

**Rutgers University**  
**Italian 16:560:662**  
**Novella del Cinquecento**  
**Spring 2012**

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**Italian Short Stories**

From Boccaccio to Sacchetti, Masuccio Salernitano, Grazzini, and Giraldi Cinzio, the Italian tradition of short story writing is as glorious as its poetic literary history. This course is designed as an investigation of the short narrative genre, its parameters, its tenets, and narratological devices from the beginning to early modernity. Originally intended to be recited, the genre undergoes severe changes in its transformation from an oral form to a written medium. The strictly “textual” approach in Todorov has been replaced more recently by the psychoanalytic study of Michel Plaisance. The more recent gender-oriented approach allows an investigation of short stories as paradigm of femininity.

**Syllabus**

01/18 Introduzione

01/25 La Cornice: Boccaccio, Grazzini, Firenzuola  
Michel Plaisance, “Funzione e tipologia della cornice,” *La novella italiana. Atti del Convegno di Caprarola [19-24 settembre 1988]* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1989) 103-118.

02/01 La Cornice: Costo, Erizzo, Giraldi-Cinthio  
Giorgio Patrizi, “Oralità e oratoria in alcuni novellieri del Cinquecento,” *La novella, la voce, il libro. Dal ‘cantare’ trecentesco alla penna narratrice barocca* (Napoli: Liguori Editore, 1996) 99-115.

02/08 Machiavelli, “Favola.”  
Carlo Dionisotti, “Machiavelli letterato,” *Machiavellerie* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980) 227-266.  
Gerard Genette, “Frontiere del racconto,” *L’analisi del racconto* (Milano: Bompiani, 1969) 271-290.

02/15 Grazzini, *Le Cene*: Cena I  
Michel Plaisance, “La structure de la *beffa* dans les Cene d’Antonfrancesco Grazzini,” *Formes et signification de la «Beffa» dans la littérature italienne de la Renaissance*, a cura di André Rachon (Paris : Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1972) 45-97.

- 02/22 Grazzini, *Le Cene* : Cena II  
Marga Cotino-Jones, « Il ‘realismo grottesco’ come modello di ‘trasgressione.’ *Le cene del Grazzini*,” *La novella italiana. Atti del Convegno di Caprarola [19-24 settembre 1988]* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1989) 851-860.
- 02/29 Bandello  
Nuccio Ordine, “Teoria della novella e teoria del riso nel Cinquecento,” *Teoria della novella e teoria del riso nel Cinquecento* (Napoli: Liguori Editore, 1996) 59-91.
- 03/07 Bandello  
Giancarlo Mazzacurati, “La narrazione policentrica di Matteo Bandello,” *All’ombra di Dioneo. Tipologie e percorsi della novella da Boccaccio a Bandello* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1996) 191-213.
- 03/28 Straparola  
Giancarlo Mazzacurati, “La narrativa di G.F. Straparola: Sociologia e struttura del protagonista fiabesco,” *Studi mediolatini e volgari* 17 (1969) 49-88.
- 04/04 Straparola  
Jack Zipes, “Of Cats and Men: Framing the Civilizing Discourse of the Fairy Tale,” *Out of the Woods: The Origins of the Literary Fairy Tale in Italy and France*, eds. Nancy Canepa and Antonella Ansani (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1997) 176-193.  
Giancarlo Mazzacurati, “La narrativa di Giovan Francesco Straparola e l’ideologia del fiabesco,” *All’ombra di Dioneo. Tipologie e percorsi della novella da Boccaccio a Bandello* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1996) 151-189.
- 04/11 Giraldis Cinthio  
Giorgio Patrizi, “Giraldis Cinthio e la complicazione del racconto. Note per una lettura degli Hecatommithi,” *La novella italiana. Atti del Convegno di Caprarola [19-24 settembre 1988]* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1989) 885-899.
- 04/18 Giraldis Cinthio  
Michel Olsen, “Un novelliere controriformistico fa luce su un altro: le Sei giornate di Sebastiano Erizzo e Gli Ecatommithi di Giambattista Giraldis Cinthio,” *Amore, virtù e potere nella novellistica rinascimentale. Argomentazione narrativa e ricezione letteraria* (Napoli: Federico e Ardia, 1984) 133-151.
- 04/25 Conclusione

This is a seminar and participation is very important in this class; it will constitute a percentage of your final grade. Everyone is expected to do the assigned reading by the date specified on the syllabus. Participation, oral presentations, and a final paper will all contribute to your final grade. Academic integrity is expected of everyone. Please, quote

your sources, do not plagiarize, do not copy, and do not submit your paper for more than one class. The final paper should be a research paper of approximately 20 pages and should ideally originate in your oral presentation. It should present an original idea and be a combination of critical/theoretical investigation and textual analysis. You should think of your paper in terms of a publishable article.

**Learning goals.** Some of the learning goals for this class are the following: Attain scholarship and research skills in a broad field of learning. Engage in and conduct original research. Prepare to be professionals in their discipline. Write a paper that can be revised into an article.