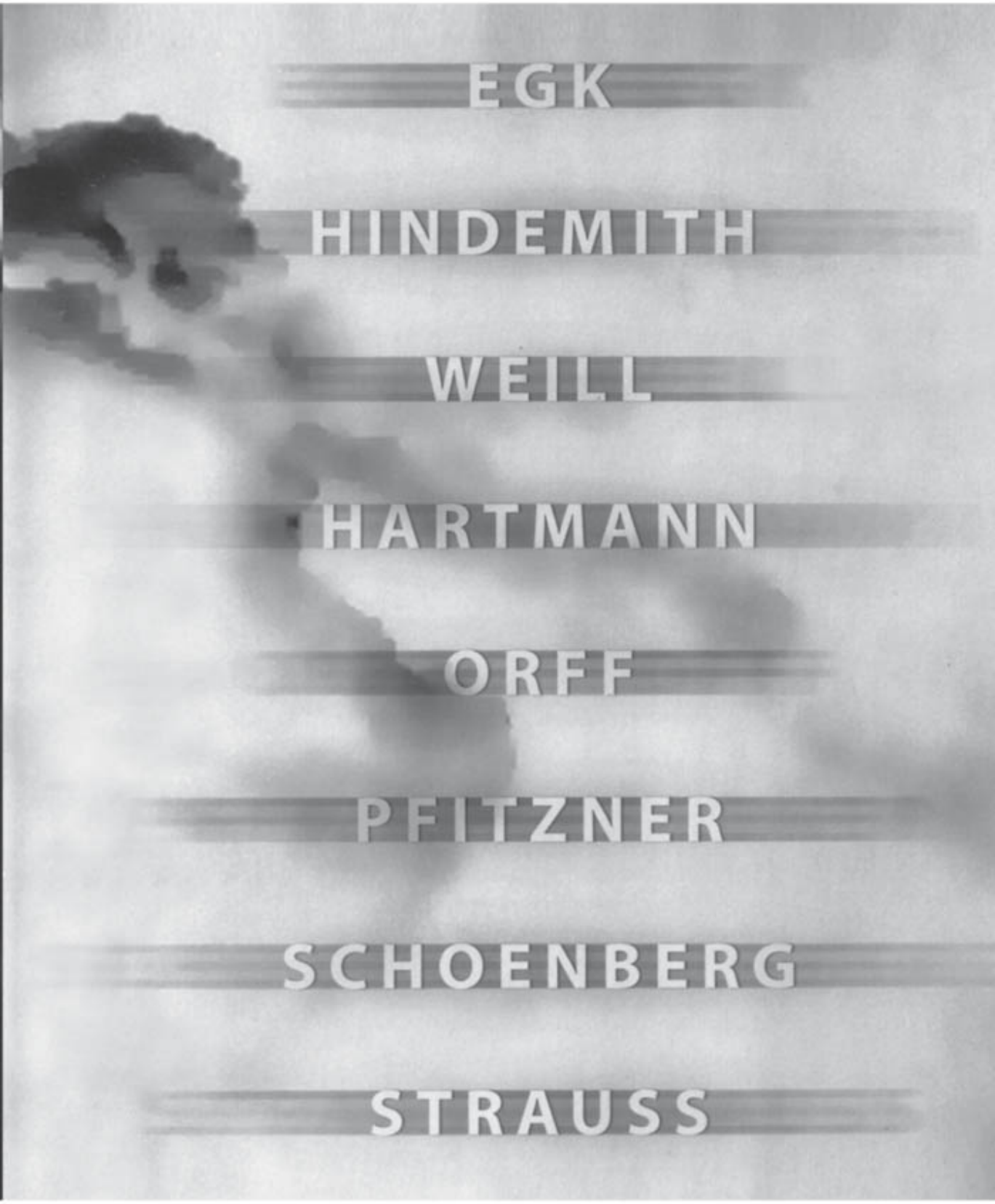
Composers of the Nazi Era

EIGHT PORTRAITS



Michael H. Kater

COMPOSERS *of the* NAZI ERA

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Eight Portraits

Michael H. Kater

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Preface

This book is the last in a trilogy on music and musicians in the Third Reich. The first one was on jazz, the second on the general, mostly serious-music scene, and this one is about eight composers: Werner Egk, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weill, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Carl Orff, Hans Pfitzner, Arnold Schoenberg, and Richard Strauss. As in the first two volumes, I am trying to explore these musicians' relationship with the Nazi regime and examine the role their music played in it, if any. Of these composers, one or two are well-known, such as Strauss and Schoenberg (and much has been written on them already) whereas others are hardly known outside Germany, especially Hartmann and Egk. Why were they chosen? Each man's history was backed by a wealth of private papers to which I was fortunate enough to have access, and even in terms of raw and unsorted documents each history turned out to be sufficiently unique to tell me something new about the fate of music in the Third Reich in general and how the composers fitted into it in particular. Although the order of the composers treated in this book is random, certain cues during the writing of the biographies appeared to direct me from one name to the next. I sensed these cues intuitively and therefore cannot explain them. But I started with Werner Egk because I felt that in sketching his career in my previous book, *The Twisted Muse* (1997), I had left important questions unanswered. And I finished with Strauss because throughout the entire writing process he appeared as the greatest challenge, better attempted at the end. Strauss was of course the senior composer and to be largely recognized as such by his peers. But the order of

the chapters indicates nothing about a ranking of these composers in music history (if that can at all be determined) or about my personal feelings about them or their music. Because each artist deserved a self-contained portrait and one should be able to read it independently of the other chapters, some phenomena are mentioned more than once in this book, with only a minimum of cross-reference. A good example is the Hindemith-Furtwängler affair of 1934–35, which affected both Hindemith and Strauss, or the "denazification" of Carl Orff, which also touched on the fate of his friend Werner Egk. From the point of view of institutional history, the struggle between Alfred Rosenberg and Joseph Goebbels for ultimate control of culture in the Third Reich is referred to repeatedly as well. I am asking the reader's indulgence if such repetition becomes too trying.

Many people helped me research and write this book, as they had helped me with the two previous ones. First, I have to thank the keepers of the records pertaining to each composer: notably Richard and Gabriele Strauss for complete permission to let me roam the family archive in Garmisch. Thereafter, Richard Strauss Jr. did not tire in answering any other nagging questions I had for him. My thanks also go to the archivists in charge of the papers of Hans Pfitzner at the Österreichische National-Bibliothek (Musiksammlung) in Vienna, the Hindemith papers at the Paul-Hindemith-Institut in Frankfurt am Main, the documents in the Carl-Orff-Zentrum in Munich, and the Egk and Hartmann *Nachlässe* at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Handschriftenabteilung) in Munich. In the United States, I am indebted to archivists in charge of the Kurt Weill papers at the Weill-Lenya Research Center in New York and the Schoenberg papers, then still at the Arnold Schoenberg Institute on the campus of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles (and now in Vienna). I was able to cull other documents from national, regional and special archives in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, such as the Berlin Document Center (now a part of the German Federal Archives system), the Koblenz Federal Archives, the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munich, the Münchener Stadtbibliothek, the Stadtarchiv München, the Österreichisches Staatsarchiv in Vienna, the Lotte Lehmann Special Collection in Santa Barbara, the Zentralbibliothek Zürich, and other venues.

A number of witnesses granted me interviews, most of which I recorded and transcribed. They will eventually be made publicly available. These witnesses include Gertrud Orff in Munich, Liselotte Orff in Diessen/Ammersee, Elisabeth Hartmann in Munich, Newell Jenkins in Hillsdale, New York, and Gottfried von Einem in Vienna. Several witnesses corresponded with me, as did Richard Strauss Jr., Hans Hotter (Munich), Gertrud Orff, Clara Huber (Munich), Newell Jenkins, George J. Wittenstein (Santa Barbara), and Hans and Brigitte Bergese (Berlin).

Among many friends and colleagues who helped me with this project, I must single out Joan Evans of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada, and Albrecht Riethmüller of the Free University of Berlin. With incredible patience, these two awesomely knowledgeable musicologists read

every word I wrote in manuscript and suggested many significant changes (as they had already done in the case of my previous book). This help is all the more appreciated as I wrote my chapters from the point of view not of musicology but of sociopolitical and cultural history. Nonetheless, if I have strayed from the path of accuracy, especially in musicological terms, it still is not their responsibility but my own.

Further help, in various forms, was provided by Celia Applegate, Tamara Bernstein, David Farneth, Saul Friedländer, Bryan Gilliam, Alice Goldfarb, Hartmut Kaelble, Jürgen Kocka, Kim Kowalke, David Monod, Pamela Potter, Gerhard A. Ritter, Adelheid von Saldern, Reinhard Spree, Hans Vaget, Wedigo de Vivanco, Michael Walter, and Moshe Zimmermann.

Once again I have to thank the granting agencies. During the research and writing of this book I have been generously supported by the following institutions: York University Toronto as a Walter A. Gordon Fellow, the Canada Council (Ottawa) as a Senior Killiam Research Fellow for two years, and the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung in Bonn, which appointed me Konrad Adenauer-Preisträger. When for 1997–98 I was appointed Jason A. Hannah Visiting Professor of the History of Medicine at the University of Toronto (another research fellowship), I had sufficient time left over—apart from new medical–historical research I was beginning—to devote significant energies to the completion of this book. Besides the free time I gained through these fellowships, I received significant financial aid from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada in Ottawa, to enable me to travel to many foreign places, make contacts, and collect archival material. York University, too, provided funds on a more modest scale. All these institutions must be thanked.

I owe a great debt to the four librarians at York University's Scott Library who helped me procure the sources, as they have done so now for many years. They are Mary Lehane, Gladys Fung, Joan McConnell, and Linda Hurley. Without them, those library books or articles from Princeton, Berkeley, or Göttingen would never have arrived.

At Oxford University Press in New York, my gratitude goes out to Nancy Lane for signing on this book in the first place and to Thomas Lebien and Susan Ferber for giving me much-needed editorial advice thereafter. I especially appreciate the freedom they have provided me with as an author. Those presses must be praised which constrain their authors least.

Finally, my wife, Barbara, with whom I discussed musical and historical problems ad nauseam over the years, inspired many of the chapters in this book with her keen insights. As it turned out, she had her preferred composers and I had mine, as we reviewed them over dinner or on our many walks along the shores of Lake Ontario or the Loisach river in Garmisch. Although this ought not to be part of the academic exercise, I leave it to the reader to find out who my favorite composers are.

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Contents

Abbreviations

ADMV	Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein (General German Music Society)
AI	Arnold Schoenberg Institute, Los Angeles, Archive
AM	Amtsgericht München, Registratur S, Schwurgerichtsakten
AMR	*Amtliche Mitteilungen der Reichsmusikkammer*
AMZ	*Allgemeine Musikzeitung*
APA	Author's Private Archive
BA	Bundesarchiv, Koblenz
BAB	Bundesarchiv, Aussenstelle Berlin (formely Berlin Document Center)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BH	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich
BS	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Handschriftenabteilung
CM	Carl-Orff-Zentrum, Munich
CSR	Czechoslovak Republic
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DAZ	*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic)
DKW	*Deutsche Kultur-Wacht*
DM	*Die Musik*

DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
EB	Elly-Ney-Nachlass, Staatsarchiv, Bonn
ETA	Ernst Toch Archive, Special Collections, Music Library, UCLA
GDT	Genossenschaft Deutscher Tonsetzer (League of German Composers)
GEMA	Gesellschaft für musikalische Aufführungs– und mechanische Vervielfältigungsrechte
GLM	*Das Grosse Lexikon der Musik: In acht Bänden,* 8 vols., ed. Marc Honegger and Günther Massenkeil (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1978–82)
HJ	Hitler-Jugend (Hitler Youth)
IBD	*International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Emigrés, 1933–1945,* ed. Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Röder (Munich, 1983)
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich
ISCM	International Society for Contemporary Music
JdM	*Jahrbuch der deutschen Musik, 1943/1944,* ed. Hellmuth von Hase (Leipzig and Berlin, [1943/44])
KfdK	Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur (Combat League for German Culture)
LBI	Leo Baeck Institute, New York
LI	*Lexikon der Interpreten klassischer Musik im 20. Jahrhundert,* ed. Alain Paris (Munich and Kassel, 1992)
LP	Library of Washington State University, Pullman
MGG	*Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik unter Mitarbeit zahlreicher Musikforscher des In- und Auslandes,* 17 vols., ed. Friedrich Blume (Kassel, 1949–86)
MK	*Musik im Kriege*
MMP	Münchener Stadtbibliothek, Monacensia-Abteilung, Pfitzner-Briefe
NAW	National Archives, Washington
NG	*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* 20 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London, 1980)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workers' Party—Nazi Party)
NSF	Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft (National Socialist Women's Organization)
NSKG	NS-Kulturgemeinde (National Socialist Cultural Community)
NSV	Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (National Socialist People's Charity)
NWH	Österreichische National-Bibliothek, Vienna, Handschriftenabteiling
NYA	New York Philharmonic Archives, Avery Fisher Hall, New York

OMGUS	Office of Military Government of the United States for Germany
OSW	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Archiv der Republik
OW	Österreichische National-Bibliothek, Vienna, Musiksammlung, F68 Pfitzner
PA	Private Archive
PF	Paul-Hindemith-Institut, Frankfurt am Main
Promi	Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (Reich Propaganda Ministry)
RG	Richard Strauss-Archiv, Garmisch
RKK	Reichskulturkammer (Reich Culture Chamber)
RM	Reichsmark
RMK	Reichsmusikkammer (Reich Music Chamber)
SA	Sturmabteilungen (Brownshirts; Stormtroopers)
SM	Stadtarchiv, Munich
SMM	Städtische Musikbibliothek, Munich, Pfitzner-Briefe
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
SS	Schutzstaffel (Security Squad)
Stagma	Staatlich genehmigte Gesellschaft zur Verwertung musikalischer Urheberrechte (State-approved Society for the Utilization of Musical Authorship Rights)
TG	*Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels: Sämtliche Fragmente,* 5 vols., ed. Elke Fröhlich (Munich, 1987)
TGII	*Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels, Teil II: Diktate, 1941–1945,* 16 vols., ed. Elke Fröhlich (Munich, 1993–96)
UCLA	University of California at Los Angeles
UCSB	University of California at Santa Barbara
UE	Universal Edition
Ufa	Universum Film-Aktiengesellschaft
USC	University of Southern California, Los Angeles
VB	*Völkischer Beobachter*
WC	Weill-Lenya Research Center, New York
ZM	*Zeitschrift für Musik*
ZNF	Zentralbibliothek, Zurich, Musikabteilung, Nachlass Furtwängler

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COMPOSERS *of the* NAZI ERA

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1

Werner Egk

The Enigmatic Opportunist

I

Werner Joseph Mayer was born in 1901 in the Swabian village of Auchsesheim, not far from Augsburg, the son of a Catholic and very musical primary-school teacher of solid peasant stock. Whereas his father was strong and authoritarian, his mother was soft and inclined toward poetry. The family moved to Augsburg when Werner was six and already noticeably interested in music. His formal education there was that of a humanistic Catholic Gymnasium, led by Benedictine monks; Werner took in the Greek and Roman classics, but also Shakespeare, Goethe, Nietzsche, and Dostoyevsky. He was fascinated by the new schools in art, Die Brücke of Dresden and Der Blaue Reiter of Munich; the paintings of Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky became familiar to him. At age eighteen he entered the municipal conservatory; a few songs, music to poems by Rilke, Werfel, and Hofmannsthal, were the result. Visits to concert halls and the opera stage ensued; first he savored *Der Freischütz* and then *Tristan und Isolde*. Werner's father wanted him to enter the postal service, but the young man, almost equally gifted as a graphic artist and a writer, strove for a career in music. He moved to Frankfurt to perfect his piano skills and then, in the postwar turmoil of 1921, came to Munich. There he was introduced to a theater off the beaten track, began to write music for it, played in the orchestra pit, and worked as a stage designer.

By 1923 Werner Mayer had met an accomplished violinist, who, after

giving him a few lessons, became his wife. His only son, Titus, was born in 1924. Perhaps because Mayer was such a common German name, he adopted a nom de plume: Werner EGK, an acronym based on his wife's name: "Elisabeth, geborene Karl."[1]

For a few years he moved with his family to Italy for health reasons, and new aesthetic influences overwhelmed the young musician: Italian opera, an enchanting landscape, and art. Composing chamber music, Egk stayed in the south till 1927; then again there followed artistically decisive, albeit economically insecure months in Munich. Egk eked out a living as a cinema musician, accompanying silent films. The year 1928 found Egk in Berlin, where he met the important representatives of the musical avant-garde: Arnold Schoenberg and Hanns Eisler. He learned to appreciate Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* under Erich Kleiber and *Die Dreigroschenoper* of Kurt Weill. By 1928 he had made Weill's personal acquaintance and through him met Hans Flesch, the Jewish brother-in-law of Hindemith's wife, Gertrud, and an important broadcast executive. This introduced him to the medium of radio. The Berlin station Funkstunde commissioned his first composition for broadcasting. Egk's sense for the dramatics of radio and stage was being sharpened. He returned to Munich in 1929 to work as a composer for the radio station there. In 1931, Lochham, on the outskirts of the Bavarian capital, became the permanent residence for the family. Egk joined like-minded musicians such as Fritz Büchtger, Karl Marx, and Carl Orff in a Vereinigung für Zeitgenössische Musik, or Association for Contemporary Music. He made friends with the avant-garde conductor Hermann Scherchen and the Strecker brothers of the music publishers firm of B. Schott's Söhne in Mainz.[2]

Egk's future career as a composer of opera was decisively launched with the composition of *Columbus,* not surprisingly initially written for radio. The work was premiered in its original broadcast version in July 1933 and in a subsequent stage version in April a year later, both in Munich. By this time it was clear that his predominant musical influence thus far had been Igor Stravinsky, whose sense of rhythm and colorful tone language put their stamp on Egk's music. Two other musical influences, but even more important in personal terms, were Hermann Scherchen and Carl Orff.

At the latest, by spring of 1931 Egk was collaborating with Scherchen during new-music festivals in Munich, at which some of his own works were premiered. In those last few years of the Weimar Republic, Scherchen was frequently in Munich, working with Egk, Orff, and their friends. The charismatic conductor evidently took great interest in Egk's plans for *Columbus,* which was just then being conceived. Egk in turn visited Scherchen in Winterthur, the provincial Swiss town where Scherchen had already been leading a local ensemble for several years. By 1933—the Nazis had taken over political power in Germany and the socialist Scherchen carefully avoided the Reich—the avant-garde conductor was keen to draw Egk into the modern-music workshops that he tried to organize in democratic countries such as France, and at which he sought to patronize the works of Egk's Munich colleague Karl Amadeus Hartmann. But because of the change in

political climate and Scherchen's persistent absence from Germany, the contact between Egk and Scherchen soon lapsed.[3]

Werner Egk met Carl Orff as a teacher and mentor very early on, around 1921, when his Munich piano instructor Anna Hirzel-Langenhan sent him to Orff. They became more like friends; Orff remembers Egk, six years his junior, from those days as "dangerously gifted in several directions."[4] In the early 1920s, Egk did not stay long with Orff, but he returned to him as a friend and junior colleague toward the end of the decade when Egk got himself involved in various Munich musical functions. This included the exercises under Scherchen, but at the beginning of the Third Reich Orff appears to have presided over a group of young and progressive composers such as Büchtger, Marx, and including Egk, which was bent on experimenting with new things. In Egk's case this meant adapting his radio opera *Columbus* as a "scenic oratorio" to the live stage.[5] Orff was genuinely fond of Egk and was impressed by his music but also by the fact that he seemed to have been able successfully to interest the ruling Nazi Party in his work. Internationally, too, this group was being recognized, as correspondence from the antifascist "Permanent Commission for International Exchange Concerts" demonstrates, which included Edgar Varèse from the United States, Alexander Jemnitz from Hungary, and, still, the Jewish Ernst Toch from Germany. Egk gratefully acknowledged Orff's friendship. In February 1934, in the pages of a racist, regime-beholden publication, *Völkische Kultur,* he touted Orff's pedagogical *Schulwerk* project, a work which Orff at that time was bent on promoting in conjunction with the monopolistic Hitler Youth.[6]

Publications such as those for *Völkische Kultur* signify that Egk, despite being steeped in the modernist culture of Weimar, was early on trying to arrange himself with the new Nazi rulers. Somewhat later in 1934 Egk published another piece in that journal, at length citing Alfred Lorenz in a critical interpretation of Richard Wagner—Munich-based Wagner scholar Lorenz was known to be one of the most vicious anti-Semites of the music world, not just musicology.[7] All this contradicts the post-1945 judgment of one of Egk's biographers, that he was "hardly touched by the forces and tendencies of fascism and its coming to power."[8] Egk had, in fact, been touched as early as 1931 and 1932 when the *Völkischer Beobachter,* the Nazis' official broadsheet edited by party ideologue Alfred Rosenberg, had denigrated him for his modernist leanings.[9] Part of the reason for this was the proximity of Egk's music to that of his idol Stravinsky, who remained persona non grata in the circle surrounding Rosenberg from the end of the republic to well into the mid-1930s.[10]

Throughout 1933, as a matter of fact, some seesawing was going on between cultural administrators of the city of Munich with whom Egk had allied himself and the local representative of Rosenberg's Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur (KfdK), Paul Ehlers, who organized concerts for his "German Stage," whose emblem was the swastika. In a time of budgetary restraints at the tail end of the Great Depression, the plan was to manage a

stage production of Egk's radio opera *Columbus* under the joint sponsorship of the city and the "German Stage." But despite repeated prodding by Egk himself, Ehlers wavered for the longest time, wondering whether the music, so reminiscent of Stravinsky, was really suitable for his genuinely Nazi audience. In the end, a concert performance planned for 30 November 1933 was canceled, but Egk persisted well into 1934. On 5 and 7 April of that year, the oratorio was finally performed, with the aid of three local choirs and the Munich Philharmonic; whether Ehlers had had his hand in it is not certain but may be assumed on the basis of a favorable review of the event in the *Völkischer Beobachter.*[11] If Ehlers had been assuaged, Egk was still being taken to task as late as February 1935 for his obvious allusions to Stravinsky, his professed love of Hindemith and Bartók, and his scarcely veiled disdain for Pfitzner. The man who criticized him then was Ludwig Schrott, another functionary in Rosenberg's entourage and a close friend of Pfitzner's.[12]

Egk hit upon the idea for a new opera, encouraged in this by Ludwig Strecker, the senior partner of Schott's publishers, who under the pseudonym of Ludwig Andersen (an obvious pun on Danish fairy-tale poet Christian Andersen), helped him write the libretto. It involved a fairy-tale opera *Die Zaubergeige,* or "The Magic Violin," which was premiered in Frankfurt on 20 May 1935. The libretto itself was seemingly unremarkable, for it presented the simple story of Kaspar, a naive and uncomplicated farmhand who, after some adventures, wins the love of Ninabella, the aristocratic young lady inhabiting the castle on the hill, before finally settling down to a harmonious and contented life with his peasant wife, Gretl. In this bittersweet comedy there is the character of Guldensack, or Money-Bags, an unsavory fellow who is eventually subdued and could easily be taken for a Jew.[13] The Swiss composer Heinrich Sutermeister in 1936 called this work an "opportunistic construction," and it may have been just that, not only because of the obviously suggestive villain Guldensack but for the entire plot, which was meant to remind German audiences of the tranquility of a simple life (preferably in the countryside, to service the official "Blood-and-Soil" mythology) that was not to call into question the order of things or the powers that be.[14] Egk himself pandered to the Nazis' penchant for anti-intellectualism when he wrote to Hamburg's Intendant Oscar Fritz Schuh that he wanted the work to be deft and emotional, "far removed from any playfully intellectualized ploys."[15] A recipe for acquiescence in the Nazi way of life, therefore, not a prescription for unrest—exactly in keeping with the aims of the Nazi government in Berlin. Hence the folksy side of the piece, its being close to the people, was generally lauded. "People's art," summed up one reviewer, and in this he was referring not merely to the plot but also to the music, which was melodious and tonal to a fault, if—for the cognoscenti—in stretches still betraying Egk's predilection for Stravinsky, especially rhythmically.[16] Of predictable consequence for Egk therefore were the favors showered on him by premier Nazi music critic Fritz Stege—an opponent of Alfred Rosenberg and his minions but a loyal adherent of

Goebbels—who henceforth treated the composer as a paradigm for music and musicians in Nazi Germany. Egk's danceable sequences from *Die Zaubergeige* were exemplary, wrote Stege in July 1936; after all, Egk was the man who had said that any piece of German music would have to be such that it could be performed at popular Nazi functions. Indeed, *Die Zaubergeige* was truly for the German people, was Stege's verdict as late as spring of 1940.[17] Small wonder, then, that the opera was quickly scheduled for performances in many German cities: Hanover, Kassel, Mannheim, Hamburg, Halle, Coburg, Krefeld, and Nuremberg.[18]

However, what most genuine Nazis may have regarded as obvious virtues was, in the manner of Heinrich Sutermeister, contemplated by more caustic listeners with guarded suspicion. Shortly after its premiere, Paul Hindemith was listening to excerpts from *Die Zaubergeige* in Frankfurt, demonstrated to him by conductor Bertil Wetzelsberger. He found them "repulsive to the highest degree. The silliest folk-dance melodies and harmonies with a few dissonances."[19] A follow-up concert piece based on the opera, featuring a solo violin with orchestra, was conducted by Egk at the music festival of Baden-Baden in April 1936, which at that time still benefited from its republican aura of serious music composed by the avant-garde. "Egk disappointed the expert with a magic violin concerto," reported Hindemith's (and Egk's own) publisher Willy Strecker, Ludwig's younger brother, to Hindemith, "while the layman thought it a riot." Hans Bergese, an assistant of Carl Orff in the process of doing some editing work for Egk, also felt that the Baden-Baden piece had been controversial at best.[20]

Nonetheless, Werner Egk had successfully begun to carve a niche for himself in the cultural establishment of the Third Reich. His next rung on the ladder of success was the Eleventh Olympic Games during the summer of 1936. According to his memoirs, Egk had been approached by German Olympic authorities to write orchestral ballet music for solo dancers Mary Wigman, Harald Kreutzberg, and choreographer Gret Palucca, as well as their massive corps de ballet. This Egk did, and after the performance the German functionaries asked him to permit his new composition to be entered into an international Olympic competition, because there were not enough applicants. Hence Egk, innocently enough, at the opening of the Games in mid-August won an Olympic Gold Medal in the section for sportive art, orchestral music.[21]

But the reality was much more political, for behind the scenes there were certain machinations that Egk may or may not have known about at the time but would have had plenty of opportunity to discover after 1945. The whole thing was an intrafascist scheme, because other music medals were also won solely by German composers, apart from one Italian. The final international jury had been made up of most of the German subjury, which already had chosen Egk, plus two German functionaries (including RMK general manager Heinz Ihlert), in addition to the reliably pro-Nazi Finnish composer Yrjö Kilpinen and the Italian-sponsored Gian Francesco

Malipiero. Already in June 1936, weeks before the Olympic event, Goebbels, the chief of the Reich Music Chamber (RMK), who most certainly had been pulling strings, had been told by Malipiero that Egk could be looked upon as the "future bearer of the Olympic Medal for Music."[22]

As could be expected, Egk's festive music, which he later marketed on Electrola records,[23] suited the Nazi Olympic organizers perfectly. Contrary to Egk's postwar statement, it had been one of more than 100 German entries.[24] The choral and instrumental work in four movements was rated as "original in melody and rhythm," with, propitiously, a "genuine folksiness."[25] It was defined as something that could be sincerely appreciated even by "naive, receptive listeners."[26] Alas, today's experts regard it skeptically. Berlin musicologist Rudolf Stephan has judged Egk's *Olympische Festmusik* a "model for National Socialist festive celebrations," fulfilling, through the use of clever devices, "the longing by the regime leaders for a monumental musical style."[27] Albrecht Riethmüller, also from Berlin, has said that Egk's hymn demonstrated an "extravagant use of techniques leading to an extreme paucity of musical substance."[28] Egk, already a skillful tunesmith in his own right, had begun to serve the political simplifiers through significant propagandistic channels.

After the Olympics, Werner Egk's star was to rise even further. Heinz Tietjen, the almighty Generalintendant of the Berlin Staatsoper under Minister-President Hermann Göring, had heard of the success of Egk's *Zaubergeige* in Frankfurt and had watched him conduct it at the Kassel stage, which also came under Göring, as part of the Preussische Staatstheater. At a time that the future of the new Generalmusikdirektor Clemens Krauss in Berlin, much disliked by Tietjen, was uncertain, but also because Furtwängler's position in Berlin then was in the balance, Tietjen was casting about for capable younger conductors whom he could easily control. Egk seemed like such a man; he was known to be dynamically gifted but still without direction, influence, or power, and Tietjen also knew that Egk had, more than passably, conducted his own and other works on a number of occasions.

Hence the Berlin Generalintendant invited Egk to have *Die Zaubergeige* performed in the capital, and later also to conduct it, in mid-February 1936. Tietjen was so moved by it all that he offered Egk a permanent post as Kapellmeister at the Staatsoper, at an annual salary of RM20,000. This was a position that actually preceded Herbert von Karajan's subsequent position by a couple of years.[29]

When in November 1994 I asked Egk's erstwhile friend, Viennese composer Gottfried von Einem, why the seasoned director of the Berlin opera would have appointed such a relative novice to one of the most important conducting posts in the Reich, he replied: "Egk was a first-class musician, but conducting is something else." According to von Einem, Tietjen completely suppressed legitimate doubts he may have had about Egk's conducting talent; all he wanted to see was "Egk's genius."[30]

This may be a subjective evaluation on von Einem's part, but Tietjen's of-

ficial recognition of Egk certainly constitutes one of the first pieces in the strange series of puzzles that determine the biography of this idiosyncratic artist. There were more puzzles to come. The enigmatic Tietjen obviously liked what Egk was doing, so to show his appreciation and also to enrich the repertoire of his opera house, he commissioned Egk to compose a new opera based on Henrik Ibsen's drama *Peer Gynt*.[31]

Egk got to work, composing the music in his trademark angular style that stretched conventional tonality, again reminiscent of Stravinsky. Using Ibsen's story line, he wrote his own libretto, this time without the help of Ludwig Strecker. When the work was premiered under his direction at the Berlin Staatsoper on 24 November 1938, the reaction was two-sided, as it would remain after most subsequent performances throughout the Reich. On one hand, he had dealt with an obviously "Nordic" theme, which was to the credit of the myth-craving Third Reich. The music itself was generally well received, despite the fact that Stravinsky's influence was recognizable, but the expatriate Russian composer was still officially tolerated in Nazi Germany until the outbreak of World War II. Yet, on the other hand, some critics, especially those from the Rosenberg camp, rejected the figure of Peer Gynt, a proverbial loser, as unheroic, anything but in the mold of Nazi martial grandeur. The troll characters of the cavernous empire also were regarded as degenerate, like figures out of an expressionist creation by Ernst Barlach or George Grosz: They resembled the opposite of lean, blond Hitler youths. Egk's postwar remark that any of the head trolls could have been taken to be Hermann Göring, if a somewhat different costume had been imagined on them—a remark he claims to have made at a press conference before the dress rehearsal—is hardly credible. There was, after all, a reliable Nazi image one could draw on for the trolls, and that was—again after the model of "Guldensack" in *Die Zaubergeige*—the stereotype of the ugly, deformed Jew. It must remain open here whether Egk had actually intended one interpretation or the other; quite possibly, he had written the opera neither for nor against the Nazis. For the music, too, was not everybody's favorite: In a scene depicting a Latin American bar with an alluring redhead a tango was being played with hints of the hated jazz; there was the sound of muted trumpets usually used in jazz, and the often exotic rhythms went beyond the marching beat so loved by the Nazi rulers.[32]

A few weeks later, yet another, puzzling, stroke of luck would favor Werner Egk. On 31 January 1939, Hitler, along with Goebbels, decided to attend the opera, as they often did. The conventional wisdom that Goebbels personally disliked Egk's style[33] has never been proved and certainly is not documented in the minister's diaries; quite the contrary, what is documented there is Goebbels's delight at the prospect of Egk's winning the 1936 Olympic music medal. On the other hand, Egk's works had been attacked by Goebbels's Berlin Nazi Party tabloid *Der Angriff,* which, however, in those days was edited at arm's length from the propaganda ministry (Promi) without the tight control that Goebbels had exerted on it before 1933 and later exerted again over his wartime creation, the weekly *Das*

Reich. At any rate, it is true that at the time Goebbels admitted to a "strong suspicion" before entering the opera house, a sentiment he gratuitously extended to the personality of the Führer as well. And, indeed, Hitler had several reasons to be wary; Egk had something of an avant-garde reputation possibly reminiscent of Hindemith's *Neues vom Tage,* which had so disgusted Hitler in 1929, and his libretto was not based on the translation of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* authored by Hitler's old Munich crony Dietrich Eckart, but on that by the much more respectable Christian Morgenstern. Moreover, Hitler had been warned by Göring not to see the opera, apparently because none of his own favorite opera singers were starring in it. But if the reports are correct, this was exactly what raised Hitler's ire: that one of his lieutenants should dictate to him when or when not to visit the opera! It is possible that once in his Führer box, Hitler decided to "like" the opera as a taunt to Göring; whether he genuinely did, we shall never know. According to his minister's chronicle, Hitler and Goebbels were ecstatic: "Egk is a huge, original talent. He moves in his own and very individualistic direction. Does not associate himself with anybody and anything. But he knows how to make music. I am totally delighted and so is the Führer. A new discovery for both of us; we have to remember this name." According to von Einem, who has his story from Egk himself, Hitler called the composer to his Führer box during the intermission in order to announce to him, in the presence of Minister Goebbels: "Egk, I am pleased to make the acquaintance of a worthy successor to Richard Wagner!"[34]

Immediately after the Berlin performance of *Peer Gynt,* Egk, according to his postwar memoirs, was asked by representatives of the propaganda ministry to present the opera at the Reich Music Festival to be held under Goebbels's auspices in Düsseldorf in May 1939, as it had been the year before.[35] Press reports at the time claimed that Egk's had been one of thirty-six works specifically submitted to the jury of the festival, whose aim it was to demonstrate the new, "Nordic" type of music Third Reich composers were now capable of writing.[36] Be this as it may, around the time that Egk conducted the work in Düsseldorf on 19 May, he was asked to make official pronouncements as a "leading personality of the German music establishment," in which capacity he said, among other things, that it was important for contemporary German composers to celebrate the Düsseldorf event and "eagerly to take in the richness of the new spiritual currents and the new opportunities for musical expression resulting therefrom."[37] Goebbels concluded the seven-day festival with a speech in which he excoriated the excrescences of elements "alien to one's race"—a clear reference to the "Jewish," atonal, and jazz music condemned in an exhibition of "degenerate music" at Düsseldorf the year before.[38] Egk was rewarded for his efforts; he received RM10,000 as an official commission to compose a new (Nazi-style) opera, which task, said the composer after 1945, he never fulfilled.[39] In analogy to performers who won similar prizes, Egk's commission was immediately referred to as the "national composition prize," a designation that was certainly correct according to the spirit of the venture

but technically false and protested loudly by Egk after World War II, in peculiar circumstances yet to be discussed.[40] It is certain that Egk got to use the money to support himself while he was composing his next two works: a ballet, *Joan von Zarissa,* actually yet another work commissioned by his patron Tietjen and glowingly praised by Fritz Stege (premiered January 1940, Berlin), and a fuller version of the 1933 scenic oratorio *Columbus* (January 1942, Frankfurt).[41]

In the 1940s *Joan von Zarissa* was sometimes paired with Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana,* and hence the combination of these modern German compositions seems to have symbolized the enduring friendship between the two composers. Indeed, Egk and Orff were then beginning to be mentioned in the same breath.[42] However, in reality the relationship between the two men at that particular time had become rather complex. At the core of this was the fact that Egk, who nominally could be regarded as Orff's pupil, had become fairly early on artistically and commercially more successful than his older friend. In the winter of 1942–43, for instance, six of Egk's compositions based on orchestra and choir were performed throughout the Reich, but only one of Orff's—his *Carmina Burana.*[43] Orff obviously had some difficulty coming to terms with this, although the guarded language of most of his correspondence over those years hardly betrays it.

Die Zaubergeige was premiered in Frankfurt in May 1935, more than two full years before Orff's *Carmina Burana,* which had its opening day on the same progressive stage only on 8 June 1937. Orff was eager to travel to Frankfurt to witness his friend's first day of glory, but at the same time he made it clear to the publisher they both shared, Schott's Söhne of Mainz, that he also wished to demonstrate the score of *Burana,* by then completed, to the "rather large number of conductors" expected to be at Egk's premiere. The publishers responded that there would not be too much of a chance for that, because the Strecker brothers "will be more occupied with Egk's *Zaubergeige* than with half of the *Burana* score." After the premiere, although Orff admitted the huge success of *Zaubergeige* to a friend, he also could not help complaining that the publishers had been so busy as to grant him only "little time for consultations." Later Orff asked the firm, only half in jest, what his own percentage "of Egk's great success" would come to.[44]

In 1935–36 Egk and Orff were both commissioned to write music for the Olympic Games, with Orff's contribution designed for a somewhat different function. During this process Orff again did not fail to point out that in his opinion, Egk was one of the strongest talents around, and he was not just saying that because "many years ago" Egk had been his student. But in the end it was Egk, not Orff, who was asked to submit his work to a prize committee (with predictable results), so that Armin Knab, a distant composer friend of Orff's, wrote him cryptically: "Egk seems to have pulled through."[45]

After 1937 Egk was hobnobbing with everybody who counted in the music business, mostly in Berlin, and Orff could not help but hear about it.

This was the time that Orff was getting his first significant work, *Carmina Burana,* off to an initially rather shaky start in Frankfurt, whereas Egk was easily able to present his already established *Zaubergeige* in Orff's hometown of Munich.[46] And everything augured well for the premiere of *Peer Gynt* late in 1938; Orff himself had to concede that in comparison even with *Die Zaubergeige* it was "a giant step forward."[47] By 1939, Egk's work had already had good success in Berlin, and Orff's none.[48] Egk was making plenty of money; even apart from the Düsseldorf festival commission of RM10,000 in 1939, his net earnings were close to RM40,000 in 1937, nearly RM20,000 in 1938, and almost RM27,000 in 1939. Orff, however, was constantly begging his publisher for advances, for as a self-employed composer he could not make do with the meager royalties he earned.[49]

It is true that Werner Egk and his wife Elisabeth continued to see Orff socially, especially when in Munich, and after Orff had married, for the second time, in the summer of 1939.[50] It is also true that Egk and Orff did share like-minded friends, such as stage designer Caspar Neher, the director Oscar Fritz Schuh, and the critic Karl Heinz Ruppel—who were capable of criticizing the Third Reich. Later Orff was even said, by some of them, to have been a sort of elder statesman of this circle, small and ever so loosely organized.

But even here cabal was at work. One of Egk and Orff's friends was the Swiss composer Heinrich Sutermeister, born in 1910 and based in Berne, who, like Egk, considered Orff to be one of his more influential teachers. Judging by his correspondence of many years with Orff, Sutermeister, composer of an opera titled *Die Schwarze Spinne,* or "The Black Spider," tended to conspiracy and intrigue, and perhaps because he was jealous of Egk's early success and knew of their relationship, in the years from 1935 to 1941 he lost few opportunities to position Orff against Egk. If at one time he found Egk's work too superficial, at another he was warning Orff that Egk would steal from him. There were a lot of intrigues against Egk in Berlin, suggested Sutermeister in the summer of 1936, and Egk would have been shot down a long time ago but for Tietjen's protection.[51]

In this case Orff, who was a shrewd judge of character, undoubtedly could take those letters for what they were worth, but some of the carping may have left traces on him, and besides, Sutermeister was not the only acolyte with a sharp tongue. Yet another was Orff's onetime Munich assistant Hans Bergese, who in 1938 was working for the Berlin branch of the originally Munich-based Günther–Schule, Orff's cocreation which, at the end of the 1920s, had spawned the now universally famous *Schulwerk*. Bergese's criticism of Egk to Orff was not capricious like Sutermeister's but substantial and musically sound. Bergese, who knew Orff's early works as well as the current ones by Egk, for whom he was doing a piano reduction of *Peer Gynt,* wrote that this work was nothing but a "skillful improvisation." Because Egk mastered instrumentation with great virtuosity, he was able to mask "shortages of musical essence, as far as rhythm, melody, and

especially form were concerned." Although momentarily successful with the public, Egk's music would never be pace setting because he stuffed too much into it. Egk was composing the sort of music Orff once started with, explained Bergese, but now was in the process of growing out of. Whereas Egk's music would be effective, Orff's was enchanting, divined Bergese. And, presciently, he was hinting that when Egk would long be forgotten, Orff's creations would still be around.[52]

II

Egk received his first big professional break, with possible political ramifications, at the level of the professional organization of musicians in the Reich Music Chamber. The connecting link here probably had been Professor Paul Graener, a nationally well-known composer of music in the post-Romantic style who as head of the composers' section (*Komponisten-Fachschaft*) of RMK was respected by his fellow Nazis. But he had not been particularly successful with his oeuvre even after 1933 and was thought to be lacking acumen at his job, where he was treated as little more than a figurehead by about 1937. He was born in 1872, and it had become obvious that Graener finally should retire from his duties by the time the war was on. Egk certainly knew him well from the Olympics in 1936, when Graener had been one of the German judges awarding him the prize, and their works had also appeared on double bills at concerts. By November 1940 Egk was assisting Graener in the defense of serious-music or *E-Musik* composers, whose share of royalties was threatened by representatives of light-entertainment music (*U-Musik*), led by Norbert Schultze and Marc Roland; they were demanding a larger share for their group. Goebbels, as head of the RMK, was backing Schultze and Roland because he thought light music to be more important than Beethoven and Mozart, to keep the fighting morale of ordinary soldiers at the fronts as high as possible.[53]

Serious composers, for decades led in this by Richard Strauss and the musicians' organizations he headed, in particular the Stagma (staatlich genehmigte Gesellschaft zur Verwertung musikalischer Urheberrechte), had since 1934 been guaranteed a so-called serious-music one third, amounting to one third of all the royalties centrally collected. By 1939–40, however, Goebbels was in the process of removing this, to the benefit of the *U-Musik* spokesmen. Although without any official function in the RMK any more, Strauss through his affiliation with Stagma was still bent on defending the serious-composers' privileges, with Graener pledged to assist him as best as he knew how. At a meeting called in the propaganda ministry for 28 February 1941, to settle this matter definitively, Egk was summoned to be present; his name had undoubtedly been forwarded by Graener, and Goebbels by this time of course knew very well who Werner Egk was. It is possible that Goebbels thought he could win a level-headed ally in the person of the dynamic Egk, but because he knew that Egk by this time was a solidly es-

tablished *E-Musik* composer, he actually could not have been under any illusion as to what side Egk would take in the dispute. According to Egk's not always trustworthy memoirs, the meeting itself went terribly, with Goebbels insulting Strauss and also barking at Egk, but, claims the composer, he kept his thoughts to himself. The latter is questionable, however, for Egk's pocket calendar for the day records a "presentation for Dr. Goebbels." The minister himself confided to his diary that whereas Strauss had been senile and stubborn and Graener greedy, "Werner Egk is the most sensible." Today we may infer from these remarks that Egk tried to make the minister see the serious-music composers' point of view in discussion and that the intractable Goebbels in this case actually listened. Although nominally the "serious-music one third" was removed, something that was, technically, an equivalent, dictated by Goebbels, was put in place for composers of *E-Musik* until May 1945.[54]

Impressed with Egk's recent performance and at the same time disenchanted with Graener over the years, Goebbels decided in late May 1941 to replace the older with the younger man.[55] There were, in fact, several conferences among Egk, Graener, and other officials of the RMK and Promi before Egk was appointed on 7 June and formally introduced as the RMK's new composers' section head by the General-Secretary of the Reich Culture Chamber, Hans Hinkel, on 10 July. These scrupulously documented conversations belie Egk's postwar contention that his appointment came to him as a complete surprise; altogether, the chain of events regarding Egk's growing importance in the RMK adds yet another chunk to the larger puzzle of that composer's Nazi biography.[56]

Egk later claimed that he consulted with his musician friends before accepting the post, and indeed, at least one letter by Carl Orff suggests that such deliberations did take place and that Orff and his extended circle encouraged Egk to enter the lion's den, for the benefit of all of them.[57] But on the other hand, Egk must have known that from now on he might be called upon to do the egregious regime leaders' bidding in earnest, in a manner that was still quite inconceivable when he was working as a repertory conductor for culture czar Heinz Tietjen in Berlin. Even with just the official policy of anti-Semitism in mind, Egk must have been aware that in the most serious of cases those leaders' policies could be capricious, intolerant, and even lethal.

Hence Fred K. Prieberg's 1982 assessment of Egk's appointment is still valid. Tempering Egk's oft-stated contention that he accepted the job because he looked upon himself as a true representative of his colleagues who trusted him with their problems (which may or may not have been so), Prieberg has written that in actual fact Egk took this step because "Goebbels regarded him as the most dependable among all the available personalities who were known to have leadership qualifications, as defined by himself." This assessment corresponds to at least one officially published interpretation that in the case of Egk, Goebbels had appointed no one but "the man of his trust."[58]

Would there have been an alternative? Egk could have said no in the interest of political integrity with, in all probability, no harm to his musical career, or to his friends. There was a foil: Egk's new deputy was to be Franz Grothe, wisely a man from the *U-Musik* sector, who as a writer of popular film scores (*Watch out! The Enemy is Listening!*; *Roses from Tyrol*) not only knew Goebbels well but actually was considered a Nazi. But evidently he had not been the minister's or Graener's first choice. Originally, the honor was supposed to have gone to Grothe's film composer friend Theo Mackeben (*Ohm Krüger*), who, unlike Grothe, had a late-Weimar left-wing past, culminating in a collaboration with Brecht and Weill, which in that respect actually resembled Egk's own. After having been asked by Graener, Mackeben declined politely for reasons of "cultural egotism," and because he would probably not be found as active as the ministry rightfully expected.[59]

So, apart from possible political laurels on the one hand and the desire to work against the regime from within a Trojan Horse on the other, what tangible motives would Egk have had to accept such a tricky position? After scrutinizing his record as a composer of relatively modern works since 1933, his claim, stated even then, that he wanted to support novel trends in music, whatever that may have meant in the Third Reich, is plausible, and warrants further discussion.[60] But to stay with the sheer politics of the position for a moment, it is clear that through the composers' *Fachschaft* of the Reich Music Chamber, Egk personally was unassailable and potentially in a position to exert a lot of power, in and of itself. He immediately struck up a cordial relationship with Hans Hinkel, an SS general, which lasted to the very end of the regime, as a result of which agendas for composers' meetings were drawn up, albeit most of those not feasible because of the exigencies of war.[61] He shared the responsibility for awarding prizes to composer colleagues, from 1942 to 1944, all of them naturally acceptable to the Third Reich and with partial non-"Aryans" excluded.[62] He got into working relationships with leaders of the Hitler Youth and the SS, for whom he rendered artistic services of various sorts: speeches, musical arrangements, consultations.[63] Within the RMK, he represented the Third Reich at international composer functions organized in Germany or occupied countries by a Nazi-controlled commission.[64] He wrote a birthday laudation for Hugo Rasch, on his staff in the RMK, an old Nazi fighter, longtime member of the SA, and once a vicious enemy of jazz, the medium Egk himself had admired and utilized in several of his post-1933 compositions.[65] And last, but not least, he attempted to do justice to Goebbels's concern that *U-Musik* not be trampled under foot by serious-music composers in the Reich.[66]

But let us return to Egk and his new-music quest. For apart from political opportunism as a possible motive for entering the ranks of the RMK, Egk was truly convinced that through it he could advance the cause of a new style of music in the Third Reich that was neither based on the efforts by representatives of the German "Back-to-Bach" revival movement, such as Wolfgang Fortner or Ernst Pepping,[67] nor on the "atonality" of the Second

Viennese School of Arnold Schoenberg. At the same time, it was to be as sufficiently differentiated from the post-Romanticism of a Graener or Richard Strauss as had been Stravinsky's music in the 1920s, which had, of course, been a major inspiration for Egk's own oeuvre. Egk made public his aim of furthering "new music" when he was introduced as RMK *Fachschaft* leader in July 1941, and among everything else he said in his inaugural address and subsequently, this was the point on which today he appears to have been most credible.[68]

What exactly did that entail? First, Egk regarded as his foremost mission the support of new German stage works, as opposed to, for instance, new works from (Fascist) Italy or France. Egk mentioned opera, not accidentally, for it was the quintessential musical genre, not only of the Third Reich. Egk and the members of the loosely structured circle around Orff composed operas, Rudolf Wagner Régeny, for instance, and Heinrich Sutermeister (with pronounced pro-Nazi leanings), Boris Blacher, and Gottfried von Einem. Caspar Neher wrote libretti and designed stage sets for operas, and Oscar Fritz Schuh directed them. Egk personally continued to be lauded for his own innovative style, manifested in *Peer Gynt,* for instance, by Goebbels's foremost music critic, Fritz Stege. Most of the composers in this group at one time or another had been influenced, to varying degrees, by Stravinsky, some also by Kurt Weill.[69] This ultimately explains why these artists were in favor of Egk's appointment in the summer of 1941, and, consequently, Egk went ahead and in October of that year urged Goebbels that his own works and those of his friends—meaning specifically modern stage works—be supported. Surely he must have known that Goebbels wanted modern German compositions, thematically and musically acceptable ones of course, as part of the cultural Nazi Revolution.[70]

Second, under the constraints of totalitarian governance in the Third Reich, one had to play by the rules to advance or merely to survive; it simply would not do to define new goals for the future without recourse to official imagery, be it positive or negative: This was, after all, an ideologically determined polity, the cultural establishment not excepted. It is at this level that Egk was prepared to pay lip service or more to the regime, thereby either overriding his own convictions momentarily or, perhaps worse, demonstrating a genuine change of heart. As early as July 1940 Egk was quoted by Karl Holl in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* as saying that in rejecting late Romanticism with its "cult of the individual and ego-centricity," he preferred "an active weltanschauung," which later in the article was coupled with the "people's community and community culture" of the regime.[71] Egk, reported Holl, believed that "a strengthening effect on the community will take place, meaning an ethical as well as a political effect," after appropriate thematic treatments through the arts.[72] If this could easily be interpreted as a confession of Nazi ideology, Egk himself somewhat later did not shrink from denouncing formative musical impulses of the Weimar Republic. In Munich toward the end of 1941, now in his new official role, he delivered "an almost programmatic lecture"—within the context of a concert

naturally also featuring his own works—in which he denounced the Schoenberg era, as "the time of atonality, as the last and lowest plateau of chaotic and decaying forces that had pushed themselves to the fore during the past decades."[73] In 1942, in a *Festschrift* for his boss the RMK president, unflagging Nazi Peter Raabe, he hailed the present age as one that had "positively distanced itself from the period of expressionism and atonality," and he managed to get in barbs against Strauss as well as against his former paragon Kurt Weill.[74] A year later still, in the Nazi Party's *Völkischer Beobachter,* Egk expanded on this theme by equating the "aesthetics of expressionism" with "nihilism"; indeed, current politics was trying, he claimed, "to eradicate this nihilism, not just in the graphic arts and sculpture, in architecture and literature, but also in music, which goes to show that art and politics are well connected."[75] Not only did these sentences echo the archetypal message of destruction by the Nazi rulers, but Egk had even seen fit to utilize the annihilative language of the SS and Auschwitz.[76]

As a composer in mid-career, Egk was to profit handsomely from his 1941 posting to the Reich Music Chamber. Already in September of that year he could afford to cancel the prestigious but nevertheless onerous contract with the Berlin Staatsoper in order to devote himself entirely to writing music, because he was offered an agreement with the Frankfurt stage director Hans Meissner, guaranteeing him premieres of new works for the next five years. Frankfurt suited Egk admirably, for Intendant Meissner and conductor Bertil Wetzelsberger were the sort of progressively inclined artists apt to perform works by the younger contemporary group who, according to the definition certainly of Egk and probably Goebbels as well, could be considered *acceptably* modern.[77]

Egk's ballet *Joan von Zarissa* and the reworked, more extensive version of *Columbus* (Frankfurt, 1942) now arrived at many of the Reich's stages and festivals, some of which were special Nazi functions. Even the moderately controversial *Peer Gynt* was still featured. The reviews were positive throughout, as if Egk could do no wrong.[78] In July 1942 one critic even wrote that Egk's music was typically manifest of the German "race."[79] Moreover, in 1942 Egk's music became the bedrock of modern-music events in Vienna, because Gauleiter Baldur von Schirach, in an attempt to acquire a distinctive profile for himself vis-à-vis Goebbels's centralist cultural administration in Berlin, thought him eminently presentable, notwithstanding the notoriously reactionary Viennese music establishment.[80] The Reich broadcast service network was also investing in Egk, scheduling interviews with him and portraying him as a composer ideally representative of his Bavarian home province. In 1944 Egk was placed into the most preferred category for a radio list of indispensable German composers.[81]

At the height of World War II, Egk scored what may have been his most spectacular coups outside the German Reich proper, namely, in Axis-ruled countries and, more frequently, in Wehrmacht-conquered and wholly Nazi-controlled territory. Already on 1 March 1941, before his appointment to

the RMK post, his *Peer Gynt* had been performed, under his own direction, in Bratislava, capital of the Nazi puppet state of Slovakia. He again conducted the opera on 12 June 1941 in Prague, where SS Security Chief Reinhard Heydrich ruled as acting governor of the Czech "Protectorate." Somewhat later Egk profited from a staging of his new *Columbus* version in Zagreb, renamed Agram by the Nazis, and the capital of the newly established fascist puppet state of Croatia. Egk's work was billed there as a "representative example of the new German opera scene"—perhaps just what the composer had had in mind in his October 1941 letter to Joseph Goebbels.[82] And during March 1943 in Rome, Egk enthusiastically conducted three stagings of his *Joan von Zarissa* ballet, which, as far as Fascist Italy was concerned, had as its object "the multiplication of his personal fame," in the malicious words of Promi functionary and potential rival Dr. Heinz Drewes.[83]

Egk's repeated visits to occupied Paris, where, by his own admission, between 1942 and 1944 *Joan von Zarissa* was mounted approximately thirty times at the Paris Opéra, proved most spectacular, for the first time in the summer of 1942.[84] In addition, *Peer Gynt* was highlighted on 4 October 1943, in a French translation by André Coeuroy. The critiques by French reviewers such as Henri Sauget, Marcel Delannoy, Emile Vuillermoz, Guy Ferchault, Adolphe Borchard, and Robert Bernard were positive throughout; today one wonders what would have happened to any of the critics had they dared to be negative![85] As in the case of *Joan von Zarissa,* Egk not only conducted the work himself but was also provided ample opportunity to appear on French radio and to produce recordings.

Egk may have played down the official importance of such events in Occupied France in post-1945 statements, but there is no denying that activities such as his were important to the German war effort, for which reason the propaganda ministry fully sponsored them as a function of psychological warfare. According to German strategic planning, a military occupation would be easier to accept by the enemy if the Germans wooed a section of the cultural and politically influential elite of the subdued people, especially in the case of the sophisticated French. "For the French," decided Goebbels in February 1942, "cultural propaganda is still the best kind of propaganda. I shall therefore strengthen it even more than before."[86] Clearly, Egk was supposed to be part of this scheme; in fact, he had met with Goebbels in the middle of June 1942, when he was just beginning his sojourns in France.[87] Egk's onetime senior colleague in Berlin and now in Munich, Generalmusikdirektor Clemens Krauss, was about the same time being scheduled for a similar mission to Paris at the head of his Bayerische Staatsoper orchestra, "which is very strongly desired by the propaganda ministry," as Krauss informed Richard Strauss.[88] Such cultural junkets, and Egk's in particular, were logistically supported by a special Promi detachment in Paris headed by one Dr. Fritz Piersig, but also by former *Melos* editor Dr. Heinrich Strobel. This modernist-inclined music critic, married to a Jewish woman, in the face of Nazi threats had been described as a coward

by Kurt Weill as early as February 1933.[89] Now, during the war, he was stationed in the French capital, nominally as a German newspaper correspondent (while in reality trying to salvage his professional future and save the life of his wife), but for the sake of his regime credibility he compromised himself by doing the Promi's handiwork and helping such Nazi cultural ambassadors as Werner Egk, who, not insignificantly, was financed in all of this by Goebbels's ministry out of Berlin.[90]

Egk's role in wartime Germany stands out in contrast with that of other German musicians, who scrupulously avoided taking on a politicocultural stance on behalf of the Nazi regime in territory conquered by Hitler's army and being especially sensitive with regard to France, which had such an overwhelming cultural tradition of its own. As conductor Karl Böhm—who himself violated this ethical precept—put it ruefully in his postwar memoirs: "It is not hard to imagine that the French had anything but a fond opinion of us in those years."[91] After the war, Furtwängler prided himself on always having rejected the offer of a concert tour to France (which, alas, did not prevent him from accepting work in occupied Denmark and other Nazi satellite states).[92] The singer Heinrich Schlusnus by and large withheld his services as well.[93] And Erna Berger, the famous coloratura soprano and a close friend of Egk, admitted after World War II that she had greatly enjoyed performing at the Paris Opéra without thinking for a moment that in reality her concert constituted "a demonstration of enemy might before a prostrate opponent."[94]

Not surprisingly, various financial bonuses and official honors came his way in good time, to mark Werner Egk's success. His annual earnings rose well above the generous level he had been used to even by 1941.[95] At the height of the war, he was placed on an exemption list with respect to any sort of war service, including military conscription—a privilege only few of his colleagues shared.[96] As if to crown his career under the Nazi rulers, and coterminously with his triumphs in France, he was awarded the Martial Merit Order in 1943, in a group with staunchly National Socialist fellow musicians Michael Raucheisen, Hans Knappertsbusch, and Elly Ney.[97]

Still, even the most incriminating evidence we have so far does not point to the conclusion that Egk was a believing Nazi. In his writings, he may have betrayed earlier-held aesthetic principles (once symbolized by his admiration for Weill and Scherchen), and he certainly accepted high office under questionable masters. But he did this, calculatingly, for three reasons. First, he wanted to become professionally as successful and materially as secure as possible. Second, he was serious about championing a new, modern type of German music beyond Pfitzner and Strauss—toward this he thought he had found an ally in Goebbels. And third, seemingly paradoxical and yet another segment in the larger biographical puzzle, temperament, intelligence, and sensitivity informed his fundamental dislike of the Nazis, a dislike he shared with Carl Orff and his friends, and which he himself, systematically, imparted to his only son, Titus. As RMK *Fachschaft* chief, he may have fooled himself into believing that he could keep himself,

his immediate family, and his friends immune from the more dangerous reverberations of Nazism.

Egk's friendship with Orff had slowly strengthened again after Orff had had his own spate of success with the arrival of *Carmina Burana* on the Frankfurt stage in June 1937, a work that continued to augment his prominence as the war progressed.[98] This meant that the motivation, on Orff's part, for jealousy toward Egk began to evaporate somewhat. From 1941 on, Orff's and Egk's compositions, usually *Burana* and *Joan von Zarissa,* received frequent simultaneous exposure at opera theaters throughout the Reich.[99] In the spring of 1942, both composers' works were prominently featured at the Schirach-sponsored modern-music festival in Vienna.[100] They were also equally sought after by the national radio network.[101] Among the insiders, then, it became common to refer to Orff and Egk as a natural pair; both men were given to understand, by their critics, publishers, and even representatives of the regime, that they ranked among the most prominent composers of the era and that neither was the lesser artist.[102] As their publisher told Orff in January 1943: "You constitute an indivisible whole even on our account ledgers."[103] Although at the height of the war Egk was the one who had more works to go around for national performances, Orff could match him quantitatively with repeated productions of his singular *Carmina Burana,* which remained eminently popular with German opera producers.[104]

Egk's close link to Orff provided him with convenient, albeit looser ties to the artists revolving around Orff, but here it is important once again to qualify that circle. Its single unifying element was aesthetic, namely the promodernist tendency among its members, much of which was traceable to Stravinsky and Weill. The act of admiring Stravinsky, Orff, and modernism went hand in hand in with a fundamental dislike of the Nazi dictatorship but, as in the case of Orff and Egk themselves, did not necessarily preclude opportune arrangements with the regime. Hence Wagner-Régeny, who had a half-Jewish wife, early in the dictatorship tried to curry favor with Rosenberg's Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur, and the young Gottfried von Einem, who was held by the Gestapo in 1938 on suspicion of subversion, for a while admired the Führer and was a welcome guest at the Nazi shrine of Bayreuth.[105] As it turned out, occasional efforts to use the good offices of Werner Egk in the RMK for the sake of a composer's fortune (usually involving suspension from military service and invariably implicating Orff as intercessor) were few and far between and never, ever successful.[106] Artists such as Neher, Blacher, and Schuh, from the bosom of Weimar culture, cherished a spiritual relationship with Orff and, perhaps vicariously, with Werner Egk, who may have represented some sort of insurance for them should they run afoul of a regime that for the longest time showed few signs of cracking. Conversely, Egk and perhaps Orff, both of whose formal commitment to the rulers was already quite strong by 1943, might have been able to put to good use working relationships with a quarter-Jewish

Blacher or his pupil von Einem, who had ties with the anti-Hitler resistance, in case the regime did bounce and they might need an antifascist alibi.[107]

Egk may have wanted to be able, early in his career as RMK *Fachschaft* leader, to extricate colleagues from service with the armed forces.[108] But that such a thing was not possible he was to experience in his very own family, where his only child, Titus, ultimately became the victim. If, on the one hand, the figure of Titus serves well, for the biographer of Egk, to demonstrate the composer's relative impotence within the overall Nazi administrative machinery, it might also serve as proof that Egk, like Orff, was no friend of the Nazis—hence all the more despicable was his decision to collaborate with them in matters of music policy.

By the time Hitler took power in January 1933, Titus was ten years old. As was already pointed out, there is circumstantial yet not altogether incredible evidence to suggest that Titus was educated by his parents in a spirit of defiance against the Third Reich, and that Egk tried to influence even Titus's boyhood friends.[109] According to Egk after the war, he refused to send his son to religious instruction in school because the parish priest had declined to denounce National Socialism as a creed irreconcilable with Christianity. Egk also affirmed that Titus, having been inducted into the Hitler Youth, acted in such a fashion as to be ceremoniously demoted in front of his comrades from the modest rank he had attained.[110] Be this as it may, in June 1942 Titus Egk, now eighteen, was inducted into the German Labor Service, usually the prestage to full military conscription. He was posted to Wartenberg camp, in the Czech Protectorate. By November of that year, Titus had been released and sent home to Lochham, ill with jaundice. But already in December he was ordered back, to present himself to an artillery company stationed in Munich. Promptly, Titus developed angina, and, while he continued to be held in Wehrmacht camps, he later fell sick again with pneumonia. Clearly, the young Egk reacted with various forms of illness to forced service for a cause he had come to hate.[111] In the spring of 1943 his father was trying, through his good friend Hans Hinkel, to save the son from military headquarters altogether. Hinkel's entreaties to military officials in Berlin, however, remained without consequence.[112] Titus Egk seems to have been stationed in the vicinity of Munich as late as January 1944.[113] He was then sent to fight on the Italian front—on a suicide mission; during the Battle of Monte Cassino only he and one other from his company survived. He then was tried for mutiny by a military tribunal near Florence, as a result of which he was pressed into a punitive battalion and dispatched to the Eastern front, probably on a mine-sweeping mission, from which he never returned. His last letter dates from January 1945. Werner Egk recorded its arrival in Lochham as his penultimate entry in his wartime diaries. Egk's last entry, for the eleventh and twelfth of that month, reads ominously: "Beginning of the Russian Offensive."[114]

III

Until the present day, more than a decade after the death of the composer, three different interpretations of Werner Egk's career in the Third Reich have prevailed. The most benign holds that Egk was never a Nazi, that he was never interested in unfair advantage for himself, and that he was barely tolerated by the regime. Significantly enough, these versions of his Third Reich past have been circulated by two composers fairly close to him at the time: Gottfried von Einem and Boris Blacher.[115]

At the other end of the spectrum some critics have averred that Egk was "an official musician" of the Third Reich, who had identified himself with the ideas of the Nazis. In 1969 one young German composer and music critic went so far as to risk litigation from Egk after accusing him of having been "one of the most loathsome representatives of National Socialist music policy."[116] The truth is somewhere in the middle. Prieberg qualified Egk's alleged innocence in 1969 by saying, unequivocally, that "in the Third Reich, no one forged a career for himself whom the National Socialists did not want."[117] In 1980 a biographer of Richard Strauss charged Egk with having adapted his artistic and public behavior to a Nazi style and, contrary to the facts, with insisting later that he had been persecuted.[118] Five years hence, Egk, along with some of his composer friends such as Orff, was aptly described as a "reinsurer."[119] And as late as 1995 the U.S. author Frederic Spotts has written that Egk "tried to conceal the past and claimed he had in fact been persecuted."[120]

When Egk was faced with the end of the war in May 1945, he knew that difficult times would lie ahead for him. The first reality with which he was confronted was that the Office of Military Government of the United States for Germany (OMGUS), in this case its cultural branch based in Munich, had placed him on its so-called black list, ostensibly because of his prominent role in the RMK. This meant that although some U.S. personnel were privately partial to his music, he was put into professional limbo, the most immediate consequence of which was that his works were banned and his financial independence was curtailed until clarification.[121] At the end of 1945 and beginning with 1946 and even beyond, Egk was placed into the vortex of events and personalities that were as much the immediate results of the current legal precariousness contingent upon Germany's vanquished state as the ramifications of long-standing, and more recent, personal relationships. The players in this scenario, besides Egk himself, were his friend Carl Orff; Orff's wife, Gertrud; Orff's longtime student and current U.S. culture officer Newell Jenkins; and Brigitte Bergese, the wife of Orff's former assistant, Hans Bergese.

Perhaps the following forms yet another, if not the final, component in Egk's complex biographical puzzle. By the end of 1945 Egk, publicly unemployed since V–E Day, was living with his wife Elisabeth in their house in Lochham, not at all far from the Orff house in adjacent Gräfelfing. The Orffs at that time were sheltering Brigitte Fuchs-Bergese, her baby son, and

her mother, all refugees from Germany's Eastern provinces, while Hans Bergese was in a U.S. prisoner-of-war camp. Brigitte Fuchs, who had gotten to know Orff in 1937 as a student at the Berlin branch of the Munich Günther-Schule, then managed by Gunild Keetmann and Hans Bergese, had married Hans in 1942, and by 1943, when her husband was stationed at the eastern front, had developed a great devotion for Orff, whom she once referred to as "our young father." She claims, quite plausibly, that Orff became romantically interested in her after she had moved to Gräfelfing in January 1945 but that she rebuffed him and that he was already openly involved with yet another woman. In any event, Brigitte Bergese developed a liaison with Werner Egk, whom throughout 1945 she saw on a regular basis. Gertrud Orff's personal diary gives the impression that the relationship between the Egks and Orffs in 1945 socially was a friendly one—with both men evidently facing a high degree of professional uncertainty.[122]

On 24 December 1945, Captain Jenkins, driving in from Stuttgart, made his first personal visit at the Orff home to join them in the celebration of Christmas. Brigitte Bergese today remembers Orff and Jenkins, both in a jolly good mood, arriving at the house in the afternoon together, where they met Elisabeth and Werner Egk. Orff and Jenkins obviously had had a lot to talk about already—presumably with respect to Orff's own political clearance at the hand of the Americans. Knowing that this also was a chance for himself, Egk asked the whole party over to his house in Lochham later, so that he might be able to impress Jenkins with piano renditions from his work *Columbus*. However, according to Brigitte Bergese, who by that time was back at the Egks' house, Orff and Jenkins arrived there in too animated a state and much too late in the evening for Egk to win over Jenkins with his piano playing.[123] The next day Frau Bergese risked a personal falling out with a furious Orff over this delay, when she accused him of having set this situation up on purpose because "you wanted to cut Egk out." The probable motives on Orff's part were, first, that his old professional envy of Egk was welling up again and, second, that, after all, he was jealous of Egk's current relationship with an attractive young woman he had desired for himself.[124]

In the next few days after the holidays, Jenkins ascertained for himself that "the suspicion was that Egk had been far more involved with the Nazis than Orff ever was. From conversations with my Munich colleagues—and I was not down there that often—I got the impression that Egk was having serious problems." When on 6 January 1946 Jenkins offered to his old friend Orff a possible way out of his personal dilemma, he added laconically at the end of his conciliatory letter that "for the present, I see no possibility of helping Egk."[125]

On 5 March 1946, ordinances were promulgated providing the German authorities with the means to clear their own nationals under the watchful eyes of the Americans. Musician suspects now placed in a new Category II—as Nazi fellow travelers corresponding to the former "black" category

of OMGUS—were prohibited from performing or having their works performed and were subject to a freeze of their financial assets.[126] In order to end the uncertainty for himself and receive quick clearance (which then would enable him to have his five-year Frankfurt contract of 1941 honored to the end), Egk on 10 March initiated a charge against himself for a trial by the German judiciary.[127] Although a long-winded Munich trial eventually acquitted him on 2 May 1947, the German public prosecutor decided to resume proceedings on the state's own terms on 7 July 1947, using as its main argument that Egk had been a "profiteer" from the Hitler regime. With difficulty, Egk managed to vindicate himself through a final legal verdict on 17 October of that year.[128]

During this process, the behavior of the Orff couple was quite remarkable. Whereas Gertrud tried to help Egk by making a statement in his favor, her husband, Carl, said, slanderously, that the reason why Egk's operas had been successful and their composer had benefited from them financially during the Nazi reign was because of "many good reviews in the Nazi press."[129] In fact, as both composers were poised to have new works performed on European stages, the old rivalry between the two men—of which Gottfried von Einem spoke to me again in Vienna in November 1994, that "each was jealous of the other"—had received new fuel.[130] Orff's opera *Die Bernauerin* was performed in Stuttgart on 15 June 1947, to negative reviews in *Melos,* now once again edited by Egk's old friend Heinrich Strobel. Egk himself had completed a new ballet, *Abraxas,* which, so he was afraid, Orff might try to suppress with the aid of his own compositions.[131] All this should help to explain several critical comments Orff made with respect to Egk throughout 1947, such as the one in December, when he wrote to Oscar Fritz Schuh that lately Egk "had committed many mistakes, and I told him so, for which reason he is mad at me."[132] Egk, on the other hand, was more guarded but left no doubt as to whom he was referring when he summed things up for Viennese choreographer Erika Hanka, who was not an intimate of Orff: "In order to get this entire crap started, many colleagues and friends did their part. It would have been just too convenient to make Egk, the competition, disappear so cheaply. However, the competition has decided to stay around."[133] At the end of 1947, after Egk had finally been cleared, the two couples once again met socially. Gertrud Orff's diary entry reflects the circumstances aptly: "After a long hiatus, Egks have been here. But the mood was cool."[134]

The proceedings of the German *Spruchkammer* in Munich, whose task it was to denazify Egk so that he could be productively integrated into postwar democratic society, were cumbersome and fraught with mistakes because of ignorance and carelessness on the part of the jurists. Several of these mistakes Egk was able to exploit, in addition to maneuvers he orchestrated or oversaw, maneuvers designed for obstruction and obfuscation, in the hope that the web of lies and distortions would color his questionable career in Nazi Germany as positively as possible.

For instance, although the court early on maintained that Egk had been an "artist rooted in Nazi soil," it was never able to differentiate which of

Egk's musical compositions had actually been tarnished, in the sense of being obviously tailored for Nazi usage. But certain of Egk's oeuvre had been so designed—one piece for a nationalist mystery play entitled *Job der Deutsche* (1933), another for a similar play called *Die hohen Zeichen* (1939), to hail Germany's new imperialistic course, and yet a third as background for a Hitler Youth film, *Jungens* (1941), which was classified as outright Nazi propaganda by international film historians after 1945. The compromising quality was later indirectly unmasked by Egk himself, when he chose to omit those pieces from his Federal Republican catalog of works, officially published by the Schott firm in 1976.[135] Neither was the Munich court informed about key stages of Egk's official progress in the Third Reich, for example, his being awarded that high Nazi medal in the company of the odious anti-Semites Hans Knappertsbusch and Elly Ney (although the court did note that Ney, like Egk, had been a cocontributor to the *Festschrift* for Nazi Peter Raabe).[136] By getting insignificant but nonetheless easily traceable dates in Egk's curriculum vitae wrong, the court further showed its ineptitude. As a small but telling example, Egk did not cancel his Prussian opera contract in 1940, as the minutes of the court proceedings consistently recorded, but in 1941.[137]

Moreover, the court proved itself remiss in leaving the Nazi past of some of Egk's key witnesses unchecked.[138] Hence it committed an embarrassing blunder by calling to the stand Erich Kloss, the certifiably Nazi deputy conductor of Hitler's National Socialist Symphony Orchestra, as well as Karl Holl, the critic at the *Frankfurter Zeitung* who back in July 1940 in so many words had praised Egk as an epitome of Nazi cultural policy. In September 1947 Holl wanted the court to believe, in contradistinction to Egk's real function as a purveyor of new-German and Goebbels-sanctioned musical idioms, that recurrent presentations of the composer's works after 1933 really had been "foolhardy from a National Socialist perspective."[139]

As the court did not know where to turn for appropriate witnesses for the prosecution, Egk was in a unique position throughout the trial, because with his great *Fachschaft* experience behind him, he had recourse to many people. Not only could he marshal a lot of names for his defense, but he also instructed some of his witnesses as to the manner in which they were to represent his interests. Hans Schüler, who had survived as the Generalintendant of the Leipzig opera, he unabashedly asked to send in "a few words regarding my political and cultural-political attitude." Schüler was to make a deposition under oath using his "most magnificent letterhead stationery." And just to drive his main point home, Egk reminded Schüler that "my success is *exclusively* based on performance."[140] That some of his friends saw through this manipulation is proved not only by Orff's brusque reaction but also by the elegant response of the wily Tietjen, who politely refused to travel from Berlin to Munich, saying that he was too unwell to do so.[141]

The basis for Egk's defense, on which all other testimony was cleverly predicated, was the legend that his modern style had been diametrically opposed to the official aims of Nazi cultural policy, Goebbels's in particular.

Not knowing the intricacies of Third Reich policymaking and planning, but also ignorant of the prevalent intraparty divisions that characterized political governance in the Reich at all levels, the members of the court failed to grasp that Egk's aesthetic efforts had been completely at the behest of and in conformity with the propapaganda ministry, the divisions in this ministry (Egk versus Drewes versus Raabe) notwithstanding.[142]

From this followed several nontruths or half-truths which, monotonously repeated by Egk's defenders, were assiduously put on record and ultimately formed the basis for his acquittal. To these belonged the assertion that Egk's own works had constantly placed his personal safety at risk, that an overly powerful tide springing from the Rosenberg camp had consistently been on the verge of enveloping him, and that the vast majority of the press reviews in the Reich had been menacingly hostile. (A variation on this theme was that Egk had had to seek Baldur von Schirach's protection because Goebbels himself had been against him—a particularly hilarious distortion. For related reasons Egk also never mentioned his presence in the Führer box during the January 1939 *Peer Gynt* performance.) Conversely, whatever Egk himself had written in Nazi publications had been done either with tongue in cheek or with a view to deceiving the rulers, his hidden antiregime agenda clearly having been legible between the lines for the secretly initiated. The definition of Egk's *Fachschaft* office in the RMK was construed along the same lines: a factually nonexistent division between this *Fachschaft* on the one hand and the RMK and/or the Promi on the other was postulated and hence the hierarchical relationship between these three echelons of cultural power flatly denied. In essence, the court was told, Egk's *Fachschaft* of composers had possessed absolutely no power (a version Egk himself proliferated in his partially apocryphal memoirs)—as if the priority ranking of modern operas or the assignment of coveted money prizes during the war had never been official tasks.[143]

If in 1946–47 all this conjured up the image of active resistance to the Third Reich on the part of Egk, it was, indeed, intended. Other objectively questionable activities by the composer were conveniently subsumed under this opposition rubric. For instance, Egk's work in occupied Paris was certified to have occurred in the spirit of true culture and freedom-loving Frenchmen, although no one, not even Strobel, dared mention the French Resistance in this context for lack of any evidence. Egk spun the court a yarn (destined again to invade his memoirs) about his repudiation first of military conscription, and later still of the Volkssturm, that last-ditch, no holds-barred defense effort organized by the Nazi Party among boys and old men in each town and village. Of course, he knew as well as the court was unaware that he had been favored by a position on the *Gottbegnadeten-Liste,* or "Important Artists Exempt List," a privilege he expressly invoked with Hinkel in 1944 when finally the Volkssturm threatened. It fell into this groove when he and his friends repeatedly dwelt on the saga that he had helped many colleagues by virtue of his high office in the RMK—for this particular purpose that office was suddenly acknowledged as having had some weight![144]

Today, of course, we know that Egk helped only himself; the *Fachschaft* was a vehicle for getting through the tides. That it could be used in no other way, whether he wanted to or not, Egk demonstrated when composer Wagner-Régeny, the friend of Blacher, von Einem, and Orff, was in a psychotic state because of unbearable service in the Wehrmacht. Egk could do nothing to get him released from it, and there is no record that he even tried. After all, there could have been correspondence with Hinkel, as there was in the case of his son.[145] The person who accomplished the feat, uncannily, was Baroness Gerta Louise von Einem, Gottfried von Einem's mother and a Mata Hari-like woman with mysterious connections to the very top.[146]

Nonetheless, possibly using Orff as his model, Egk stated repeatedly during his Munich trial that he had been an active member of a German resistance movement, knowing full well that if he were believed, this would be his best alibi.[147] As it turns out, composer von Einem provides an important piece to this latest puzzle. Egk seized upon his recurrent war sojourns in Paris and contacts there with known anti-Nazi Frenchmen and German men such as Strobel, who had been, for the most part, clean, to invent the myth of a courier role he had played between dissidents in Germany and France. Expecting the worst for himself as early as the summer of 1945, Egk, after consultations with von Einem, who had just been installed by the Americans as the reliably antifascist mayor of the village of Ramsau, received from him a letter, in German, with a translation into Einem's somewhat unpolished English. It certified that Egk had been working, "since July 42 with the Austrian resistance movement. During his frequent voyages to Paris he conveyed very confidential news. It is a well established fact that the Gestapo in Paris had started very intensive investigations on his behalf." When I asked about the veracity of this in Vienna in November 1994, von Einem admitted that the whole thing had been cooked up, for neither had such an "Austrian resistance movement" ever existed, nor had Egk been a secret courier. Einem averred, however, that it had been necessary to manufacture such a document in order to help out his friend.[148] Einem, so it has now been ascertained, liked supplying compromised colleagues close to him with denazification affidavits, whether they were fireproof or not.[149]

Indeed, right after the war, with so many ends untied, von Einem needed Egk just as much as Egk needed von Einem. Although Einem was politically in the clear, his friend Herbert von Karajan was not, and Einem, who knew the conductor from his Berlin days, had decided to hitch his star to the wagon of the unquestionably mercuric but momentarily blackballed fellow Austrian. Einem was in close contact with former Nazi Party member Karajan, who was often in his native Salzburg at the time and waiting in the wings to restart his career, possibly with the help of some of the younger, more promising German artists he had worked with of late and who presumably had a cleaner slate than he did. This would include Einem himself and the other artists revolving around Orff. Werner Egk's new work, the opera *Circe,* was just completed and Karajan already had shown great interest in pre-