

*At the Top it's a Male Word.*

## Il personaggio dell'imprenditore nel romanzo italiano degli anni Ottanta e Novanta<sup>1</sup>

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*Abstract*

*At the Top it's a Male Word. The character of the entrepreneur in the Italian novel of the Eighties and Nineties*

*The entrepreneur began to play an important role in Italian fiction as early as the 1980s. As a central character in the Italian economic and social landscape, the entrepreneur has had leading roles in novels by Busi, Piersanti, Culicchia, Montesano, and many more. As a masculine emblem of the winner, this self-made man is a testimony to the success of the neoliberal approach. The entrepreneur is able to overcome the boundaries of the company status-quo and establish work as a way of life; as a code of conduct. This essay investigates the representations of the entrepreneurial figure in certain novels published in the eighties and nineties. It explores the characteristics common to the entrepreneurial character and their meanings. This analysis brings to light two specific elements: the criticism of the neoliberal system and the anthropological mutation of the Italian people. These Italian novels become an important tool to measure how much the paradigm of hegemonic masculinity has changed, but also how mutations in the working world have invaded social and civil life. How they are modifying the rhythms, aspirations and dominant values.*

**Keywords:** manager; masculinity; entrepreneur; Italian novel; performance.

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<sup>1</sup> La citazione è tratta da Connell, Wood 2005: 351.