Occasionally, the volume suffers from the problem of repetition. This was probably an editorial choice, and it does serve to bolster the truth-value of these memoirs; yet, in my view, this repetition weakens the force of the selections and makes it more likely that the reader will become desensitized to the real tragedies described in the memoirs. This said, *Till My Tale Is Told* is an important testimony to the Stalinist years and very useful as a teaching tool. Each selection is introduced by someone who knew the author of the piece (and/or by the editor of the volume). There is a good glossary and a short history of events at the back of the book as well as two short, information-packed introductions (to the English and Russian editions) by Simeon Vilensky, and an afterword by John Crowfoot. The translations are good. And each of the testimonies begins with a photograph of the author—some in their youth, some in old age; this visual evocation provides intimacy and poignancy to the stories told in words.

The original volume, *Dodnes' tiagoteet* (*A Burden Borne to This Day*) is longer by seven memoirs than the English edition; this editing down is an excellent choice as it makes the book more suitable for teaching. Overall, this is an intelligent volume—well thought-out and well put together. *Till My Tale Is Told* adds a great deal to those accounts already published: it delineates perspectives that are often different from the well-known accounts of Ginzburg and Solzhenitsyn and enhances such recent works as the diary selections in the 1995 *Intimacy and Terror* (Garros, Korenevskaya, Lahuksen, editors). It is important to have many different accounts of the Terror so that one version does not become the dominant narration (the camp narrative). And one hopes that more extensive memoirs are to come.

*Jehanne M. Gheith*

*Duke University*


Ideally, recent events should deepen our insight into the past. Too often in practice they leave the past foreshortened and oversimplified. That is what the collapse of Soviet Communism has done to the history of the Soviet Union in general and to the appreciation of Nikita Khrushchev in particular. Khrushchev is usually remembered as a peasant buffoon who threatened to bury the capitalist West with thermonuclear weapons. Now two new works, one by Khrushchev's son Sergei and the other with Sergei's collaboration, go far to restoring the three-dimensional complexity of the man who tried to undo Stalinism without undoing Communism.

Born in 1935 and coming of age just as his father was achieving supreme power in the Soviet Union, Sergei Khrushchev was uniquely positioned to observe Nikita Khru-
Khrushchev in action, and to appreciate the critical political currents, domestic as well as international, that swirled around him. This memoir-history by the son tells a fascinating year-by-year, even day-by-day story of the father’s decision-making, from Geneva to Cuba and beyond. The translation by Shirley Benson (from the 1994 Russian edition as updated by the author) is so smooth and lively that one forgets the original was in a foreign language. Sergei’s account is hard to put down.

Sergei Khrushchev must have kept voluminous records of events and conversations as he experienced them from within the Moscow inner circle, though such documentation is not mentioned. Sometimes conversations are reconstructed that he could not have heard directly, as when Nikita took an outdoor walk with his Presidium confidant Anastas Mikoyan to agonize about his decision to intervene in Hungary in November 1956. However, the son was close to the father all during his years in power, and the latter regularly filled the former in about such episodes. Furthermore, Sergei makes use of Nikita’s memoirs, including the as yet untranslated four-volume Russian version. There are also some poignant excerpts from the memoir that Sergei’s mother Nina Petrovna Kukharchuk (Khrushcheva) wrote “to my children and grandchildren,” about growing up in Ukraine and working for the Communist Party.

Sergei conveys a certain naivety about his status as a child of the power elite, taking for granted an almost bourgeois normality in his life. The family socialized mostly with their peers of the Party Presidium, and Sergei gives us revealing vignettes of some of them. He notes, for example, Georgi Malenkov’s weakness as a leader, and Deputy Prime Minister Frol Kozlov’s denseness.

This account in all its living color is difficult to reduce to a simple thesis, and Sergei abjures “drawing conclusions or judging my own Father” (p. xi). Yet there is one proposition running throughout: that Nikita Khrushchev, like centuries of Russian leaders before him, was determined to catch up with the West and match its power. He was sensitive to real or imagined Western expressions of superiority, but at the same time he was wary of a fatal confrontation. “What did Father want most of all? To find common ground, a mutual understanding that would make it possible to avoid war” (p. xi). Hence Nikita’s repeated efforts, especially before the U-2 crisis of 1960 and the Berlin crisis of 1961, to cut the Soviet military back in favor of the civilian economy and to strike disarmament deals with the West. But as backup, he aimed to rely on the rocket-borne nuclear deterrent to keep American forces at bay (precisely the same “more bang for a buck” approach that distinguished the Eisenhower administration in the US, one might add). Uneasy national pride explains much in the Soviet reaction to the flights of the American “U-2” photo-reconnaissance planes commencing as early as 1956, and even in the Cuban missile crisis, both of which Sergei recounts at length. Sergei strives to explain (p. 133) his father’s oft-quoted but totally misrepresented remark (actually at a Polish Embassy reception in November 1956, according to Ambassador Charles Bohlen’s recollection) promising to “bury” the West, but only in the sense of presiding over the funeral of capitalism.

Much of Sergei’s narrative is a counterpoint between high-level politics as he observed them and his own not inconsequential role in Soviet missile technology. In fact, Sergei’s account is an indispensable source on the history of this field and its leading lights. One who figures prominently is Sergei Korolyov, a survivor of the la-