

# FROM THE EDITOR



China's Academy of Social Sciences has just published its long awaited Chinese Encyclopedia of General Knowledge. The new encyclopedia has one entry under the heading of religion. Professor Thaddeus Hang, who heads the philosophy department of Zhengzhi University in Taiwan, assuming the important influence the encyclopedia will have on the Chinese reading public, felt a critique of the entry's content and its underlying presuppositions was in order. Professor Hang's analysis and criticism can be found in our lead article.

From science we move on to a continuation of our exploration of the present state of affairs among China's major religions. Last issue, as you may recall, dealt briefly with Buddhism and Catholicism. This time we give our attention to Protestantism, Islamism and Daoism. It would be difficult to find a more competent spokesman for the Protestant Three-Self Movement than its chairman, Bishop K.H. Ting, who is also president of the China Christian Council. In a recent interview, Bishop Ting brings us up-to-date on the fortunes of Protestantism during the present thaw. This is followed by a number of interviews from the Muslim community of Yunnan Province. The interviews by Dr. Donald MacInnis are personal and full of light, human touches that give us a flavour of the daily life and present concerns of the Muslim community. Don has also left behind his translation of an excerpt from "Religious Issues Under Socialism", a recently published report edited by Luo Zhufeng of the Academy of Social Sciences. The excerpt is on the current situation of Daoism in Qingchengshan, Sichuan Province's most noted Daoist shrine and pilgrimage centre.

For a more speculative treatment of Islam in Asia we refer you to Fr. David Burrell's article in which he discusses the reasons for the rapid spread of Islam throughout the continent and its ready acceptance by Asians. This is in contrast to the comparatively limited success of Christianity among Asian cultures.

And now for a bit of history. Fr. Bernard Willeke, OFM, reports on his efforts to find vestiges of Franciscan convert work during the Yuan dynasty that still survive in China today. He produces enough documentary evidence to contradict the popular belief among historians that all traces of Christianity among the Chinese disappeared with the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty. Finally, Peter Barry brings us back to Yunnan and the condition of the Catholic Church there by translating a recent article on the subject from the special report on China (Zhu Ai Zhonghua) which appears each month in the Hong Kong Catholic Weekly.