

ITALIAN TRAVELERS IN ALBANIA

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Abstract

Since ancient times, Albania has been visited by many foreign travelers. Its geographical and strategic position as well as economic, political and social development in centuries drew the attention of travelers from other close and distant countries including geographers from ancient Greece and Rome to more recent travelers of different nationalities of the XIX-XX centuries. Many travelers who came to Albania as diplomatic, religious, war and military missionaries, special envoys, senior reverends, as well as doctors, scientists, poets, painters etc left very interesting travel notes. This study targets establishing a typology of Italian travelers who have visited Albania, from their earliest travels until 1912. The first inspiration for this work came from Lumo Skendo's book "Udhëtarët e huaj në Shqipëri" (Foreign Travelers in Albania) (until the end of the XIX century), prepared by L. Malltezi and Sh. Delvina, Tiranë, 1999. From careful reading, we identified that in L. Skendo's book, to our surprise, only a single Italian traveler had been included, namely Lorenzo Bernardo. The first objective of this study was to complete the voices of Italian travelers and create a clearer picture of this phenomenon, in the sense of meeting "one another." Our research has shown that for the period in case, i.e up to 1912, there are 82 voices structured under the chronological principle. The first trip to Albania was made by Italy's Benedetto Ramberti in 1585. All voices have been provided with notes which by identifying the status or the the traveler's goal as well as valuable historical and political notes lead the reader to the gist of the text. The bibliographical representation is another goal of this study which fulfills our goal of a full typology of Italian travelers in Albania.

