

## My Journey with Calvino

Rui Zink<sup>1</sup>

[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org)  
Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2023 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

I am such an Italo Calvino buff that, nearly thirty years after his abrupt departure, I still miss him like an estranged friend. I like to brag I read all his work, from the postmodern to the post-mortem, such as collections of never-assembled forewords and newspaper articles, plus the odd unfinished book (one about the senses with only three senses), his famous lessons for a new literary millennium (brilliant, short only of a chapter), long forgotten novels he hadn't cared to reprint, but death, to great writers, tends to do that dubious magic of turning into publishing gold even their obviously lesser works, or works they would never publish themselves, if they had a say about it.

I remember how annoyed I was when he died, for the books immediately available in my country were misrepresentative of his work. With prolific writers there should be a way, for those who truly loved

---

<sup>1</sup> **Rui Zink** was born in Lisbon in 1961. He's a professor of Editing and Writing at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, as well as a writer and translator, having published more than 30 books. His work is translated in a dozen languages (including French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian and Japanese), ranging from fiction to plays, from cartoons to opera. He published his first book in 1986, *Hotel Lusitano*, hailed 25 years later as one of the best novels of his generation with a celebratory edition. In 1990, Rui Zink was a pioneer of writing courses in Portugal. In 1997, he co-authored, with artist António Jorge Gonçalves, the first graphic Portuguese novel: *A Arte Suprema*. In 2001, he wrote the first Portuguese online novel, *Os Surfistas*, with the input of e-readers. He wrote a tetralogy about the crisis, comprising *O Destino Turístico* (2008), *A Instalação do Medo* (2012), *A Metametamorfose e Outras Formosas Morfofos* (2014) and the short novel *OssO* (2015). Aside from being a novelist, he is a playwright, writes comic strips, and frequently creates librettos for operas. As a translator, he has brought into Portuguese, among others, Saul Bellow and Richard Zenith. He was visiting scholar at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, reader at the University of Michigan and resident writer at Middlebury College, Vermont, USA. Address correspondence to: Rui Zink; e-mail: [zink.rui@gmail.com](mailto:zink.rui@gmail.com).