GATEWAY TO SIBERIAN RESOURCES (THE BAM). By *Theodore Shabad* and *Victor L. Mote*. Washington, D.C.: Scripta Publishing Co., Scripta Technica, 1977. viii, 189 pp. Distributed by Halsted Press Division, John Wiley & Sons, New York.

The prime showcase physical project going on now in the Soviet Union, recalling the Urals-Kuznetsk Combine and the large Siberian or Volga hydroelectric stations of yesterday, is the construction of the "Baikal-Amur Mainline," or BAM, over two thousand miles from the upper Lena River to the lower Amur and the Pacific, a few hundred miles north of, and parallel to, the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Quite apart from the monumental enginering difficulties presented by the terrain and climate, this project throws into high relief contentious issues of domestic policy, such as the peopling of Siberia at a time of acute labor shortages and the limits of subsidization in resource development at a time of severe capital shortages. Equally fundamental is the delicate interdependence between this project and the international economy at a time of growing shortages of energy and minerals, and the shifting trade alliances between Japan, China, the United States, and the Pacific Basin in general, vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The equation is further complicated by the deep-rooted issues of Soviet ideology, as well as the imponderable military factor, in the face of continuing Sino-Soviet hostility.

This book is a model of the value of wide-ranging geographical analysis of the interplay and significance of such questions. The perspective of time and space is admirably provided by Theodore Shabad in his introductory chapter on Siberian resource development in the Soviet period. The chapter is packed with detail which does not obscure the delineation of the changing trends and phases of the process, and is informed by sureness of touch born of Shabad's painstaking and comprehensive study of these problems, both inside and outside of the Soviet Union. This account, quite apart from its relation to this particular project, is the most concise and authoritative survey of Soviet Siberian development available.

Similarly, the detailed analysis of the project itself "as a catalyst for the development of Pacific Siberia," by Victor Mote, is the best available, maintaining a good balance between the environmental, historical, and resource details and problems of the specific region and the wider context. Mote has combed through hundreds of Soviet sources and has produced a balanced and critical summary and evaluation of the costs, benefits, and the many significant questions involved.

Finally, short evaluations by five Soviet experts are included. These provide an instructive mirror of their preoccupations and viewpoints; the analysis by the veteran Irkutsk geographer, Viktor Sochava, is particularly wise and diversified in scope. Incidentally, it is a pity that the topical maps in this book do not match the standard set in Sochava's *Atlas Zabaikalia* of a decade ago, which still stands as one of the finest regional atlases in existence.

In short, this relative deficiency notwithstanding, the book is a landmark in the geographical analysis of a major project, which may substantially modify economic, political, and environmental conditions in the country and in the Pacific Basin. If, indeed, the BAM is in operation by the mid-1980s (it was marked as completed in an American atlas three decades ago!), it will surely stand as one of the most monumental—and controversial—new geographical features of the twentieth century.

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