

THE FUTURE OF INTER-BLOC RELATIONS IN EUROPE. Edited by *Louis J. Mensonides* and *James A. Kuhlman*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xiv, 217 pp. \$16.50.

As an entry in the Praeger Special Studies series, which is designed to "make immediately available" to specialists the "most up-to-date research" in international affairs, this volume is most unsatisfactory, despite the presence of much pertinent information, useful perspectives, and valuable insights. Consisting of papers presented at a December 1972 conference, the collection was not published until October 1974, thereby losing the promised immediacy. Further, because the chapters were evidently untouched for purposes of revision during the two-year time gap, the research was hardly up-to-date at publication. Thus, nowhere is the correct starting date—July 3, 1973—of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) indicated, nor the fact that it ultimately fielded thirty-five nations, rather than the thirty-four which negotiated the preparations for the CSCE, when the studies under review were presented. Similarly, in Richard F. Staar's otherwise valuable treatment of East-West military constraints, the force reduction talks (MBFR) are incorrectly located in Geneva (pp. 51 and 53), rather than Vienna where preparatory talks actually began in January 1973.

The book also suffers from sporadic copy-editing. For example, Robert H. Donaldson's generally informative study of the diplomacy leading up to the European security conference is marred by the designation of the conference both as the CSCE and as the ECSC (properly, the European Coal and Steel Community!), and frequently on the same pages (pp. 80, 81, 88, 95, 96).

Despite these serious flaws, the volume, evenly divided between quantitative and more traditional analyses, offers the wary specialist an important discussion in a much neglected area of scholarly concern.

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EASTERN EUROPE: A GEOGRAPHY OF THE COMECON COUNTRIES.  
By *Roy E. H. Mellor*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975. x, 358 pp.  
Illus. Tables. \$17.50, cloth. \$9.00, paper.

Recent works in English covering the physical and human geography of Eastern European countries are in short supply, hence Professor Mellor's book is very welcome. The book is divided into three main parts. The first deals with the physical environment and political geography, the second with the demographic and economic framework of the region, and the third with Comecon and the national economies. The section on physical geography is short but succinct, containing enough information for the average reader, and avoiding the detailed descriptions of the geology often found in regional geographies of Europe. However, the physical geographer must look elsewhere for detailed information.

The section devoted to political geography consists of two lengthy chapters on the historical evolution of the region from the Greco-Roman period to the present. Mellor discusses the arrival of the Slavs, the emergence of the present ethnic structure, the growth of the Habsburg Empire, and the rise of the major nation-states in the region. The text is illustrated with a number of clear and well-designed maps.

The chapter on population contains useful information on population distribution and growth, including a comparison of population pyramids, as well as migra-

tions and the ethnic pattern of the region. There is, however, little discussion of national population policies or attitudes toward birth control.

The subject of towns and villages is given limited treatment and little space is devoted to the important topic of urbanization. A few pages are devoted to each of the capital cities of the region, but little is said about other cities. The town plans accompanying the text are unclear and of little help to the reader.

The rest of the book deals with economic geography, including such topics as the economic landscape before the war, transport systems, the origins of Comecon and Sovietization, and sketches of national economic geographies. These topics are handled well, although one might have expected a lengthier discussion of Comecon and its problems from an expert on the subject.

The main drawback of the book lies in its organization. Readers who wish to obtain information on a particular country must search through each section to pull together the scattered paragraphs dealing with the country of their interest. Conventional regional textbook organization, consisting of several general chapters followed by separate chapters on the physical and human geography of each country, still has much to recommend it. Mellor's book is thus difficult to use as a textbook in a course which is taught on a country by country basis. Some students may find the historical theme overemphasized, although it is important for an understanding of the region. Despite these few flaws, the book is well written, and the quality of its content outweighs the disadvantages of its structure.

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SOZIALISTISCHE AGRARPOLITIK IN OSTEUROPA, vol. 1: VON MARX BIS ZUR VOLLKOLLEKTIVIERUNG. By *Karl-Eugen Wädek*. Osteuropastudien der Hochschulen des Landes Hessen, series 1: Giessener Abhandlungen zur Agrar- und Wirtschaftsforschung des europäischen Ostens, vol. 63. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1974. 238 pp. Paper.

This book treats systematically the socialization of agriculture in the Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries in Eastern Europe, up to the time of "full collectivization" in each country. Albania is included, as are Poland and Yugoslavia, despite the lack of full collectivization in the latter two countries. A second volume, which will bring the subject matter up to date, is advertised on the back cover as the forthcoming volume 67 in the same series.

A brief English summary states that this book does not aspire to fundamentally new insights; rather, its goal is to give a hitherto lacking synthesis of the whole subject of collectivization. Such an enterprise is ambitious enough in itself, and the author, because he has previously worked mainly on the Soviet Union, wisely chooses to supplement his own competence by drawing on assistance and advice from German and British colleagues.

The first chapter deals with Marxian theories of the agrarian question prior to World War I. The following three chapters trace the formation of Soviet collective systems from Lenin through the late Stalin years. The lengthy fifth chapter, on the transfer of the Soviet agrarian system to Eastern Europe, fills half the book, with monographic treatment of each of the eight countries being surveyed. A final chapter discusses Soviet agricultural policy under Khrushchev (up to 1960).