10	11	12	7	8	9	4	5	6	1	2	3
11	12	10	8	9	7	5	6	4	2	3	1
12	10	11	9	7	8	6	4	5	3	1	2
7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	7	11	12	10	2	3	1	5	6	4
9	7	8	12	10	11	3	1	2	6	4	5
4	5	6	1	2	3	10	11	12	7	8	9
5	6	4	2	3	1	11	12	10	8	9	7
6	4	5	3	1	2	12	10	11	9	7	8
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	3	1	5	6	4	8	9	7	11	12	10
3	1	2	6	4	5	9	7	8	12	10	11

Order 12 Latin Bi-Square as used by Georges Perec

In 1947 Raymond Queneau wrote 99 short descriptions of the same pair of unremarkable events: a man was seen on the 'S' bus having a run-in with another man, and was then seen again later that day at the Gare St-Lazare. Each description was written in a different style, following its own set of specific literary rules, with the effect that the scene is transformed completely in each instance, as if imagined or remembered through the lens of a hundred diverse minds. In 1969 Georges Perec began a project in which he chose twelve places in Paris where he had either lived or had attached certain memories to. He then proceeded to write descriptions of two of these places each month, one written at the place as an objective description, the other written from memory. He slipped these into sealed letters together with photos of the locations, taken by a friend. Each year he repeated the task, taking care to follow an algorithm based on a Latin bi-square, so that each place was described during a different month to the previous year, ensuring that the same pair of places was never described in the same month. This was continued for twelve years, until each place had been described twelve times as both an objective list of elements and as a collection of thoughts and memories.

Both writers belonged to Oulipo, a group for whom the constraints and formal logic of poetry and mathematics were "encouragements for inspiration, so to speak, or else, in a way, aids to creativity"*. Around these frameworks the tangle of events, narrative and language could grow in wild profusion while the core would remain as an elegant plan. The productive play against rules was nothing new, what was unusual was how these writers consciously played *with the rules themselves*, creatively reformulating the structure of their medium each time they began a new project. Their techniques ranged in complexity from the simple structure of Queneau's exercises in style, effectively a ten by ten grid with an equivalent numerical array, so that one can mirror any grid location to any other with total

correspondence (except the one empty square, precisely positioned to destabilize its total internal symmetry), to the twelve sided Latin bi-square that ordered Perec's archiving of fact and experience, in the form of time, embodied by the Gregorian calendar.

At every node, in each of these structures, the writers unified numerical differentiation and equivalence with the complex and psychological effects of memory and form. While the grid of identical units in Queneau's array are all interchangeable, their transformation through the filter of perception and style rendered them entirely unique and totally asymmetrical. Perec's square — divided according to units of time and space — is transfigured by his recollections and the atemporal nature of memory, which weaves a network of new correspondences across the boundaries laid out by his framework. It is precisely the power of the related patterns created by this intermingling and overlaying of objective mathematical clarity and subjective effect, each time generated anew, with novel and surprising consequences in every Oulipian tract, that offers up a richer definition of symmetry. Rather than being described only in terms of abstract geometric and numerical reflectivity, this form of correspondence dynamically binds the structure to the effect uniting co-ordinated language with its phenomenal, subjective counterpart in the world of memory and experience.