

regional administration have occurred in the Balkans that complicate comparisons between prewar and postwar statistics. Perhaps where prewar data are unavailable on a comparable basis, it would be necessary to limit comparisons to, say, the early 1950s and the late 1960s. But abundant industrial and agricultural statistics and employment data are available by subregion (e.g., by *județ* in Rumania) for all countries in the group with the possible exception of Albania, so that intertemporal and cross-sectional comparisons can probably be made once these detailed data are regrouped by broad regions that are at least roughly comparable over a fair period of time. To reaggregate basic data in order to make them comparable over time and across countries would require a good deal of work. But isn't painstaking work of this kind supposed to be the scholar's long suit?

J. M. MONTIAS
Yale University

PRESIDENTIN MUOTOKUVA. 2 vols. By *Kyösti Skyttä*. Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä, 1969–70. Vol. 1: 294 pp. Vol. 2: 298 pp. Paper.

KOLME MATKAA MOSKOVAAN. By *J. O. Söderhjelm*. Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä, 1970. 229 pp. Paper.

OMAA TIETÄÄN KULKI VAIN. By *Rainer von Fieandt*. Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä, 1970. 372 pp. Paper.

Kyösti Skyttä's two biographical volumes attempt to trace the life and career of Urho Kaleva Kekkonen, now in his fourth term as president of the Finnish Republic. It is no easy task. Mr. Kekkonen has had an unusually long and stormy political career: he has been actively involved in most of the significant political controversies that have rocked his country during the past half-century.

Born in a log cabin in northeastern Finland in 1900, the son of a lumberjack, Kekkonen nevertheless succeeded in securing a secondary-school education and volunteered to fight in the "White army" which defeated the "Red revolution" of 1918 in a bitter civil war. In the 1920s he studied jurisprudence, worked for the state security police, and emerged as an aggressively nationalistic and outspoken publicist and student leader famed for his sarcastic polemics against the Swedish-speaking minority of the country and the Russian "archenemy." Launching upon a new career in national politics as the bright young man of the Agrarian Party, a key party in Finland, he reached the rank of cabinet minister in 1936. Excluded from a cabinet post during the war years, he tried to find an outlet for his energies as a member of the parliament and as a publicist. From an unbending and implacable foe of the Russians (he was one of the few members of the Finnish parliament who voted against armistice during the Winter War and also engaged in aggressively anti-Soviet polemics during the first years of the so-called Continuation War, the second Finno-Russian conflict during the Second World War) he evolved toward the end of the war into an advocator of early peace and the establishment of new friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

Such a change of views and a prominent role as the minister of justice in the Soviet-inspired prosecutions of Finnish wartime political leaders as war criminals gave him a good launching pad for a career in postwar Soviet-dominated Finnish politics. After an unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 1950, Kekkonen served several times as prime minister before his election as president of the republic in

1956 by the narrowest possible majority of 151 (composed primarily of Agrarians and Communists) out of an electoral college of 300.

During Kekkonen's first presidential term three major national crises (a general strike in 1956, a crisis in Soviet-Finnish relations known as the period of the "nightfrost" in Finland in 1958, and finally his re-election campaign in 1961 culminating in Soviet demands for military consultations with Finland based on the existing Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between the two states) shook the Finnish society to its foundations. In contrast to his eventful first term, the subsequent years of the Kekkonen presidency have been relatively calm. But his ambiguous approach to efforts to increase cooperation between Finland and the Scandinavian states, and recent efforts to secure him an unprecedented fourth term through special legislation by-passing the popular elections, have again whipped up the waves of controversy around his name.

Skyttä's volumes stand out, to their credit, from much of the writing about Kekkonen in providing some illuminating insights into his character and some interesting thoughts on Finnish politics, but they do not meet the standards that one expects from a serious scholarly biography. Skyttä writes well, and his style is lively and at times quite colorful, but his arguments and conclusions are far too often speculative in nature. His research is lacking in depth, and in general the work is inadequately documented. It bears the signs of haste: Skyttä apparently was in a hurry to finish the book for Kekkonen's seventieth birthday. The president contributed to the undertaking by making some of his private letters available, granting interviews to the author, and reading the manuscript before publication.

This kind of close cooperation has affected the tone and approach of the work. Skyttä occasionally allows himself the luxury of critically examining some specific acts of the president, but the general tenor of the volumes reveals him as a rather uncritical admirer of his subject. Though he discusses at great length Kekkonen's many achievements, he either glides over possible shortcomings or failures in the president's policies or adopts a vigorously partisan polemical approach against Kekkonen's critics. He fails to throw new light on controversial issues such as Russian influence on the internal politics of Finland, including presidential elections, the relations of the various Finnish political parties with one another, and the composition of the country's cabinets during Kekkonen's presidency. It might have been fruitful, for example, if Skyttä had compared this situation with the last eight years of the presidency of Paasikivi, Kekkonen's immediate predecessor.

But there are other ways that Skyttä's approach does not do justice to the complexity of his topic. In order to counter frequently voiced criticism concerning excessive opportunism on the part of Mr. Kekkonen, he is overly anxious to argue how consistent and farsighted the political views of his subject have been in the different periods of his career. Such efforts weaken the study. Ultimately Kekkonen and his career will be judged not on how he may or may not have changed his views since the 1930s but on how his actions and policies as head of state affected the degree of independence, national security, and the general tone of the political life of his country. Besides being marred by the author's strong enchantment with his subject, Skyttä's work, especially the first volume, suffers from his poorly disguised antagonism toward the Swedish-speaking minority of Finland. There are also a few factual mistakes. For example, the Social Democrats did not form a coalition government with the Swedish People's Party in 1926-27 but a minority government of their own.

With all the weaknesses, Skyttä's two volumes do provide a good deal of information if used with appropriate care and reserve. But they certainly will not remain the final word on the life and career of President Kekkonen, whose complexity, stature, and significance to Finnish history deserve far more serious and thorough study.

The memoirs of J. O. Söderhjelm, a Finnish politician and businessman, concentrate on describing the Finno-Russian negotiations in which he has participated, and he provides some interesting information about the steps taken toward the conclusion of the 1948 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between the two states. Rainer von Fieandt also had a dual career in business and public life. For several decades he headed one of the two leading commercial banks in Finland and served once as prime minister. His memoirs throw some new light on the economic and business history of his country.

P. K. HAMALAINEN

University of Wisconsin, Madison

UPRISING IN EAST GERMANY: JUNE 17, 1953. By *Arnulf Baring*. Translated by *Gerald Onn*. Introduction by *David Schoenbaum*. Foreword by *Richard Lowenthal*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972. xxvii, 194 pp. \$8.75.

The outgrowth of an earlier Columbia University master's thesis, Arnulf Baring's book first appeared in 1965 as *Der 17. Juni 1953* (Cologne and Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch). The present unaltered English version is a faithful and entirely fluent translation of the original German text. It also contains eleven major documents relating to the uprising.

Baring presents a first-rate case study in the political sociology of revolution. Analyzing both the background and the actual course of the East German uprising, he pinpoints the particular circumstances that made for a revolutionary situation and depicts the dynamics of an upheaval that required massive Soviet intervention to put down. Baring argues that the uprising was doomed to failure in any event, owing to the absence of effective revolutionary organization and leadership. He concludes by noting that conditions in East Germany have changed since 1953, such that "the time is ripe for evolution and not revolutions."

The latter thought informs Richard Lowenthal's substantial foreword to the book, also reproduced in translation from the original German edition. Lowenthal sketches the international background to the East German rising and stresses the passivity of Western diplomacy, which in his view resulted in a "missed opportunity." For Lowenthal the lesson is clear: "Instead of waiting for the Soviet leadership to clarify its position, the Western powers [should] try to influence that process by putting forward constructive proposals." Coming from a close confidant of Willy Brandt, whose *Ostpolitik* embodies this very proposition, Lowenthal's words have added significance.

The present volume includes a pithy but pointed introduction, especially written for the English edition by David Schoenbaum, who suggests that, properly demythologized, the East German uprising still "deserves to be remembered." This reviewer fully agrees and warmly recommends Baring's study for the purpose.

MELVIN CROAN

University of Wisconsin, Madison