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LIVING IN A REVOLUTION: MY ENCOUNTERS WITH HISTORY, By Hans Kohn (Credo Series, edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen. Pocket Books. 185 pp. \$3.95)

When Socrates asked the aged Cephalus what old age has to relate of life to the coming generation, he did not get a very fruitful answer. He should have asked Hans Kohn. For Professor Kohn has much of value to report. It is doubtful if any lifetime in human history has covered a more eventful period than Professor Kohn's allotted three-score-and-ten, from 1891 to 1961. And few men living in those years have been more aware of what was going on than the author of this little book. More-  
the author ~~is~~ is that rare thing, a true cosmopolitan, as much at home, apparently, during his year in Irkutsk, <sup>Siberia in 1919,</sup> as <sup>during</sup> his fifteen months in Paris, four years in London, six in Jerusalem, or fifteen in Northampton, Massachusetts. His youth in Prague was spent under that diverse and anachronistic political structure, the Hapsburg monarchy, which was destroyed as an anachronism in 1918, but which now, with the turning of the tide of Europe's political development, has many lessons for the future of an integrated Europe. Few men are better qualified than Professor Kohn to teach those lessons. In his twenties, he was a soldier of the Central Powers in World War I, was a prisoner of war in Russia during the five crucial years 1915-1920, <sup>and</sup> was a student and journalist over much of Europe and the Near East until he came to America in 1933. Today, after twenty-seven years of teaching at Smith College and the City College of New York, he is recognized as the historical profession's outstanding authority on nationalism and one of its most facile and prolific writers.



From Professor Kohn's experiences, related by a learned and thoughtful mind, a number of interesting conclusions emerge. One is that the experience of nationalism in much of Europe was very brief. In the 1890s, Prague was still largely untouched by it, and today in Prague it has again become a secondary concern, while in the twenty years 1918-1938, it was the chief motivation of political action in all of Bohemia. Today Americans still insist on a fully integrated, largely conformist, nationalist society, and it is something of a shock to us to read of the cultural and intellectual vitality which Prague, with its segregated linguistic groups, had in the 1890s. The Czechs, Germans, Jews, and others had separate theatres, literatures, and, to some extent, separate education, but they lived with a minimum of personal friction and found acquaintance with each other's cultures, especially music and literature, mutually enriching. Surely this is a model for the political and cultural future of western Europe's Economic Community.

Almost equally striking is the intellectual and cultural fervor of ~~the~~ young Hans and his friends. In an un-affluent society, where drugery was endemic and automation undreamed of, they had the time and energy to sample all kinds of diverse experiences and to build the best aspects of these, by discussion and testing, into their own outlooks and values. How colorless in comparison is our contemporary students' "search for identity" in materialism and sensuality.

~~Professor Kohn's conclusions are not those of our recent past,~~ but are those of an older tradition, closer to our traditional Western culture. He sees diversity, pluralism, mutual respect, compromises, and continual change as the fundamental facts of human or social experience, and sees the slogans of the recent

past, such as "One World, or None?", or the emphasis on conformity, integration, togetherness, and belonging, as misleading and even dangerous. In view of the rich experience of his own life and the longer range view of his historical knowledge, his conclusions make sense,-- in terms of what is possible or desirable and in terms of the older traditions of our own western culture.

Carroll Quigley