.

But, someone, pass me  
The fragrant cup  
Full of dark light,  
So that I may rest; it would be sweet  
To sleep in the shadows.  
It isn't good  
To be soulless  
With mortal thoughts, yet it is good  
To have a conversation  
To let your heart speak,  
To hear much about days of love  
And of deeds to come. Hölderlin

3-14

Allones near Saumur 17 July 1944  
Three vintners from the Loire Valley  
Distilling Eau de Vie (55%) from lees (green plums)

3-15

Times of hardship,  
Never forget  
what they taught you! (Gessner)

3-16

With the army Group B en route to Belgium  
and the Netherlands  
Old windmill in Well near Venlo

3-17

From *The Wanderer*  
... And now I return to the Rhine, to the homeland;  
The breezes of youth tenderly wafting over me like before;  
And the familiar open trees that once rocked me in their  
arms  
Sooth my aspiring heart  
And the holy greenness, the witness to the blessed, deep  
Life in the world, refreshes me and transforms me into a  
young man.

Meanwhile I have aged, the polar ice caps have lightened  
my skin

And in the burning south, I have lost my hair.

Even if someone, on the last of his mortal days,  
Coming from far away and tired down to his soul, and at last

Saw this land again, his cheeks would flush one more time,  
And his almost lifeless eyes would shine.

Blessed valley of the Rhine! Every hill has a grapevine,  
And every wall or garden is garlanded with grape leaves,

And the boats on the river are filled with the divine potion,  
Towns and islands are drunk with wine and fruit,

But smiling, yet serious, the old one, the Taunus, rests above,  
And crowned with oak trees the liberated one bows his  
head. . . . Hölderlin

3-18

Bad Kreuznach 11–25 September 1944

3-19

Making letters in any form is to me the purest and  
greatest pleasure, and in innumerable situations and  
circumstances in my life it was to me like a song to the  
singer, like a picture to the painter, or what a cry of joy is

to the happy, or a sigh to the distressed— it was and is the  
happiest and most complete expression of my life.

Rudolf Koch, died 9 April 1934

3-20

Wolfstein December 1944

3-21

*Heidelberg . . .*

. . . the gigantic castle, having endured its fate,  
worn down to the ground by weather,  
looms oppressively over the valley

yet the eternal sun poured her  
rejuvenating light over the vast aging  
tableau and lively ivy turned it green all over;  
pleasant forests  
rustled over the castle from above. Hölderlin

From 21–27 March 1945 in Klingenstein in Rhineland-Palatinate  
to Heidelberg to the auxiliary military hospital on the Neckar

3-22

Hölderlin Tower in Tübingen 15 April 1945

3-22 verso

In remembrance of my time at the military hospital in  
Tübingen

3-23

Germany's cities and villages lie desolate and ravaged and the inhabitants have escaped and wander around forsaken and sad. Never before has war raged so far and wide through all of Germany and almost all the countries of Europe. It has so violently taken the goods in which people search for happiness and on which they hang their hearts, that they look around for goods that cannot be taken. War has broken the back of the conceit and arrogance that had raised their ugly heads; it has

taught men to surrender and submit to the powerful hand of God and through quite a few injustices and acts of violence, loss and hardship has mellowed and beaten their hearts. In a word, it has made them more receptive to the Help, that alone can help. And what more does one need, than to be receptive in order to receive and be happy. Matthias Claudius 1814

[inside back cover] 9 May 1945

End of the third sketch book    End of the war