

# **Tra migrazione e malattia. La voce femminile nella narrativa della migrazione italiana negli Stati Uniti: *Paper Fish* di Tina De Rosa, *Umbertina* di Helen Barolini e *Vita* di Melania Mazzucco**

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Crossways in Cultural Narratives

The presence of women in migration has often been underestimated in comparison to the presence of men due to the fact that women, stereotypically, are considered both dependent and unproductive. This essay analyzes two novels written by Italian-American authors Tina De Rosa, and Helen Barolini, and a novel written by the Italian author Melania Mazzucco. These authors, through their novels *Paper Fish* (1980), *Umbertina* (1979) and *Vita* (2003) respectively, have come to terms with the psychological stereotypes that have pervaded Italian emigration to the United States. They offer the reader a new female perspective and give voice to a category that has been unjustly ignored for a long time. The purpose of this dissertation is to point out the common aspects and the divergences between the three writers, and in particular, the points of convergence between Barolini and De Rosa that distinguish them from Mazzucco. Special attention is given to the function of illness used as a metaphor of discomfort, displacement and alienation experienced by Italian immigrants in the United States, and especially by women who are doubly subordinate—as migrants and as women.