

the diplomatic efforts of the USSR. He "was a conventional rather than an innovative or outstanding diplomat." It was not primarily his problem, however, since "Washington temporized and muddled, zig-zagging through policy decisions." Good wishes and hopes were not enough then, nor are they enough today.

The book could have profited by more careful proofreading. For example, on page 177, the United States Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is cited as the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

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BÖHMEN UND SEINE NACHBARN: GESELLSCHAFT, POLITIK UND KULTUR IN MITTELEUROPA. By *Karl Bosl*. Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, vol. 32. Munich and Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1976. 346 pp.

No less than three Festschriften have been published on the occasion of the sixty-fifth birthday of Karl Bosl, the renowned, and now retired, social historian at the University of Munich. The Collegium Carolinum of Munich has added a fourth one in honor of the founder and organizer of its institute, which is dedicated to research in the field of Bohemian area studies. It was a fortunate idea to let Professor Bosl himself speak in this volume on one of the main themes—by no means the only one—of his distinguished scholarly career.

The twenty-one essays and two book reviews compiled in the book appeared in print between 1958 and 1973 in various collections of essays and serials, but primarily in the yearbook *Bohemia*, which Bosl sponsored and elevated to international scholarly prestige. The central theme of the essays is Bohemia, with emphasis placed on its relationship to its neighbors—Germany, primarily southern Germany, and the Habsburg Monarchy, mainly the Hereditary Austro-German Alpine lands. The volume covers more than a millenium, from the Christianization of the Bohemian lands to the Czechoslovak republic of Masaryk and Beneš. Regarding interpretation, one finds, as expected, a certain emphasis on structural social analysis in the selection of essays; but several of the studies, including some of great significance, deal with political history.

It should be clear from the foregoing that in a brief survey it is virtually impossible to evaluate any of the author's specific contributions. It must suffice to call attention to characteristic features in Bosl's work in general that are reflected in this notable book. Bosl is undoubtedly a specialist in the topics presented but he never ties his subject to a limited area. He perceives even the most specific issues as samples of a historical process measured in various comparative aspects of time and space. The results of this method may not always lead to general agreement among historians, but they are always challenging. Another marked feature of Bosl's work as a distinguished bibliographer and reviewer is his view of historiography not as the history of individual contributions linked together by a common theme, but as the trends apparent in the overall evolution of history. The reader of these essays, as of Bosl's entire literary *oeuvre*, will spot another characteristic feature of his writing: little is expressed cautiously in tentative terms, modified by "perhaps," "but," and "although." Bosl is very clear and firm in his views and always very self-assured. Is he too confident, some of his confreres may ask? The answer to this question and the justification of Bosl's method is anchored in the remarkable personality of the man and the outstanding significance of his scholarly achievements.

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