

《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》文章播发始末 The Story of the circulation of the article “Practice is the Sole Criterion for Judging Truth”

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Jiang Shuping (姜淑萍), Zhang Mingjie (张明杰), Zhang Shu (张曙) from their book, 邓小平在历次论争中 [*Deng Xiaoping in Successive Controversies*], 中国长安出版社, 2004

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1978 年 5 月 11 日,《光明日报》发表特约评论员文章《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》。文章指出,检验真理的标准只能是社会实践,理论与实践的统一是马克思主义的一个最基本的原则,任何理论都要不断接受实践的检验。这是从根本理论上对“两个凡是”的否定。

特约评论员文章起风波 The Special Commentator Article Stirred Up a Storm

1978 年 5 月 11 日,《光明日报》以特约评论员署名发表《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》。新华社于当天转发了这篇文章的全文,《人民日报》、《解放军报》也于 5 月 12 日转发了这篇文章。文章发表后,引起了各方关注,成了全国性的真理标准问题大讨论的导火索。

这篇重要文章的原作者是南京大学哲学系教师胡福明,后经过多人多次修改,最后由主持中央党校工作的胡耀邦审定,5 月 10 日先在中央党校《理论动态》第 60 期全文发表,5 月 11 日在《光明日报》以特约评论员文章发表。文章分四个部分:检验真理的标准只能是社会实践;理论与实践的统一是马克思主义的一个最基本的原则;革命导师是坚持用实践检验真理的榜样;任何理论都要不断接受实践的检验。文章提出,实践不仅是检验真理的标准,而且是唯一标准。

许多干部群众和理论工作者都赞成文章的观点，并要求按“实践标准”去处理大量历史遗留问题。但也有一些人不赞成或不接受文章的观点，而坚持“两个凡是”错误观点的人更是立即出来加以反对，并施加很大压力。

5月12日，当时毛泽东著作编辑出版委员会办公室的一位成员就打电话给《人民日报》总编辑，对《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》一文作了激烈的批评。5月13日，《红旗》杂志的主编打电话给新华社社长，说新华社转发此文是错误的，“新华社和《人民日报》犯了错误”。5月17日，当时主管宣传工作的中共中央副主席汪东兴在一次小范围的会议上，点名批评《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》这篇文章“理论上是荒谬的，思想上是反动的，政治上是要砍旗帜的”。他责问：“这是哪个中央的意见？！”“要查一查，接受教训、统一认识，下不为例。”“《人民日报》要有党性，中宣部要把好关。”5月18日，汪东兴召集中宣部和《红旗》杂志负责人谈话，批评《人民日报》很“不慎重”，要求中宣部把好关。

面对来自“两个凡是”派的指责，胡耀邦等人面临着巨大的政治压力。随高压而来的是理论界一片鸦雀无声。这样下去，真理标准问题的讨论就会面临夭折的危险。

关键时刻，邓小平表态了

与指责和批评相反的是，邓小平对《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》一文，给予了坚决有力的支持。

《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》一文刚发表时，邓小平没有注意到。后来他听说有人对这篇文章攻得很厉害，就找来认真阅读。5月19日，邓小平在接见中央文化部核心领导小组负责人时明确表示：“文章符合马克思列宁主义嘛，扳不倒嘛！”在中央高层领导中，邓小平是最早站出来明确表态的。

5月30日，邓小平在同胡乔木等几位负责人谈准备在全军政治工作会议上讲话内容的问题时，明确提出要着重讲关于真理标准问题。说：我这次会议的总结发言，准备讲三个问题：第一个问题，就是要讲实事求是毛泽东思想的根本态度、根本观点、根本方法。着重讲第一个问题。毛泽东思想最根本的最重要的东西就是实事求是。现在发生了一个问题，连实践是检验真理的标准都成了问题，简直是莫名其妙！他还有针对性地指出：只要你讲话和毛主席的不一样，和华主席的不一样，就不行。这不是一种孤立的现象，这是当前一种思潮的反映。

就在这个时候，在中央军委秘书长罗瑞卿的直接领导下，全军政治工作会议正在加紧筹备。在筹备全军政治工作会议的过程中，也出现了不同的意见。当邓小平得知有的人不同意会议文件中某些符合实际的新提法这个情况后，当即指出，这是一种思潮，我一定要讲话。

6月2日，邓小平在全军政治工作会议上发表讲话，再次批驳了“两个凡是”。他在阐述怎样正确地对待马列主义、毛泽东思想的问题时指出：实事求是毛泽东思想的出发点、根本点。他批评有一些同志天天讲毛泽东思想，却往往忘记、抛弃甚至反对毛泽东同志的实事求是、一切从实际出发、理论与实践相结合这样一个马克思主义的根本观点、根本方法。“不但如此，有的人还认为谁要是坚持实事求是，从实际出发，理论和实践相结合，谁就是犯了弥天大罪。他们的观点，实质上是主张只要照抄照搬就行了。要不然，就说这是违反了马列主义、毛泽东思想，违反了中央精神。他们提出的这个问题不是小问题，而是涉及到怎么看待马列主义、毛泽东思想的问题”。

邓小平强调指出：马列主义、毛泽东思想的基本原则，我们任何时候都不能违背，这是毫无疑义的。但是，一定要和实际相结合，要分析研究实际情况，解决实际问题。他还号召打破精神枷锁，“使我们的思想来个大解放。”邓小平的讲话，不仅深刻地阐明了实事求是，一切从实际出发，理论与实践相结合的基本观点，而且对“两个凡是”进行了透彻的批驳，在全国引起了强烈的反响，成为广大干部群众解放思想的锐利武器。

次日，《人民日报》以《邓副主席精辟阐述毛主席实事求是光辉思想》为题，详细介绍了邓小平6月2日的讲话。同时，还加了几行按语，鲜明地表达了报社的立场。6月6日，《人民日报》和《解放军报》又在第一版全文发表了邓小平的这篇讲话。邓小平的这篇讲话，被列为中发1978年38号文件的主要内容之一，于6月29日发出，对真理标准问题的讨论和实际工作起到了巨大的促进作用。

但斗争并没有就此结束。6月15日，汪东兴召集中宣部和中央直属新闻单位负责人开会，着重批评《人民日报》，几次点了胡耀邦的名。

解放思想是一个重大政治问题

为了反驳对《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》一文的责难，胡耀邦顶住压力，在中央党校组织了第二篇重要文章《马克思主义的一个最基本原则》，文风犀利地逐条批驳了对《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》的种种指责，6月24日以《解放军报》特约评论员的名义在

《解放军报》上发表。这之后，胡耀邦又组织撰写了第三篇文章《一切主观世界的东西都要经受实践检验》，于1978年9月10日在中央党校《理论动态》上刊出，9月26日又以《人民日报》特约评论员名义公开发表，从而把讨论进一步推向深入。

在《马克思主义的一个最基本原则》一文发表后，汪东兴对讨论继续施加压力。华国锋也指示中央宣传部门和一些省、市的某些负责人对真理标准问题的讨论“不表态”、“不卷入”。在他们的支持下，作为中共中央理论刊物的《红旗》杂志，对这场争论长时间保持沉默。

随着真理标准问题讨论的不断展开和深入，邓小平对一些给这场讨论制造障碍的人进行了批评。7月21日，邓小平找中宣部部长谈话，要求他不要再“下禁令”、“设禁区”了，不要“再把刚开始的生动活泼的政治局面拉向后退”。第二天，邓小平又同胡耀邦进行了一次谈话，旗帜鲜明地支持胡耀邦发动的这场讨论。他说：你们理论动态，班子很不错啊！你们的一些同志很读了些书啊！是个好班子。他还指出：《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》这篇文章，是马克思主义的。争论不可避免。争得好，根源就是“两个凡是”。

9月上旬，李先念在国务院务虚会上指出，实践是检验真理的标准是正确的，这是我们一向坚持的观点。我们要解放思想，振奋大无畏的革命精神。

应《红旗》杂志约请，谭震林撰写了一篇纪念毛泽东诞辰85周年的文章，文中宣传了实践是检验真理的唯一标准的观点。这与《红旗》不卷入的态度相悖，谭震林又不愿删改，只好将文稿报送中央常委裁决。11月中旬，邓小平通过谭震林的文章的批示，严肃地批评了《红旗》对真理标准讨论的消极态度。他说：我看这篇文章好，至少没有错误。改了一点，如《红旗》不愿登，可转《人民日报》登，为什么《红旗》不卷入？应该卷入。可以发表不同观点的文章。看来不卷入本身，可能就是卷入。邓小平的支持，有力地推动了真理标准讨论在全国的展开和深入。

从1978年6月至11月，中央党政机关各部门，全国绝大多数省、市、自治区党政领导机关，中国人民解放军各总部和各大军区的大多数负责人，以及更多的理论工作者，纷纷参加真理标准问题的讨论，并撰写文章和发表讲话，表示支持实践是检验真理的唯一标准的观点。截止1978年底，全国中央及省级报刊共刊登关于真理标准问题的讨论文章650多篇，形成以理论界为主力，波及全国，影响各界，人人关注的全民讨论热潮，从而使政治

力量的天平倒向了坚持实践标准的一边。在 1978 年 11 月 10 日至 12 月 15 日召开的中央工作会议上，汪东兴和华国锋不得不就“两个凡是”和真理标准讨论问题作了检讨和说明。

1978 年 12 月 13 日，邓小平在中央工作会议闭幕会上讲话，强调“解放思想是当前一个重大政治问题”。“不打破思想僵化，不大大解放干部和群众的思想，四个现代化就没有希望。”他说：目前进行的关于实践是检验真理的唯一标准问题的讨论，实际上也是要不要解放思想的争论。大家认为进行这个争论很有必要，意义很大。从争论的情况来看，越看越重要。一个党，一个国家，一个民族，如果一切从本本出发，思想僵化，迷信盛行，那它就不能前进，它的生机就停止了，就要亡党亡国。他还指出：只有解放思想，坚持实事求是，一切从实际出发，理论联系实际，我们的社会主义现代化建设才能顺利进行，我们党的马列主义、毛泽东思想的理论也才能顺利发展。从这个意义上说，关于真理标准问题的争论，的确是个思想路线问题；是个政治问题，是个关系到党和国家的前途和命运的问题。邓小平的话，是对持续半年之久的真理标准问题讨论重大意义的充分肯定和理论上的科学总结。

关于真理标准问题的讨论，是继五四运动、延安整风运动之后的又一次思想解放运动。它打破了过去盛行的个人迷信和教条主义的精神枷锁，逐渐端正了马克思主义实事求是的思想路线，为大规模进行拨乱反正奠定了思想理论基础，为十一届三中全会的召开准备了思想理论条件。

本文摘自《邓小平在历次论争中》 姜淑萍 张明杰 张曙 编著 中国长安出版社出版一书

DeepL translation

《实践是检验真理的唯一标准》文章播发始末 The Story of the circulation of the article “Practice is the Sole Criterion for Judging Truth”

On May 11, 1978, Guangming Daily published a special commentator's article, "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth." The article points out that the standard for testing truth can only be social practice. The unity of theory and practice is one of the most basic principles of Marxism. Any theory must be tested by practice. This is a fundamental theoretical negation of "two things."

The special commentator's article stirred up a storm

On May 11, 1978. The Guangming Daily was published under the signature of a special commentator. "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth." The Xinhua News Agency forwarded the full text of this article on the same day. The People's Daily and the People's Liberation Army newspaper also forwarded this article on May 12. After the publication of the article, it has aroused the attention of all parties and became the fuse of the national discussion on the standard of truth.

The original author of this important article was Hu Fuming, a teacher of the Department of Philosophy of Nanjing University. After many revisions, he was finally approved by Hu Yaobang, who presided over the work of the Central Party School. On May 10, he first published the full text of the 60th issue of the Central Party School "Theoretical Dynamics" magazine. On May 11th, in the "Guangming Daily" published in a special commentator article. The article is divided into four parts: the standard of testing truth can only be social practice; the unity of theory and practice is one of the most basic principles of Marxism; the revolutionary leader is an example of insisting on using practice to test truth; any theory must be accepted continuously tested. The article suggests that practice is not only the standard for testing truth, but also the only criterion.

Many cadres and theorists agree with the point of view of the article and demand that a large number of historical issues be dealt with according to "practical standards." However, some people disapprove or do not accept the views of the article, and those who insist on the "two whatevers" wrong views immediately come out to oppose it and exert great pressure.

On May 12, a member of the Office of the Editors and Publications Committee of Mao Zedong called the editor-in-chief of the People's Daily and made a fierce criticism of the article "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth". On May 13th, the editor of "Red Flag" magazine called the president of Xinhua News Agency and said that it was wrong for Xinhua News Agency to forward the article. "Xinhua News Agency and People's Daily made mistakes." On May 17, Wang

Dongxing, vice chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, who was in charge of propaganda work at a small-scale meeting, criticized the article "Practice is the only criterion for testing truth." This article is "theoretically absurd and ideologically reactionary. Politically, it is chopping down the banner." He questioned: "Which Center's opinion is this?!" "To investigate, accept lessons, and unify understanding, so it is not a precedent." "People's Daily must have party spirit, and the Central Propaganda Department must make a good pass." May 18 Wang Dongxing summoned the Central Propaganda Department and the person in charge of the "Red Flag" magazine to talk, criticizing the "People's Daily" is "imprudent" and asked the Central Propaganda Department to take care of it.

In the face of accusations from the "two ordinary" factions, **Hu Yaobang and others are facing tremendous political pressure.** With the high pressure, **the theoretical world is silent.** In this way, the discussion of the issue of the standard of truth will be at risk of abortion.

At a Critical moment, Deng Xiaoping declared himself

In contrast to the blame and criticism, Deng Xiaoping gave firm and effective support to the article "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth."

When practice was the only criterion for testing truth was published Deng Xiaoping did not notice. Later, when he heard that someone had attacked this article fiercely, he came to read it carefully. On May 19, when Deng Xiaoping met with the head of the core leadership team of the Central Ministry of Culture, he clearly stated: **"The article is in line with Marxism-Leninism, and it can't be taken down!"** In the central leadership, Deng Xiaoping was the first to stand up and express his position. [date apparently is incorrect – see Deng Xiaoping Nianpu]

On May 30, when Deng Xiaoping talked with Hu Qiaomu and other responsible persons about the content of his speech to the political work conference of the whole army, he clearly stated that he should focus on the issue of the standard of truth. He said: My concluding remarks at this meeting are prepared to **talk about three questions:** The first question is to talk about **seeking truth from facts is the fundamental attitude**, fundamental point of view, and **fundamental method of Mao Zedong Thought.** Focus on the first question. The most fundamental and most important thing in Mao Zedong Thought is to seek truth from facts. Now there is a problem, even the practice is the

standard for testing the truth has become a problem, it is simply inexplicable! He also pointed out in a targeted manner: If only your speech is different from that of Chairman Mao, unlike Chairman Hua, it is no good. This is not an isolated phenomenon, which is a reflection of the current trend of thought.

At this time, under the direct leadership of the Secretary-General of the Central Military Commission, Luo Ruiqing, the political work conference of the whole army is stepping up preparations. In the process of preparing for the political work conference of the whole army, different opinions also appeared. When Deng Xiaoping learned that some people disagreed with some of the facts in the meeting documents that were in line with the actual new formulation, he immediately pointed out that this is a trend of thought, and I must speak.

On June 2, Deng Xiaoping delivered a speech at the political work conference of the whole army, and once again refuted "two whatevers." In explaining how to correctly treat Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, he pointed out that **seeking truth from facts is the starting point and fundamental point of Mao Zedong Thought**. He criticized some comrades who talked about Mao Zedong Thought every day, but often forgot, abandoned or even opposed Comrade Mao Zedong's seeking truth from facts, all starting from reality, combining theory with practice, such a fundamental point of view and fundamental method of Marxism. "Not only that, **some people still think that whoever insists on seeking truth from facts, starting from reality, combining theory with practice, is committing a great crime**. Their point of view is essentially that they only need to copy and copy. Otherwise, they will say 'This is a violation of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and violates the spirit of the Center. The question they raised is not a small issue, but a question of how to treat Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.'

Deng Xiaoping emphasized that the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought cannot be violated at any time. There is no doubt about this. However, it must be combined with the actual situation, to analyze the actual situation and solve practical problems. He also called for breaking the spiritual shackles, "to make our thoughts a big liberation." Deng Xiaoping's speech not only profoundly clarified the basic idea of seeking truth from facts, everything from reality, theory and practice, but also thorough refutation of the "two whatevers." This has aroused strong repercussions throughout the country and has become a sharp weapon for the masses of cadres and people to emancipate their minds.

The next day, the People's Daily made a detailed introduction to Deng Xiaoping's speech on June 2, with the title of "Vice Chairman Deng's incisive elaboration on Chairman Mao's quest for truthfulness". At the same time, a few lines of words were added to clearly express the position of the newspaper. On June 6, "People's Daily" and "Liberation Army Daily" published the speech of Deng Xiaoping in the first edition. Deng Xiaoping's speech was listed as one of the main contents of Zhongfa's Document No. 38 of 1978. It was issued on June 29th and played a significant role in promoting the discussion and practical work of the standard of truth.

But the struggle did not end there. On June 15th, Wang Dongxing summoned the head of the propaganda department and the head of the news unit directly under the Central Committee to focus on criticizing the People's Daily and several times the name of Hu Yaobang.

Emancipating the mind and is a major political issue

In order to refute accusations against the article "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth," Hu Yaobang stood up against pressure, organized the Central Party School a second important article "a fundamental principle of Marxism", sharp style The article criticized the various accusations of "Practice is the sole criterion for testing the truth", and was published in the "Liberation Army Daily" on June 24 in the name of the special commentator of the "Liberation Army". After this, Hu Yaobang organized and wrote a third article, "All things in Subjective Worlds Should Be Tested by Practice," which was published on September 10, 1978 in the "Theory of Dynamics" of the Central Party School, and on September 26, in the name of the special commentator of the People's Daily, the discussion was made public, which further pushed the discussion deeper.

After the publication of the article "A Fundamental Principle of Marxism," Wang Dongxing continued to exert pressure on the discussion. Hua Guofeng also instructed the central propaganda department and some of the provincial and municipal leaders to discuss the issue of truth standards "not to be expressed" or "not involved." With their support, the "Red Flag" magazine, a theoretical publication of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, kept silent on this debate for a long time.

As the discussion on the issue of truth standards continued to expand and deepen, Deng Xiaoping criticized some people who created obstacles to this discussion. **On July 21, Deng Xiaoping talked to the Minister of the Central Propaganda Department and demanded he not "issue a prohibition order" or "set a forbidden zone".** Do not "move the lively political situation at the beginning to retreat." The next day, [July 22] **Deng Xiaoping also had a conversation with Hu Yaobang and clearly supported the discussion initiated by Hu Yaobang.** He said: **Your Theoretical Dynamics team is very good! Some of your comrades have really read some books! It is a good team.** He also pointed out that the article **"Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth"** is Marxist. **The debate is unavoidable. To struggle well, the root cause is "two whatevers."**

In early September, Li Xiannian pointed out at the State Council Retreat that practice is the right standard for testing truth. This is the view we have always insisted on. We must emancipate our minds and invigorate the fearless spirit of revolution.

At the request of the "Red Flag" magazine, **Tan Zhenlin wrote an article commemorating the 85th anniversary of Mao Zedong's birthday. The article publicizes the idea that practice is the sole criterion for testing truth.** This is contrary to the attitude that "Red Flag" is not involved. Tan Zhenlin was reluctant to revise it and submitted the manuscript to the Standing Committee for ruling. **In mid-November, Deng Xiaoping seriously criticized the negative attitude of the "Red Flag"** to the discussion of the standard of truth through the instructions of Tan Zhenlin's article. He said: I read this article well, at least no mistakes. Changed a bit, such as "Red Flag" is not willing to publish, can be transferred to the "People's Daily" board, why "Red Flag" is not involved? Should be involved. Articles with different opinions can be published. It seems that it is not involved in itself, it may be involved. Deng Xiaoping's support has effectively promoted the development and deepening of the discussion of the standard of truth in the country.

From June to November 1978, the various departments of the central party and government organs, the majority of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, the party and government leading organs, the headquarters of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the majority of the heads of the major military regions, and more theories Workers have participated in the discussion of the issue of truth standards, wrote articles and delivered speeches, expressing support for practice as the only criterion for testing truth. By the end of 1978, the national central and provincial newspapers and magazines had published more than 650 articles on the issue of truth

standards, forming a trend of discussion among the theoretical circles, affecting the whole country, affecting all walks of life, and attracting attention from all walks of life. It has turned to the side of adhering to the standard of practice. **At the Central Work Conference held from November 10 to December 15, 1978, Wang Dongxing and Hua Guofeng had to review and explain the discussion of "two whatevers" and the standard of truth.**

On **December 13, 1978**, Deng Xiaoping spoke at the closing meeting of the Central Working Conference, stressing that **"liberating thought is a major political issue at present."** "Do not break the rigid thinking, not greatly liberate the cadres and the masses' thinking, and there is no hope for the four modernizations." He said: The current discussion on the only standard issue of practice as a test of truth is actually an argument for emancipating the mind. . Everyone thinks that it is necessary to carry out this debate and it is of great significance. From the point of view of the argument, the more important it is, the more important it is. A party, a country, a nation, if everything starts from the books, the mind is rigid, and superstition is prevalent, then it cannot move forward, its vitality ceases, and it is necessary to die and die. He also pointed out: Only by emancipating the mind, persisting in seeking truth from facts, starting from reality, linking theory with practice, can our socialist modernization drive proceed smoothly, and the theory of our party's Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought can develop smoothly. In this sense, the debate on the issue of the standard of truth is indeed a question of ideological line; it is a political issue and a question concerning the future and destiny of the party and the state. Deng Xiaoping's words are a full affirmation and theoretical scientific summary of the significance of the discussion of the standard of truth that lasted for half a year.

The discussion on the issue of the standard of truth is another ideological emancipation movement following the May Fourth Movement and the Yan'an Rectification Movement. It broke the spiritual shackles of personal superstition and dogmatism that prevailed in the past, gradually corrected the ideological line of Marxism seeking truth from facts, laid the ideological and theoretical foundation for large-scale chaos, and prepared ideological and theoretical conditions for the convening of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee. .

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