

Quaderni di Comunità

Persone, Educazione e Welfare
nella società 5.0

Community Notebook

People, Education, and Welfare in society 5.0

n. 2/2026

EASTERN EUROPE ECHOES: NARRATIVES,
CULTURES, AND MEMORIES FROM COLD
WAR TO DAYTON'S LEGACY (1946–2026)

Edited by

Vito Saracino, Giacomo Giuseppe Colaprice



Iscrizione presso il Registro Stampa del Tribunale di Roma
al n. 172/2021 del 20 ottobre 2021

© Copyright 2026 Eurilink
Eurilink University Press Srl
Via Gregorio VII, 601 - 00165 Roma
www.eurilink.it - ufficiostampa@eurilink.it
ISBN: 979 12 82274 15 9
ISSN: 2785-7697 (Print)
ISSN: 3035-2525 (Online)

Prima edizione, luglio 2026
Progetto grafico di Eurilink

È vietata la riproduzione di questo libro, anche parziale,
effettuata con qualsiasi mezzo, compresa la fotocopia

INDICE

EDITORIALE

- Viaggio “a Est”: alla ricerca della complessità
Vito Saracino, Giacomo Giuseppe Colaprice 13

RUBRICA EDUCATION

GENERAZIONI TRANS E INTERCULTURALI 21

1. “La nuova Italia siamo noi”: il ruolo delle culture e delle pratiche musicali nei processi di costruzione di appartenenza delle generazioni dell’immigrazione
Resmie Hallulli 23

2. La scuola e le sue identità multiple. Una testimonianza dal nord est italiano
Marco Siragusa 33

RUBRICA EMPOWERMENT

I. MEMORIE E PRESENZE DA EST A OVEST 41

1. Lo Spomenik di Barletta
Rosanna Rizzi 43

2. The Twinning Between Barletta and Herceg Novi
Giacomo Giuseppe Colaprice 53

3. La musica nella Polonia socialista: potere, rivolta e alienazione
Lorenzo Ferrazzano 61

RUBRICA EMPOWERMENT

II. REMEMBERING SREBRENICA 1996-2026 71

1. Il ruolo dell’OSCE in Bosnia 1995-1996. Una testimonianza
Tomas Miglierina 73

2. From Propaganda to Preservation: Film as Historiography in 1990s Massacres <i>Vito Saracino</i>	81
SAGGI	
I. MASS MEDIA, CULTURA VISUALE, SPORT E PROPAGANDA OLTRE LA CORTINA DI FERRO	93
1. Caricature as a Reflection of Communist Propaganda in Bilateral Relations between Albania and the Soviet Union (1945-1961) <i>Oltsen Gripshi</i>	95
2. The Albanian Media Issue: Between Italian Proximity, Western Influences, and the New Turkish Influence <i>Vito Saracino</i>	125
3. La trasformazione della figura femminile nel cinema albanese: tra comunismo e transizione <i>Malda Lika</i>	159
4. Il basket come strumento diplomatico oltre la Cortina di ferro <i>Giacomo Giuseppe Colaprice</i>	187
SAGGI	
II. STORIE E MEMORIE CHE RESTANO	215
1. Una resistenza internazionale. Partigiani jugoslavi in Puglia, quindici anni di ricerche <i>Gaetano Colantuono, Adriano Capanna, Rosanna Rizzi, Andrea Martocchia</i>	217
2. Topografie della memoria: i cimiteri tra distruzione, ricostruzione e conflitti simbolici nel Kosovo post-bellico <i>Michele Martini</i>	251
3. Yugosfera digitale: nuovi territori di mediatizzazione della memoria <i>Elisabetta Zurovac</i>	279

4. A Contribution to the Understanding of the Dynamics of the Massacres in Srebrenica <i>Nika Vrbek</i>	309
5. Dayton at 30: Peace, Power, and the Politics of Post-War Bosnia & Herzegovina <i>Amir Duranović</i>	335
6. Vae victis? Interpretazioni accademiche serbe degli accordi di Dayton <i>Bogdan Zivkovic</i>	353
7. Engeneering Democracy: Consociationalism in Post-Dayton Bosnia AND Herzegovina <i>Rebecca Bowen</i>	379
APPROFONDIMENTO	403
Uno sguardo oltre. L'esperienza di Meridiano 13 <i>Gianni Galleri, Marco Siragusa</i>	405
RECENSIONE	409
Recensione del libro: "A Century of the Media in Italian-Albanian Cultural Relationships" <i>Rebecca Bowen</i>	411

RECENSIONE DEL LIBRO: “A CENTURY OF THE MEDIA IN ITALIAN-ALBANIAN CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS”

di Rebecca Bowen*

Abstract: Il libro *Un secolo di media nelle relazioni culturali italo-albanesi* di Vito Saracino, pubblicato da Palgrave Macmillan, costituisce un'importante analisi del modo in cui Italia e Albania hanno sviluppato relazioni geopolitiche reciproche negli ultimi 150 anni, con particolare enfasi sul ruolo dei media in diverse forme nel forgiare gli scambi culturali, politici e simbolici tra i due paesi. Situando il discorso mediatico in un contesto più ampio, quello delle relazioni internazionali, l'opera di Saracino offre un contributo sfumato allo studio delle relazioni culturali transnazionali nello spazio adriatico. Questo volume evidenzia come i media nazionali e stranieri possano avere un'influenza significativa sullo sviluppo della società civile di una nazione e sulla sua transizione democratica.

Parole chiave: Albania, relazioni culturali italo-albanesi, relazioni geopolitiche, media, guerra fredda.

Abstract: The book 'A Century of the Media in Italian-Albanian Cultural Relationships' by Vito Saracino, published by Palgrave MacMillan, constitutes an important analysis of the way Italy and Albania have developed reciprocal geopolitical relations in the past 150 years, with particular emphasis on the role of media in its different forms in forging the cultural, political and symbolic exchanges between the two countries. By situating media discourse within a broader context, that of international relations, Saracino's work offers a nuanced contribution to the study of

* Gramsci Foundation's researcher, r.bowen@studenti.uniba.it.

transnational cultural relations in the Adriatic space. This volume highlights how both domestic and foreign media can have a significant influence on the development of a nation's civil society and its democratic transition.

Key words: Albania, Italian-Albanian cultural relationships, geopolitical relations, media, cold war.

A century of the Media in Italian-Albanian cultural relationships is truly singular in its genre, distinguished by both its historical depth and its contemporary relevance. At a moment in which modern societies grapple with declining literacy rates and the rise of a fast-paced and consumer-oriented media culture, the author's historical perspective offers us valuable insight to the role media has played in shaping civil society and influencing geopolitical relations between nations. This book invites the reader on a journey through Albania's complex history, tracing its turbulent yet persistent search for democracy and stability, while also exploring how print, radio, television and ultimately digital platforms have had a lasting impact on the country's establishment as an independent democratic state. The singular nature of this work lies in its attention to the evolving influence that Italian media has had on Albanian society throughout the years. From the overt fascist propaganda disseminated under Mussolini's dictatorial regime to the light-hearted Italian pop music that secretly penetrated daily life and offered a rare form of escape from the harsh realities of Enver Hoxha's dictatorship, Italian media emerges as both a political instrument and a cultural refuge.

The text in question distinguishes itself for its comprehensive and nuanced examination of the media's role in shaping the cultural, social and political relationship between Italy and Albania over the course of the twentieth century. Its ambitious

goal of adequately covering such an extended historical period was easily reached, thus making it a distinctive contribution to communication and media studies. In doing so, it implicitly emphasizes the interdependence between the development of media tools and the evolution of geopolitical relations between nations. The two neighbouring countries share a complex intertwined history that dates back to the establishment of the Arbëreshë community in Italy. Within this framework, the author traces the development of media by detailing the role of printed text in promoting the Albanian language within Italy as part of the broader effort toward Albanian independence. As fascism emerged in Italy and the regime pursued its expansionist objectives in the region, media, most notably radio, was increasingly employed as an instrument of propaganda as it was deemed the perfect, albeit expensive, tool to aid Italy's invasion of Albania.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, diplomatic relations across the Adriatic became increasingly strained, largely due to Italy's colonial past in the Balkans, a factor that directly affected the social and political conditions of Italians still living in Albania during the immediate post-war period. Simultaneously, the country inaugurated a new political chapter through the gradual consolidation of a communist state that differed notably from both the Soviet system and Tito's Yugoslavia. Hoxha's Albania remained largely closed off from the rest of the world, deliberately limiting its external relations to what it considered strictly necessary primarily with other communist nations, such as China. Although these relationships were rooted in ideological alignment, Hoxha's strong convictions regarding the communist ideal to pursue meant that even these relations were destined to become strained.

Radio continued to be recognized as a powerful social tool, capable of fostering cohesion whilst also shaping the country's collective identity- Radio Tirana, once supported by Italy as part of

its broader expansionist strategy in the region, was now under the partisans' control. Reconfigured to serve the new political order, its primary objective was that of reinforcing popular support for the regime and consolidating a renewed sense of patriotic nationalism amongst the population.

Saracino also devotes significant attention to the development of Albanian cinema during this period, with a particular emphasis on the different ways Italians were portrayed within state-controlled media. Despite the regime's ideological resentment towards the West, foreign films were often acquired and distributed with the intent to critique the capitalist system. At the same time, the controlled circulation of these films functioned as a strategic measure to curb the spread of Italian television in Albania. In parallel to this, *Kinostudio Shqipëria e Re* was founded on 10th July 1952, indirectly envisioned as a national counterpart to Italy's Cinecittà dedicated to the production of domestically made films aligned with state ideology. The author highlights how much of the cinematic output produced revolved around Second World War narratives and the portrayal of the partisan resistance. Italians were consistently cast as fascist occupiers and thus positioned as the enemy to be defeated, often parodied through the use of deliberately derogatory nicknames such as 'Peppino' or 'Turtle' which underscored stereotypes of laziness and incompetence. While these negative depictions softened over time as the diplomatic and commercial relations between the countries improved, Albanian cinema remained subject to rigid state censorship, thus meaning that artistic expression and experimentation were severely prohibited, often resulting in imprisonment and harsh punishments.

Only a limited number of reforms were implemented during Hoxha's regime, one notable example being the establishment of *Televizioni Shqiptar* which resulted in a significant rise in television

ownership. Television soon became a crucial medium through which ordinary citizens subtly resisted the regime, with Italian programming playing a central role in this process. People were even willing to risk their lives and freedom to tune into Italian tv shows. The seemingly mundane act of watching these broadcasts and listening to Italian music constituted a quiet challenge to the rigid repression endured by the Albanian people. A music festival, *Festivali i Këngës*, was created in parallel to Italy's Sanremo, although it remained firmly aligned with the regime's strict rules regarding music, performance and dress. Despite this limited openness toward a more liberal media culture, Italian television (particularly RAI) was portrayed as an instrument of capitalist and bourgeois propaganda and was consequently firmly prohibited. Nevertheless, Italian singers such as Adriano Celentano maintained a cult following as his music, alongside that of many other pop stars, provided a symbolic refuge for many Albanians. This consistent exposure to Italy encouraged the development of an idealized image of the country, later influencing Albanian people's migration patterns following the regime's collapse.

The poignancy of Saracino's work lies in his ability to convey the significant impact that something as trivial as a game show can have on people living within a repressive state. Rather than addressing this directly, he allows the reader to reflect on the broader significance of media and its rapid evolution over the past three decades, particularly in shaping our understanding of reality and our social interactions. The current digital age is defined by a form of rapid consumption in which innovative multimedia platforms are often taken for granted. Consequently the consumer is rendered passive through algorithmic filtering and instances of information overload. The news can be easily manipulated to fit a certain narrative in ways that closely resemble those of a dictatorship. Yet, the majority of us live in democratic societies.

Saracino demonstrates that media, from film and television to music and journalism, plays a crucial role in fostering a strong, informed and diverse civil society.

The volume concludes with an accurate analysis of the migratory crisis Italy faced during the nineties, specifically with regards to the narratives constructed by Italian media outlets at the time. Contemporary collective memory often recalls the arrival of the Vlora in Bari as a moment marked by empathy and civic engagement. Saracino complicates this narrative by providing us with further context, underscoring how both conservative and liberal newspapers would frequently adopt negative, xenophobic and prejudiced descriptions of the Albanians seeking refuge. These portrayals portrayed a significant role in altering the perceptions of Albanian citizens, forcing a reconsideration of the idealized image of Italy that had long been sustained through media consumption.

Overall, Saracino's work offers a compelling and methodologically sound examination of the complex relationship between media, cultural imagination, and political power. Research of this kind is becoming increasingly necessary in light of the strategic importance of geopolitical relations across the Adriatic, which extend far beyond the short-comings of the Rama-Meloni agreement. The current era is that of European integration and democratic development, and Italy continues to foster an important cultural connection to Albania both thanks to its geographic proximity and to the large presence of Albanians residing in the country. The text convincingly proves that media can bridge social divides and act as an instrument of inclusion. As such, the volume represents a valuable contribution to both media and Balkan studies, offering perspectives that remain highly relevant to contemporary debates on representation and democracy.

The author has also worked on a follow-up volume regarding the evolution of education in Albania which will be published by

Palgrave in the upcoming months. The volume – which I had the pleasure of editing and translating – encapsulates the century long history of instruction in Albania, highlighting the changes it underwent during the period of fascist occupation, the regime, and the years following the country's transition to democracy. It is ulterior proof of the author's dedication to the topic at hand, as it represents yet another comprehensive study on the relationship between Albania and Italy.