



Calvino's Combinational Creativity

Elizabeth Scheiber

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Calvino's Combinational Creativity examines the various ways combinatory processes influence the work of the Italian author Italo Calvino. Comprising chapters by six literary scholars, the volume asserts that the Ligurian writer's creativity often stems from his contemplation of literature even as it investigates the intersection of his work with poets, writers, and literary movements. Each chapter explores a different aspect of Calvino's creativity. Natalie Berkman examines Calvino as a reader of Ariosto and provides an analysis of mathematical combinations inspired by Vladimir Propp in *Il castello dei destini incrociati*. Discussing the poetic and scientific influence of the Argentine writer Julio Cortázar on Calvino, Sara Ceroni then presents *Palomar* as a modernist work of epiphanies. This is followed by two chapters investigating different influences on *Cosmicomics*: Elio Baldi demonstrates how Calvino's collection of stories appropriates various conventions of the science fiction genre, while Elizabeth Scheiber provides a close reading of two tales to show how Calvino uses science as a metaphor to comment on the poetics of Italian authors Gadda, D'Annunzio, Ungaretti, and Montale. Cecilia Benaglia then proposes Calvino as a reader of Gadda, who served not only as an aesthetic influence, but also as an epistemological one. Finally, juxtaposing Calvino with his contemporary, Umberto Eco, Sebastiano Bazzichetto examines the two authors' use of figures of speech as ways of constructing labyrinths. *Calvino's Combinational Creativity* takes Calvino studies in new directions as it rethinks how the authors' work can be classified, and delves into the sources of his inspiration.

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