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"THE QUEST FOR LIFE" \* "COINCIDENCES"

SYNOPSIS

In 1960 while I was resident at the Mac Dowell Colony in N.H., I experienced a compulsion to write this book. I gave it the tentative title "THE QUEST FOR LIFE \* COINCIDENCES". I worked on it (1960-68) with the conviction that it was not for publication.

Now in 1968-1972, almost all of my old friends have died. The new generation seems to have a very different attitude towards the problems involved. Young people today seem to repeat the same questions and experiences of the postwar period after 1918. There is the same search for a new understanding of life, for new concepts and directions. In the last few years most of the formerly avoided problems have been constantly discussed, in print, in films, on radio and television. In art and in science parapsychological phenomena have become the new frontier area. Therefore I have the feeling that now the struggles of the artist in the subconscious, mystical, prophetic regions are more important than the usual analysis of what is "good art or bad art", etc.

My book is a description of the step by step evolution of my concepts, experiences and attitudes towards the problems and meaning of art, life and of death, starting from zero up to the time of my arrival in America.

It contains the following: my childhood in Czechoslovakia (formerly Austria), a joke which became my fate when as a child my father made me believe that my drawings can come to life if perfect enough, Czech antisemitism, art studies in Vienna and Munich, Paris, Italy, London, etc., strange experiences in portraits, years of studies in the Emperor's famous Spanish Riding School (the Lipizzaner horses), the last cultural cluster in Vienna with new ideas in literature, stage, education, the Wiener Werkstaette, Klimt, Schiele, Kokoschka, Czizek, Freud,

Wagner-Jauregg, Gustav Mahler, the prophecy of Wagner's "RING", Schoenberg,  
*\* How destiny decided between Hitler and me at the exam to the Academy of Art in Vienna.*

## 2. "THE QUEST FOR LIFE \* COINCIDENCES"

Karl Kraus, Kafka, etc., sudden fame and financial success through unexpected coincidences. Murals and feudal life in Tobitschau Castle, the two Hedi's, the birth of my idea of "Pan Europe" taken over by Count Richard Coudenhove-Kallergi and Bronislaw Huberman, also met Richard Strauss, etc. Outbreak of World War I destroyed all the fabulous potentialities of my career. In the Austrian army, officer's school in Krakau (still in Austria), an impossible Fieldmarshal with impossible plans, serving in the mounted artillery in Rumania. 1918 return to Vienna, total collapse of Austro-Hungarian Empire. The stories are full of seemingly impossible coincidences, including rare mystical experiences. After 20 millions had been sacrificed in the battles the Asian Flu (pandemic) epidemic killed another 20 millions and great numbers of children died from lack of food. Europe in general and Austria in particular faced one of the most violent tidal waves of psychological despair and chaos. The military, political and economical angles of the catastrophe have been described and analyzed in numerous books and articles. I am giving eye-witness account of the phases of shock and the search which took place in the psychological field. The impact of ancient Egyptian ideas of life and death and after-death life, the influence of Far Eastern ideas (Hindu religion, Vedas) Yoga, Buddhism, Chinese philosophy (Lao Tzu), Japanese cults, Zen and Shingon (Kobo Daishi), occultism, Gustaf Meyrink, Raphael Schermann's Graphosophy, Magic, witchcraft, superstitions, astrology, miracles, esoteric teachings, Nostradamus, Blavatsky's theosophy, Steiner's anthroposophy, from Wiener Werkstaette to Bauhaus, from Yoga to Functionalism. Moving family (with three children) to Holland, starting without a cent, meeting with Freud in Holland, Einstein's speech in Leyden (1920), Art revolutions, Slaviners (Hippies), Precolumbian giants, religious crises, the problem of violence, is war human nature?, prophesies, the enigma of Mr. Zelleis, and the fantastic coincidences which culminated in an invitation to America by Frank A. Vanderlip in 1921.

3. "THE QUEST FOR LIFE \* COINCIDENCES"

In the army I had one predominant idea, one wish. I did not care about what would happen to me, but I did not want to be the cause of any man's death. Repeatedly the most unexpected things happened, usually things which are unthinkable in an army. I did not and could not ask for favors or avoid duties, but I actually lived through that time without having killed. It sometimes seemed like a protection by, what C.G. Jung called, the invisible agents.

All the questions: "Who am I?, what is the meaning of life?, what are the unknown effects of millions of violent deaths?, the incredible ignorance in such matters, the mental explosions and psychological earthquakes during catastrophies of such magnitude, the total economic bankruptcy (when a newspaper cost 2 billion marks in Germany), the total moral, social, religious, political, geographical collapse of all general human values, -- no hope, no Marshall-plan, no direction -- no power. All armies of the central powers had been fighting deep in enemies' lands when they were told that the war was lost. How I had to lecture to help people survive, how in 1918 I predicted the Atom bomb. No one still seems to suspect that the thinking, the logic, the attitudes which ruled our life produced the greatest ecological bankruptcy in the history of this planet. It all did not start yesterday. Life is the balance between the destructive forces and the creative energies. Here is my personal chapter of that struggle.

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