

# THE YEAR THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

## MICHAEL MEYER

READ BY ED SALA

The twentieth century ended with a bang in 1989 and Michael Meyer has vividly captured the drama, import and energy of that fascinating year.... Riveting.

Fareed Zakaria, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Post-American World*

"Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" President Ronald Reagan's famous exhortation when visiting Berlin in 1987 has long been widely cited as the clarion call that brought the Cold War to an end. That is, the United States won because Reagan stood firm against the USSR. Michael Meyer, who was there at the time as a *Newsweek* bureau chief, begs to differ.

In this compelling account of the revolutions that roiled Eastern Europe in 1989, Meyer shows that American intransigence was only one of many factors that provoked world-shaking change. He draws together breathtakingly vivid accounts of the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the stealth opening of the Hungarian border, and the collapse of the infamous wall in Berlin. Most important were the heroic stands taken by individuals in the thick of the struggle, particularly Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet general secretary of the Communist Party.

*The Year That Changed the World* is not just a thrilling chronicle of the most important year of the twentieth century. It is also a crucial refutation of a triumphal misunderstanding of history that seduced the United States into many of the intractable conflicts it faces today.

Michael Meyer was *Newsweek's* bureau chief for Germany, Central Europe, and the Balkans between 1988 and 1992, writing more than a dozen cover stories on the breakup of Communist Europe and German unification. He is the winner of two Overseas Press Club Awards and the author of *The Alexander Complex*. He lives in New York City.

Ed Sala, an actor and a writer, has won numerous *AudioFile* Earphones Awards for his audiobook narrations, including one for *Finn* by Jon Clinch. His performance of *White Doves at Morning* by James Lee Burke was selected by *AudioFile* as one of the fifteen best audiobooks of the year.



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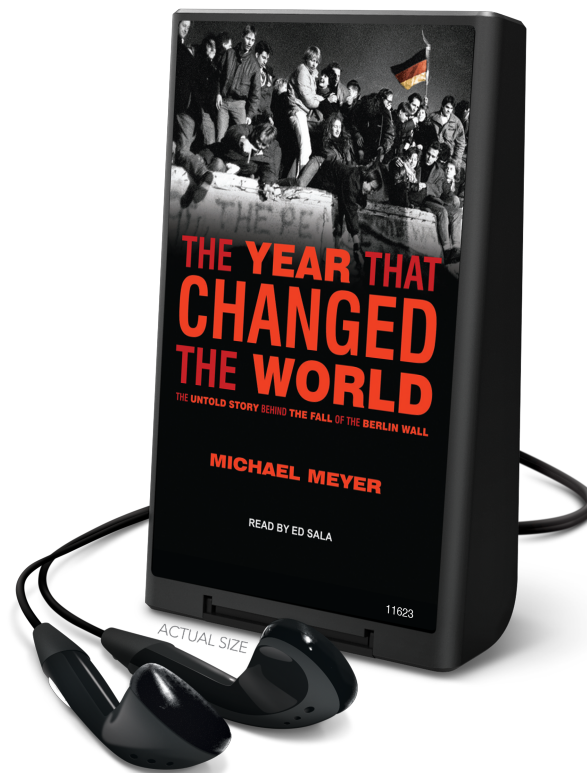
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