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PUBLIC HEALTH AND TRADE. ON THE ECONOMIC COST  
OF THE QUARANTINE SYSTEM IN GALAȚI  
BEFORE THE CRIMEAN WAR  
(Summary)

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The Treaty of Adrianople and the Organic Regulations legalised two contradictory institutions in the Romanian Principalities of Wallachian and Moldavia: their commercial freedom and the introduction of a severe sanitary cordon along the Danube. The former institution was open and inclusive, the latter closed and exclusive; the former was related to the globalization of the capitalist system and the Principalities' exit from the economic periphery of the Ottoman Empire, the latter concerned the globalization of disease after the two states' entry onto the routes of international mobility. Both institutions were the result of diplomatic calculations made by the Russian authorities during their occupation of the Principalities (1828-1834), and they contributed to maintaining the Romanian territory in a zone of inter-imperial ambiguities, as autonomous provinces of the Ottoman Empire, but enjoying numerous immunities and privileges guaranteed by Russia. The status of Moldavia and Wallachia remained equally ambiguous economically, as can it results from an analysis of the commercial exchanges through the inland Danubian ports of Galați and Brăila, the commercial "capitals" of the two Principalities.

These port-cities have been studied from multiple perspectives, and my paper aims to analyse their connections, with a special focus on Galați, as a contact zone of the two contradictory institutions. The ports were the convergence of complex commercial and sanitary regulations, but also of the different interests of Russia, the European powers and the Principalities themselves. In both ports, the quarantine stations were a central site from which to trace the contradictions and ambiguities of the Principalities' economic regime. Thus, I will try to analyse the competition between free trade and preventive sanitary policies as it results by detailing some aspects of the organisation and functioning of the Galați quarantine station. The paper is mainly based on British consular sources, as the English vice-consul in Galati, Charles Cunningham, often reported to his superiors in Istanbul and London the shortcomings of the commercial and quarantine regime of Moldavia's port. My paper will refer to three aspects in which the trade – public health dispute is clearly visible in the port of Galați: 1) the status and role of the quarantine system; 2) quarantine policies and the state of the Galați lazaret; 3) the regional trade effects of these quarantine policies.

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