

The Plague of 1718–19 and its Impact on the Foreign Trade of the Romanian Principalities

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“In Cronstat, città situata tra li confini della Transilvania e le frontiere della Vallacchia, siasi scoperta vampa<ta> di contagiose influenze, benché ciò non basti per crederla vera.”

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IN THE Romanian territories, the plague remained an endemic disease throughout the 18th century, as the transformation of the Romanian Principalities into a veritable battleground, during the successive wars fought by the Habsburgs and Russia against the Porte, facilitated the recurrence of the epidemics and its spread over large areas. The plague of 1718–19, with antecedents recorded in the previous years, was extremely virulent and impacted enormously on the demography of almost all Romanian territories,¹ also affecting large regions

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of Europe² and causing numerous casualties in the Balkans³ and, generally speaking, in the Ottoman possessions.

If in the Catholic world the well-known litany *A peste, fame et bello, libera nos Domine!* was frequently voiced in churches and during religious processions in order to prevent or drive away the bubonic plague, the Orthodox believers from the Romanian Principalities addressed their prayers, in the 18th century, to the Hieromartyr Saint Charalampus (Romanian: Sf. Haralambie; Greek: Άγιος Χαράλαμπος). The saint, venerated with special devotion by the Greeks, but whose cult was also highly esteemed among other Orthodox peoples, was, according to the hagiography, bishop of Magnesia, in Asia Minor; martyred in 202, during the reign of the Roman Emperor Lucius Septimius Severus, he is commemorated on 10 February, being venerated as a defender against the plague and other epidemics.⁴ Unlike in Eastern Europe, the Catholics worshipped St. Sebastian as *Depulsor Pestis*.⁵ In a “traditionally” religious society like the pre-modern European society of the first decades of the 18th century, in which natural phenomena and epidemics were regarded as manifestations of the divine will, the cult of the saints who defended the communities against epidemics was a normal alternative to the relative inefficiency of the empirical treatments employed by “classical” medicine.

In Transylvania, at Braşov, the plague had episodic manifestations in the summer of 1717, and broke out violently in December 1718, reaching the climax in August 1719, when it affected the entire principality.⁶ The epidemics, spread in the context of an acute shortage of food caused by a prolonged drought which compromised all harvests, had catastrophic consequences, with around 16,000 casualties recorded only for the town and district of Braşov.⁷

The extension and virulence of the epidemics had negative repercussions for the domestic and foreign trade, consequences that strongly affected the economy of the Romanian Principalities. The drastic limitations imposed on the circulation of persons and goods, following the decisions of the central and local authorities, the food shortages and the impossibility to easily cover the land routes across the territories affected by the epidemics determined a temporary decrease in medium- and long-distance trade, causing material losses to the merchants who had invested capital in goods blocked in depots or quarantines. The Venetian authorities considered that Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia were epidemic centers, and therefore the quarantine period imposed on goods coming from these areas was extended, as early as 1716, to up to 40 days. Nevertheless, the precautions taken by the Venetians, expression of a modern vision and of a coherent sanitary policy promoted by the Serenissima since the late 15th century, negatively affected the natural flow of commercial exchanges, given the excessively long quarantine period set for the merchandise. Many Greek and Aromanian

merchants, who brought to Venice raw materials from the Romanian Principalities, reoriented their trade towards the competing markets, sending the goods to Ancona, via Ragusa, and to Trieste, the Habsburg port which, after 1717, experienced a rapid development and played an increased role in the international trade in the Adriatic basin.⁸

In 1717–19, in the context of the epidemic outbreaks of plague which affected Eastern and Central Europe, the firmness of the Venetian measures for preventing and restricting the spread of the epizooties and epidemics greatly affected the circulation of goods and the merchants' freedom of movement. Obligated to remain in quarantine for long periods of time, the tradesmen could not take advantage of the free market mechanisms and trade their goods in favorable moments, when the selling price could bring them the highest profits. Although Venice desperately needed the raw materials and other goods which were mostly imported, the central Venetian authorities did not hesitate to adopt painful decisions, strongly harming the Venetian economy, to prevent the emergence and spread of the epidemics into the lagoon city.

The great density of the population and the effervescence of the maritime and mercantile activity of Venice were favorable factors for the rapid spread of epidemics. The traumatic experiences of 1575–77 and 1630–31, when the plague had destroyed almost a quarter of the population of Venice,⁹ led to the inflexible measures taken by the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità*, the officials responsible with public health, a veritable Department of Health in the Ancien Régime. These high officials, elected for a term of one year from among the Venetian political oligarchy, received detailed information from various European regions, thorough diplomatic channels or from private sources, and thus quickly issued orders that imposed the partial or total interruption of commercial exchanges with the states and regions affected by epidemics and epizootics or extended, if necessary, the quarantine period for the goods blocked in the Lazarettos.¹⁰

The *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* of the central administration appointed the persons responsible with public health in the other urban settlements of the Venetian state and, through them, the restrictive measures adopted at the center were efficiently applied throughout the entire Venetian territory. The importance of their responsibilities is illustrated by decisions such as that issued on 11 January 1706, by which the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* temporarily prohibited the trade of the Serenissima with “Ottoman Albania” and “Veneta Albania, unitamente con Ragusi e tutta la sua giurisdizione,”¹¹ as in many areas of Dalmatia an outbreak of the plague epidemics had been reported. More than a year later, on 12 March 1707, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* confirmed to Daniele Dolfin, the Venetian ambassador to Vienna, that they had received his information regarding the health

situation state of the inhabitants and of the livestock from Poland, Hungary, Moldavia and Wallachia:

Illustrissimo et Eccellentissimo Signore Padrone Colendissimo

Dall'ultimo foglio, che diligente l'Eccellenza Vostra fa scrivere al Magistrato Nostro sopra la salute della Polonia, siamo persuasi a restituire quel segno alla primiera libera communicatione con quelli Pubblici Stati, già sospesagli l'emergenze contagione che vi s'erano scoperte. Con piacere pure osserviamo le notizie costì capitate della buona salute che si gode nell'Ongaria, e così nella Moldavia e Valacchia, e nello stesso tempo rileviamo quali sieno state le rimostranze di Vostra Eccellenza appresso cotesta Corte [in Vienna] perché sopra tal qual voce, che correva di male in quelle Provincie, fossero prese con ...¹² le necessarie informazioni. Con avviso però che tengono li Provveditori alla Sanità di Palma da quelli di Goritia habbiamo come a questi ultimi s'è stata avanzata una notizia da' corrieri Cesarei di Gratz di contagione insorgente nella Valacchia et Ongaria, per il che avevamo estese le diligenze proprie e rilasciati ordini rigorosi perché alcun partito da tali parti non habbia l'ingresso in quel contado [Gorizia and Palmanova]. Tanto a lume di Vostra Eccellenza resti significato per quei riscontri, che giudichiamo necessari di havere in tal stato di cose, e che attenderemo con la maggior celerità, nell'auguraragli dal Cielo ogni felicità.¹³

THUS, THE prompt reaction of the Venetian central authorities was, to a great extent, the result of the quality and quantity of information received from almost the entire Europe, especially from the regions considered of strategic interest for the economy and foreign policy of the Serenissima. As public health—i. e., the necessity to prevent and restrict the outbreak and spread of epidemics by all means considered legitimate—was a top priority, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* did not hesitate to issue orders which publicly proclaimed, under threat of capital punishment ('pena la vita'), the immediate prohibition of the trade with the areas affected by the plague and/or by epizooties: on 17 August 1708 with Poland; on 26 October 1714 with Germany; on 14 June 1715 with the Habsburg dominions, including Transylvania; on 24 March 1716, by a decision of the same *magistrati*, it was accepted "di facilitar, per quanto sia possibile, il commercio, [quindi] hanno ridotte le contumacie dalli giorni quaranta a giorni vintiotto" with the goods coming to the Venetian lagoon from Trentino, Tyrol, the Swiss territories, Swabia, Franconia, and on 23 May it was decided to reduce the quarantine period to only 14 days of confinement for goods and persons in the Lazarettos.¹⁴

On the basis of the information received, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* followed closely the evolution of the situation in Transylvania, during the serious plague epidemics that struck the principality in 1718–19. In

December 1717, information reached Venice relative to the suspicion of the plague spreading to Braşov and the neighboring areas.¹⁵ In January–February 1718,¹⁶ the Venetian *magistrati* knew that the epidemics especially affected “Cronstat¹⁷ . . . [and] Clauseburgh,”¹⁸ but the information was not confirmed by contemporary Transylvanian sources. Towards the end of the same year, on 12 November 1718, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* doubted the accuracy of several recent reports and, before adopting a restrictive decision likely to affect the exchange of goods between Venice and the Romanian Principalities, asked the Venetian ambassador to Vienna to provide them with more details so as to confirm or invalidate the veracity of the respective information: “giunse a'la nostra saputa notizia ch' in Cronstat, città situata tra li confini della Transilvania e le frontiere della Vallachia, siasi scoperta vampa'ta di contagiose influenze, benché ciò non basti per crederla vera.”¹⁹

By 24 November 1718 it was certain that the plague had broken out in the town of Braşov and spread to its hinterland. Alarmed by the perspective of the epidemics advancing into the Balkan regions, because of the considerable commercial relations between Transylvania and the Ottoman Empire, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* requested the Venetian diplomatic representative in Vienna to send them new information regarding the evolution of the situation in the Principality, taking into account, in the first place, “[il] pericolo della Città di Corona e per il continuo commercio con gli Ottomani.”²⁰ The climax of the epidemics, in terms of recrudescence and spread, was recorded, indeed, in December 1718, but it was only the fatal prelude to the devastating bubonic plague which hit Transylvania and Wallachia in 1719.²¹ The message of the Venetian ambassador, dispatched on 26 November 1718, reconfirmed “[i] sospetti di salute in Transilvania e Vallachia,” as well as “[il] mal epidemico de' bovi che regna in Carintia.”²²

In 1719, the plague affected large areas of Eastern Europe, stopping the commercial exchanges of the Romanian Principalities with Austria and the Italian Peninsula. The correspondence of the Venetian ambassador in Vienna, Giovanni Priuli, with the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* of the Serenissima reveals the close monitoring by the Venetian and Habsburg authorities of the evolution of the plague epidemics in Transylvania and Wallachia and emphasizes the measures taken to prevent the pandemics which threatened large areas of Europe. Thus, on 28 July 1719, an order issued by the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* regulated the Venetian trade with the regions affected by the plague, i.e. a vast area including Transylvania, Wallachia, Serbia, Bosnia and the Adriatic coast of Dalmatia (Fig. 1).²³ The imports of goods coming from these regions were not forbidden, but were subject to rigorous quarantine, which even implied crossing three successive quarantine stations.²⁴ A month later, on 12 August 1719,



TERMINATIONE

Degl' Illustrissimi, & Excellentissimi Signori

SOPRA PROVEDITORI, E PROVEDITORI ALLA SANITA'.



Ervenute fondate notizie, che nelle Prouincie della Seruia, Vallachia, e Transiluania regnino funeste contaggiose influenze nelli Vomeni, dà primi semi delle quali, sin dal decorso Inuerno ebbero à temersi li molesti progressi, in maniera tale, che ne siano già à quest'ora contaminati più di settanta Luochi à quelle bande, & alle precauzioni, che vengono promesse alle parti istesse di chiudere li Passi, e studiare di preferuare l'Vngheria, intendendo gl' Illustrifs. & Excellentifs. Signori Sopra Proueditori, e Proueditori alla Sanità d'indemnizare li Publici Stati da ogni pericolo, che piaccia alla Diuina Misericordia tener lontano, hanno Terminato, e Comandato, che siano, e s'intendano Bandite da ogni commercio, e comunicazione con questa Dominante, e Stati tutti Publici le sudette Prouincie della Seruia, Vallachia, e Transiluania; Douendosi intendere sospesa la Boffina, & adiacente Confine, lo Stato di Ragusi, e sue adiacenze, e tutto il Littorale di Fiume, Bucari, Buccariza, e Segna per l' aperto commercio, che tengono con le sudette Prouincie; cosicche non possano esser ammessi in alcun luoco de Publici Stati Persone, Mercì, & Animali prouenienti da alcuno de Luochi sudetti, in pena irremissibile della vita, se non per via delli Lazaretti, & essere obligati li sudetti Paesi infetti, e Banditi all'intera quarantena, e quelli sospesi alle risserue di trè punti di Contumacia; E stampata la presente sia trasmessa à Publici Rappresentanti, & à soliti corrispondenti, & ita, &c.

Dat. dal Magistrato alla Sanità li 28. Luglio 1719.

- [*Aluise Mocenigo Kau. Sopra Proueditor.*
- [*Girolamo Giustinian Proc. Sopra Proueditor.*
- [*Pietro Bon 2.^o Proueditor.*
- [*Giacomo Caualli Proueditor.*
- [*Almorò Pisani Proueditor.*

Lionello Cosmi Not.

Stampata per Pietro Pinelli, Stampator Ducale.

FIG. 1. Venice, 28 July 1719, Order of the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* regarding the restrictions on the trade between the Serenissima and the areas affected by the plague.

the epidemics spread from Central Europe to Asia Minor, causing numerous casualties in Transylvania, Wallachia, at Constantinople, Smyrna, in the islands of the Aegean archipelago, and in Thessaly.²⁵ It was even believed that the former Wallachian ruler, John Mavrocordatos, had died of the plague,²⁶ although his death was caused, in fact, by typhoid fever.²⁷ Through Venice, the information regarding the spreading of the bubonic plague in Central and Eastern Europe reached Naples, where Regent Tommaso Mazzaccara signed an order which imposed similar measures to prevent the spreading of the plague by the merchants who brought to the Italian Peninsula goods from the affected areas.²⁸

On 19 August 1719, the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità*, being informed about the terrible effects of the plague, considered that the epidemics had started in Braşov, from where it had spread across Wallachia, in the Balkans, and partially in the rest of the Ottoman territories due to the presence in the town of numerous Greek-Levantine merchants.²⁹ However, the conclusions of the five Venetian *magistrati* were erroneous, as the bubonic plague had broken out and spread concomitantly in several areas of Eastern Europe, in the context of the drought which compromised the harvests, and in Western Europe, where, for example, it showed special virulence at Marseille.³⁰ The *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* decided, in the order issued on 19 August 1719, to impose 21 days of quarantine on the goods coming from the areas affected by the plague or considered to be potentially risky (Fig. 2),³¹ a relatively moderate measure, taking into account the alarming news that had reached Venice and especially the dire situation in Eastern Europe. The same Venetian *magistrati*, writing to the ambassador of the Serenissima in Vienna, Giovanni Priuli, appreciated the consistency and accuracy of the information he had provided and updated him on the quarantine measures, flexible enough to allow, even in the difficult circumstances caused by the bubonic plague, the imports of raw materials and other Eastern European goods necessary to the Venetian economy.³² A week later, on 26 August 1719, a new letter sent to ambassador Giovanni Priuli reiterated the satisfaction of the central Venetian authorities relative to the way in which the diplomat had monitored the evolution “del contagioso morbo nella Transilvania e Province Ottomane.”³³

The restrictive measures meant to prevent the spread of the epidemics in the territories unaffected by the feared pathogenic enterobacteria had immediate effects on international trade. The archbishop of Zara, Vicko Zmajević, mentioned, in a letter written on 3 September 1719, that the Habsburgs had closed the roads they controlled in Serbia, blocking a part of the terrestrial routes which linked the territories of the House of Austria and the Romanian Principalities with Venice and other economic centers in the Italian Peninsula.³⁴ Thus, the foreign trade of the Romanian Principalities witnessed a clear decrease in 1719,



TERMINATIONE

De gl' Illustrissimi, & Excellentissimi Signori

SOPRA PROVEDITORI, E PROVEDITORI ALLA SANITA'.



È fondate notizie, che sopraggiungono andarsi sempre più dilatando la peste nella Transilvania, particolarmente nel Comitato vicino alla Città di Cronstat, doue trasse li suoi principij, come pure nella Valachia, & nelle Prouincie Ottomane del Regno della Seruia, obligano la prudenza dell' Illustris & Excellentis Signori Sopra Proueditori, e Proueditori alla Sanità ad aggiungere nuoue precauzioni à quelle espresse nella Terminazione 28. Luglio caduto. Restando dunque per ora da considerarsi nelle precauzioni, che esatte vengono praticate à quelle parti, per preseruare da funesti progressi li Confinanti Paesi Imperiali, e particolarmente l'Vngheria, & il Bannato di Temelvar deue riuogliersi lo Studio alle bande della Boffina, e Seruia Ottomane, che nel naturale abbondano d'ogni cautela rendono esposti li Publici Stati confinanti della Dalmazia, & Albania Veneta. Per questo aggiungendo Sue Eccellenze alle riserue della Terminazione sudetta, oltre il Bando pubblicato contro la Transilvania, Valachia, e Seruia, e la sospensione dichiarata contro la Boffina adiacente, e Stato di Ragusi confinante, come pure di tutta la Costiera Auftriaca, di Fiume, Buccari, Buccarizza, e Segna dichiarano nello stesso grado sospese le sudette Prouincie dell'Albania Veneta, e Dalmazia con l'Isule grosse della medema, eccettuate per ora quelle del Quarner, che sono Veggia, Arbe, Cherfo, Ossero, Luffino, Selue, S. Piero di Nembo, Vlbo, e Pago; cosicche tutte li Legni, Persone, e Merci, che in presente s'attrouano, come quelle, che sopraggiunessero da' luochi tutti sopradetti sospesi abbiano à soggiacere alla Contumacia di giorni 21. Per il che douerà la presente essere intimata à chi spetta trasmessa à Publici Rappresentanti per la sua esecuzione, & à soliti corrispondenti per lume, & ita, &c.

Dat. dal Magistrato alla Sanità li 19. Agosto 1719.

- (*Aluise Mocenigo Kau. Sopra Proueditor.*
- (*Girolamo Giustinian Proc. Sopra Proueditor.*
- (*Pietro Bon 2.^o Proueditor.*
- (*Giacomo Canalli Proueditor.*
- (*Almorò Pisani Proueditor.*

Lionello Cosmi Not.

Stampata per Pietro Pinelli, Stampator Ducale.

FIG. 2. Venice, 19 August 1719, Order of the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* regarding the imposition of a 21 days' quarantine period for the goods coming to the Venetian lagoon from the areas affected by the plague.

as Wallachia and Transylvania were strongly affected by the epidemics, whereas, paradoxically, Moldavia, although located in the vicinity of both epidemic centers, was less affected by what was to be considered one of the most devastating plague epidemics of Eastern Europe in the 18th century.

In the autumn of 1719 the plague epidemics gradually regressed and subsequently ceased in Wallachia and Transylvania, probably also due to a worsening of the weather, as heavy rains³⁵ and lower temperatures reduced the number of bloodsucking parasites, the vectors that transmitted the disease to human beings. Information regarding the regression of the plague at Braşov, also recorded in the context of the measures adopted by the Habsburg authorities, who temporarily closed the borders of Hungary and Transylvania, were known to the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* from several *avvisi*, whose veracity the Venetian ambassador to Vienna was asked to check on 10 December 1719.³⁶ *Annus Horribilis* 1719 ended with a tragic balance for Transylvania and Wallachia, where tens of thousands of plague victims were recorded, but also with severe repercussions for the economy, following the limitation and then interruption of foreign trade. The situation was worsened by the modest harvests caused by the drought and by the effects of the epidemics on the people involved in productive activities.

Indubitably, the most dynamic sector of the economy, medium- and long-distance trade, suffered the most during the devastating plague epidemics that affected Transylvania in 1718–19 and Wallachia in 1719. Providing important incomes to the princely Treasury, in Wallachia, and to the Aulic Council, in Transylvania and in Little Wallachia (Oltenia), annexed by the Habsburgs in 1718, through the custom taxes paid by merchants for the traded goods, the foreign trade was obstructed and blocked by the closing of roads and custom houses, by the uncertainty of transportation, by the imposition of an obligatory prolonged quarantine period for products and by the confinement in Lazarettos of the merchants who brought them to the Venetian market. In the archive of the former Venetian consulate in Durazzo, which was, in the 18th century, the main transit port for the Oriental and Eastern European goods destined to the Venetian market, the year 1719 is sporadically mentioned, without records of consistent transports of goods from Eastern Europe. Evidently, the plague epidemics made the Greek and Aromanian merchants avoid traveling to the Romanian Principalities, a risk which, very probably, was also not taken by their agents or by the caravans of transporters. Therefore the years 1718–19 represent a period of economic and demographic regress, which increased the economic development gap between the extra- and intra-Carpathian territories, on the one hand, and the advanced capitalist economies of Western Europe, on the other.



Notes

1. Klaus Fabritius, "Johann Albrich și ciuma de la Brașov din 1718–1719," in *Apărarea sănătății ieri și azi*, ed. George Brătescu (Bucharest, 1984), 63–71; Paul Cernovodeanu and Paul Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului: Calamitățile naturale din trecutul României (până la 1800)* (Bucharest, 1993), 137–145. See also Ioan Ciorba, "Le Phénomène épidémiologique en Transylvanie (fin du XVIII^e–début du XIX^e siècle)," *Transylvanian Review* 19, 3 (2010): 3–15.
2. George C. Kohn, *Encyclopedia of Plague and Pestilence, from Ancient Times to the Present*, 3rd edition (New York, 2007), 236.
3. Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews, 1430–1950*, 2nd edition (London, 2006), 108.
4. Camelia Burgele, "Sfântul terapeut," *Caietele Echinox* (Cluj-Napoca) 6 (2004): 181–195.
5. Irwin W. Sherman, *The Power of Plagues* (Washington, 2006), 63–64.
6. P. Binder, "Epidemiile de ciumă din Transilvania în secolul al XVIII-lea (1709–1795)," in *Retrospective medicale: Studii, note și documente* (Bucharest, 1985), 178–179; Cernovodeanu and Binder, 142–145; Ioan-George Andron, "Calamități naturale și epidemii în Brașov și Țara Bârsei în secolele al XVIII-lea și al XIX-lea," *Țara Bârsei* (Brașov), new ser., 3 (2004): 17.
7. Cernovodeanu and Binder, 143–144; Andron, 22; see the chronicles of Radu Tempea and Nicolae Grid quoted in *ibid.*, 18–21; Sarah Hadry, "Der Tod in Kronstadt 1717–1719: Ein Augenzeugenbericht zur letzten großen Pestepidemie Siebenbürgens," *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 28, 1 (2005): 57–69.
8. John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington, 1982), 40, 44–45; Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, 2010), 24.
9. Paolo Preto, "Peste e demografia. L'età moderna: le due pesti del 1575–77 e 1630–31," in *Venezia e la peste, 1348–1787* (Venice, 1979), 97–102; see also *id.*, *Peste e società a Venezia nel 1576* (Vicenza, 1978).
10. Salvatore Carbone, *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità della Repubblica di Venezia: Carteggio con i rappresentanti diplomatici e consolari veneti all'estero e con Uffici di Sanità esteri corrispondenti. Inventario* (Rome, 1962), 8–14.
11. State Archive of Venice (hereafter cited as ASV), *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. [busta = archival envelope] 140, unnumbered doc. (11 January 1706); the archive collection in which the official correspondence of the Venetian ambassador to Vienna with the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* is preserved was primarily mentioned, almost five decades ago, by Carbone, 56.
12. Indecipherable.
13. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (12 March 1707).
14. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc., *ad datum*.
15. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (11 December 1717).
16. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (14 January and 11 February 1718).

17. Romanian: Braşov; German: Kronstadt; Hungarian: Brassó; Latin: Corona.
18. Romanian: Cluj; German: Klausenburg; Hungarian: Kolozsvár; Latin: Claudiopolis. See Paul Shore, *Jesuits and the Politics of Religious Pluralism in Eighteenth-Century Transylvania: Culture, Politics and Religion, 1693–1773* (Aldershot–Burlington–Rome, 2007), 115.
19. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (12 November 1718).
20. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (24 November 1718).
21. Ilie Corfus, *Însemnări de demult* (Iaşi, 1975), 172; Gheorghe Lazăr, “Un negustor muntean și ‘cronica’ sa de familie (1702–1736),” in *Românii în Europa medievală (între Orientul bizantin și Occidentul latin): Studii în onoarea Profesorului Victor Spinei*, eds. Dumitru Țicu and Ionel Cândea (Brăila, 2008), 870.
22. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (3 December 1718). See, for the abovementioned bovine disease, Clive A. Spinage, *Cattle Plague: A History* (New York, 2003), 115 (a cattle plague which spread, in 1718, partially in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and in Eastern Europe, and in the following years affected the livestock in Prussia, Holland and southern France).
23. Order printed at Venice, in the workhouse of printer Pietro Pinelli, on 28 July 1719 (original; private collection).
24. *Ibid.*
25. Katerina Konstantinidou, Elpis Mantadakis, Matthew E. Falagas, Thalia Sardi, and George Samonis, “Venetian Rule and Control of Plague Epidemics on the Ionian Islands during 17th and 18th Centuries,” *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 15, 1 (2009): 41.
26. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (12 August 1719).
27. Irina Roman, “Dansul morții: ciuma și impactul ei asupra locuitorilor munteni (secolul al XVIII-lea–începutul secolului al XIX-lea),” *Hrisovul: Anuarul Facultății de Arhivistică* (Bucharest) 14 (2008): 289.
28. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (12 August 1719).
29. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (19 August 1719); see also Noah Webster, *A Brief History of Epidemic and Pestilential Diseases, with the Principal Phenomena of the Physical World, Which Precede and Accompany Them, and Observations Deduced From the Facts Stated*, vol. 2 (Hartford, 1799), 6, 70.
30. *Ibid.*; Samuel K. Cohn Jr., “Epidemiology of the Black Death and Successive Waves of Plague,” *Medical History*, Suppl. 27 (2008): 79.
31. Order printed at Venice, in the workhouse of printer Pietro Pinelli, 19 August 1719 (original; private collection).
32. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (19 August 1719).
33. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (26 August 1719).
34. *Ibid.*, unnumbered doc. (3 September 1719).
35. Roman, 289.
36. ASV, *Archivio proprio Ambasciata Germania*, b. 140, unnumbered doc. (10 December 1719).

Abstract**The Plague of 1718–19 and its Impact on the Foreign Trade of the Romanian Principalities**

The plague epidemics of 1718–19 greatly affected the foreign trade of the Romanian Principalities, and also the international trade in Central and Eastern Europe, leading to a complete interruption of commercial exchanges following the closing of the borders of Imperial Hungary and given the uncertainty of the routes in the areas affected by pestilence. On the basis of a critical analysis of the correspondence between the Venetian ambassador to Vienna and the *Provveditori e Sopraprovveditori alla Sanità* of the Serenissima, this paper presents the impact of the bubonic plague on the foreign trade of the Romanian Principalities, especially in what concerns the commercial relations between Transylvania, Wallachia and Venice. These unpublished Venetian sources refer to the position of the Romanian Principalities at the periphery of world economy, after the conclusion of the Peace Treaty of Passarowitz (Požarevac), which led to the annexation of Little Wallachia by the Habsburgs, thus causing a reduction in Wallachian exports and the rise of a new competitor—the Habsburg Empire—in the commerce with the Ottoman Levant.

Keywords

bubonic plague, foreign trade, Transylvania, Wallachia, Italian Peninsula, 18th century pestilence