

Conti, a Venetian merchant who had converted to Islam, traded in India, and was living in Alexandria. Upon learning that Conti had traveled through heretofore unknown parts of the world, Pedro, who had been sent by his brother on an intelligence mission to gather geographical knowledge and maps of possible routes to the Orient, contacted him and offered him a deal. If he would provide the Portuguese with information and charts based on his travels, Pedro would use his brother's influence with the Catholic hierarchy to gain for him absolution for his Islamic conversion. Conti agreed, and he returned to Rome, where he was debriefed by Dom Pedro. For obvious reasons, the Portuguese kept the map a state secret, revealing it only to a handful of officials, cartographers, and explorers. The Portuguese now knew there were two sea routes to the East Indies. Believing it was the shorter route, they chose to explore the one around the tip of Africa.

Menzies believes the world map was drawn from knowledge Conti gained while sailing with a Chinese fleet around the world just seven years before. In 1421, the Chinese emperor Zhu Di launched an enormous expedition led by over 100 large treasure ships (or junks) and hundreds of supporting craft, whose task was to sail the world's oceans, map the continents, establish trade with foreign peoples, and perfect their already advanced

knowledge of astronavigation and mathematical geography. Menzies believes these oceangoing vessels followed the prevailing winds and currents to India, down the east coast of Africa, north to the Cape Verde Islands, then separated with the currents. One fleet, led by Admiral Zhou Wen, sailed north to the Caribbean, with the Gulf Stream along the east coast of North America to Greenland, continued along the north coast of Siberia, and returned to China through the Bering Strait. The other fleet sailed south along the east coast of South America, went through the strait, and separated again, one fleet sailing south through the South Shetlands to Antarctica, then east to South Georgia, and along the 40th parallel to western Australia, before turning north for home. The third fleet sailed north along the west coast of South America to Ecuador and across the central Pacific to Australia, New Zealand, and the Spice Islands. It then followed the North Pacific current to North America, made landfall on Vancouver Island, and sailed south along the coast to Central America before turning west for home. Menzies believes most of the junks wrecked on rocky coasts, submerged coral reefs, and treacherous shoals, leaving thousands of Chinese stranded at different points and a plethora of physical evidence (archeological, botanical, and zoological).

While the fleet was at sea, a new emperor, who was hostile to overseas exploration, colonization, and trade, ascended the throne. When the surviving ships returned, he halted all future voyages, banned overseas travel and trade, and ordered all maps and written records of the expedition destroyed.

Menzies has amassed sufficient plausible evidence to deserve a point-by-point refutation from those who reject his claim. Such a refutation would still leave open the question of how the Portuguese obtained so much geographical information about places that neither they nor other Europeans of the time had visited. However, whether the Chinese fleet made these voyages does not matter very much in the end. If made, their "discoveries" were ephemeral and, at most, encouraged the European voyages. The Portuguese, bent on finding a sea route to Asia, would have groped their way around Africa even without advanced knowledge, and some naval power would have ventured west in search of Asia. The Europeans were restless, inquisitive, and inventive, and the lack of a world map would

not have stopped them. Furthermore, their discoveries enlarged the world, because they followed them with trading outposts, colonies, and continuing exploration, thus incorporating far-flung lands and seas into the intellectual and commercial radius of the western world. The Chinese discoveries were forgotten and left to be rediscovered almost 600 years later.

H.A. Scott Trask has just completed his biography of Condy Raguet and is now writing a short volume on William Graham Sumner before returning to his study of the Northern peace movement during the War Between the States.

In a Strange Land

by Fr. Michael P. Orsi

Catholicism and American Freedom: A History

by John T. McGreevey
New York: W.W. Norton & Co.;
295 pp., \$26.95



There will always be tension between America's experiment with democracy and hierarchically structured Roman Catholicism, because the two proclaim different concepts of freedom. While the former is grounded in the individualism of Protestantism and, more recently, of secularism, the latter regards true freedom as being circumscribed by claims imposed by considerations of the common good and by natural and supernatural law. In *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History*, John T. McGreevey, the John A. O'Brien Associate Professor of History at Notre Dame, sketches the main events, ideas, and characters that have shaped American Catholicism since the 1840's. His thesis is grounded in the triangular tension among the local Catholic Church, wary authorities in Rome, and the civil and cultural ethos of the country. In this light, McGreevey discusses such key issues as schooling, slavery, social justice, sexual morality, and religious freedom. While his analysis of these matters will enrich the historian and theologian, it is the cultural anthropologist who will most benefit from the insight McGreevey brings to the inter-Church and

LIBERAL ARTS

"METROSEXUAL" BLUES

"He has been marginalised by the women's movement, portrayed as a useless plonker in television sitcoms and told by scientists that his Y-chromosome is in decline. Now the modern British male is about to be fleeced as advertisers capitalise on his low self-esteem and target him with products to 're-empower' him.

"Marian Salzman said her research . . . showed that men had been neutered — not just by feminism and women in the workplace, but by the political events of the past three years. September 11, the Iraq war and Private Jessica Lynch's usurping of the traditional male battlefield bravado had blurred their sense of self."

— from "Neutered modern man to be offered back his missing pride in exchange for his wallet"
by Angelique Chrisafis,
the Guardian (June 30)

civil dynamics that continue to produce uneasiness between Catholic liberals and conservatives and to cause strains in Church-State relations.

McGreevey is most insightful in his presentation of the philosophical and theological beliefs of certain priests, bishops, and lay theologians who have driven Catholic opinion and behavior. Two Jesuits in particular represent the contending schools of separatism and inculturation that, to this day, incite debate in Catholic circles. Fr. Bernadine Wiget greatly feared the Protestantizing effects the public schools in Boston might have on newly arrived Catholic immigrants, and his crusade for Catholic schools had a ghettoizing effect on Catholic life that gradually encompassed cradle-to-grave care designed to produce group cohesiveness and solidarity that would ensure strong loyalty to Rome. A second, more liberal, school working to promote a more mainstreamed Catholicism was advanced in the mid-20th-century writings of Fr. John Courtney Murray. His work on Church-State relations and religious freedom more or less paved the way for Catholics to participate in American social structures and political processes, for the advancement of the common good.

McGreevey's discussion of various Catholic leaders' positions on slavery during the Civil War era, the Church's intrusion into the arena of social justice, and the loud voice it has raised on behalf of sexual morality and the sanctity of life demonstrate the Catholic Church's role as a dynamic cultural force perennially to be reckoned with in America. The contributions of such Catholic activists and intellectual giants as Orestes Brownson; Archbishop John Hughes; Fr. John A. Ryan; John C. Ford, S.J.; and Gerald Kelley, S.J.; as well as the effects of the neo-Thomist school of Nouvelle Théologie in America (which included Jacques Maritain; Henri de Lubac, S.J.; Yves Congar, O.P.; Karl Rahner, S.J.; Bernard Lonergan, S.J.; and, of course, Murray himself), provide the ideological framework that shaped the battles both within and against the American Catholic Church.

Rome's uneasiness with American liberty, according to McGreevey, stems from the Vatican's experience with European liberalism, which, for centuries, denigrated the Church's authority and Her claims to absolute truth. The merest hint of such an attitude in the United States often entailed the appointment of heavy-handed, Rome-oriented (ultramontane)

bishops, along with the call for a return to Thomistic philosophy and theology in the interest of bolstering the traditional Catholic worldview. The Vatican's justifiable concerns—which stem both from America's hostile pragmatism toward, and incompatibility with, Catholicism and from theological historicism's emphasis on individual conscience as promoted by the Nouvelle Théologie—are nevertheless given short shrift by McGreevey. Certainly, the abandonment by many Catholics of Church teaching on life issues should have engendered some analysis of, and sympathy for, Roman vigilance. While the last chapter of the book attempts to discuss certain contemporary problems in the American Catholic Church, such as the refusal of many Catholic politicians to legislate in accord with Church teaching in moral matters and the clerical sex-abuse scandal, McGreevey falls short of offering any insight into them. Perhaps we do not yet stand at a great enough distance from these phenomena to study their causes or to determine their effects on Catholics in America. However, McGreevey fails to draw the connection between these problems and the regnant license that has gained hegemony in America and, in some cases, the Church. Despite this lack, his book is a superb study of American Catholicism. It will be a tremendous resource for the thoughtful reader.

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That Old Fox

by Jeremy Lott

**Freedom and Its Betrayal:
Six Enemies of Human Liberty**

by Isaiah Berlin
Princeton: Princeton University Press;
182 pp., \$35.00



Give Isaiah Berlin this much: He had the good sense to choose Henry Hardy as an editor and literary trustee. Since Berlin's death in 1997, Hardy has moved at a reasonable pace in releasing Berlin's unpublished papers, but he has taken great care to do it right.

A case in point is last year's *Freedom and Its Betrayal: Six Enemies of Human Liberty*, a collection of six off-the-cuff 1952 BBC broadcasts on famous (or infamous) antiliberal thinkers from Helvétius to Maistre. Reconstructed from the broadcasts and Berlin's own meager notes, Hardy has made the crooked path of his late friend's idiosyncratic rapid-fire delivery (Berlin was known to pronounce *epistemological* as one syllable) into this straight Sunday stroll of a book. Widely available for the first time, the addresses can now be studied and savored.

Really, "savored" is not too strong a word. Non-book-reviewers, like non-political-science-students, may not realize what a relief it is to crack a book by *any* political philosopher (or "historian of ideas," as Berlin preferred) only to learn that he could write in English. The language is vivid—direct, playful, learned; the presentation, ordered and concise. We may owe the limited length of the radio broadcasts for the last blessing.

Measured in terms of depth, the essays in *Freedom and Its Betrayal* are not on the level of some of Berlin's other work, such as "The Hedgehog and the Fox" or "Two Concepts of Liberty" (or "The Originality of Machiavelli," in my view the best thing ever written on the author of *The Prince*). Faulting them for this, however, would be a bit like judging a priest's homily to be wanting because it fails to measure up to the Sermon on the Mount.

In fact, a homily might be a good comparison. In these six lectures, Berlin sets out to inform, entertain, and defend the Anglo-Saxon concepts of liberty and pluralism against all comers. In the Preface, he explains that the question he posed in respect to each of his subjects was, "Why should you obey anybody else?" Although all, save one,

claimed they were in favour of [human liberty]—indeed some of them passionately pleaded for it and regarded themselves as the truest champions of what they called true liberty, as opposed to various specious or imperfect brands of it—yet it is a peculiar fact that in the end, their doctrines are inimical to what is normally meant, at any rate, by individual liberty, or political liberty. . . . [N]amely, the right freely to shape one's life as one wishes, the production of circumstances in which men can develop their natures as variously and