The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages

Doob, Penelope Reed

Published by Cornell University Press

Doob, Penelope Reed.
The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/68526

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2414138
APPENDIX

Labyrinths in Manuscripts

The following labyrinths in medieval manuscripts are not included in either Kern's or Batschelet-Massini's catalogues.

1. Oxford MS. Bodley Auct. F. 6. 4 (S.C. 2150), consisting of an early thirteenth-century manuscript of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and a fourteenth-century manuscript of Nicholas Trevet's commentary on Boethius. Circular labyrinths, each in a different hand, appear on fols. 61av and 61bv, at the end of the *Consolation* and before the commentary, which seems to have been added later. The labyrinths seem to date from the thirteenth century.

A. A maze with thirteen circuits and a center medallion labeled *domus dedali*. Latin verses on the signs of the zodiac precede the maze. See plate 22.

B. A clumsily drawn maze with nine circuits and a center medallion labeled *domus dedali*, followed by a hymn in a late thirteenth-century hand whose text reads, “In terram Christus expuit / Salium terre miscuit / Et serui formam induit / Dei sapientia. // Illa mundans hec mundata / Illa creans hec creata / Unde lutum fit ex sputu / Sed non sputum fit ex luto / Assignant misteria. // Christus tamen sic providet / Quod non statim cecus vidit / Numquam videt cecus natus / Nisi prius baptizatus / In aquas misterii.” A rough translation: “Christ spat on the earth / And mixed his saliva with earth / And clothed the features of the [his] servant / With [by] the Wisdom of God. // That purifying, this purified / That creating, this created, / Whence mud is made from spit / But spit is not made from mud. / They call such things mysteries [miracles?]. // Christ however thus foresees / What the blind man did not see at once. / The man born blind will never see / Unless he is first baptized / In the waters of the sacrament.”
2. Florence MS. Bibl. Laur. Plut. 78.16, a fourteenth-century copy of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*. At the end (fol. 58r) appears a circular maze with eleven circuits and a central medallion in which a man and a woman grip the hilt of a sword. See plate 23.

3. Paris BN. lat. 1745, containing miscellaneous MSS. of the ninth and eleventh centuries, including St. Ambrose, *De fide*; St. Augustine, *De haeresibus*; Agobard, *De correctione antiphonarii*; Heribertus, *De haereticis*; excerpts from the Old Testament; a notice of an act of Eudes, abbot of Saint-Germain, Auxerre.

A. Fol. 30v, after Agobard's text and before Heribertus's, illustrates a labyrinth, possibly in connection with Agobard's reference to the labyrinth, mentioned in Chapter 7. See plate 5.

B. Fol. 40r, a labyrinth after the Act of Eudes and preceding a table of contents.

Both labyrinths contain eleven circuits and a center medallion.


5. Paris, MS. BN fr. 9682, ca. 1300; *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*. Fol. 142r shows the labyrinth as a three-dimensional building and the Minotaur, as above. See Buchthal, plate 141c.

6. Paris, MS. BN fr. 20125, thirteenth century; *Histoire universelle (Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César)*, French provenance. Fol. 158r shows a quadrirpartite diagram, apparently with eight circuits and no central medallion, as if projected onto a sphere; the paths seem to wrap around the sphere, passing beyond our line of vision. See my plate 19.