

The Department of FRENCH & ITALIAN Lecture Series presents:

THE LAW OF THE NOVEL AND THE FORM OF HISTORY

a lecture by Professor ROBERTO DAINOTTO, Duke University

From Richardson's *Pamela*, "a victim to the will of a wicked violator of all the laws of God and man!" to Balzac's *Lost Illusions*, "It was the duty of a man of genius to set himself above law; it was his mission to reconstruct law," what Ian Watt (in)famously called "the rise of the novel in the 18th and 19th Century" seems to be characterized by a recurrent concern with the precariousness of all laws.

Taking the plot of Manzoni's *Betrothed* as paradigmatic, this lecture wants to revisit Bakhtin's assertion that "Of all the major genres only the novel ... has no canon of its own" in the context of the historicist disruption of classicist laws of narrativity.

ROBERTO DAINOTTO is a professor of Italian and of literature at Duke University, and teaches courses on modern and contemporary Italian culture. His publications include *Place in Literature: Regions, Cultures, Communities* (Cornell UP, 2000); *Europe (in Theory)* (Duke UP, 2007); and *Mafia: A Cultural History* (Reaktion Books, 2015).

Friday, FEBRUARY 24, 2017, 4:00pm Kresge Hall 1-515