



# **Italian Women and Autobiography: Ideology, Discourse and Identity in Female Life Narratives from Fascism to the Present**

*Ioana Raluca Larco and Fabiana Cecchini*

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The essays included in this collection examine issues such as identity and ideology which are at play in the female autobiography practice, along with the problematicity that these trigger in terms of self-representation and traditional formal boundaries. The women writers analyzed here through mainly historical, literary, feminist and psychoanalytic lenses cover a long period in the history of Italy, spanning from the Fascist era to our time. In an attempt to organize and connect these texts which are chronologically far apart, we have divided our contributions into two main parts. The first, 'Shapes of Ideology,' includes authors interacting primarily with political ideology in a way that eventually entails the challenge of the official 'technologies of gender' (De Lauretis, 1987) and implicitly, a reflection on the gendered identity. In the second part, 'Reconsidering ideology, negotiating autobiography,' while the political ideology is not completely excluded, it becomes however something more internalized and relevant to the writers quest for identity. Such process bears consequences with respect to the canon of autobiography, as authors experiment with new forms of autobiographical narratives and readers become more and more an integral component of this personal endeavor.

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