

*I deny, with the arguments of idealism, the vast temporal series which idealism admits. Hume denied the existence of an absolute space, in which all things have their place; I deny the existence of one single time, in which all things are linked as in a chain. The denial of coexistence is no less arduous than the denial of succession. (Jorge Luis Borges)*

The maze is (a) work, mazes are always at work within work. The maze is the very object of work itself. The subject is always labyrinthine: a largely unknown interconnected field of instances, spaces, engagements — whose convoluted and intricate structure as such must be actually explored. Enclosing a journey, a work is a maze: the subject becomes a convoluted space by becoming a wanderer of these forking paths which continuously converge and diverge, cyclically multiplying spaces, ever forwards to infinity.

The fabled maze which confines a minotaur, *labyrinth* already contains the Lydian *labrus*, the double-headed axe of Minos. A sacred dual-weapon to rend the folded beast, to slay the man with the monstrous head of a bull. The labyrinth itself is monstrous and harbors monsters; within its folded space, amidst tunnels and promenades, somewhere a terrible half-man, half-beast is wandering alone, on the borderline between infinite spaces, waiting within the imbrications of fractured infinity, waiting for his death, for his redemption. Salvation is a question of transmutation, and like all metamorphic fables, a mysterious secret is contained, an answer to the question: what to do with the hybrids, these half-men, half-x...?

Literature responds: recover them, redeem them, make them cycle transitorily, make them unfold (new worlds between.) In short, save them from the labyrinth. These people deserve their freedom, the spirit of open space “just like” us. But how long is it going to take? A maze unfolds itself by being traversed, the differences between beginning and end mapped out completely; but in the passage, the unthreading multiplies pathways, events, moments of affirmation or refusal. And ultimately we probably will not claim victory; for the labyrinth has swallowed greater than we.

Thus great decisions are lethal, because they *work*: the labyrinth slays or is slain, it is an instrument of fate, a cursed (double-headed) weapon and a mystical sacrifice. Borges poses a question for translators: do we attempt to resolve the labyrinth (slay the master,) or leave it unresolved, circular, open (childlike, half-animal)? What is literary pride, why do we feel proud of another’s words, as though they ennobled us, raised us up above men (perhaps into a half-man, half-x...?)

So Literature is violence insofar as it rends static ancient mazes in pieces in a joyful, liberating affirmation of openness, of opening-up, of being-opened. Borges fractalizes the labyrinth, infinitely multiplies the interconnections between spaces — but makes all these spaces identical, cloned pieces of an infinite non-linear repetition, extending vertiginously into eternity, out in space and deep into the future, forever onwards. Such is literature: a tremendous, terrifying, joyous exploration of abyssal infinities. The labyrinth represents the hardness, the cruelty which is possible in literature, in the violent subtraction of identity, in the mad convolution of forms and the slowly unfolding spaces of thought...

*(Literature is the labyrinth, Borges the mad minotaur, Ariadne's thread the telling, the story, or if you like, a library.)*