

From the Bank's statutes, and from some of the more serious discussion of its work in recent writings by Eastbloc economists,¹ it appears that the Bank enjoys virtually no independent authority, but acts chiefly as the book-keeper for intra-CMEA accounts. No multilateral settlements can be made by the Bank without explicit permission of the countries involved. Nor can the Bank extend trade credit on its own authority. Any such swing credits extended to a debtor country must first be approved by the particular creditor country, or countries affected.

From an October 1963 CMEA communique it seems that the Bank's investment activities, too, are limited to the role of agent. Thus the Bank "may, upon the instruction of the interested parties, finance the construction... of enterprises... *from resources allocated by these countries.*"² (Italics added).

Mr. Grzybowski's book, though deficient in its economic insights, nevertheless is a serious, scholarly work. It is a useful reference for other students of Eastbloc affairs, both because of the detailed discussion of specialized agencies' activities, and for its comprehensive list of good source materials.

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E.D. Tappe (ed.), *Documents Concerning Rumanian History (1427-1601)*. The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1964. Pp. 162.

In this book, Professor Tappe has assembled an assortment of 218 unpublished documents in English, French, Italian, and Latin, which are in some way related to the history of the Rumanian Principalities, and are drawn from archives in Great Britain: the Public Record Office, British Museum, Bodleian Library and other public and private collections. Although of mixed value to the historian, this work justifies Iorga's contention, that given the dearth of native sources, the British archives might prove as valuable a source for the study of Rumanian history as those which he used in France, Austria, and Prussia for the famed 44 volume Hurmuzachi collection. The significance of this new material lies not so much in the evidence provided for revolutionary

1. See in particular articles by Adam Zwaz in *Finanse*, Warsaw, no. 2, February 1965, and by Stefan Zurowski in *Zycie Gospodarcze*, Warsaw, 18 July 1965, also appearing in English in the *Polish News Bulletin* of 24 July 1965.

2. *Pravda*, 24 October 1963.

interpretations but rather the aid furnished for filling in odd historical gaps, and clearing up small mysteries. As Professor C. Marinescu notes in the introduction, these sources enhance our knowledge of the origins of the Anglo-Moldavian commercial treaty of 1588, and give us reason to suspect that Prince Peter Cercel of Moldavia (1583-1585) may not have been the son of Pătrascu the Good as previously believed, but probably was a Greek from the Morea.

More surprisingly, these documents reveal the degree of importance with which Elizabethan diplomatic agents at Constantinople, particularly from the time of Sir William Harborne onward (1583-1588) viewed the Danubian provinces, even sponsoring princely candidates there centuries before official relations were established. By far the most successful instance of such backing was Sir Edward Barton's support of Prince Michael the Brave (1593-1601), although this was well known before the present collection appeared.

Indeed, the documents, notwithstanding their purported starting date (1427), are very largely concerned with the short but epochmaking career of this Wallachian ruler, who swiftly accomplished the dream of future Rumanian nationalists by uniting Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania. Of the 218 documents, only two deal with the fifteenth century; not more than 22 touch on the first half of the sixteenth and well over half cover the reign of Michael, whose death in 1601 provides a closing date for the book. With Barton's appointment in 1593, Ottoman state papers enter the collection, but it is only after Michael's ascension to the Wallachian throne that the dispatches from Constantinople become more accurate, consistent and frequent (the diplomatic agent sent 20 reports the year after Michael's appointment, but only four in the preceeding year). Although there has been good monographic work on various aspects of Michael's reign, some of it making use of English sources, the Tappe collection nevertheless provides future historians with enough new data for a reappraisal of this vital political and military episode.

Since the collection of documents is still a vital part of Rumanian historiography and historians in the Rumanian People's Republic are publishing archival material from within the country, from its neighbours, and from Russia (new volumes of documents taken from Russian, Bulgarian, Polish, and Hungarian sources are shortly to be added to the Hurmuzachi collection), it is particularly appropriate that a scholar of Professor Tappe's competence and integrity should have brought to fruition a project started before World War II (transcripts had at

least been made from the Public Record Office). He has avoided reprinting documents from the PRO previously published, and, in starting the arduous work of making British primary sources on Rumania available, has offered a lead to other historians, who it is hoped will continue this work from 1601 onwards. Indeed, it might be desirable to broaden our perspective regarding Eastern Europe by publishing English documents for Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia. If comprehensiveness be the aim, English volumes which would be the equivalent of the Hurmuzachi collection are still in the offing.

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W.E.D. Allen, *Problems of Turkish Power in the Sixteenth Century*. London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1963. Pp. 64 + Appendix.

With the prevailing tendency to equate bigger with better it is refreshing to find a work which proves that good things still do come in small packages. W.E.D. Allen, well-known and respected for his histories of Georgia and of the Ukraine, presents, within the compass of a forty-page essay buttressed by almost forty pages of notes and tables, a far-ranging, provocative study on the vast Turkish expansion of the sixteenth century. The word Turkish is important since Allen deals with the Turks in their Central Asian, Russian, and Indian manifestations as well as in the Ottoman Empire. If upon ending the monograph the reader is left both somewhat dissatisfied and a bit winded by the swiftness of the pace which shifts him back and forth between Istambul and central Asia, he has at least benefited from an imaginative exposure to several problems of major importance.

A point of departure is provided for Allen by Toynbee's declaration (in *Civilization on Trial*, 1948) that the Turks, notably Babur, were unaware of the implications of the Portuguese appearance in the Indian Ocean, and that the Ottomans reacted too late with too little in dealing with the oceanic enterprise of the Castilians and Portuguese. Toynbee had further rubbed in the salt with the added observation that Sokollu's Don-Volga canal scheme failed when attempted in 1568-1570 because the Russians had secured Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan in 1554. Allen rises to the defense of the Turks, stating that, "...there were in the Turkish world men who were concerning themselves with the potential menace of the 'oceanic revolution' within a decade of Vasco da Gama's arrival in India. Further there were men who had comprehended the significance of the decline of Turkestan and who were aware of the new