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## **Storytelling Across Centuries: Boccaccio and Calvino in Dialogue**

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the narrative strategies employed in two important Italian works from distant cultural periods: Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* (14th century) and Italo Calvino's *Italian Folktales* (Fiabe italiane, 20th century). Through a comparative analysis of their use of adapted fairy tales and short medieval story forms, the study examines how narration, narrative framing, and didactic elements evolve over time. Special attention will be given to the function of parody and humor in both works, questioning whether these are deployed on a single narrative level or across multiple layers—targeting the present, the past, or the genres themselves.

The paper investigates whether these literary strategies serve merely as stylistic devices or whether they engage with broader cultural and philosophical concerns. Do Calvino's reworkings of traditional tales, like Boccaccio's stories, reflect or respond to the socio-political contexts in which they were created? What insights can be gained by placing these texts in dialogue across centuries? Further, the study considers how both authors address enduring themes such as gender roles, intercultural relations, morality, violence, empathy and historical consciousness. By examining the interplay between past and present in their storytelling, the paper seeks to uncover whether certain human concerns persist across time, and how narrative form both reflects and critiques the cultural moment of its production.