

COMMUNISM IN THE ARAB EAST. By *M. S. Agwani*. Issued under the auspices of the Indian School of International Studies. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1969. vi, 259 pp. \$10.00.

Professor Agwani, who teaches West Asian studies at the Indian School of International Studies, has set out to "describe and evaluate the more significant stages in the development of Arab Communist parties and their ceaseless interaction with rival political groups." It is not a systematic or comprehensive history of Arab communism, and it is somewhat uneven in character. The early part of the book presents little that is new; there is nothing about the Sudanese Communist Party, one of the strongest in the area, and very little about the Lebanese C.P. The sections about Iraqi communism under Kassem and on Syria in the 1950s are the most interesting, based on a wide range of sources in Arabic and English.

It is not always easy to detect the author's own point of view, and his infrequent comments strike this reader as a little naïve. He maintains that one of the cardinal shortcomings of Arab communism is that it has failed so far to relate Marxist doctrine to the specific conditions and requirements of the Arab East, that it lacks mature understanding of this doctrine, and that this explains the erratic course of Arab communism. He also blames the Communists for not having succeeded in gaining a firm foothold among the peasants in what is still a predominantly agrarian society. On the Egyptian revolution, the author says that it has "not been an unqualified success but few Communist or non-Communist regimes that attempted to take so much in hand have done much better" (p. 222).

Professor Agwani apparently takes it for granted that there is such a thing as a "correct Marxist course" and that it would have resulted in greater achievements for the Communists. He seems not to have posed the question whether the failure of communism among the peasants was the result of not trying hard enough or whether their policy simply did not correspond with the beliefs and interests of the peasants. On the other hand, he writes sensibly about the appeal of communism as a modernizing force, and adds (unfortunately only as an afterthought) that the indirect and ideological impact of communism—through Nasserism and the Ba'th—has been much more significant than the influence exerted by the various Communist parties themselves.

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SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST. By *Aaron S. Klieman*. *Studies in International Affairs*, no. 14. The Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research, School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970. vi, 107 pp. \$6.50, cloth. \$2.45, paper.

Mr. Klieman has provided a short, competent, and unstartling survey of the emergence of the new "Eastern question." Like most recent writers, he concentrates on the Arab countries, especially Egypt, the keystone of Soviet policy; there is little about Turkey and Iran. For the most part he deals sensibly with the dilemmas facing the superpowers in the area. However, some of his statements seem a little sweeping. Why should one have assumed that the tensions within the Middle East would be an adequate deterrent against involvement by external powers? It would seem that, on the contrary, the very existence of these tensions facilitated the growth

of Soviet influence. Nor is it certain that "in the future Soviet policy will illustrate a greater degree of caution towards the Arab world" (p. 84). Is the Soviet Union really worried about Arab internal friction, as the author intimates (p. 100)?

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SOVIET POLICY IN WEST AFRICA. By *Robert Legvold*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970. xii, 372 pp. \$13.00.

This study by Dr. Legvold, in contrast to the earlier Western studies on Soviet involvement in Africa, is intensive and comparative. It thoroughly analyzes the evolution and shifts in the USSR's relations with six West African states—Ghana, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal between 1957 and 1968. During the first contact with independent Africa, according to Legvold, it was "an African nation's foreign policy, not internal development" which determined the Soviet attitude toward the country. The author points out the initial unfounded Soviet optimism about their opportunities in such "radical" states as Guinea, Ghana, and Mali. However, he notes that it was Guinea's independence and not Ghana's that "marked a turning point in Soviet relations with Black Africa."

The resultant failures in the USSR's policies in the Congo and Guinea and the movement toward a "broader African unity" among the "radical" Casablanca and the "moderate" Monrovia group of states caused a shift in the Soviet Union's policy, and it began to develop "businesslike" relations with "moderate" African states such as Senegal and Nigeria. Simultaneously, certain Soviet theorists, especially Khrushchev, began to reappraise less critically such ideological concepts as African socialism and pan-Africanism. The author notes that the Sino-Soviet competition influenced these changes in Soviet policy.

Legvold skillfully discusses the additional shifts in Soviet policy following the ouster of Khrushchev from power and after the overthrow of friendly leaders like Nkrumah and Keita. Soviet policy-makers became disillusioned with the "African revolutionary democrats," and broadened their relations with "moderate" African states such as the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Upper Volta. However, this reviewer has serious reservations about the impression created (pp. 325, 327, and 329) that Western powers were "neutral" in contrast to the USSR during the Nigerian Civil War. Other minor mistakes include disjointed sentences (p. 316) and a typographical error (p. 320).

In summation, the organization of the book is very good, and judicious use has been made of various Soviet, African, and Western source materials. The book deserves a wide circulation in public libraries, embassies, and among students and teachers. But it seems doubtful that Soviet authorities will permit their citizens (other than a few officials) to read this well-researched and interesting volume.

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COMMUNIST PARTY-STATES: COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES. Edited by *Jan F. Triska*. Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969. xxxv, 392 pp. \$9.00.

In recent years, attempts have been made by specialists in Soviet and Communist systems to break with the tradition of so-called area studies and to integrate the