

**Onofrio ROMANO**

**Albania and Apulia Contribution to European Identity**

**Abstract**

The contribution focuses on the identity issue with reference to the European integration process. To this aim, the case of the Southern Adriatic area – covering the Italian South-East and South western Balkans (namely Apulia and Albania) – will be highlighted. This region shows many reasons of interest for the whole process of European integration, as it represents a kind of hinge between Western civilization and the East, Europe and the Mediterranean, North and South of the World. Our thesis is that, despite the different traditions, cultural heritage, histories, political dominion etc., the societies facing on the two sides of the lower Adriatic sea share common core attitudes. They were forged on the basis of a similar existential framework: the secular (or century-old?) condition of marginalisation in relation to the hubs of political power. So, the lower Adriatic inhabitants have acquired a particular skill to win the grace of the ruler in office, whoever he was, building, at the same time, a hidden orb in which to preserve their authenticity, their original cultural references. This framework has produced, in the long run, an anti-identitarian people's constitution, i.e. an "anthropology of the absence", consisting of two complementary dimensions: mimicry and the vernacular order. This ensures both the merger of dissimilarities and the preservation of an impregnable singularity. The anthropology of the absence still emerges strongly in relation to the new political focus with which this region relates nowadays: the European Union.

The implemented policies aimed at cohesion and integration of the peripheral regions are here systematically diverted to reproduce life forms consolidated over the centuries, which escape the fundamental canons of the Western-European model of society. But, far from being included as a disease, the attitude developed in the lower Adriatic could represent a useful suggestion for Europe itself, always faced with the problem of its unresolved identity.

**Anomic Europe**

For a long time we have been crushed between the anvil of "imaginary socialism" and the hammer of "real socialism". EU today is likely to melt in the same *impasse*. All kinds of discourse have been produced on the idea of Europe, on its identity dress. Almost all European intellectuals have exercised their imagination on it, devoting at least one book to what Europe could and should be.

Then, on the other hand, at a sidereal distance, “really existing” Europe arises, that of Brussels celestial bureaucracy, which enacts its regulation protocols on every detail of our life, going from the welfare regimes down to the size of bananas. Despite the complete separation of their orbits, the imagined Europe and the real Europe are two sides of the same inconsistency, two expressions of the same impossibility, of the same basic cultural *manque*. Furthermore, both expressions are completely separated from the people, i.e. the really existing society of Europeans.

As Pasquale Serra (2004) points out, if we deeply look at the highest summits of thought concerning Europe, we will almost always face something like anti-Europe theories, in which it is decreed that any sovereign political entity is an obsolescent tool. Europe coincides with a horizon in which all differences are only waiting to melt into a neutral form of universalist atomization.

According to Massimo Cacciari (1994), for example, the “European spirit” is nothing more than the celebration of the endless process of eradication, of unlimited emancipation from any “form”, even those who have ferried modernity (the State, socialism, liberalism, etc.). Europe is the cradle of the West, literally understood as “the land of the sunset” of any communitarian garrison. Balibar (2001; 2003), in the same wake, looks at Europe as the place of “evanescent mediation”, where to experience the endless deconstruction of citizenship in favour of a transnational civilization freed from the “violence” of borders and differences. Antonio Negri (Hardt, Negri 2000) rediscovers Europe as the eligible land where his amorphous multitude will exercise its a-finalized and unlimited constituent power, enemy of every form of sovereignty. Habermas, finally, in his apology of juridical globalism, replaces the European political project with the cosmopolitan right.

More precisely, the vocation to pluralism (of persons, nations, cultures, jurisdictions, institutions, etc.) included in the idea of Europe is the most faithful translation of the identitarian logic of “unlimited accessibility” (Romano 1993), belonging to the code of western modernity. The neutral device aimed at encouraging the unlimited creativity of individuals in the selection and development of their life projects, is the same adopted by Europe in its equidistance from any cultural specificity encompassed, not opting for anyone of them, but just recognizing the right of each one to self promotion, within the limits of respect for the others. This neutral and universalistic (or pluri-versalistic) strategy has an almost inevitable outcome: if, in principle, the exclusive promotion of a single model of existence is banned – in order to ensure the coexistence of all models of life – the policymaker can only engage in a culturally anonymous work of generalized expansion of the system, which basically corresponds to the growth of intangible and material resources that guarantee the access to life’s chances individually chosen. From this device arises the fetishism of economy, i.e. the paroxysm of the unlimited valorization, detached from any cultural orientation.

The cultural dimension, denied by the neutralist device, melts in a folkloric (Latouche 1996) or aesthetic (Cassano 2003) orbit, losing all sovereignty on the social sphere. From the same mechanism stems the “really existing” Europe of the celestial bureaucracies: the abolition of sovereignty (in the name of the golden principle of “unlimited accessibility”) leads to replace politics with governance, with the neutral administration and the technical expertise, separated from any cultural reference.

Thus, the European project is already depleted. The elusiveness of European features threatens also the integration process, especially of those areas which are more remote and less homogeneous with European history. The case of Southern Adriatic, from this point of view, is very interesting. Our ambition is to show that its imperfect integration, far from being an anomaly to be remedied, could give some precious suggestions in order to de-strand Europe from the anomic drying neutralism, restoring it to a great political vision, without sacrificing its pluralistic vocation. The Southern Adriatic also allows us to re-found Europe starting from the real social practices, found on site, and not from abstract intellectual constructions. A Europe based on what it really is and not on what it should be.

## 2. Noman's land

In this brief exploration we will be led by one of Ulysses's masks, the one employed on meeting Polyphemus, the Cyclops. The invention of the pseudonym “Noman”, the cunning of the “disappearing identity”, enable Odysseus to experience the magnificence without succumbing to it, allows him to beat an infinitely more powerful being. The identity simulation, which may be extended to a symbolic abolition of oneself, can be found in many inner suburbs of the Mediterranean. The lower Adriatic (including the Italian south-east and south-western Balkans) is, without any doubt, one of them.

Historically - and not just geographically - it is a very particular area, placed at the crossroads between Eastern and Western civilization, and between Northern efficiency and Southern stasis. Both Apulia and Albania have been for centuries (and, in some ways, they still are) extreme outskirts of flourishing civilizations and grandiloquent empires, dwelling at a sidereal distance from the centres of power. This peripheral condition has produced an anti-identitarian people's construction, i.e. an anthropology of the absence. Based on a double movement: mimicry and the preservation of the vernacular, i.e., of its static circuit of social reproduction.

The mimetic approach is employed to gain the favour of the representatives of History, namely the colonizers in office. The lower Adriatic inhabitant has developed a special ability to wear the signs of conversion to the various historical mainstreams that have crossed its moorlands. Exemplary in this sense is the religious history in Albania. Its pagan lower layer has been oppressively encircled by the

universalistic and monotheistic religions: the Catholic one in the North, the Christian Orthodox in the south, and the Muslim in the Centre. The Albanians have thus alternated their faiths, depending on the best offer of prebends attached to conversion. Already in the eighteenth century, Lady Montagu wrote that in the North of the country, to be sure not to err, villagers went to the mosque on Friday and to church on Sunday (Baldacci 1925). To better tolerate the bitterness of the faith practices, the Albanian Muslims have even come to build an autocephalous sect, the Bektasci, auto-assigning them some discounts on fasting during the Ramadan, the opportunity to freely consume pork meat and alcohol, the lack of central spiritual directions, and so on...

Under the mimetic peel, the lower Adriatic inhabitants have been able to cultivate their own eternity, a lifestyle modelled on a tragic mood, confident in the sense of death and self-annihilation, removed from the historical flow and from the expressive swelling of identity, based on the mere reproduction of life, alien to any form of projectivism, expansionism, development (even in the purely economic sphere).

Two cardinal institutions of the lower-Adriatic anthropology witness this posture: "tarantism" and "revenge". The phenomenon of Tarantism, that originally connotes the area of Salento in Apulia (though similar practices can be found in other orbits of the Mediterranean), fits in a typical logic of *dépense*, allowing the resetting of the substances of removed-remorse (called to epiphany by the bite of the poisonous tarantula) through special collective dancing rites (De Martino 2005). It is a cyclical dynamics of emptying and cleansing of the self, in which the subject disappears to himself, acknowledging his submission to the removed forces. On this horizon, the accumulative, controlling and operating individuality, typical of western civilization, cannot have any citizenship. Revenge fits in the segmental structure of the Albanian anthropological warp and it is codified in its customary law, whose most known transcription is contained in the Kanuni by Lek Dukagjnit (Resta 1997).

A hostile act revenged by the murder of the author obliges all members of the victim's clan to return the courtesy by killing a male member of the murderer's clan. And so on *ad infinitum*, until virtually the mutual extinction of the opponents' clan. The endless cycle of revenge strengthens a special closeness to death, which becomes a constant presence in the Albanian collective body. The inexhaustible pursuit of a break-even point in the accounting of bloodshed (the state of equilibrium in the blood balance) immobilises the community within a static circuit which inhibits the citizenship bond and its expansive potential.

Mimicry and the circular (a-historical) existence seriously undermine the logic of economic exploitation mirroring a twofold strategy for the resolution of the problem of livelihood: the practice of parasitic capture of resource flows from the

colonizing powers (attached to mimicry) and the vernacular self-production (horticultural scale cultivation, harvesting of nature wild fruits, wild animal breeding, etc..) in accordance with the preservation logic of the social reproduction static circuit.

These features are not outdated materials but rather stand out in full force during the end of the Fordist modernity.

The new imperial centre (EU), with which the lower Adriatic area has to relate, through the poisoned gift of the integration and cohesion policies, imposes a development model based on the classic canons of the exploitation of human, material and intangible resources, whose fruits would be later used in the free market competition.

If the lower Adriatic had undertaken this path, today the area would sink in a poverty state. Its competitive position, in fact, would be suspended between the firepower of the big Western companies – whose productivity is supported by unsurpassed research and innovation targets – and the dumping of the productive factors remuneration (work above all) led by the emerging Eastern countries. A deadly flattening, that would have condemned the area to economic marginality and, in social terms, to the abyss of the relative deprivation. A recipe universally distributed aimed at enhancing local production entirely circumvents the problem of the territory placement into the international economic space, hierarchically structured. In this space, the lower Adriatic would have played a gregarious role, that is the storage area of the lower productivity working phases. Beyond all purposes, EU *de facto* imposes its neighbours a kind of *subordinate integration*.

On the contrary, both sides of the lower Adriatic have gained life and consumption standards that, from a purely material point of view, is perfectly aligned with the standards of most developed Western countries. Against EU directives, the area has developed an alternative pattern of cohesion, founded on the canon of *orbital integration*. Participation in the dominant system (and in its benefits) is not insured by the exploitation of tangible and intangible territory resources, but mainly by picking up the resources produced elsewhere, flowing in the globalization circuits. This abduction economy takes on different characters on the two sides: more hidden in Apulia and more visible in Albania.

### **The orbital integration**

In Apulia, the orbital integration was developed, starting from the end of World War II, in the new political landscape of the Democratic Republic. The so-called “phase leap”, classically themed in southern literature, is the first indicator: the Italian Mezzogiorno shifted from a predominantly agricultural economy to a services one, bypassing the manufacturing stage. It is impossible to show the statistical details here,

but it is well known that the services sector is largely oversized if compared to physiological parameters dictated by the agricultural-industrial complex to be served, thus the speculation shadow emerges. Its growth was decisively fuelled by patterns of political achievement, unrelated to market competition (Trigilia 1993). The political mediation has not only directly ferried towards the periphery copious resource flows in a purely welfare logic, but has deeply structured all sectors of the real economy. First of all, agriculture: more and more rarely its output has undertaken market destinations, becoming a mere virtual caution to win public subsidies, which are now the largest part of agricultural income.

Big industrial plants have been dropped from above, eliminating the network of local small firms, but without gaining a real rooting in the socio-economic context and finally crashing against the crisis of the “glorious thirty years”. According to Tonino Perna (1992 and 1994), the specificity of southern dynamism must be found in the extra-profit vocation, that has produced a vast nebula of high productivity economic ventures, placed halfway through the illegal sector and the mere financial speculation.

In this framework, applicable to all the Italian Mezzogiorno, Apulia was marked by some specific connotations. First of all, the criminal hand has acted in less invasive and less structured ways. Here, the political achievement has reached greater efficiency. The resource flows coming from the centre (Rome) have been better catalyzed (due to the consolidation of politically articulated systems of communication between local political staff and national government ranks) and better spent (Romano *et al.* 2003). The economy of the most dynamic areas in the region has been led by sectors dependent on public regulation and investment: constructions, private health care, banking, financial services controlled by representatives of local governments. The market achievement can only be found in the residual areas of the small speculative trade, taking advantage of an ancient trade tradition, that is very difficult to reintegrate in the pattern of modern Western capitalism. The case of the regional capital (Bari) is very significant: at the beginning of the sixties, we saw a promising development of some indigenous manufacturing sectors, especially in mechanics. But this vocation was suddenly frustrated, because the entrepreneurial energies have been taking the road of easier and quicker horizons of enrichment, with the housing industry sack of the city and some other opportunities of political appropriation (Viesti 1998).

The general crisis of the Fordist model, declined in the Italian Mezzogiorno with the “extraordinary intervention” recipe, opened up new scenarios. In the early nineties, the bottom-up approach to development led to bet directly on southern citizens, by financial support to self-entrepreneurship and to small and medium local enterprises operating in the “industrial districts”, and then with the so-called “negotiated planning” policy (territorial pacts, programming contracts, etc.). The great

hopes raised by this prospect are rapidly shifting in growing disappointment. Support tools are more and more detached from their original development goals, becoming functional substitutes of the old resource flows assured by the “extraordinary intervention”, inefficient in encouraging selfdevelopment, but not in streaming resources towards the South (Cerese 2005; Chiarello 2005).

Brussels is the new irradiation centre of resources. Apulia is refining high level planning skills, in order to catalyze the flows, despite their planned destinations. After the huge mistake of selfdevelopment and local development, the usual orbital approach comes back: the only one that allows a real integration to propelling centres of the new empires. The project aimed at transforming the Italian south-east in a privileged hub for eastern goods falls into this newfound speculative perspective: the illusion of becoming independent-producers is definitely abandoned.

Apulia returns to harass the intermediations between those who are the real producers.

The post-communist Albania has taken the abduction route with an unmatched level of dedication.

In one of its latest reports, the World Bank defines “impressive” the cumulative economic growth of the eagle’s country (since 1990), among the most consistent in all the transition countries (WB 2005). In particular, from 1993 to 2004 the average annual growth of GDP was more than 6% (and we must take into account that the period includes the fateful 1997, in which the country experienced a second collapse due to the failure of the financial pyramid schemes). This growth is miraculous, given that it is immediately clear to whoever sets foot in Albania that the country does not produce almost anything. The officially recorded growth is not related to the real economy production (agriculture and industry) but with the emergence of a “surreal economy” (Romano 2004). The weight of agriculture in GDP is around 24% (against 35% recorded in the nineties), the industry is stuck at 9% (we should go back to 1938 to find the same value): before the regime’s fall, industry assured more than 50% of the national income. All efforts made by international bodies (including EU) to support the revitalization of agriculture and industry were vain.

According to the World Bank, the determinants for the impressive growth of Albania are to be found, first of all, in the “reallocation of resources from low productivity sectors like agriculture to high productivity sectors (services, construction)” (WB 2005, p. 1). Pressed by decades of *overcommitment* during real socialism, Albanian people refused further working coercions softly imposed by international agencies to encourage development, undertaking, on the contrary, in sectors with a high productivity or a high speculative rate. Construction, first of all. It is difficult to calculate its contribution to GDP (although officially it is around 9%), since most of the assets remain in a grey area: we must take into account that around the

major urban agglomerations many informal suburbs arose. The contribution of services to GDP shows an exponential growth during the transition and it is now around 60% (INSTAT 2005). The services are physiologically justified as serving production, but it is clear that this is not the case. They are used primarily to manage the orbital flows of the abducted resources.

The official figures, however, make no sense. Albanian economy sails far beyond the recordable production, the formal/real economic circuit. The glaring inconsistency of average wages and salaries compared with the living cost (very close to that of Southern Italy) witnesses a decisive pressure on goods demand, not explainable with the inner production and coming from dimensions not intercepted by the collectors of official data. Most of the Albanians livelihood sources are not recordable by official statistics.

The orbital integration of Albania is based on three major currents of economic extra-version: migrants' remittances, trafficking (legal, illegal, purely financial) of the holding companies that play a role in global affairs, provisions of international donors (Romano 2004).

The weight of remittances on the national economy is difficult to be calculated, since most of the flows escape detection. People living at home now stand around 3,100,000, and only between Greece and Italy approximately one million legal migrants are distributed, who regularly transfer part of their earnings to relatives back home. We can infer that almost the entire population is assisted from outside. There is no family in Albania that does not have at least one member residing abroad. But the resource flows from migrants do not entirely explain the extraordinary growth pace in Albania.

The decisive boost probably comes from the illegal sector, that since the beginning has marked Albanian dynamism. Prostitution, illegal migration and drug-dealing were the ridges along which a sort of primitive accumulation took place in Albania, which has given the *big-push* to the country.

But we must, however, consider that today these trades have put on more respectable clothes. 1997 was in this sense a kind of watershed. In that year, as is known, the dream of proliferation and redistribution of wealth, in which the entire population had been called to participate by the system of financial pyramids, was shattered. Since then, the Albanian criminal clans have abandoned the traditional, rough and aggressive robes to undertake a new respectable style, well-articulated and more refined. Exploiting the resources accumulated in the early years of rampant lawlessness, they have been able to set up complex trusts that invest in global affairs in a wide range of fields, all connoted by the extra-profit motive: hotel chains, construction industry, cruise ships, casinos, shopping centres, major infrastructures etc. Speculation on capital movements is now added. These trusts have their holdings



in Albania and take deep roots here. They name their emissaries in parliament and at all Government levels; they control the press and television networks.

The resource flows from international donors are still generous. In this sector too, Albania has enjoyed a kind of primitive accumulation, heaping up a series of emergencies during the years (until the Kosovo crisis in the late nineties), that have catalyzed the international aid. They are no longer merely care flows. Albanian authorities have done their best to exploit the strategic collocation of the territory in the new, complex geopolitical scenario, building a refined alliances policy with the dominant countries (especially U.S.) and receiving in return substantial prebends. Later, Albanians have acquired remarkable planning skills in order to stabilize relations with the international community. The most striking example is the "business of civil society". In the early nineties, there were almost one thousand NGOs in the country, which are no evidence of a particular democratic spirit. Far from it. NGOs have a peculiar familistic character, they are alien to internal democracy, the leaders appear almost irremovable and interpret the association as their own property (Romano 2000). NGOs are mirror decoys for larks. They represent only a business investment in the new market of sociality. The old social rights are no longer guaranteed by the State (in accordance with the structural adjustment recipes by IMF, World Bank etc.). Therefore they are replaced by international charity intercepted by local NGOs, which have developed over time good skills and good camouflage capacity, apprehending the language of international projects and so acceding to donors resources (which, *ça va sans dire*, will never reach the ultimate declared beneficiaries).

Next to the abduction economy, tied to mimicry vocation, there are several expressions of vernacular preservation. In present Albania we can clearly read both approaches. If the extraversion flows produce a kind of urban orbital economy, vernacular expressions can be found mainly in the informal suburbs and in the self-production and self-consumption practices re-emerging in Albanian rural areas.

Transition Albania was affected by large flows of internal migration from rural areas to major urban centres, under the pressure of land property fragmentation that has deeply undermined the opportunity to build a market-oriented agricultural sector. Around the town borders, large suburbs have sprung up informally, without infrastructure and urbanization works. The inhabitants of these areas survive thanks to remittances, but also thanks to small businesses that benefit from the proximity of the city. Here some solidarity networks re-emerge from a forgotten past. Here a new vernacular society is reborn, focused on a merely social reproduction.

This is much more visible in the countryside, with the small scale production, targeted to mere selfconsumption and to goods exchange along the lines of parenthood/clan reciprocity. Only for the mere survival maintenance. The countryside

inhabitants are far from the formal market, they live now in their own, invisible orbit. A dignified poverty.

The eternal double movement (mimicry and vernacular preservation) is back to work in Southern Adriatic. It ensures the integration at the centre of the system, without obeying to alien lifestyles.

### **Politics comes back**

We do not propose an apology of orbital integration. We do not suggest the case of lower Adriatic as a model. Beyond the embarrassment that it evokes for the content of lawlessness and barbarism, it is above all hardly sustainable in the long run, as emphasized by the World Bank and by most observers. Furthermore, these practices are seriously undermined by the standardization directives imposed by EU and other international bodies. The stabilization pacts become increasingly stringent and do not allow large areas of operation beyond the compulsory development paths. But above all, the lower Adriatic experience does not open new perspectives, nor in any way undermines the dominant patterns, since it is fed by them. The lower Adriatic route also produces huge inequalities, which are only partially absorbed by the reciprocity networks and neo-clanic solidarity. Ulysses- Noman does not disturb the Cyclopes' calm, he just stole them what he needs to survive. Therefore, the temptation to sanctify this marginalised condition is far from us. We have no reason to hope for the eternal reproduction of a world whose enchantment never existed.

Anyway, Southern Adriatic witnesses an alternative way of living. Starting from it, maybe it is possible to build something else, i.e. starting from its political potentials. Is it possible that the coming back of an anthropology of the absence could work as a basis for a socio-political alternative to the mainstream, giving meaning and specificity to the European project?

According to Bauman (1999), the contemporary world is haunted by a major paradox: from an individual point of view, personal freedom of western citizens has never been so widespread, but at the same time all of us are quite convinced that no collective project could determine deep and radical changes in our reality. The forces that forge the world appear to be hidden, not subject to the control of collective political autonomy. Compared with other ages, in which people lived the thrill, the exaltation and also the anguish given by the possibility for a radical, forthcoming and sudden change, today we are, on the contrary, haunted by the feeling that, despite the level of freedom reached, we are no longer able to imagine and implement great projects of transformation, which could overturn current dynamics and forge a world ruled by a different vision. We can only navigate at sight. Politics can only engender very small changes, because its real role is to aid the state machine to fit in the

anonymous flows of reality. Politicians must assure that the ship's course is maintained in the most rational and balanced way.

Why big political projects are no more conceivable? Because we have defined a horizon locked down by inviolable taboos. The infrastructure of human rights, of fundamental individual liberties, the "perpetual veto of autonomist virality" lead to the system lock. Autonomy, in fact, is a viral concept. Once in, you can't limit it with devices not legitimated by the autonomy principle. It spreads as a pandemic, building wide spaces, intangible by collective autonomy, in favour of individuals. It follows that the implementation of any great political vision is structurally prevented by the recognition of the molecular autonomy in defining and pursuing an idea of "good life". The recognition of the micro-liberty becomes a veto to great liberty. The big forces that determine individual lives remain absolutely untouched, as they are considered the prerogative of private will, in the name of viral autonomy, but mainly by virtue of the stigma on sovereign power, the only entity able to limit private greediness and to implement great objectives.

This is the "condominium model". It spreads anywhere: from suburb to town, territorial district, region and so on. The aim is permitting anyone to enjoy his own housing plot, assuring that the common appurtenances are well maintained. Infringing this spatial split is an intolerable abuse.

In order to rediscover the great vision and the great Politics, to experience the Cyclopic, we must restart from the "de-thinking" peripheries, where residents are not involved in the care of themselves, surviving beyond the identitarian logic. Here the exploitation and self-promotion logic gives way to taking, dissipation, *dépense*. Here Politics rediscovers its humus. Only in the desert, the mirage raises, the great vision that all envelops. Availability to radical transformation raises only where people search self-annihilation to give space to vision.

These are not mere abstractions. This political chance is alive nowadays. Two of today most interesting political cases arise in Southern Adriatic: the regional government of Apulia led by President Nichi Vendola and Tirana city (the capital of Albania) led by the mayor Edi Rama. Two weird politicians: a poet and an artist called to play top level roles in local governments.

Beyond any administrative output, it is very interesting to inquire into the deep social expectations they have shaped.

With Vendola, vision came back to the political domain. Without any planning, he has touched the deeper strings of the meridian being. Inexpressible and uncivil feelings. He has given a shape to a clamouring and ineffectual *agora* (far from the spirit of good administration of commons), to a mere abandonment in the bliss of nature, distrustful towards technologic illusion (that promises safe disposal of other's waste and composting of garbage). He has given shape to the creative antieconomies, based on the mere capacity to manage symbols, to sing, to live without working. The

Mezzogiorno, thanks to the oblivion in which it has been left in recent years, has regained its rebellious spirit, its character untamed by the sirens of neutralising rationalism. So, a vision returns to win against the pursuit of objective reality.

Vendola has also won a challenge inside the left, against the “conservative left” who has reduced politics to mere administration, who has married modern rationalism at its twilight, out of time. The left that repeats at all times “that is not possible”, that censors all practices that are not included in the homogenizing protocols of neutral and rational Europe, the omni-parametric left who rejects all visions. Apulia has rebelled to the limitation of horizons, to the diktat that states “a communist gay man (i.e. Vendola) cannot climb to Government”, rediscovering instead that there is no limit to human political creativity. Vendola has been able to give citizenship back to certain scopes ousted for many years by the left.

Vendola has stopped the rush to individual self-promotion, redesigning the possibility to rediscover the “social chain” protection and a new collective subjectivity opposed to anonymous forces that forge the contemporary world.

Rama has been able to upset many development processes started by Tirana. The post-transition anarchic-capitalism has been translated into the spreading of a myriad of kiosks within public gardens along the central boulevards in Tirana. This dictatorship of entrepreneurial singularity, also promoted by the international agencies and reinterpreted in specific ways by Albanian people, has been defeated by a returning sovereign force, embodied by Edi Rama. He has opposed a major political project to the viral autonomy veto, involving the whole citizenship, against individualist *imperium*. Rama has given a shared identity back to the town, creating a clear aesthetic mood, embraced by citizens. This asset has been implemented thanks to some oddness, like the transformation of the old gloomy socialist buildings in polychrome paintings. Rama has coloured Tirana buildings diverting some European grants from their natural destination, thus exploiting the mimetic mindframe of taking and often winning the condominiums’ opposition. In this sense, he has also *de facto*, and not only symbolically, overcome the condominium logic dictatorship, that prohibits the epiphany of the supremacy of the collective body.

Both cases show the possibility to re-build the community on different bases, far from the unlimited individual sovereignty, far from the market-development normalisation promoted by EU. Both cases meet once again the vision that shapes a new communitarian sense, infringing the collective taboo.

This is possible thanks to the rediscovered anthropology of the absence, based on the “Noman” path, that allows the Cyclopic experience. A new community that stands beyond the individual competition, that has its cardinal point in the collective force. A community emancipated by selfpromotion coercion and also by the marginalisation tied to the orbital integration (too compromised with the dominant

forces). The Southern Adriatic offers its potentials to Europe, helping to overcome the Europeism impasses.

## References

- Baldacci A., *L'Albania, Istituto per l'Europa Orientale, Roma 1925.*
- Balibar E., *Nous, citoyens d'Europe. Les frontières, l'Etat, le peuple, La Découverte, Paris 2001.*
- Balibar E., *L'Europe, l'Amérique, la guerre, La Découverte, Paris 2003.*
- Bauman Z., *In search of politics, Stanford University Press, 1999.*
- Cacciari M., *Geo-filosofia dell'Europa, Adelphi, Milano 1994.*
- Cassano F., *Approssimazione. Esercizi di esperienza dell'altro, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2003.*
- Cerese F. P. (ed.), *Lo sviluppo possibile. Esiti e prospettive dei Patti Territoriali in quattro regioni meridionali, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2005.*
- Chiarello F. (ed.), *Cooperare con lentezza. L'esperienza dei Patti territoriali in Puglia, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2005.*
- De Martino E., *The Land of Remorse: A Study of Southern Italian Tarantism, Free Association Books 2005.*
- INSTAT, *Albania in figures, Tirana 2005.*
- Latouche S., *The Westernization of the World: Significance, Scope and Limits of the Drive Towards Global Uniformity, Polity Press 1996.*
- Hardt M., Negri A., *Empire, Harvard University Press 2000.*
- Perna A., "Sulla specificità del Mezzogiorno", in F. Cerese (ed.), *Dopo il familismo, cosa?, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 1992.*
- Perna A., *Lo sviluppo insostenibile. La crisi del capitalismo nelle aree periferiche: il caso del Mezzogiorno, Liguori, Napoli 1994.*
- Resta P., *Il kanun. Le basi morali e giuridiche della società albanese, Besa, Nardò 1997.*
- Romano O., "Le illimitate accessibilità del codice tecnologico", in *Democrazia e Diritto*, n. 1/1993, pp. 73-88.
- Romano O., *Albania: alla ricerca di nuovi equilibri, in S. Matteucci (ed.), Gli altri Balcani, Trieste, Asterios, 2000.*
- Romano O., Mangini M., Spadavecchia V., *Mutamenti levantini, Bari, Progedit, 2003.*
- Romano O., *Il postmoderno transAdriatico. Per una sociologia immaginaria della periferia appulo-albanese, in Botta F. e Garzia I. (eds.), Europa adriatica. Storia, relazioni, economia, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2004, pp. 134-155.*
- Serra P., *Europa e Mondo. Temi per un pensiero politico europeo, Ediesse, Roma 2004.*
- Triglia C., *Sviluppo senza autonomia, Il Mulino, Bologna 1993.*
- Viesti G., *Bari. Economia di una città, Bari, Laterza, 1998.*
- World Bank, *Albania. Sustaining Growth Beyond the Transition, Report No. 29257-AL, 2005.*