

## Wittgenstein's and Borges' Labyrinth-Imagery

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The paper discusses Wittgenstein's labyrinth-imagery in the *Philosophical Investigations* and *Zettel* in the light of ancient Greek labyrinth-story of Theseus' escape from the labyrinth and Borges' labyrinth-stories. The paper argues that considerable light is shed on several unappreciated dimensions of Wittgenstein's later philosophy by these religious and literary labyrinth-stories. The paper argues that Wittgenstein's labyrinth-imagery is connected with other important dimensions of his later philosophy, including his imagery of the emergence of linguistic order (meaning) from chaos in paragraph 608 of *Zettel*, his imagery of philosophy as a journey in *Preface to the Philosophical Investigations*, his insistence on the need for courage in philosophizing, his view that language arises out of animal instincts, and his Socratic comments that philosophy must be brought "down to earth." It is also argued that whereas an escape from the labyrinth, via "Ariadne's thread," is possible in the ancient labyrinth story, Wittgenstein, with Borges and Kafka, holds that no escape from the modern labyrinth is possible. The story of Wittgenstein's and Borges' and Kafka's modern labyrinths is more pessimistic than the ancient story. Modern human beings must simply learn to live in the labyrinth. Understanding the literary roots of Wittgenstein's labyrinth-imagery illuminates his later philosophy and his conception of philosophizing. Although there is no intention to deny Wittgenstein's strong links to linguistic or analytical philosophy, the paper argues that Wittgenstein's thought is far more informed by the existential concerns of human life than is generally recognized.<sup>1</sup>

Language is a labyrinth of paths.  
Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (203)<sup>2</sup>

Wittgenstein's comparison of language to a labyrinth is generally seen as an allusion to his view that one must examine the uses of words from a vast number of directions.<sup>3</sup> The present paper argues, rather, that Wittgenstein specifically intends the *literary* notion of the Labyrinth deriving from the ancient Minoan story of the Labyrinth later adopted by various religious traditions.<sup>4</sup> Wittgenstein employs the labyrinth-imagery to convey a vision of philosophizing on analogy with Theseus' *perilous journey* into the *center* of an immensely *confusing* structure to win his *freedom*—with one major exception. Like Borges' and Kafka's more

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1. Abbreviations of Borges and Wittgenstein's works are placed in square brackets "[ ]" directly after the title of the work in the Bibliography section.

2. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* [PI], trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1958).

3. Garth Hallett, *Companion to Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Investigations"* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1979), 287.

4. Edith Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heros* (New York: Meridian 1969), & Craig Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

pessimistic *modern* conceptions of the Labyrinth, Wittgenstein does not envisage any *thread* ("clue") that enables one to escape the labyrinth. For Wittgenstein, one must learn to live in the Labyrinth. Paragraph 608 of Wittgenstein's *Zettel* (hereafter Z608)<sup>5</sup> is relevant. Whereas most scholars read Z608 as proposing *theories* about neural processes, Wittgenstein holds that the philosopher must not advance theories (*PI*, 109). Thus, the paper argues that Z608 is written in the same kind of *literary* language as Borges' labyrinth stories and that related Labyrinth-imagery can be found *throughout* Wittgenstein's later works. The idea of a link between Z608 and Borges' literary works may seem fanciful, but Borges (*NRI*, 231) explicitly discusses the psycho-physical parallelism that Wittgenstein rejects at Z608-Z611.

§ I discusses the central features of the labyrinth story. § II argues that the Neurophysiological Interpretation of Z608 (**NI**) is incorrect. § III sketches the Religious-Cosmological Interpretation (**RCI**) of Z608. § IV shows how Borges use of labyrinth-imagery suggests a Labyrinth Interpretation (**LI**) of Z608 that builds on RCI. § V applies **LI** to Wittgenstein's later philosophy in general.

### The Traditional Labyrinth Story

Labyrinth patterns ... do not have dead-ends like a maze; instead, a single path winds to the center, where, with a single turn, the ... path leads out again.

Kern, *Through the Labyrinth* (Chap. 1)

In the ancient labyrinth-story King Minos of Crete directed his greatest architect, Daedalus, to build a large complex building with intricate passageways to imprison the Minotaur, a monstrous half-man half-bull creature, at its center. In the first part the ancient hero, Theseus, escapes the labyrinth. In the second part King Minos imprisons Daedalus and his son Icarus in the Labyrinth resulting in Icarus' death during an escape attempt.<sup>6</sup>

The background is this: A foolish decision at Athens results in the death of King Minos' only son by a dangerous bull. Enraged, King Minos captures Athens and requires that Athens periodically send a group of Athenian youths to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. Theseus, the mythical founder of Athens, offers to be one of victims but his plan is to kill the Minotaur and end the slaughter of his kinsfolk. Fortunately, Ariadne, the King's daughter and Princess of ancient Crete, attracted to Theseus, gives him a ball of thread, "Ariadne's thread," to "point the way" out of the labyrinth. Theseus fastens one end of the thread to the entrance,

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5. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel* [Z], trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970).

6. Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heros*, 138-140, 149-152.

travels to the center, kills the Minotaur, and follows the thread back to freedom.<sup>7</sup>

First, the labyrinth is a *confusing structure of pathways* in which one easily becomes lost. Both labyrinths and mazes, are confusing structures in which one can easily become lost. Indeed, the etymology of "maze" traces to "amaze,"<sup>8</sup> means to "overwhelm or confuse with sudden surprise or wonder," but can also mean "stupefied, irrational, or foolish."<sup>8</sup>

But it is customary to distinguish between a unicursal single non-branching labyrinth that *leads to the center* from a multi-cursual branching maze involving choices and dead ends.<sup>9</sup> Whereas a maze need not, have a center, the center of the labyrinth (home to the Minotaur) plays a crucial role in the labyrinth-story. Thus, all labyrinths are mazes, because they are all "amazing" (confusing) structures, but not all mazes are labyrinths because not all mazes have a path to a *center*. Third, the story of the Labyrinth is the story of a dangerous *journey*. Fourth, since a genuine labyrinth involves a single non-branching path to the center and back out again the difficulty finding the path in the labyrinth is primarily psychological (one easily loses one's way). Fifth, since Theseus' plan is to end the sacrifice of Athenian youths, it is a story of *redemption*. Sixth, the journey requires going *through the center* of the labyrinth and out again. Seventh, it is a *dangerous* journey requiring *courage* because one might lose one's life to the Minotaur. Eighth, it is a journey from *bondage to freedom*. Ninth, Theseus needs a "clue," "Ariadne's thread," to escape the labyrinth.<sup>10</sup> This can be summarized in 9 Labyrinth-themes,

- (L1) The labyrinth is an *amazing* complicated and *confusing* structure.
- (L2) The labyrinth has a path to a *center* while a mere maze might or might not have a path to a center.
- (L3) The story of the Labyrinth is about a *journey*.
- (L4) The Labyrinth is confusing largely for *psychological* reasons.
- (L5) The journey is one of *redemption*.
- (L6) The journey goes *through the center* of the labyrinth.
- (L7) The journey is *dangerous* and requires *courage*.
- (L8) The journey is from *bondage to freedom*.
- (L9) Escape from the Labyrinth requires a "*thread*" or "*clue*" that points the way out.

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7. Ibid., 56.

8. *Online Etymological Dictionary* (hereafter OED). Retrieved from [goo.gl/UW63wz](http://goo.gl/UW63wz).

9. Harmann Kern, *Through the Labyrinth: Designs and Meanings Over 5,000 Years* (New York: Prestel, 2000), 23.

10. OED. The etymology of "clue" means *ball of thread*. Retrieved from [goo.gl/GVM5fm](http://goo.gl/GVM5fm).

Furthermore, the Minotaur had been created when Poseidon gave King Minos a "wonderfully beautiful bull." Unfortunately, King Minos' wife, Pasiphaë, fell "madly in love" with the bull. King Minos, being, apparently, an understanding sort, rigged a wooden contraption which his wife could use to simulate a cow and entice the bull to a tryst. The plan succeeds and Pasiphaë gives birth to the monstrous half-man half-bull Minotaur. Pasiphaë is the daughter of Helios, the Sun god, which explains the Minotaur's name, Asterion ("ruler of the stars"). Thus, the Minotaur is half-divine and half-beast. Since it is natural to think of a human being as midway between gods and beasts,<sup>11</sup> the monster Theseus faces in the labyrinth is not so different from himself, which is reflected in the Jungian view that the labyrinth symbolizes the unconscious.<sup>12</sup> On this view, the journey toward the Minotaur at the center of the labyrinth is the terrifying journey of self-knowledge.<sup>13</sup> Thus,

- (L10) The Minotaur symbolizes our own beast nature.

The second story begins with King Minos not too happy at Theseus' escape and departure with his daughter. Since he believes Theseus could not have escaped without Daedalus' help, he puts Daedalus and his son, Icarus, into the labyrinth as punishment. Daedalus knows the labyrinth cannot be escaped by water or land so he fashions two pairs of wings that he and Icarus may *fly* to freedom.<sup>14</sup> Daedalus warns Icarus not fly near the sun, since the wings will melt and he will fall to the sea.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, Icarus' new power goes to his head, he flies too high, his wings melt, and he falls to his death. Thus,

- (L11) The attempt to escape the labyrinth by exceeding human limitations (*flying* near the *divine* realm) inevitably results in failure.

Further, since the labyrinth has become a symbol of the chaos of life.<sup>16</sup>

- (L12) The journey through the labyrinth symbolizes the journey through the chaos of life.

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11. Plato, *Phaedrus: A Translation With Notes, Glossary, Appendices, Interpretive Essay and Introduction*, trans. Stephen Scully (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publisher, 2003), 203a.

12. Marie-Louise von Franz, "The Process of Individuation," in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Carl G. Jung (New York, London: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1964), 176.

13. James E. Irby, introduction to Borges' *Labyrinths* (New York: New Directions, 2007), xvi.

14. Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heros*, 139.

15. *Ibid.*

16. David McCullough, *The Unending Mystery* (New York: Anchor, 2005), 4.

- (L13) The escape from the chaos of the labyrinth symbolizes the emergence of order from chaos.<sup>17</sup>  
Since the notions of chaos and cosmos are intertwined.<sup>18</sup>
- (L14) The labyrinth also symbolizes the *cosmos*.

For these reasons, the journey through the labyrinth makes a natural *religious* symbol of a person's spiritual journey on earth. Augustine mentions the labyrinth in *City of God*.<sup>19</sup> Calvin emphasizes the numerous labyrinths that confront Christians.<sup>20</sup> Goethe,<sup>21</sup> who influenced both Wittgenstein and Borges, refers to "life's devious labyrinthine ways" in the Dedication to the religiously-themed *Faust*. Thus,

- (L15) The journey through the labyrinth symbolizes the human earthly journey through spiritual darkness.

### The Orthodox Interpretation of Wittgenstein's *Zettel* 608

No supposition seems to me more natural than that there is no process in the brain correlated with associating or with thinking; ... [I]f I talk or write, there is, I assume, a system of impulses going out from my brain and correlated with my spoken or written thoughts. But why should the *system* continue further in the direction of the center? Why should this order not proceed, so to speak, out of chaos?  
*Zettel* (608)

Z608 invokes the same concepts, the center and the emergence of order from chaos, found in the labyrinth story. § V argues that 14 of the 15 L-themes listed in

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17. Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: The Other Mexico, Return to the Labyrinth of Solitude, Mexico and the United States, the Philanthropic Ogre* (New York: Grove, 1994), 26, 51-52.

18. Karen Lang, *On Chaos and Cosmos* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), & Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 165.

19. Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson (New York: Penguin, 2003), 777.

20. Richard Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), & C. A. Radke, *A Labyrinth Pilgrimage: A Pilgrim Journey to the Foot of the Cross* (CreateSpace Publishing, 2009).

21. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust*, trans. and notes Charles T. Brooks (Project Gutenberg, 2004: EBook #14460). Retrieved from [goo.gl/EsXHBX](http://goo.gl/EsXHBX).

§ I are reflected in Wittgenstein's works and that the missing 16<sup>th</sup> theme is illuminating by its absence.<sup>22</sup> Consider first the orthodox reading of Z608!

Most scholars, Davies,<sup>23</sup> Mills,<sup>24</sup> Scheer,<sup>25</sup> McGinn,<sup>26</sup> and Hark<sup>27</sup> endorse some version of NI, the view that the center and chaos referenced in Z608 are the neural center and neural chaos. All read Z608 as proposing some *theory* about brain processes. Since, however, Wittgenstein opposes philosophical theories, Z608 cannot, to be consistent, be proposing any theories.

Second, Z608 does not state that language and thought might arise out of chaos. Z608 states only that they might, so to speak ("*sozusagen*") arise out of chaos. This is the language of *comparison* (*PI*, 130-131; *RFM*, V. 12),<sup>28</sup> not theory. The "*sozusagen*" qualifies the language as *figurative* language: "What I invent are new comparisons" (*CV*, 16).

Third, NI gets the direction of the neural impulses in Z608 backwards. Consider the 2nd and 3rd sentences in Z608,

- (S<sub>1</sub>) There is, I assume, a system of impulses going out from my brain and correlated with my spoken or written thoughts.
- (S<sub>2</sub>) But why should the *system* continue further in the direction of the center?

S<sub>1</sub> reiterates the common view that neural impulses coming out of the brain produce "spoken and written thoughts." Since those spoken and written thoughts are in the public world, the direction of motion in S<sub>1</sub> is from the brain *towards* the public world. Since S<sub>2</sub> asks why this "system of [neural] impulses" should proceed *further in the direction of the center, the center mentioned in S<sub>2</sub> is in the public world!* Wittgenstein identifies the public center. At *PI* (108), he states that "the axis

22. The argument in this and the next section is based on McDonough [Richard McDonough, "Towards a Non-Mechanistic Theory of Meaning," *MIND* 98, no. 389 (Jan., 1989); McDonough "Wittgenstein, German Organicism, Chaos, and the Centre of Life," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* XLII no. 3 (2004), & McDonough, "The Religious-Cosmological Reading of Zettel 608," *Sophia* 52, no. 2 (2011)].

23. Martin Davies, "Concepts, Connectionism, and the Language of Thought," in *Philosophy and Connectionist Theory* ed. William M. Ramsey, Stephen P. Stich, & David E. Rummelhart (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991).

24. Christopher Mills, "Wittgenstein and Connectionism," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements* 34 (1993).

25. Richard Scheer, "Wittgenstein's Indeterminism," *Philosophy* 66, no. 255 (1991).

26. Colin McGinn, *Wittgenstein on Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984).

27. Michel ter Hark, "Electric Brainfields and Memory Traces: Wittgenstein and Gestalt Psychology," *Philosophical Investigations* 18 (1995).

28. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics [RFM]*, ed. G. H. von Wright, R. Rhees, & G. E. M. Anscombe (Cambridge: MIT Press, Revised Edition, 1983).

of reference of our examination must be rotated, but around the fixed point [*Angelpunkt*] of our real need." Anscombe translates "*Angelpunkt*" as *fixed-point*, but a more literal translation is "center-point."<sup>29</sup> Wittgenstein goes on in the next sentence to identify the center-point of his investigations as "ordinary life." Similarly, *RFM* (IV. 15) identifies "the center of gravity [*Schwerpunkt*]" of mathematics as *action*. Wittgenstein identifies the center-point of *his* philosophical investigations as *human life*.

Finally, since the chaos is where the center is, and since the center is forms of life, **RCI** holds that *the chaos referenced in Z608 is the chaos in forms of life*. At Z567 Wittgenstein describes "the great swarm [*ganze Gewimmel*] of human actions" as "the background" against which the meaning of human actions is judged. But how does this apply to the understanding of a difficult sentence? Wittgenstein (*PI*, 525) writes,

Do I understand it just as if I should if I heard it in the course of a narrative? If it were set down in isolation, I should say, I don't know what it's about. But all the same I should know how [it] might perhaps be used; I could myself invent a context for it. (A multitude of familiar paths lead off from these words in every direction).

First, to understand the meaning of a sentence is to see it against the *background (context)*. Second, understanding the meaning of a sentence is like understanding its role in a *narrative*. Thus, linguistic meaning is akin to *literary*, not scientific, concepts. Third, Wittgenstein's parenthetical point clarifies the connection between language and "chaos" from Z608. If a sentence has meaning by virtue of its role in a context, and if such roles point to a multitude of familiar paths (other sentences, roles and contexts) that "lead off" from it "in every direction," and each of those point to new sentences, new roles, new contexts ..., and so on, then *the meaning of any sentence is connected with the meanings of an infinite number (a "chaos" of other sentences, roles, and contexts)*. This has nothing to do with neural chaos but with the "chaos" deriving from the infinite possibilities of human life.

Consider the obscure last sentence, call it **S**, in Borges' *GS*: "This is why I do not pronounce the formula, why, lying here in the darkness, I let the days obliterate me." What kind of formula is it? Is it like a mathematical formula or like one of Hegel's formulas—or something else? What is one's motive in not pronouncing it? Is it physical, moral, spiritual, or intellectual darkness? How do the days "obliterate" one? Can one elude the obliteration by stating the formula ... and so on?

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29. John Traupman, *German & English Dictionary* (New York, London, Toronto: Bantam Books, 1991), 17.

Note first that one cannot calculate the meaning of S from its parts—as if the meaning of S were a "compositional function" of the meanings of its parts.<sup>30</sup> On the contrary, what one requires is the *story* within which S plays a role,<sup>31</sup> e.g., the fact that Borges' protagonist is in a *prison*, that he is a *magician*, that he belongs to *Mesoamerican culture*, etc. Borrowing Wittgenstein's words, these facts, and others like them, lead off from S in a "multitude of paths" *PI* (525), and provide the first glimpse of S's meaning. Unfortunately, a new path always opens up. In Borges' terms, the meaning of a sentence appears like "a book which had the possibility of continuing indefinitely" (*GFP*, 25).<sup>32</sup> Gibson's<sup>33</sup> remark that "one never finishes with any of Borges' stories parallels Wittgenstein's *PI* (525) point that despite the dreams of legions of linguists, there is a sense in which *one never finishes with meaning of any sentence.*"

From this perspective, Z608 takes on a very different aspect. Since Z608 indicates that the neural impulses move *toward* the center, i.e., forms of life, and since the chaos is where the center is, Z608 suggests that language and thought arise, not out of physical chaos at the neural center, but out of the chaotic *Ganze Gewimmel* of human action in the *Angelpunkt* (center-point) of human life. **NI** has transfigured an *existential* point about the *labyrinthine pathways* of human existence into some generally unpalatable scientific theories about neural processes—precisely the sorts of theories Wittgenstein rejects as irrelevant.

### The Religious-Cosmological Interpretation of Zettel 608

Wittgenstein [told] his close friend ... Drury: ... "I cannot help seeing every problem from a religious point of view."

Malcolm, *Wittgenstein: From a Religious Point of View?* (1)<sup>34</sup>

The lone alternative to **NI** is the religious-cosmological interpretation (**RCI**). Inspired by Wittgenstein's remark to Drury that he cannot help looking at philosophical problems from a religious point of view, **RCI** holds that the language of Z608 is not the forbidden (for Wittgenstein) language of neural

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30. Bruce Goldberg, "Mechanism and Meaning," in *Knowledge and Mind* ed. Carl Ginet and Sydney Shoemaker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 202.

31. *Ibid.*, 203-210.

32. In language reminiscent of *PI* (525), Gibson (2007) describes the effect of **TU** upon him: "Borges hallmark of corridors opened up around me in every direction."

33. William Gibson, "An Invitation to *Labyrinths*," in *Labyrinths* (New York: New Directions, 2007), x.

34. Norman Malcolm, *Wittgenstein: From a Religious Point of View?* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

mechanisms. It is the religious language of *creation*: the emergence of order out of chaos at the center. Recall the critique of **NI**.

First, **NI** reads Z608 as proposing *theories* about the arising of language and thought from chaos, when Z608 only states that language and thought may, *sozusagen*, arise from chaos. Second, Z608, carefully read, states the neural impulses are moving *from* the brain *towards* the center, which locates the center (*Angelpunkt* of our real need) in human life. Third, since the chaos is where the center is, Z608 is suggesting is that language and thought arise out of the chaotic *Ganze Gewimmel* in human behavior in that public center-point of human life.

**RCI** agrees that Z608 is not advancing theories. The language in Z608 is akin to the *figurative* language in creation stories in Hesiod and Augustine. **RCI** also agrees that in many ancient cosmogonies order emerges from chaos via motion *towards* the true center.<sup>35,36</sup> This archetypal imagery is found in many religious writers, some of whom, such as Goethe<sup>37</sup> and Augustine,<sup>38</sup> influenced Wittgenstein. **RCI** sees Z608, not as proposing *theories* about the *causes* of language and thought, but as attempting to shed light on the nature of language by *comparing* the production of language with the *genesis* of order out of chaos in creation stories.

### Borges' Notion of the Labyrinth

I dreamt of an exiguous and nitid labyrinth; in the center was a water jar; my hands almost touched it, ... but so intricate and perplexed were the curves that I knew I would die before reaching it. ... A labyrinth is a structure compounded to confuse men; ... a chaos of heterogeneous worlds, ...  
Borges, "The Immortal" (107, 110-111)

Consider Borges' labyrinth imagery in connection with the 15 L-themes in § I. The epigraph (above) makes clear that Borges employs L1 (The labyrinth is an *amazingly* complicated/confusing *structure*), and L2 (The labyrinth has a center), L4 (The Labyrinth is confusing for *psychological* reasons), and L6 (the movement is towards the center). L3 (The labyrinth-story describes a journey) is everywhere in Borges but the epigraph above is preceded in the text by a reference to "our

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35. McDonough, "The Religious-Cosmological Reading of Zettel 608," 268-269.

36. Compare Avnon [Dan Avnon, *Martin Buber: The Hidden Dialogues* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), 125, 250 note 29] on Martin Buber's imagery.

37. Tom Mellett, "Goethean Science: Bringing Chaos to Order by Looking at Phenomena Right in the 'I,'" in *Goethe, Chaos and Complexity*, ed. Herbert Rowland (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001).

38. Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 59.

journey" (*TI*, 109). Borges employs L5 (The journey promises redemption) when, at *HA* (140), the Minotaur refers to Theseus as his redeemer. Borges employs L7 (The journey through the labyrinth is dangerous and requires courage) in *TI* (115) where he writes that "every act [men] execute may be their last" and also in his description of the heroic Fergus Kilpatrick in *TTH* (72-73). Since the Zahir symbolizes free-will, Borges employs L8 (The journey is a journey to freedom) when he refers to the Zahir at the center of the labyrinth (*TZ*, 163).

Although Borges refers to Ariadne (*HA*, 140), the passage has nothing to do with Ariadne's "thread," but with the odd fact that the Minotaur "hardly defended himself" against Theseus. Indeed, Borges seems unconcerned with clues for escaping the labyrinth. It is argued later that this is a positive fact about Borges' *modern* conception of the Labyrinth. Thus, the discussion of the "thread" or "clue" in L9 is postponed until § V.

Borges also employs L10 (The danger at the center of the labyrinth is our own bestial nature) when, in *HA* (140), the Minotaur, referring to Theseus, asks if he, his "redeemer," will "be like me." L11 (The attempt to escape the labyrinth by exceeding human limitations is bound to fail), is among Borges' central themes.<sup>39</sup> Although Funes possesses a superhuman capacity to remember details, "I suspect he was not very capable of thought" (*FM*, 66). Accordingly, Funes died of "congestion of the lungs" (*FM*, 66).

One might infer that L12 (The labyrinth symbolizes chaos), is found in Borges in the remark in *FE* to the mazelike city as "a chaos of heterogeneous worlds" but the point of *FE*, with L2, is to distinguish a labyrinth proper, which is "rich in symmetries," from a mere maze-like structure that does *not* possess a center, and which is, therefore, monstrous and hateful. Although *FE*'s reference to the body of a bull suggests a comparison with the Minotaur from the Cretan story, the creature with the body of a bull or tiger is the *reverse* of the Minotaur with the *head* of a bull. Borges' point is that this chaotic maze-like city is quite unlike a labyrinth proper. Thus, the chaos symbolized in *FE* is *not* labyrinthine chaos but the different *kind* of chaos of "heterogeneous worlds" (see the discussion of L14).<sup>40</sup>

Borges does, however, employ L12 in the "chaotic novel" in *GFP* (25-26). This labyrinth, as "a cyclic volume, a circular one," *does* possess the symmetries Borges requires of a genuine labyrinth. Borges' labyrinth symbolizes chaos but it is a different kind of chaos from that of a "hateful" unsymmetrical maze in *FE*.

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39. Irby, introduction to Borges' *Labyrinths*, xvi.

40. In his review of *Citizen Kane*, Borges describe Kane as "a simulacrum, a chaos of appearances" and goes on to state that "nothing is so frightening as a labyrinth with no center" [Dan Piepenbring, "Sartre and Borges on Welles," *The Paris Review New York*, August 12, 2014, retrieved from [goo.gl/ZGfje1](http://goo.gl/ZGfje1)]. A labyrinth without a center is much more frightening and hateful than a labyrinth proper.

L13 (The escape from the labyrinth symbolizes the emergence of order from chaos) is illustrated in *GFP* (26) in Borges' contrast between Ts'ui Pên's "chaotic novel," which "choose[s] simultaneously" all paths and normal novels which "choose one and eliminate the others." That is, normal fiction writers, unlike Ts' ui Pên, choose to create order in the chaos of possibilities.<sup>41</sup>

Borges also employs L14 (The labyrinth is a symbol of the cosmos). Since Borges' paradigm of the labyrinth is time (*LB*, 52; *TC*, 235), one example of L14 is Borges' reference in *TU* to time as "the perfect synonym of the cosmos." See also the archetypal cosmic imagery elsewhere in Borges's works (*LB*, 52; *FSP*, 190, 192). This illuminates Borges' reference in *FE* to the mazelike city as "a chaos of heterogeneous worlds."

It was pointed out earlier in the discussion of L12 that *FE* cannot be used to illustrate the theme that the labyrinth symbolizes chaos. Whereas the classical notion of the cosmos is the idea of *a whole unified by a single idea*, this mazelike city is not a unified whole but is more like several *incompatible* worlds that have been forced together.

Borges also employs L15 (The journey through the labyrinth symbolizes man's spiritual journey through worldly darkness). This is present in the description in *TI* (109) of the pilgrim's descent through "a chaos of sordid galleries ... into the darkness below" in a labyrinth that "treacherously returns to the same chamber."

One might object that that these various L-themes are not found in Borges in a *straightforward* form. For example, surely Borges is satirical when he suggests that the Minotaur is *redeemed* by his killer or that the Zahir at the center of the labyrinth symbolize freedom—but this misses the point. The claim is not that these L-themes have exactly the *same* meaning in the Cretan story, Borges, and Wittgenstein. Borges employs these L-themes in order to express his own unique insights into the paradoxical nature of human life. Indeed, it would diminish Borges' work if his meaning turned out to be the same with themes in the Cretan story or in Wittgenstein. The present paper claims only that the *language* and concepts of these L-theses is found in the Cretan story, in Borges and in Wittgenstein and that seeing this discloses a new dimensions in Wittgenstein's labyrinth-imagery, roughly that his imagery, like the imagery in *Z608*, is broadly *existential* rather than *scientific*.

### The Labyrinth-Interpretation of Wittgenstein's View of Language

[W]e *always* have to reach some sort of firm ground, ... so ... a picture at the root of all our thinking is to be respected & not treated as a superstition.

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41. In *TI* (114), Borges, true to form, *reverses* the usual order and has chaos created *after* cosmos.

Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (95)<sup>42</sup>

Once, in addition to the Secret, there was a legend (and perhaps a cosmogonic myth), but the shallow men of the Phoenix have forgotten it ...

Borges, *The Sect of the Phoenix* (102)<sup>43</sup>

Whereas **NI** reads Z608 as proposing controversial empirical theories about the neural processes believed to underlie language and thought, **RCI** holds that Z608 is written in the *literary* language of religious cosmogony. The present section, building on **RCI**, argues that Wittgenstein's archetypal religious-cosmological imagery in Z608 is closely related to his labyrinth imagery but that **LI** includes the themes from **RCI** but links up with numerous other passages in Wittgenstein untouched by **RCI**.

It should be no surprise that **RCI** and **LI** are connected. The key concepts in Z608 are the cosmogony-concepts of the emergence of order from chaos at the center—and the concepts of the center (L2, L6), the emergence of order from chaos (L12-L13) and the cosmos (L14) also appear in the labyrinth story. It is the other concepts in the 16 L-themes that may seem more difficult to locate in Wittgenstein. Consider these 16 L-themes one by one.

First, there is no problem linking L1 (The labyrinth is an amazing complicated structure) to Wittgenstein's text. Indeed, this is the only one of the 16 L-themes that is accepted both by the ordinary interpretation of *PI* (203) and by **LI**. Second, Wittgenstein, in keeping with L2, like Borges, employs both the notions of a labyrinth and a maze, and Wittgenstein, like Borges, compares a city to a maze. At *PI* (18), Wittgenstein describes a city that, one might say, arose, without a plan or idea, from the chaos of human life as changing needs arise. Such a mazelike city may or may not have a center, and none is mentioned by Wittgenstein. But Wittgenstein does hold that language proper *is* structured around a center—the *Angelpunkt* of our real need. Thus, one can compare Wittgenstein's concept of the mazelike city at *PI* (18) with Borges' mazelike city at *TI* (110-111), and contrasts both of these with the notion of a symmetrical (centered) labyrinth employed by both Wittgenstein and Borges.

Third, in the Preface to *PI*, in keeping with L3, Wittgenstein compares his remarks to "a number of sketches of landscapes" made in the course of his "long and involved journeys" Indeed, one might think he is alluding to the *odyssey* here.<sup>44</sup> These journeys require one to "travel over a wide field of thought criss-

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42. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, revised edition [**CV**], ed. G. H. von Wright, trans. Peter Winch (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

43. Borges, Jorge Luis "The Sect of the Phoenix" [**SP**], in *Labyrinths*, ed. Donald A. Yates, and James E. Irby, intro. William Gibson (New York: New Directions, 2007).

44. David White, "The Labyrinth of Language: Joyce and Wittgenstein," *James Joyce Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (1975).

cross in every direction." Note that the language here is strikingly similar to Virgil's description in the *Aeneid*:<sup>45</sup> "The Labyrinth between walls in the dark ran criss-cross a bewildering thousand ways." If one explains Wittgenstein's notion of the labyrinth by reference to such minimally described journeys, instead of the reverse, explaining Wittgenstein's notion of these journeys by reference to his *richer labyrinth imagery*, one misses the special structure in the labyrinth story. The role of this richer structure in Wittgenstein's views becomes clearer as we proceed.

Fourth, with L4, Wittgenstein holds that the philosophical confusions that arise out of language are psychological rather than objective. Wittgenstein (*PI*, 89) quotes Augustine's remark that if no one asks me about time I know it but if someone asks me to explain it I cannot. Thus, it is not that language is intrinsically confusing. It is only when we do philosophy that we become like "savages" and lose our way (*PI*, 194). Fifth, with L5, Wittgenstein holds that the philosophical journey is one of *redemption*. First, he felt a great personal need for redemption.<sup>46</sup> Second, he saw his philosophical concerns with the laws of the excluded middle, non-contradiction and the limits of language as connected with the problem of redemption:<sup>47</sup> "What fights doubt is, as it were, *redemption* [W's italics]" (*CV*, 39). He goes further: "[I]f I am REALLY [W's capitals] to be redeemed, - I need certainty, - not wisdom, dreams, speculation - and this certainty is faith" (*CV*, 33)—and this precisely parallels his solution to philosophical doubt in *OC*. Thus, Wittgenstein's philosophical journey is *not* merely an intellectual (academic) exercise. It is, *sozusagen*, a journey of *redemption*.

Fifth, with L6, Wittgenstein holds that the philosophical journey must go *through* the center. At *RFM* (VII. 15) he writes,

In this field one can ask all sorts of things which, whole they belong to the topic still do not lead through its center. A particular series of questions leads through the center and out into the open [*Freie*].

Like Theseus' journey through the labyrinth, Wittgenstein's philosophical journey leads *through the center* of the labyrinth and into the "open."

Wittgenstein also holds, with L7, that the philosophical journey is dangerous and requires *courage*. In a letter to his friend Hutt, he writes that though he has little courage himself he always feels "much freer and happier" once he has "screwed up my courage to do something."<sup>48</sup> This is also reflected in his

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45. Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Vintage, 1984), Bk. V, lines 761-762.

46. Ray Monk, *The Duty of Genius* (New York: Penguin, 1991), 411-413.

47. *Ibid.*, 412-413.

48. *Ibid.*, 460.

philosophy? Referring to his philosophical mission of clarification *PI* (133), Wittgenstein writes,

I believe that it is essential for the activity of clarification to be carried out with COURAGE [W's capitals]; without that it becomes a clever game (*CV*, 16)

Wittgenstein goes further: "Genius is not 'talent and character' but character manifesting itself in the form of a special talent. While one man will show courage by jumping into the water, another will show courage by writing a symphony" (*CV*, 40). It takes courage, not mere intellect, to decipher the labyrinth of language.

Wittgenstein's journey through the labyrinth is also, with L8, a journey from bondage to freedom. Wittgenstein expresses his feeling of bondage: "The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to" (*PI*, 133). Further, in the discussion of L6, it emerged that he sees the philosophical journey going "through the center and into the open [*ins Freie*]." But "*frei*" means "free" and "*ins Freie*" means "out of doors" or "into the open." Just as Theseus needed to get free of the labyrinth by getting "into the open," getting free, the philosopher needs to do something similar.

Since the discussion of L9, the need for a "*thread*" to escape the labyrinth, is taken up later, consider L10 (The danger at the center of the labyrinth is our own beast nature). Indeed, Wittgenstein stresses that language arises, not from some divine realm, but out of *animal instinct*: "I really want to say that scruples in thinking begin with (have their roots in) instinct" (*Z*, 391). He repeats this theme in his discussion of certainty: "I want to conceive [certainty] as something ... beyond being justified or unjustified; as it were, as something animal" (*OC*, 359).<sup>49</sup> Thus, part of what one discovers when one reaches the center of Wittgenstein's labyrinth is that *human language and thought do not, as it were, fall from heaven, but, rather, arise organically out of one's animal nature*.<sup>50</sup>

L11 (The attempt to escape the labyrinth by exceeding human limitations inevitably results in failure), is one of the most important themes in Wittgenstein. Like Icarus, the philosopher flies too close to the divine: "[T]he form of expression we use seems to have been designed for a god, who knows what we cannot know; he sees the whole of this infinite series, ... etc" (*PI*, 426). Philosophers believe they can do this because they tend to see human cognition as "surrounded by a halo" (*PI*, 97), i.e., as partaking of the divine. Unfortunately, this divine route is no more open to the philosopher than it is for Icarus: "We see the straight

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49. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* [*OC*], ed. G. E. M. Anscombe, and G. H. von Wright, trans. Denis Paul, and G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1972).

50. Wittgenstein here generally follows Nietzsche [Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1966), Part I, § 2-3].

highway before us, but, of course, we cannot use it because it is permanently closed" (*PI*, 426). The philosopher makes the same mistake as the fly in the fly bottle (*PI*, 309). Like Icarus, the fly's immediate instinct is to *fly upwards*—towards the sky, leading to its fall to its death in the waters below. Ironically, there is a much easier escape route available to the fly. It simply needs to *walk* down and under the lip of the fly-bottle. The philosopher must do the same: "We need to walk: so we need friction. Back to the rough ground (*PI*, 107)! Icarus, the philosopher, and the fly all suffer from the same immediate instinct, to fly *upwards* (towards the divine)—and it is that which dooms them. The only road open to human beings is to *walk* out of the labyrinth. Thus, Wittgenstein's later philosophy aims to bring the philosopher "down to earth" (*BB*, 1)—where s/he can walk.<sup>51</sup>

Wittgenstein also employs L12 (The labyrinth symbolizes chaos). At *CV* (65), he writes that the philosopher must "descend into primeval chaos and feel at home there."<sup>52</sup> Wittgenstein's philosopher must learn to *reside* in the chaos of the labyrinth and make it their *home*—an important point to which we return later.

Wittgenstein also employs L13 (the journey through the labyrinth symbolizes the emergence of order from chaos). For, if the labyrinth of language is chaotic, then "[t]he form of a philosophical problem is 'I don't know my way about'" (*PI*, 123). However, with the aid of "philosophical grammar" (*PI*, 664), one can discern a kind of order in the labyrinth of language, although not the kind of *logical* order one had expected: "We see that what we call 'sentence' and 'language' has not the formal unity that I imagined but is a family of structures more or less related to one another" (*PI*, 108).

Wittgenstein also employs L14 (The labyrinth symbolizes the cosmos). Recall that he had employed cosmological language in *TLP* 5.63: "I am my world (The microcosm)."<sup>53</sup> Since 5.63 is a direct comment on 5.6 ("The limits of the language mean the limits of my world"), his *TLP* identified the limits of language with those of the microcosm. Thus, when he later compares language to a labyrinth, he is implicitly comparing language to the microcosm: The limits of the labyrinth become the limits of his *world* (as they almost did for Theseus).

One might object that Wittgenstein may not accept these views of *TLP* in his later period.

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51. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books [BB]* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965).

52. Notice Wittgenstein's emphasis on *descent*! The philosopher, like Icarus, must go *down* from the heavens to the earth, must *humble* him/herself, in order to achieve the appropriate human wisdom.

53. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus [TLP]*, trans. D. F. Pears, & B. F. McGuinness, intro. Bertrand Russell (London, New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974).

This is true, but, first, Wittgenstein *never* renounced his microcosmic doctrine. Second, since it is independently true that the labyrinth symbolizes the cosmos, the comparison of language to a labyrinth in *PI* (203) simply repeats the cosmological image of *TLP* in different terms.

Wittgenstein also employs both L15 (The journey through the labyrinth symbolizes man's spiritual journey through worldly darkness) and L16 (The journey through the labyrinth is a journey to spiritual fulfillment). At *PI* (Preface) Wittgenstein refers to the "poverty" and "darkness of our time" and at *PI* (635) he suggests that when remembering a scene it is "as if" one could "read the darkness." Both of these images come straight out Augustine, who Wittgenstein "revered."<sup>54</sup> Given Wittgenstein's remark to Drury that he cannot help seeing philosophical problems from a religious point of view, these remarks suggest that Wittgenstein sees his *philosophical* journey as analogous to a *spiritual pilgrimage* except that his pilgrimage is through the poverty and darkness of *philosophical* confusion to a kind of philosophical *fulfillment*.

Finally, let us return to L9 (The escape from the labyrinth requires a "thread" or clue). Note first that Wittgenstein repeatedly mentions a "thread" that runs through the phenomena. At *RFM* (VII. 5) he refers to someone who, in following a rule, is *under the impression* that he has "followed a thread that is already there." Of course, Wittgenstein's point here is this person is mistaken—and this indicates the point at which Wittgenstein's labyrinth-story diverges, instructively, from the classical labyrinth-story. Theseus did follow a thread that was "already there" but Wittgenstein holds that there is no thread that can be mechanically followed to escape the labyrinth. Indeed, *Wittgenstein does not believe that one can escape the labyrinth*. How could he? That would mean one gets beyond language. Rather, Wittgenstein counsils that one must learn to live in the chaos—to make it one's *home*. Thus, the freedom Wittgenstein seeks is not the complete freedom from the labyrinth achieved by Theseus. It is the freedom one achieves, by means of philosophical grammar, of "knowing one's way about." Borges too suggests that escape from the labyrinth is impossible: "I felt that the world was a labyrinth from which it was impossible to flee" (*DC*, 85). Whereas Theseus was able to escape from the labyrinth, Borges and Wittgenstein live in a modern labyrinth from which there is no escape.

Whereas Ariadne's thread provides Theseus with a "direct ... relationship" with the exit from the labyrinth, *PI* (67) only describes a thread that requires new *decisions* as each *new* fiber in the thread is spun. If one thinks this link between the thread at *PI* (67) to Ariadne's thread is too tenuous, consider *Z* (26), where Wittgenstein asks whether a "red thread" runs through a certain set of mental phenomena, and answers "No." But why a *red* thread? Why not blue? In fact,

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54. Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, 59.

Ariadne's thread is a *red* thread (Vellenga, 2001).<sup>55,56</sup> Thus, *PI* (67) does allude to Ariadne's thread, but the point is that there cannot be any Ariadne-like thread for escaping the labyrinth of language: "How does one judge what time it is? I do not mean by clues [*Anhaltspunkten*] ... " (*PI*, 607).<sup>57</sup> There are, for Wittgenstein, no "clues," comparable to Princess Ariadne's thread, for finding the way out of the labyrinth of language.<sup>58</sup>

Similarly, Borges does not refer to any "thread" for escaping the labyrinth (§ IV). Whereas Wittgenstein holds that one may be able to "command a clear view" (*PI*, 122) of the landscape, and Borges remarks that one may learn to "decipher" it (*TU*, 17-18), neither Wittgenstein nor Borges believe that one can simply escape it. One must, rather, as Wittgenstein puts it, learn to "descend into old chaos [of the labyrinth] & feel at home there" *CV* (76). Wittgenstein's and Borges' labyrinth's, are, like Kafka's labyrinths, *modern* labyrinths. In Kafka's "The Man Who Disappeared," the "maze-walker," Karl, "never quite realizes that he makes no progress within the labyrinth."<sup>59</sup> By contrast, the ancient maze-walkers had, at least, the *possibility* of escape, and Theseus did escape.

Thus, apart from Wittgenstein's view that there is no "thread" by means of which to escape the labyrinth, there are numerous analogies between Wittgenstein's notion of philosophy and the journey through the labyrinth described in L1-L16. The notion of philosophy embodied in *LI* is that philosophy is decidedly *not* a purely intellectual enterprise. The philosophical search for truth is, rather, like a *dangerous journey*, fraught with *temptation*, requiring *courage*, through the *center* of an immensely "*chaotic*" structure. It is a journey of *self-knowledge* that offers much *humbling* insight about *one's limits* and the limits of *one's world* that one typically does not want to see, but which, once seen, can *redeem* one from one's state of lost-ness (homelessness) in the labyrinth, resulting in a kind of *freedom* and (something like) *spiritual fulfillment*. Thus, Wittgenstein's philosophy, like Borges' philosophy, is more *existential* than purely intellectual.

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55. Nietzsche [Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1969), 2nd Essay, §11, refers to a "red thread" in his account of justice.

56. Amber Hollis Vellenga, "Taking the First Step: The Labyrinth and the World of Landscape Architecture" (master's thesis, Virginia Polytechnic and State University, 2001). Retrieved from [goo.gl/ACXPww](http://goo.gl/ACXPww).

57. Hacker and Schulte [Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations [PI]*, trans. P. M. S. Hacker, & Joachim Schulte (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)] translate "*Anhaltspunkten*" as clues. See, Traupman (Traupman, *German & English Dictionary*, Part II, 54).

58. When John Milton composes his works of genius he does *not do so by following "clues."*

59. Anne Fuchs, "A Psychoanalytic Reading of The Man who Disappeared," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kafka*, ed. Julien Preece (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 32.

*Philosophizing* is a deed that requires the engagement of the *whole* person, not just the intellect, but, by the same token, it offers a kind of reward that goes well beyond the satisfaction of solving sterile intellectual puzzles.

Recall that Z608 is important for LI because it is in Z608 that the key notions of motion *towards the center* and the *emergence of order from chaos* are clearly visible. Against this background, consider two key sentences of Z608, numbered S<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>3</sub> for convenience,

- S<sub>2</sub> But why should the *system* [of neural impulses] continue further in the direction of the center?
- S<sub>3</sub> Why should this [linguistic] order not proceed, *sozusagen*, out of chaos?

While NI interprets these images in neurophysiological terms, LI, following the language in Borges, provides a, roughly, existential model of this dynamic. Thus, from LI's perspective, what S<sub>2</sub> really asks is an *existential* question: Why would anyone think that a mere material system of neural impulses takes one any closer to the center of the labyrinth of life, the *Angelpunkt* of our real need, where language *really* arises? Similarly, instead of the common view that language arises out of the brain, what S<sub>3</sub> really asks is also an *existential* question:

Why should language not arise, *sozusagen*, out of the chaos of (the labyrinth of) life? That is, LI sees Wittgenstein's later philosophy as the description of the journey, akin to an odyssey, through the labyrinth of life to the chaotic center of human forms of life, themselves grounded in animal instinct, where linguistic meaning really "arises."

One might object to the present literary interpretation (LI) of Wittgenstein's philosophy inspired by his use of the Labyrinth-imagery, that LI seems to have little to do with Wittgenstein's philosophical method, which he calls "philosophical grammar" and which consists in a "quiet weighing of linguistic facts" (PI, 496; Z, 447). It is important, however, to recognize that LI purports to characterize, not Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy per se, but his conception of philosophizing. It is the activity of doing philosophy that is illuminated by the existential dimensions of Wittgenstein's archetypal labyrinth-imagery.

### Final Comment

God grant the philosopher insight into what lies in front of everyone's eyes.  
Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (72)

While 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars, hypothesizing "from the comfort of their studies,"<sup>60</sup> generally assumed that Homer's tales of the Trojan war were myth, Hermann Schliemann, a 19<sup>th</sup> century businessman, who "had not had the benefit of a university education, and did not know what a fool ... he was,"<sup>61</sup> derived the location of Troy from his reading of the classics, mounted an expedition, and discovered "the walls of Troy." Despite the fact that the directions to Troy were spelled out in the classical texts right before everyone's eyes, it had not, apparently, occurred to the leading scholarly lights of the day to conduct a "dig" at those locations to determine what might be found there.

In *The Labyrinth of Language*, Max Black<sup>62</sup> explains the meaning of Wittgenstein's labyrinth imagery in the terms of the analytical philosophy of his day, and, accordingly, never once mentions the literary labyrinth story. Although Black produced a fine book in its own genre, he looks right past the labyrinth imagery right before his eyes and, therefore, never encounters those aspects of Wittgenstein's views of language and philosophy embodied in the preceding 16 L-themes—seeing, instead, a mere picture of the *logical* complexity of language. The shocking thesis of the present paper is that by "labyrinth" Wittgenstein means *labyrinth*, and that once one begins, so to speak, to dig in this *literary* location, explored so memorably by Borges, a whole set of L-themes are unearthed which reveal a whole new set of conceptual and existential dimensions in Wittgenstein's philosophy.

The claim is *not* that Wittgenstein and Borges hold "the same" views. Nor is it the claim that Borges *directly* influenced Wittgenstein (or vice versa). The claim is more abstract, namely, that whereas many scholars have assumed that Wittgenstein writes in the shared common languages of our age, which tends to be the languages of logic and natural science,<sup>63</sup> Wittgenstein is sometimes writing in a literary language little familiar to the main philosophical traditions that claim him. In the present case, the claim is, first, that Wittgenstein is writing in the *language* of the labyrinth story (and the *related* language of religious-cosmogony), and that the "labyrinth interpretation" of Wittgenstein's views, inspired by Borges' own journey through the labyrinth, reveals a philosophy far more closely

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60. Susan Hueck Allen, *Finding the Walls of Troy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 255.

61. Donald Kagan, "The Dark Ages," *Introduction to Ancient Greek History*, Yale University Lectures. Retrieved from [goo.gl/vfYYSO](http://goo.gl/vfYYSO), Lecture 2.

62. Max Black, *The Labyrinth of Language* (London: Pall Mall, 1968).

63. Monk, *The Duty of Genius*, 410, 416, 486, 499, 546-547, 579.

attuned to the existential concerns of human life than it is to the academic discussions of "linguistic philosophy" to which it is usually reduced.

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