

Boris Yeltsin: The Decade That Shook The World

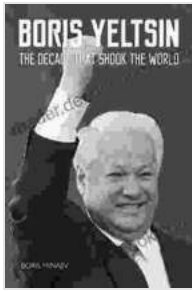
Early Life and Career

Boris Yeltsin was born on February 1, 1931, in the village of Butka, Sverdlovsk Oblast, Russian SFSR, Soviet Union. His parents were peasants, and he had three siblings. Yeltsin joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1961, and he quickly rose through the ranks. In 1976, he was appointed First Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Oblast Committee of the CPSU. In this position, Yeltsin oversaw the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the development of the region's natural resources.

Rise to Power

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the CPSU. Gorbachev introduced a series of reforms designed to modernize the Soviet Union, known as perestroika and glasnost. Yeltsin was a supporter of Gorbachev's reforms, and he was appointed to the Politburo, the highest decision-making body of the CPSU, in 1986.

In 1989, Yeltsin was elected to the Congress of People's Deputies, the new legislative body of the Soviet Union. He quickly became a leading critic of Gorbachev's reforms, arguing that they were not going far enough. In 1990, Yeltsin was elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR, the parliament of Russia. In this position, he continued to criticize Gorbachev's reforms and to advocate for greater independence for Russia.



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by Katie Winters

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President of Russia

In 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed and Russia became an independent state. Yeltsin was elected President of Russia in the first free presidential election in Russian history. As president, Yeltsin embarked on a series of ambitious reforms, including the privatization of state-owned enterprises, the liberalization of the economy, and the of a new constitution.

Yeltsin's reforms were unpopular with many Russians, who were suffering from the economic hardships caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1993, Yeltsin ordered the Russian army to shell the Russian parliament building, which was occupied by his opponents. The shelling resulted in the deaths of over 100 people.

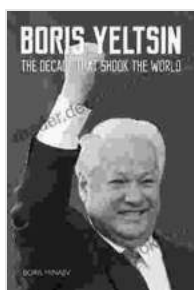
In 1996, Yeltsin was re-elected president, defeating Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov. However, his second term was marked by continued economic problems and political instability. In 1998, Russia defaulted on its foreign debt, and the ruble collapsed. Yeltsin's popularity plummeted, and he was widely seen as a failure.

Legacy

Yeltsin resigned from office on December 31, 1999, and he was succeeded by Vladimir Putin. Yeltsin's legacy is complex and controversial. He is credited with leading Russia through the difficult transition from communism to capitalism, but he is also blamed for the economic hardships and political instability that plagued Russia during his presidency.

Yeltsin died on April 23, 2007, in Moscow. He was 76 years old.

Boris Yeltsin was a pivotal figure in Russian history. He presided over a period of great change and turmoil, and his legacy is still debated today. He was a complex and controversial figure, but there is no doubt that he played a major role in shaping the course of Russian history.



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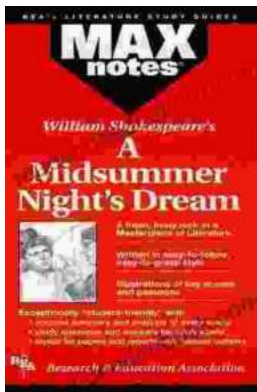
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