

THE ESSENTIAL KROPOTKIN. Edited by *Emile Capouya* and *Keitha Tompkins*. New York: Liveright, W. W. Norton, 1975. xxiv, 296 pp. \$12.50, cloth. \$3.95, paper.

This new anthology of Kropotkin's writings, the third now available in English, contains seven of his most famous essays: "The Spirit of Revolt," "An Appeal to the Young," "Law and Authority," "Prisons and Their Moral Influence on Prisoners," "Modern Science and Anarchism," "The Wage System," and "Anarchism." These essays are followed by five selections from his most celebrated books, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, *Mutual Aid*, *The Great French Revolution*, *The Conquest of Bread*, and *Fields, Factories and Workshops*. Surprisingly, the editors do not include excerpts from his writings on ethics, a regrettable omission, because Kropotkin was at bottom a moral thinker and ethics formed the cornerstone of his anarchist philosophy.

*The Essential Kropotkin* lacks an index, and, apart from a brief and inadequate "note on the texts," contains no scholarly apparatus. Nevertheless, it is a welcome Kropotkin primer, perhaps the best collection for the general reader, prefaced as it is with a valuable interpretive essay by the editors that demonstrates the continued vitality and attractiveness of Kropotkin's ideas almost a century after he elaborated them.

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SILK GLOVE HEGEMONY: FINNISH-SOVIET RELATIONS, 1944-1974. A CASE STUDY OF THE THEORY OF THE SOFT SPHERE OF INFLUENCE. By *John P. Vloyantes*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1975. xiv, 208 pp. \$10.00.

Despite its flamboyant title and the author's acknowledged inability to read source materials in either Finnish or Russian, this book is surprisingly good as it weaves postwar Finnish history into the concept of spheres of influence. Insofar as the narrative concerns the vicissitudes of Finnish politics, the author presents an informed account that is more than adequate for the general reader. Specialists, however, will be less enthusiastic. Typical of the many errors in the book is the author's misspelling of President Kekkonen's first name (five times), not to mention the author's outlandish statement, found on page 105, that Kekkonen voted for the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union.

The author's argument that Finland is in a soft sphere of Soviet influence (the silk glove), as opposed to a hard sphere (the mailed fist), is convincing, although he does his generally balanced argument a disservice when he states that Finland is committed to a "pro-Soviet policy" (pp. 46 and 80) and that Finland is a "pro-Soviet buffer state" (p. 186). What does the future hold for Finland? Vloyantes's case study "seems clearly to indicate that softness is the general attribute and long-term propensity of the Finnish sphere of influence" (p. 198). This conclusion begs the question of movement, posed by the author on page 28, where he states that a sphere does not remain static but moves either to incorporation into, or to withdrawal from, the hegemonic sphere. The author's emphasis on "personal diplomacy," with all its uncertainties, is perhaps the reason for his reluctance to state what logically flows from the systemic view that (1) Soviet

interest in Finland is basically strategic and defensive (pp. 37, 39, 47, 80); (2) technological developments may make obsolete the necessity of spheres of influence (p. 11); and (3) Finland has an alternative in the Scandinavian subsystem (pp. 162–63).

In sum, there are many weaknesses in the book, but it is, nonetheless, substantially better than Max Jakobson's recent volume on Finnish-Soviet relations (*Finnish Neutrality: A Study of Finnish Foreign Policy Since the Second World War* [New York: Praeger, 1969]) whose audience is also the nonspecialist.

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FROM ENCROACHMENT TO INVOLVEMENT: A DOCUMENTARY STUDY OF SOVIET POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 1945–1973.

By *Yaacov Ro'i*. New York and Toronto: Halsted Press, a division of John Wiley & Sons. Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1974. xl, 616 pp. \$26.75.

SOVIET POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST SINCE 1970. By *Robert O. Freedman*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975. xii, 198 pp. \$16.50, cloth. \$5.95, paper.

The diplomatic consequences of post-1945 decolonization in the Arab world, the deepening involvement of the superpowers in the area and in the succession of Arab-Israeli wars, the imperial policies and tenacity of Khrushchev and Brezhnev, and the heightened Western concern over Middle Eastern oil have all contributed to the "discovery" of the Middle East by specialists on Soviet affairs. The two books under review, both of which should prove useful for introducing college students to the complexity and twists and turns that are endemic to the subject, treat the unfolding of Soviet policies in the Middle East, but in very different ways: one is a documentary compilation of impressive scope and judicious selectivity; the other, a broad sketch of Soviet policies and dilemmas, primarily during the 1970–74 period.

Professor Ro'i has brought together 116 documents, speeches, communiqués, and commentaries that touch on all the key crises and developments of the 1945–73 period: the postwar settlement, the Iranian and Palestinian questions, Stalin's tentative thrusts, the evolution of Soviet perceptions of Arab world developments, the crises of 1956, 1958, and 1961, Soviet reactions to Egyptian-Iraqi feuding, the Yemeni civil war, changing Iranian and Turkish policies, and, of course, the June 1967 and October 1973 wars.

The usefulness of the materials—most of which are Russian and Arabic in origin—is greatly enhanced by Dr. Ro'i's background essays. Each selection is introduced by a concise essay, placing it in historical and political perspective, and each concludes with some bibliographical suggestions. The essays often contain important new information, for example, about Armenian immigration to the USSR after 1945 (pp. 45–46) and the Khrushchev-Sadat altercation in 1961 (pp. 337–44). The final product is a valuable chronological presentation in which key trends are interwoven with primary materials, guiding the reader through the Middle Eastern maze and leaving him with a heightened sensitivity to Soviet aims, policies, and attitudes. There are a very few minor shortcomings: the communiqués are not complete and the bibliographies are often too brief. However, this is an in-