

Boierii sunt oameni fără carte și foarte închipuiți. Relatările unui genovez despre starea elitei valahe pe la anul 1584

Abstract:

*The Genovese whom the study refers to is Franco Sivori. He served ruler Petru Cercel, being a close guide to him for many years. Living near by the ruler, at the princely court from Târgoviște, Franco Sivori had the opportunity to thoroughly get acquainted with the Wallachian boyars' way of being. Diplomatic missions, assigned by the ruler, put Sivori in contact with most diverse intellectual and diplomatic environments (Ottoman or Greek, Venetian, Genovese, Polish, Hungarian, etc.), fact which allowed him to form a true picture, quite accurate, of the realities from Wallachia. His writing, which includes ample depictions of Romanian social life, is entitled *Memoriale delle cose ocorese a me Franco Sivori del signor Benedetto dopo la mia partenza de Genova l'anno 1581 per andar in Vallachia*. The work, preserved handwritten, was published by Ștefan Pascu in annex to his work *Petru Cercel și Țara Românească la sfârșitul secolului al XVI-lea* (Petru Cercel and Wallachia at the end of the XVIth century), in 1944. Amongst elements characteristic to Wallachian elite, of boyars especially, Sivori enumerates: envy, hostility and suspicion of boyars manifested towards foreigners who served the ruler; boyars are illiterate and very self-opinionated persons; they are authoritarian and are badly treating their subjects; they hold great feasts, with lots of food and music, occasion on which they often get drunk; they rather live according to the laws of nature than following Christian principles; they believe in dreams and omens; they are uneasy; they do not make trade and are not skilful craftsmen or artisans; they wear mixed clothes, holding different jewels in high esteem; they like having a multitude of servants; they sleep similarly to Turks, half clothed, laying on carpets; they use a mixed and barbarian language. The Genovese's account reveals, just like the case of other authors, a more and more negative image of the Wallachian elite from the second half of the XVIth century within diplomatic and cultural European environments.*

Keywords: elite; boyars; identity marks; foreign travelers; XVIth century