



Khrushchev: The Man and His Era

Prof. William Taubman

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A magisterial, definitive and compelling assessment of one of the giants of twentieth-century history: former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. William Taubman's brilliant biography of one of the key figures of the Soviet Union is a study in contrasts -- how the boy from a peasant background rose to the heights of power; how a single-minded, ambitious political player survived twenty years under Stalin; how he opened up to the West after Stalin's death and yet brought the world close to oblivion in the Cuban Missile Crisis. What emerges is a fascinating picture of a man constantly torn between benevolence and malevolence -- a man who made himself cultured and yet who could never really escape his image as a bullying country bumpkin (most famously demonstrated by his interruption of Macmillan's speech to the UN in 1960 by banging his shoe on the table -- the urbane Macmillan responded, 'Mr President, perhaps we could have a translation, I could not quite follow'). William Taubman has previously edited collections of Nikita Khrushchev's speeches and reminiscences and is completely immersed in this subject -- his biography is likely to remain the standard work for years to come.

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