



Urania: A Romance (The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe)

Giulia Bigolina, Valeria Finucci

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Presented for the first time in a critical English edition, *Urania: A Romance* provides modern readers with a rare glimpse into the novel and novella forms at a time when narrative genres were not only being invented but, in the hands of women like Giulia Bigolina (1518?-1569?), used as vehicles for literary experimentation.

The first known prose romance written by a woman in Italian, Bigolina's *Urania* centers on the monomaniacal love of a female character falling into melancholy when her beloved leaves her for a more beautiful woman. A tale that includes many of the conventions that would later become standards of the genre—cross-dressing, travel, epic skirmishes, and daring deeds—*Urania* also contains the earliest treatise on the worth of women.

Also included in this volume, the novella *Giulia Camposampiero* is the only extant part of a probable longer narrative written in the style of the *Decameron*. While employing some of those same gender and role reversals as *Urania*, including the privileging of heroic constancy in both men and women, it chronicles the tribulations that a couple undergoes until their secret marriage is publicly recognized.

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