

David Albert Best

Ruralism

in Central Italian Writers

1927-1997

From *Strapaese* Landscapes to the Gendering of Nature:
Fabio Tombari, Paolo Volponi, Carlo Cassola, Romana Petri



Ancona University Press / Adriatic Lectures

David Albert Best graduated in European Studies, Languages and Literatures in 1999 from University College Cork, with a dissertation on Central Italian agrarian geography and culture. Between 1999 and 2000, based in Macerata and Fermo, he taught English at various secondary schools and worked as a translator. He then undertook a Ph.D. in Italian Cultural Studies (Cork) as a three-year IRCHSS Postgraduate Scholar with a thesis on *Representations of rurality in 20th-century central Italian literature*.

He has published on Volponi (*Conflicting Rural Utopias: Post-War Marche in Paolo Volponi's La macchina mondiale*, University of Edinburgh, 2004); Petri (*A Matriarchal Reading of Alle Case Venie: Petri's Challenge to Conventional Representations of the Female Peasant*, Cambridge SP, 2006); Tombari (*Frusaglia and Gli animali: Nature and Strapaese in Fabio Tombari*, Troubador, 2007), and Cassola ("*Destinate a patire*": *The Contemplation of Female Bodies From Perfection to Pain in Carlo Cassola's Paura e tristezza*', Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007).

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CONTENTS

PART ONE

WRITING THE MARCHES, TUSCANY, AND UMBRIA

Fabio Tombari (Fano 1899 – Forlì 1989). Paolo Volponi (Urbino 1924 – Ancona 1994).
Carlo Cassola (Rome 1917 – Lucca 1987). Romana Petri (b. Rome 1955).

Introduction - Conceptualising rural central Italy	9
Chapter One - Landscape and rurality in four central Italian authors	18
1.1. Strapaesismo and affinity with Nature: Fabio Tombari - Paolo Volponi	18
1.2. Agrarian bodyscapes in Tuscany and Umbria: Carlo Cassola - Romana Petri	28

PART TWO

QUESTIONS OF RURALISM IN THE MARCHES

Fabio Tombari. Paolo Volponi

Chapter Two - Tombari, <i>Frusaglia</i> , and the Marches: Expressing Fascist rural ethics	49
2.1. <i>Tutta Frusaglia</i> in the context of Fascist ruralism	49
2.2. Fascist woman in Tombari's rural landscape	53
2.3. Nature and <i>Gli animali 'umanizzati'</i>	59
Chapter Three - Rural spaces of the Marches: Landscape through dualisms in Volponi's <i>Macchina mondiale</i>	68
3.1. <i>La macchina</i> in context	68
3.2. Division of man from landscape and the mastery of Nature	74
3.3. Mastery of woman and the feminisation of landscape	79
3.4. Country and city in <i>La macchina mondiale</i>	85

CONCLUSION

CENTRAL ITALY: A RURAL ISSUE?	101
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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PRIMARY SOURCES	111
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INDEX OF NAMES	113
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The central Italian writers Fabio Tombari, Paolo Volponi, Carlo Cassola, and Romana Petri have been very much influenced by landscape, traditional ruralism, and the lively social, cultural and political debate on the passing of an era of peasantry to one of industry. This attitude simultaneously 'produce' a natural and social landscape in the works analysed here, playing a significant role in defining a collective consciousness: a local identity and a sense of region.

Offering a region-based study of literature and cultural history, *Ruralism in Central Italian Writers* identifies decisive issues pertaining to sociology and cultural geography through the analysis of written representations of central Italy.

The book debates the notion that three types of Italian rural fiction prevail: the first reacting to 'urban' modernity, the second urging revolution in order to overturn rural conditions, the third addressing ecology and post-developmental transactions between 'natural' and 'artificial' phenomena.

Theoretically informed by cultural geography and ecofeminism, the study employs a methodology based on close textual analysis supported by narratology, literary criticism and social studies to investigate the intersections between ideology and writing on the rural.

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