

# The Question of Hu: A Search for the Truth About China's Bloody Century



**The Question of Hu** by Jonathan D. Spence

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 565 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 209 pages



In the annals of Chinese history, the 20th century stands as a time of unprecedented upheaval and violence. From the collapse of the Qing dynasty to the rise of the People's Republic, from the Cultural Revolution to the Tiananmen Square massacre, China has witnessed a series of cataclysmic events that have left an enduring mark on the nation's psyche.

At the heart of this tumultuous century lies the question of Hu Yaobang, a charismatic and reform-minded leader who rose to the top of the Chinese Communist Party only to be ousted in a vicious power struggle. Hu's story is a key to understanding the complex forces that have shaped China's recent past and present.

In *The Question of Hu*, Jonathan Spence tells the story of Hu Yaobang's life and career, drawing on newly available archives and interviews with Hu's family, friends, and colleagues. Spence argues that Hu was a visionary

leader who sought to reform China's political and economic system, but that he was ultimately defeated by the forces of conservatism and reaction within the Party.

Hu Yaobang was born in 1915 in the 貧窮 province of Hunan. He joined the Communist Party in 1933 and fought in the Long March. After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, Hu served in a variety of posts, including as head of the Communist Youth League and as Party secretary of Sichuan province. In 1981, Hu was appointed general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, the top post in the party.

As general secretary, Hu launched a series of reforms designed to modernize China's economy and political system. He introduced market reforms, relaxed restrictions on foreign investment, and encouraged greater freedom of speech and assembly. Hu's reforms were popular with the Chinese people, but they also aroused the opposition of conservative elements within the Party.

In 1987, Hu was forced to resign as general secretary after a series of student protests in Beijing. He was replaced by Deng Xiaoping, a hardline leader who reversed many of Hu's reforms. Hu died in 1989, shortly after the Tiananmen Square massacre.

The question of Hu Yaobang's legacy is a complex one. He was a visionary leader who sought to reform China's political and economic system, but he was ultimately defeated by the forces of conservatism and reaction within the Party. Hu's story is a tragedy, but it is also a story of hope. He showed that it is possible to challenge the status quo in China, even if the cost is high.

*The Question of Hu* is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand China's recent past and present. Spence's deeply researched and beautifully written account of Hu Yaobang's life and career is a major contribution to the field of Chinese history.

Buy the book now



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