
FROM THE EDITOR

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."

Thus reads the inscription on a tombstone in a London graveyard, and it hardly seems possible that its author has been dead only 100 years, so great has been the impact of his ideas on contemporary society. Born in Rhenish Prussia in 1818 of Jewish parents (his lawyer father was later to convert to Protestantism bringing the whole family with him), Karl Marx went on to become the most influential thinker in the history of socialism. In this issue of Tripod, we offer our readers three articles on various aspects of Marx's thought, all three written by Catholic scholars.

In our first offering, Arthur F. McGovern, an American Jesuit, reviews for us the traditional points of conflict between Marxism and Christianity, as well as pointing out their common humanistic concerns. Christians should face realistically the areas of difference, but also be ready to accept with an open mind the valid contributions Marx has made to modern society.

The Swiss Dominican Georges M.M. Cottier takes for his subject Marx's atheism. Is it an essential part of his philosophy? After tracing its origin back through two other noted German philosophers, Hegel and Feuerbach, he concludes that atheism, far from being a peripheral element, is at the heart of Marx's concept of history.

Our old friend and colleague Leo Goodstadt chips in with an economist's view of Marxist economic theory in practice. Leo, whose name has become even more familiar to residents of Hong Kong through his popular weekly T.V. programme on current affairs, Newsline, welcomes the recent change in China's economic policy to a more open system, and credits Marxism with being a major factor behind China's entry into the international community of nations.

If your journey through the dialectical maze of Marxist philosophy has left you somewhat short of breath, we invite you to rest awhile with

Chan Sui-Jeung. Mr. Chan, who pursues his subject with the careful enthusiasm of a detective on the trail of the lost family jewels, concludes his fascinating study of the Jewish community of Kaifeng in this issue.

And finally, some pages from the notebook of a young Hong Kong traveler, on his recent visit to a number of religious centres in the famous tri-city area of Wuhan.

Also included in this issue is the Third Annual Report of the Holy Spirit Study Centre, which we sincerely hope you will not subject to Marxist historical analysis.

We take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

If you would like to contribute a manuscript to TRIPOD, the following guidelines may be of use:

1. TRIPOD'S focus is Christianity and China. Articles relating to this field are most welcome. Our more specific emphasis is on religion and morality, Church history - events and personalities, philosophical and theological approaches to the East - West dialogue, and the exchange of research materials among China study groups.

2. We encourage a wide variety of literary forms: dissertations, China travel reports, critical reviews of books and the arts, pictorial essays and personal comment.

3. The ideal length of an article is about two to three thousand words. If in English, please type and double space. If in Chinese, please use Chinese manuscript paper.

4. Submitted manuscripts will be returned at the request of the author.

5. Also upon the authors request, the final English and Chinese versions will be returned for comment and correction before publication.

6. The authors of published material will receive, in addition to five complimentary copies of the issue in which the work appears, a one year free subscription to TRIPOD.

7. Please submit all manuscripts to: The Editor, TRIPOD, Holy Spirit Study Centre, 6, Welfare Road, Aberdeen, HONG KONG.