

considerable period of time. The New Testament, which spans about fifty years, consists of biography, community history, letters, and, in some versions, an apocalypse. The Koran, except for the opening verses and a few passages in which Muhammad himself or the angel Gabriel speaks, contains nothing but God's own Word, revealed over a period of twenty-two years in the life of the Prophet.

More important, Jews, Christians, and Muslims all believe that it was God who gave and Moses who, as His human instrument, recorded the Law, or Torah. Moreover, God intervened directly in human history on several other occasions between the time of Moses and the prophet Ezra, and the Jewish Bible contains all of these revelations of God to His people. Similarly, in Islam, Muhammad is merely a prophet, a man to whom God gave a revealed Book that he was instructed to call the Recitation, or *al-Qur'an*. Christian scripture, on the other hand, is something quite different, since Jesus produced no new writings of his own. The Christian claims that Jesus is both God and man, and the gospels are accounts of Jesus' words and deeds as recorded by his disciples. Jesus did not bring a Book; he was himself "the Good News." Thus Islam may be seen as an almost reactionary return to traditional Judaism after the prodigalities of a wayward Christianity.

In discussing the early struggles that took place over the nature of the Islamic community and its leadership, Peters explains clearly and concisely the differences—exceedingly valuable to us today—between the Sunnis and the Shiites, between the *imam*, the prayer leader whose office (held by descendants of Ali) is regarded by the Shiites as demanding moral rectitude and transmitting a special charisma, and the *mahdi*, an eschatological chief similar to the figure of the Messiah in rabbinic Judaism. Useful, if more provocative, is Peters's assertion that the *mahdi* has been invoked repeatedly in Islamic history as a challenge to the *caliph* or as a catalyst in Muslim political affairs, but with negligible success.

The author also shows how the reflections of the pagan Greek theologians on Logos, or Word, as the first emanation of God may have influenced the early Jewish treatment of "Wisdom" as a personification distinct from God and an agent in crea-

tion, and may also account, in part, for Paul's version of Jesus in Colossians as the preexistent Logos.

Peters is at his most persuasive when he asserts that early Christianity's veneration of the saints was the logical outcome of the doctrine of the Incarnation. By his dual nature as God and man and by his death and resurrection, Jesus sanctified matter and established a system of sacraments that mirrored his own effortless bridging of the realms of the spiritual and the material. In Judaism and Islam the only bridge was divine revelation, the scriptures. The Christian view spawned a number of doctrines distasteful to the sensibilities of the other two—among them, the Trinity, with its implicit rejection of monotheism, the Eucharistic sacrifice in which flesh is transformed into the Word, and the veneration of the saints and images. While Judaism and Islam had their share of martyrs and confessors—those whose blood or holy lives proclaimed their right to be venerated—the Jews and Muslims were unwilling to make the fine distinctions necessary to extend to others the worship due only to God.

Like Peters's invaluable *Harvest of Hellenism*, *Children of Abraham* is a continuously fascinating book for the general reader and one that scholars will read with interest and enthusiasm.

#### **SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT AND EAST ASIA**

by Allen S. Whiting

(Stanford University Press; 325 pp.; \$22.50)

Robert W. Barnett

East of Moscow, east of the Urals, east even of Irkutsk, and yet almost as large as China or the United States, East Asian Siberia casts shadows east, west, and south. Laced by great and difficult rivers, swept by idiosyncratic winds, fogs, rains, and snows, subject to extremes of temperature unmatched anywhere on earth, and poised on sometimes fixed, sometimes writhing permafrost, this vast, underpopulated, and strategically placed territory remains largely unknown.

Travelers, biologists, botanists, geologists, chemists, seismologists, engineers—most of them Russian—have had intimations of the vast cornucopia that

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awaits: almost limitless hydroelectric potential, plus coal, oil, gas, lignite, gold, silver, diamonds, copper, tin, bauxite, lead, tungsten, zinc, antimony, mercury, molybdenum, asbestos, and timber. Whiting quotes a Yakutsk saying: "When God passed over Yakutia while creating the world, his hands became cold and all the rich minerals slipped between his fingers to the ground below." He himself is somewhat less exuberant, because actual knowledge of East Asian Siberia's wealth is fragmentary or unreliable, and also because treasures in the ground are not "resources" until man and culture, history and economics come together in such a way as to use them to advantage.

*Siberian Development and East Asia* actually offers us two Whittings: one, the traveler (in 1975 and 1978); the other, the analyst. Their collaboration offers an informative and stimulating feast for the reader.

The three chapters by Whiting-the-traveler excite hope that by an international effort, or at least by acquiescence, East Asian Siberia will be a new frontier for exploration, offering the resources to offset such premonitions of global doom as the Club of Rome's. Whiting-the-analyst cautions against expecting too much and tells us the hard-edged questions he asks himself:

"...What is the actual mineral wealth of East and Far East Siberia, and is it accessible? Does it offer significant relief from eventual shortages elsewhere in the USSR, especially in oil and gas? If so, is it desirable to assist Moscow in exploiting these resources by making credits and technology available from abroad, particularly from the United States? Should this assistance be manipulated in order to influence Soviet policy, whether toward human rights at home or toward intervention abroad?"

"What are the strategic implications of the Baikal-Amur railroad for Soviet military capabilities in the region? How are these implications perceived in Moscow, Beijing, and Tokyo? How do the Japanese view Siberian development?...What are Soviet intentions in East Asia? Can they be affected for better or for worse by the presence or absence of foreign cooperation in Siberian projects? What does the opening up of Siberia portend for the Pacific basin and the larger future of global resources?"

"...How likely is local or regional tension in East Asia to repeat the major-nation

conflicts of the past? What issues remain to be resolved among neighboring regimes? How explosive are they? Is trade and the bartering of technology for resources concessionary or mutually advantageous?...How flexible is policy over time?..."

Whiting suggests that forecasts for the future of Siberia can be read not so much in Soviet behavior as in the world's doubts about Moscow's intentions. Will the international community, for example, accept a Richard Pipes hypothesis (satanic) or, rather, a Marshall Shulman hypothesis (pragmatic) about the Soviet Union? Washington has oscillated between the two, as has Beijing. Tokyo has leaned quite steadily toward a Shulman hypothesis. Indeed, for half a century now ideological bias has been distorting or causing turmoil in the calculation of practical possibilities for Siberia.

Whiting's command of the broad East Asian historical context enables him to remind readers what has happened both in fact and in the imagination to shape Moscow's, Beijing's, Tokyo's, and Washington's present assessment of potentials and desirable commitments in East Asian Siberia. He often seems to be lamenting that a future for this colossal area of the USSR and its indigenous population rests upon global power-political concerns and upon the presumed intentions of Moscow. He hints that to attribute an efficient and coherent strategy to Moscow and Khabarovsk—though the seemingly rational thing to do—could mean denying ourselves a speculative but possibly great multisided strategic gain to be gotten from dealing with East Asian Siberia on its own merits. The possibilities include a mutually desirable movement of Chinese labor into Siberia's timber mills, an additional source of critical energy and industrial raw materials for Japan, the "Westernization" and "civilianization" of the Soviet bureaucracy, the enlargement of world trade and investment that is so desired by American business, a demonstration of mutual profit in a long-term international joint venture, some easing of border tensions, and an improvement in Soviet foreign-exchange earning capabilities through investments that would make no contribution to Soviet military production.

Whiting is much too fastidious and cautious to write policy prescriptions for the United States or others. His

findings, however, have invited one reader to brood about an attractive possibility: that a boldly comprehensive and successful multinational response to the numberless challenges of the inhospitable Siberian climate, in building the mutual trust that comes from cooperation in a limited and constructive purpose, might begin to dissolve some of the nameless fears that affect other confrontations between Moscow and Washington. On Whiting's evidence, such an undertaking in East Asian Siberia offers a low-risk experiment and the possibility of a very high return for all concerned.

With the climate in today's Oval Office, many would consider such an experiment unlikely indeed. Still, the gestation of an important new idea has rarely been trouble-free. If this one carries to term, Whiting should claim paternity. [WV]

## MONSIGNOR QUIXOTE

by Graham Greene

(Simon & Schuster; 221 pp.; \$12.95)

*John Tessitore*

Reviewing the latest work by Graham Greene is like criticizing the architecture of the pyramids: presumptuous at best. After all, one does not "review" monuments, one reveres them. And with some twenty or so novels, six plays, several dozen short stories, two volumes of autobiography, and an assortment of essays behind him, Graham Greene is every bit the monument. Indeed, his stature as living Englishman of Belles Lettres is shared only with that other cranky genius in self-exile, Robert Graves.

Understandably, it is sometimes difficult for us to remember that the Graham Greene of Nice, France, and author of such recent titles as *The Human Factor* (1978), *Dr. Fischer of Geneva* (1980), and now *Monsignor Quixote* is the same Graham Greene who produced the chilling *Brighton Rock* in 1936 and the lovely—and for some, like me, his finest work—*The Heart of the Matter* in 1948. With such accomplishments now some forty years behind him, should anyone care what a reviewer has to say in 1982?

Probably not, and it is just as well. Greene has earned his place in the Grand Tradition, and if in the next cen-