

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