

Finding the Path:

The Library as Labyrinth in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the labyrinth found within the library in the award-winning novel by Italian author Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*. This research explores how the library labyrinth represents a postmodern embodiment of the traditional labyrinth archetype extending far beyond the walls of the Aedificium. This thesis project analyses the history of mazes, the mythology where these structures are used, and literature that inspired the author. The labyrinth of the novel is looked at as an architectural feature that embodies Eco's medieval world and how mazes in other aspects of literature have come to have similar symbolism. Furthermore, this project will look at the individual characters that became maze walkers in the library and contrast the book with Jean-Jacques Annaud's take on the novel through his 1986 film. Additionally, comparisons are drawn with other works that use mazes and labyrinths in postmodern fiction and the YA genre.

Resumen

Esta tesis se enfoca en el laberinto que se encuentra dentro de la biblioteca de la premiada novela del autor italiano Umberto Eco, *El Nombre de la Rosa*. Esta investigación explora como el laberinto de la biblioteca representa una visión postmoderna del arquetipo del laberinto tradicional en una manera que se extiende de las paredes del Aedificium. Esta tesis analiza la historia de los laberintos, la mitología que contiene estas estructuras y la literatura que inspiró al autor. El laberinto de la novela es observada como una estructura que representa el mundo medieval de Eco y cómo laberintos en otros laberintos en la literatura tienen simbolismo similar. Además, esta tesis examina personajes individuales que caminaron el laberinto mientras se contrasta el libro con la película inspirada del mismo, dirigida por Jean-Jacques Annaud. Adicionalmente, se hacen comparaciones con otros laberintos hallados en otros aspectos de literatura posmoderna y contemporánea.

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Introduction

The Discussion and the Book

In Umberto Eco's international bestseller, *The Name of the Rose*, the physical and figurative element of the labyrinth plays an essential role within the narrative. It is not only a symbol of knowledge and mystery, but it also carries an allegorical and encyclopedic component, representing the known world and the workings of human consciousness. The idea of the labyrinth affects the characters and serves to structure the entire layout of the novel. Generally, the maze and the labyrinth are seen as mechanisms created to show off architectural designs and create wonder and mystery in those who dare to wander in puzzles that can become prisons. They are seen as enigmas created to distract those within, to retreat away from the world and, for authors, as a narratological tool within the larger narrative. This thesis explores the three major labyrinths present in *The Name of the Rose* and compares these labyrinths and storytelling techniques to the works of other authors such as Jorge Luis Borges' *Labyrinths* collection.

Theresa Coletti's book *Naming the Rose; Eco, Medieval Signs, and Modern Theory* emphasizes that the labyrinth used in his novel is a "complex interplay of theory and practice" (Coletti 15). Coletti drew this from Eco's own masterful technique in creating the labyrinthine library, which plays perfectly, as Coletti pointed out, with the fine line between theory and practice. Eco created a balance of ideas, making sure the plot of the murder mystery did not overshadow the deeper meaning within the framework, all the while recreating a version of the Minotaur myth within a medieval setting. She also stated that the labyrinth serves as evidence of the "debt to Jorge Luis Borges" (15). Eco's novel demonstrates the clear influence of several of Borges' short stories including but not limited to "The Library of Babel" and "Death and the Compass". Eco also imitates Borges' labyrinthine style in the way it was written and handles

information. It serves as a metaphor for Eco's "fictional and theoretical discourse" (16) regarding his work in semiotics and reader response. However, the subject of the labyrinth's role within Eco's text stops short in Coletti's work. The labyrinth, especially its significance and history need to be explored further because it is not only the pivotal setting for the climax of the novel, but it also influences the character's growth in it. The labyrinth constitutes a maze meanings, symbols and signs, polysemous historically, and a master trope for modernity itself. The labyrinths in this novel should be unfolded as a single pilgrimage in time, as a many routed physical structures impeding our heroes physically and as a conscious maze which transcends time and even the novel itself.

While it is true that the labyrinth plays with a multitude of sometimes contradictory significances, much of what makes the labyrinth so crucial to this novel is its irrefutable connection with its history, the mythology behind it, and the Christian symbolism that solidified its presence in Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. In this thesis, I expound the labyrinth's many meanings and signs, its symbolism and its role as a possible character, or living entity, within Eco's narrative and how it affects human characters in the narrative. I also explore the extent of the influence of Jorge Luis Borges on Umberto Eco, arguing that *The Name of the Rose* is a textual labyrinth of Borgesian and pastiche. In addition, this thesis traces the influence of Eco's and Borges' labyrinthine detective fiction in works like *The House of Leaves* by Mark Z. Danielewsky, and the contemporary adaptation of Sherlock Holmes. Some young adult fiction is also explored to determine how the labyrinth functions within such works as James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* series and Rick Riordan's *The Battle of the Labyrinth* by exploring which elements of the labyrinth archetype they share.

Meaning and Definition

For the purposes of this thesis, the words *mazes* and *labyrinths* will be used synonymously unless otherwise stated. Many writers use these two words interchangeably even though technically there is a distinct difference in the history of their usage in English, specifically in the etymological level. This is not to say that the difference between the words *maze* and *labyrinth* play no role in the novel, only that if a specific meaning becomes necessary to expand upon, the distinction will be made.

In Penelope Reed Doob's book *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages*, she makes a clear distinction between the two words. Mazes are multicursal paths which, "contain many points of choice between two or more paths" (Doob 3) whereas labyrinths are unicursal, "show(ing) a single winding path leading inevitably to the center and then back out again," (Doob 3). Furthermore, mazes are the puzzles that can lead you astray, structures built for entertainment like the hedge mazes of many royal courts. They are also commonly shown in literature and film as mechanisms to create tension and mystery as well as being a method to produce terror and horror.

The element of choice is present and a central theme when talking about the maze: walkers can choose to go one way, find a dead end, then head back and try a new path or can be confronted with a crossroads which makes the maze a potent symbol for the choices confronted in life. Labyrinths, however, are symmetrical, often spiraling structures that are nothing more than a single long path taking up all the available space and leading to a single end, or center. In this case, labyrinths are associated with spiritual pilgrimage and self-reflection which is why the single path of the labyrinth is usually found and associated with cathedrals, pilgrimages and enlightenment (Seward 198-205). The maze can be a setting for an adventure, while the labyrinth

is a spiritual walk leading to the center. However, as was said, the distinction between the two is often absent when speaking in general terms.

In *Mazes and Labyrinths*, W. H. Matthews points out that even though it is not grammatically incorrect to use the two words synonymously it would be “Inappropriate to speak of ‘the Cretan Maze’ or the ‘Hampton Court Labyrinth’” (Matthews 3). In this case when analyzing these names one can see that the words *maze*, and *labyrinth* are not describing the puzzle in detail but giving an immediate idea to the reader of what lies in store. The words are part of the title and therefore not interchangeable in this sense. The example here is the Cretan Labyrinth. If we were to use the literal definition given here of the labyrinth seen as a single path to the center, then the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur would take on a different meaning. If the Cretan Labyrinth refers to the single path where Theseus and the other victims had to walk to an inevitable center (there are medieval pictures and descriptions depicting this idea of the Cretan myth), then it would suggest a myth focused on destiny. Of course, in this case there would not have been any need for an Ariadne’s thread. If we were to see this Cretan construction not as a single path *labyrinth* but as the multi path *maze*, then the Theseus myth acquires a puzzling component, a mysterious adventure in the darkness with the thread serving as an indispensable tool to achieve victory. In this sense, the hero would be the one to solve the puzzle and choose when to fight or try to escape; wit and skill would become essential skills in finding a way out of the tangled streets. This description of the Theseus myth containing a maze is the version commonly referred to when speaking of the myth, and it is this version that has inspired countless authors in the creation of their own mazes and parallels to this myth.

Etymologically speaking, the word *maze* has a more northern connotation deriving, as is mentioned in the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, from the “Old English **mæs*, which is suggested

by the compound *amasod* ‘amazed’ and the verb *amasian* ‘to confound, confuse’.” It is through the word *maze* that we get other words like *amaze*. It should be noted that in the search for maze the word labyrinth appears and in the definition for labyrinth the word maze is used as well to define it. Mazes are mostly associated with the puzzle-like nature of the many paths and choices one must make to reach the other side or the exit. The intention of such mazes was diversion; the maze gardens of France and England have become tourist attractions receiving thousands of visitors per year. The Hampton Court Maze, which is the world’s oldest hedge maze was, “commissioned around 1700 by William III the maze covers a third of an acre, is trapezoid in shape and is the UK's oldest surviving hedge maze” (“The Maze”).

The word *labyrinth*, however, is defined, in the same online source (*Online Etymology Dictionary*), as “a great building with many corridors and turns... (and) intricate passages.” It is also stated that, although it is apparently Greek in origin, the word *labrys* comes from the Lydian meaning for “great power” or “double edged axe.” It is generally regarded as a single path, a twisting, often spiraling walkway corridor that leads to an inevitable center, such as the labyrinth in the Chartres Cathedral in France. In this definition, the term *labyrinth* is a single path that leads to an inevitable center. It is a small-scale representation of the pilgrimages taken during medieval Europe, and for many, also represented the practice of penance. Its design takes up all available space and each section will be visited during the pilgrimage once; thus, representing the course and paths one has taken on in life leading to a single destiny.

The differentiation in meaning between the two words is necessary to understand the history of each and what they individually represent. It should be noted that many romantic languages like Spanish, Italian, and French have only a single word while English has both labyrinth and maze: Spanish – *laberinto*, Italian – *labirinto*, and French – *labyrinth*. However, in

The Name of the Rose this differentiation is of little importance because of the amount of meaning and symbolism the labyrinth/maze library represents and the manner it influences the characters and the story. That is to say that the meanings of labyrinths seem maze-like and not always clear or confined to a single path while the symbolism of the maze takes on labyrinthine qualities. The spirituality found in this novel is not a clear and single path but takes multiple twist and turns.

Myth and Discovery

The most famous labyrinth is perhaps the one most intermingled with mythology and archeology. It was Sir Arthur Evans, an Englishman who in 1897 unearthed a palace that was the center of what became known as Minoan civilization, which he named, “Knossos, the capital of Crete.” Since Evans’ discovery the myth of Theseus, the Minotaur and the labyrinth have been associated with this site.

There are several versions of the legend coming from a myriad of sources including Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* and Virgil’s *Aeneid*. In its basic outlines, the myth relates how Theseus, the son of King Aegeus of Athens¹ and princess Aethra, took up the mantle of hero at an early age by defeating tyrants and thieves on the road on his way to Athens. The main conflict began when the prince, Androgeos of Crete, was killed in Attica. The conditions of Androgeus’ death was, as Plutarch described them, in *The Life of Theseus*, “ascribed to treachery.” This sent King Minos into a rampage, laying siege to Athens and forcing the Athenians to pay tribute for the life of Androgeus with the lives of seven young men and seven maidens every year (some sources differ on the years though the number of victims is generally constant).

¹ In several versions of the myth, Theseus was not only the son of King Aegeus but also the child of the Sea god Poseidon. Edith Hamilton’s *Mythology* was the primary source for the myth explained.

While King Minos was in Athens, Pasiphaë, King Minos' wife, was cursed by the sea god Poseidon who had been offended previously by Minos when he, Minos, failed to sacrifice an honored bull to the sea god. Pasiphaë, influenced by Poseidon's curse, grew frantic with lust for the bull. She commanded Daedalus, the famed inventor and architect, to construct a wooden cow covered in hides and she entered this simulacrum awaiting the bull. Appalled by inter-species miscegenation, Minos had the offspring imprisoned. The child was born half-man and half-bull and was called the Minotaur. Many depictions show this to be a man's body with bull's head (though there are sources that show this in reverse). Daedalus was called once again to build an elaborate labyrinth to house and imprison the bull. In the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid* Aeneas and his men reached the shores of Italy, in Cumae. Here, Aeneas heads towards the temple of Apollo and sees the carvings of the myth made by Daedalus depicting some of the most crucial moments of the story of Theseus:

The land of Crete, rising out of the sea;
the inhuman longing of Pasiphaë,
the lust that made her mate the bull by craft;
her mongrel son, the two formed Minotaur,
a monument to her polluted passion.
And here the inextricable labyrinth,
the house of toil, was carved; but Daedalus
took pity of the princess Ariadne's
deep love, and he himself helped disentangle
the wiles and mazes of the palace; with
a thread he guided Theseus's blinded footsteps.

(Trans Mandelbaum, 6, 33-43)

We can see here an attestation of the age of the ancient labyrinth, which, having been made at the height of Minoan power, precedes the matters of Troy and Rome by centuries if not more. After having escaped his own imprisonment in the labyrinth, Daedalus reached this very

hill and built upon it a temple of Apollo. The Minotaur is described as a mongrel, and a monument to his mother's polluted passion. This view of the Minotaur, as a hybrid creature, speaks of its double nature as a crossbreed between woman and bull, a representation of humanity's uncontrollable lust and bestial nature. Theseus' escape is only thanks to his relationship to Ariadne and Daedalus' ingenuity. Without them, Theseus, the hero, was in a sense blind to the danger he faced. If not for their aid, then his defeat of the Minotaur would have been worth very little if he never escaped the maze afterwards.

Though here the labyrinth is a physical setting the hero must overcome, Doob also speaks of the literary labyrinth of Aeneas' epic journey to his ultimate destiny. Similarly, Theseus faced a labyrinth in the form of destiny leading him to his fate as King of Greece. Seeing the labyrinth as a literary force that provides the hero choices, challenges, and opportunity allows for a wider exploration of the meaning and symbolism of the maze.

Helmut Jackolski's book, *The Labyrinth: Symbol of Fear, Rebirth, and Liberation*, stresses the physical, psychological, and spiritual complexities of labyrinths. He described Daedalus' labyrinth as, "a container for the Minotaur that was a prison, hiding place, and temple at the same time – a far flung system of convoluted passages that led to the midpoint, the den of the monster. It was made in such a way that the way in was inescapable, and the way out was all but impossible to find" (Jackolski 17). This adds to the mystery and terror that one usually associates with the worst parts of the maze. For an outsider looking in, it appears confusing and complex until one sees it like a puzzle and eventually solves it. However, for the one inside Minos' labyrinth it became synonymous with terror and dread, knowing that the man-eating monster could be met at any turn.

In the myth of Crete, the sacrifices to be devoured in the labyrinth were chosen by the city-states. After defeating the Athenians and imprisoning the scandal of his bastard child, the Minotaur, Minos ordered the city-states of Greece to pay tribute. It was in this labyrinth that Minos condemned the fourteen tributes from Athens as sacrifices to the memory of his dead son and as food for the Minotaur. The number of victims varies from story to story, but it is generally agreed upon that the total number was as Craig Wright mentions in *The Maze and the Warrior* “seven young men and seven virgins of Athens” (7). Perhaps it was a method for Minos to humiliate the Athenians even further. He had lost his son, Androgeous and is ashamed of the existence of the other, therefore they must suffer a loss of children as well. Therefore, he chooses young adults. The victim of his wife’s monstrous progeny, he turns the monster on his enemies symbolically destroying the next generation. Wright mentions, “young men” and “virgins,” while Doob refers to the victims as “youths” (12) and Mathews as “youths and maidens” while referring to Theseus specifically as a “valiant youth” (18). The age of Theseus and the other teenaged victims is important because the myth of the Minotaur a coming of age story, where the labyrinth perhaps represents the struggle to survive and transcend adolescence. He was the “valiant youth” destined to become a hero of legend. This myth becomes a story of the younger generation making its mark and replacing the older order through the death of Aegeus, who “hurled himself into the sea” (Doob 18) and the conquering of the Minoan power and the rising of the Greek civilization. The microcosm is the story of maturation into adulthood. The macrocosm is a parallel story of the liberation of Athens from Crete. At the center was the labyrinth, the descent of Theseus into the underworld and his symbolic rebirth as a hero and soon after the newly crown king of Athens.

With the myth of Theseus and these classical elements of storytelling and character growth by teenagers coming of age and overcoming the symbolic representation of their deaths while traversing the maze is echoed in contemporary novels such as *The Maze Runner* amongst many others². In James Dashner's *The Maze Runner*, young men are sent up one per month to the glade, a square green pasture for the population to reside in, which lies in the center of a giant maze. The walls, floors and levels of the maze change on a nightly basis where the main walls of the glade are closed. Patrolling during the night are vicious creatures called *grievors* who kill anyone caught in the maze while the walls are closed. A select group of boys, called runners, explore the maze during the day, and map out what they can, seeking out patterns, so that they can find a way out. These youths are part of what are later called *maze runner trials*, a cynical reflection of how mazes are used to study of cognitive function in mice. These young men were the mice of a governmental experiment concerning a virus that ended the world. They like the mice set on mazes for experiments were but in these giant mazes to see how they survive and eventually understand how they resist the infection.

It was not until Theseus offered himself voluntarily as tribute that the Minotaur was defeated. Theseus was only able to escape the labyrinth with the help of King Minos' daughter, Ariadne, who had fallen in love with him and promised to help him if he would take her as a wife. Theseus agreed and was given a ball of twine, called a *clue*, which had been given to Ariadne by Daedalus, and which Theseus used to escape the labyrinth once he defeated the Minotaur. Once he emerged from the maze, he was reborn as a hero with the ball of twine,

² Some other Young adult novels considered were *The Hunger Games*, by Suzanne Collins, *The Divergent series* by Veronica Roth, and *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. Each one has Maze-like elements and representations. They were not included in this thesis because the main focus was a physical labyrinth present in the novel.

emerging from the maze like an infant with a symbolic umbilical cord. The maze tested his strength and worth. He entered the unknown and faced the beast within, emerging as a hero.

Sir Arthur Evans' excavation of the site at Knossos unearthed the spectrum of what we now understand as Minoan civilization, but one can see through the images of the site that the construction of the Palace was made purposefully maze-like. This not only showed Minoan superiority in architectural skill, but as an intimidation technique against foreigners. Its layout was described as confusing and misleading by foreign kings and people. Evans said that the palace was made in a specific fashion not only to be breezier during the hot summer months but also to be intimidating and purposefully confusing for those who came in, stymieing potential invaders (Matthews 31-33).

History and Symbols

The historical labyrinth has a variety of definitions and meanings depending on where we start. If we begin defining the maze as a dark corridor with the possibility of multiple paths spreading out with no clear exit, then we can say that mazes are as old as geology itself. Man's first exploration into caves and caverns became the gateway to the first primitive understanding, or lack thereof, of the space around them. These caverns became not only shelter for primitive man, but they also caused dread, fear, and inspiration in early humanity. In our modern world the caverns of the world still cause these sensations, but even with all the equipment and preparation, heading into the caverns of the earth is considered one of the most daunting tasks for people. Caves and caverns became one of our first fears. It was in these caves that the darkness was permanent if not for the man-made fires that led the way. These caverns became the walls of humanity's first paintings, the first storage rooms of knowledge and belief (in this sense, caves became our first libraries) (Campbell 66-69).

However, if we look at mazes not as natural geological formations that man stumbled upon, but as a man-made creation purposefully crafted with multiple paths for a multitude of reasons, then man's first mazes are as old as manmade structures. W. H. Mathew's points out in his book *Mazes and Labyrinths*, that "the earliest structure of any kind to which we find the word labyrinth applied was a huge building situated in the north of Egypt" (Matthews 7). Ancient Egyptian civilization is one of the oldest of humanity and their intricate artwork and architecture have acquired the admiration of countless people throughout history. Many travelers and writers, especially famous Greek writers, like Herodotus, wrote varying accounts on the wonders of the intricate buildings of the ancient Egyptian world. The design of the buildings was done purposefully for protection, to hide away treasures and tombs. As Doob pointed out, "the Egyptian building is a multicursal architectural construction, multistoried, full of twisting corridors and doors and halls, whose darkness and myriad passages would make a stranger become irretrievably lost" (Doob 23). These structures were built to keep strangers or grave robbers away and to only allow access to those who belong there. Fear was only for those who did not belong. Similarly, the labyrinth library in *The Name of the Rose* served that same purpose with the books as the treasure being protected.

In Campbell's *Primitive Mythology*, he writes, "labyrinth, maze, and spiral were associated in ancient Crete and Babylon with the internal organs of the human anatomy as well as with the underworld, the one being the microcosm of the other" (Campbell 69). This is true, and in many of the stories the role of the maze becomes a journey to the underworld and for Adso as well as other heroes it became associated with sexual exploration and coming of age. Now the maze takes on a new role, symbolizing and representing the mind, soul or self, and with

this definition the constructed labyrinth and the natural mazes come together in definition and symbolism.

It was not until the Middle Ages that the labyrinth as a single path was a symbolic enlightenment. This is not to say that the single path image is exclusive to the Middle Ages, ancient coins from Crete show a single path labyrinth, but it was in the Middle Ages that the symbolic pilgrimage within the church began. As was mentioned before with the example of the Chartres labyrinth in France, the single path labyrinth was seen as a kind of resurrection of the soul where the walker of the path reflected upon his sins and had to confront his own personal monster just as Theseus did the Minotaur (in a myriad of forms of demons or temptations) before reaching the center and enlightenment.

Today, labyrinths and mazes are interchangeable in almost every way. Modern culture has seen a growing mania for mazes in recent years. For many, mazes have become an escape from reality as seen in the recent book written by Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One*, which extrapolates the role and construction of virtual mazes to a new cybernetically created universe where people reshape themselves to their own liking and escape the bonds of the real world. Mazes are seen in video games, for entertainment and all-over modern literature as representations of how people see their own personal lives, responsibilities, hardships and relationships. The symbolic pilgrimage labyrinths are used by meditation groups all over the world and focus on breathing exercises and inner health, which in a way serves the purpose of escaping or dealing with the reality they face. They have become once again, symbolic and spiritual pilgrimages. The reason mazes have become so popular seems to be a reaction to the amount of information we are exposed to on a daily basis. Sometimes it is overwhelming and frustrating but figuring it out and managing our mazes makes life bearable.

Mazes can range from outdoor wooden labyrinths for fun and pleasure, to indoor mazes of books, mirrors and even vertical mazes on the sides of buildings. We see mazes in videogames and as Allison Gazzard argues in her book *Mazes in Video Games*, one's avatar is present in the virtual world and allows one to manage and have individual choice. For Gazzard, "video games offer us the empowered experience of navigating our own individual paths" (Gazzard 8). It is through videogames that the player becomes an active detective in a story, the maze runner and the hero who completes tasks and, like the symbolism of the maze mentioned above, escapes from their own reality.

In our contemporary cinema, mazes are used as tropes in movies to give our characters a quest, a prison to escape, a puzzle to solve and a new revelation to achieve. This kind of use of the maze as a puzzle for cinematic purposes has given the maze a kind of artistic view. In *The Maze Runner* the maze was a prison, as it was in *Pan's Labyrinth* where the protagonist, Ophelia, enters the maze to escape the real world and find a way to save her mother.

The Novel and its Parts

In the *Postscript of the Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco gives the labyrinth three separate definitions, each one relating to the novel in a different way. The first labyrinth he describes as the "The labyrinth of Theseus. This kind does not allow anyone to get lost: you go in, arrive at the center, and then from the center you reach the exit. This is why in the center there is the Minotaur" (564). This is the medieval description of the unicursal labyrinth, which usually shows a singular path to the center where the true danger lies, the Minotaur. This kind of labyrinth is the one least present in the novel, but it represents the inevitability of the events leading to a single moment. Adso of Melk and William of Baskerville have a final confrontation with their own Minotaur in the form of blind Jorge de Burgos in the one room they most sought

to find, the *Finis Africae*. The labyrinth becomes a single path of destiny leading the monks to a final confrontation, but as soon as the fires of the apocalypse begin, they are confronted with a multipath maze that could trap them inside or lead them astray. Eco's labyrinth is a mixture of both definitions of *labyrinth* and *maze* depending on what it means for the characters.

The second definition is that of the *mannerist* maze. Eco says, "if you unravel it, you find in your hands a kind of tree, a structure with roots, with many blind alleys. There is one exit, but you can get it wrong" (565). With this kind of traditional maze, one needs, as Eco puts it, "an Ariadne's-thread to keep from getting lost. This labyrinth is a model of the trial and process error." (565). Eco confirms that this is the labyrinth seen in *The Name of the Rose*'s library which led the unknowing characters to dead ends, false passages, mirrors, and circles. William and Adso had become lost their first time inside, but afterwards they create a map to be able to decipher the maze.

Eco's last category of labyrinth is defined as the net or the "rhizome." Eco explains that this "rhizome is so constructed that every path can be connected with every other one. It has no center, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite" (565). Eco notes that his character William realizes that his surrounding world has this rhizome characteristic to it. In a way this labyrinth not only reflects the world we live in but it is the definition most similar to postmodern ideals and Jorge Luis Borges' labyrinths, for example, the mazes found in *The Library of Babel*, *The Garden of Forking Paths*, and *Death and the Compass*.

If we look further into Eco's three definitions, they show a progressive elaboration not only in structure but also in complexity. His first labyrinth is the single path pilgrimage to the center, while the second is the maze puzzle of confusion and intricacy, while his last one, the "rhizome," is the most complex because of how it gives the authors freedom to explore

labyrinths in a way that, “has no center, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite” (Eco 565). Time and events become interconnected so that each lead to the next and the rhizomic maze can fold in on itself. This last definition seems to have been taken out of Borges’s *Garden of Forking Paths*, where the labyrinth and the book of the story folds in on space-time and plays with the laws of probabilities and inevitabilities as seen in this short story’s outcome. This last definition plays with what Eco pointed out in his *Postscript*, “what Deleuze and Guattari call “rhizome,” [which] is so constructed that every path can be connected with every other one... The space of conjecture is a rhizome space.” (565)

One of the key features of *The Name of the Rose* is the library inside the ancient building called the Aedificium. This library is presented in the story as a multi-path maze, “a mannerist labyrinth” of multiple paths - each one containing knowledge of the known world (Eco, *Postscript* 57). The library is a *speculum*, a mirror or representation of the world and the world is present within the library’s holdings. The organizational layout of the library also functions like a *mappa mundi*, as its design is similar to that of a circular beehive where each part represents an area of the known world. This physical labyrinth is the smallest one with the greatest importance for the immediate action within the novel. It is in this maze that the blind Jorge de Burgos lurks, hoarding and surveilling what books circulate and who is allowed to read them and poisoning the pages of the book that serves as the labyrinth’s deepest mystery. Jorge’s library is a closed world, many corners of which remain unexplored. As such, the librarian takes on mythic proportions. He is the vengeful god of this microcosm of the world.

William faces the darkness within the walls of the library as a form of the unknown and the light in the form of the fire devouring it all. Eco’s mannerist maze comes into play as it interacts and influences the characters. Adso is a Christian version of the young Theseus coming

of age and defeating the labyrinth. Umberto Eco uses this labyrinth as a narrative technique to present the characters with a puzzle which plays a greater role within the murder mystery at the heart of the novel.

The Chapters

Chapter I – The Aedificium, the Labyrinth and the Library

The first chapter focuses on the physical structure of Eco's labyrinth as a setting, representation of the unconscious, and the library within. The labyrinth is a psychological mechanism which challenges the intellects and beliefs of the monks of this abbey, not only by its imposing presence in the Aedificium but also by containing a Babel of languages, histories, and symbols not fully known by anyone within the library.

The mystery behind the construction of the Aedificum, the labyrinth within and the library it has become are explored. The ancient pagan past of a building within a Christian abbey is analyzed as well as its importance as a library and sanctuary of knowledge. The library within the building is a beacon of light in a dark age and represents the access the monks had to the world's collective knowledge.

Chapter II – Adso of Melk, William of Baskerville, and Jorge of Burgos

The second chapter studies the point of view of Adso of Melk and how the labyrinth plays a role in his coming-of-age and coming-to-terms narrative. The labyrinth not only holds a myriad of meanings, but it directly affected Adso and forced him to change, to grow, to confront his demons, and to learn to see the world with a new perspective. He is an elderly man recalling events from his youth and then analyses both his past thoughts and his current analysis of them. We see through his reflection how he analyzed his own coming of age story and how the labyrinth, the mystery, and the things surrounding it affected him. He reflects upon each event

that tests his spiritual being like the temptation of the flesh, the allure of the unknown worlds, and the new information seen by the heathens of the east and the monsters who may or may not exist, and he even reflects upon his development as a detective in training under the tutelage of William of Baskerville.

This chapter also investigates the role of two other characters as players within the maze. William of Baskerville is a hero in his own right, but he is also a mentor, a detective, the wise man, and Ariadne to Adso's Theseus. William is Adso's guide as his teacher and mentor, but within the maze there is an exchange of roles as it is Adso who provides a thread to help them get out. His exploration and appreciation of the maze and the murders in the abbey are essential to Adso's growth as a character and development as a critical thinker. William is the Sherlock Holmes of this medieval world and uses the power of deductive reasoning to uncover, however slowly the truth behind the murders in the abbey and the murderer within.

Jorge of Burgos is the last character to be explored in this chapter as the murderer and the Minotaur who hoards the knowledge of giants in his sanctuary, the labyrinth. He is the blind guardian of knowledge who controls the abbey through fear and horror. Jorge of Burgos creates the atmosphere of fear through the murders and once his power is threatened, he set out to create his apocalyptic ending.

Chapter III – Labyrinth of Words, Catabasis and Other Parallels

The third chapter explores the reimagining of Theseus' myth to the underworld as represented as a labyrinth. This chapter not only makes several comparisons with other stories that have labyrinths in them, but it also sees the labyrinth of words and language as well as the representation of the ancient myth.

Jorge Luis Borges is the Argentinean author who is often referred to in this thesis. As Coletti pointed out, Eco owes him a debt and this thesis references Borges' short stories like "The Library of Babel", "The House of Asterion", "The Garden of the Forking Paths", "Death and the Compass", and "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" at length. His stories are used to compare and contrast the use of the labyrinths between the stories and novel and what purpose they serve in each. The maze carries with it a myriad of meaning and symbols, much like, Eco's *Rose*, but each symbol carries with it purpose that affects the characters of the story and how the labyrinth is viewed. Fear, horror, spirituality, loss, sexuality, and the unconscious are some of the elements that are associated with the maze depending on how the characters interact with it. "Death and the Compass" is one of Jorge Luis Borges' short stories that does not contain in it a physical labyrinth but it has deep religious symbolic imagery with a murder mystery. *The Name of the Rose* parallels this short story by containing in it a murder mystery as well deep Christian symbolic imagery. "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" does not have a physical manifestation of the labyrinth either but the maze is there nonetheless in the form of a written maze of words, histories, and translation that not only connect with the entire structure of *The Name of the Rose* but also plays with the labyrinth in the mind and the labyrinth of history and fiction which are seen in the third chapter of this thesis. Indeed, the relationship of the novel to Borges as a precursor and his short stories as intertexts to the novel is one of Eco's most puzzling mysteries.

Chapter I: The Labyrinth

The labyrinth of *The Name of the Rose* is the embodiment of Eco's medieval world and it lies at the center of it. However, as Coletti writes, Eco's definition of his labyrinth goes far beyond the world, it also stands as a model for the "universe of semiotics" that is "virtually infinite" (15). This allows the labyrinth to have several symbolic representations depending on how it is studied.

Though it is a world of books, it is also an underworld of terror and ignorance. The labyrinth is a man-made cave, but it stands as the structure tallest and closest to heaven in the ancient Aedificium. As a structure of giants, the labyrinth carries with it the wisdom of the past which has been hoarded by a monstrous librarian. Eco created a library that would serve as a beacon of knowledge, a medieval Tower of Babel and used it as the center of the apocalyptic ending for his medieval story.

The Aedificium

The immediate impact of the labyrinth in *The Name of the Rose* is apparent during the first of the seven days. During *Prime*³ Adso of Melk, a young Benedictine novice, and William of Baskerville, a Franciscan monk renowned for his deductive skills and a retired inquisitor, arrived at the mysterious abbey. As they made their approach Adso was, "amazed, not by the walls that girded it on every side, similar to others to be seen in all the Christian world, but by the bulk of what I later learned was the Aedificium" (Eco 23). The reader later learns that the third floor of this building contains the labyrinth library. All events in this story occur within the Aedificium or around it in the abbey's grounds.⁴ The labyrinth is always present in the background. In a way, the labyrinth has influenced the young monk before he even arrived,

³ Eco added a *Note* explaining the liturgical hours *Prime* refers to the time around 7:30 before daybreak

⁴ D. B. Jewison's article expands on the architecture and meaning in the novel's setting.

making him feel vulnerable, amazed, and small in the presence of this gigantic building. Eco's use of the word *amazed* adds to this point because of the etymological ancestry this word shares with *maze* meaning to "stupefy" or "astound."

So amazed was Adso that his train of thought continues with an elaborate explanation of the significance of the numbers involved in the creation of this building and the defining Christian aspect of each. For Adso, every event, building, and person contains meaning. As a novice reflecting a young man's curiosity, he seeks out and analyzes what significance the symbols of the world hold. He does this several times in the novel, first with the Aedificium, then while exploring the abbey and especially within the labyrinth after his sexual encounter. For Adso, the world is filled with meaning and significance and he seeks out divine messages in every person, symbol, and event. For older Adso in hindsight, all events were a forewarning of the impending doom of the library.

The Aedificium is shrouded in mystery, which is amplified by the atmosphere of anxiety and unease created because of the murders and the apocalyptic meaning being attached to them. This meaning however, as William notes, is subjective. As William (and Eco) understand, meaning is given to the murders on purpose so as to cause the uproar of revelation and dread of death in the monastery. Each of the deaths of the monks can be interpreted as a death correlating with a passage of *The Book of Revelations*. The first death (that of Adelmo) reflects objects falling from the sky. His death was a suicide but as William noted, it was an assisted suicide if not murder. Then again, with the pool of blood that became Venantius' death was nothing more than a staged death by another monk fearing discovery who in turn fell victim to the real murderer, the poison from the book of Aristotle. Berengar was poisoned by the same source as Venantius but because he was staged in the baths, his murder was seen as another symbolic

death, representing the third trumpet. William noted the effects these deaths were having on the other monks. Someone was pulling the strings and controlling the events so as to cause fear. As Eco mentioned in his *Postscript* how “the rose is a symbolic figure so rich in meaning that by now it hardly has any meaning left” (542). Eco’s use of sign and the multiplicity of signs and meaning is taken advantage of when dealing with the events of the books. Each event, each symbol can be interpreted in a myriad of ways by many people, much like the rose itself.

Eco uses Adso, both the young ignorant one and the older one seeking meaning in his past to produce uncertainty in the interpretation of signs. Take for instance Adso’s interpretation and description of the abbey. For Adso, the large building was coming from below where the, “cliff seemed to extend, reaching up towards the heavens, with the rock’s same colors and material, which at a certain point became keep and tower (work of giants who had great familiarity with earth and sky)” (Eco 23). From afar, the amazement Adso was experiencing seemed sublime in the sense that readers see the abbey as mythological, larger than life, even before arriving at the abbey. The craftsmanship of the building was described as so precise and defined that it seemed to be a part of the mountain it was built upon, as if the Aedificium grew from the mountain itself as a figure reaching towards the sky.

The mention of giants brings into the picture a history that, like the labyrinth, connects with the world. Labyrinths and giants are both used in this novel as figures which are greater than humanity, not only in size and scope but in the information they contain. Eco’s use of the mystifying setting in the mountains allowed him to let certain events happen (like the slaughter of pigs nearing winter) (*Postscript* 27). However, this setting in the mountains also gave the novel a sense of grandeur and a magnitude that made the mention of giants all the more relevant as figures of earth. Having the labyrinth as the heart of the novel (another symbol of earth) gave

the inside of the Aedificium a similar grandiose scope. The beehive nature of the labyrinth library made it seem enormous within especially for the ignorant maze walkers who walk within as if discovering a cave.

According to Cohen's article on "Old English Literature and the Work of Giants,"⁵ these larger than life beings of the ancient world had inspired stories and legends throughout all cultures. The existence of Giants allowed ancient men to explain supernatural phenomena by having, "pinned anthropomorphic causation onto random nature" (Cohen 1-3). They used the existence of giants to explain earthquakes, "storm, fog, blizzard [and] thunder" while being tied to a "certain primitivism... linking them to the rough, early, larger than life days of the world." As Cohen explained, modern man can scientifically explain the existence or the causation of natural disasters or immense landscapes and how it came to be. For early man, who had no scientific background, the stories and legends of giants helped them make sense of a seemingly senseless world. Adso, mystified by the presence of the Aedificium, immediately tried to make sense of the magnitude and craftsmanship behind the building by mentioning giants as architects who understood the working of the earth and sky.

Giants are often associated with the earth. In fact, the word "*Gigant*" is taken directly from the oblique forms of Latin *gigas*, which in turn was borrowed from the Greek term for the earth-born race guilty of rebellion against the Olympian gods" (Cohen 3). The mother of these earth born giants was the earth itself, *Gaia* (or *Terra* for the Romans), who gave birth to them. These earth-born giants threatened the sky-gods, leading to the gigantomachy where the Olympic gods were victorious over the Titans. Cohen stresses the giants' connection with the earth, "As

⁵ This article not only explains the earlier understanding and belief of the giants, but it also focuses on the Book of Enoch and other Biblical occurrences of Giants which only adds to Adso's fascination and understanding of Giants on top of his Germanic roots.

elemental representations they are repeatedly connected to earth and stone, and so we gained an explanatory function as creators of landscape, ruins and architecture” (7). Adso mentioned the giants’ work in the landscape as the builders of the Aedificium. Therefore, for Adso, the giants were seen as possible creators of the building containing the labyrinth in the third floor. As the highest floor of the abbey, the Aedificium stands between sky and earth as if the giants were constructing their own Tower of Babel. They were the ancient creatures of earth reaching for the sky and threatening the divine world.

Adso connected giants once again to earth and architecture as they rode up the side of the mountain. He felt “fear, and a subtle uneasiness...interpreting indubitable omens inscribed in the stone the day that the giants began their work” (Eco 24). Adso uses his descriptions and mixes myth and history when describing the Aedificium. His mention of omens written into the stone itself adds to the uneasiness he felt when approaching this building and his undeniable fear later within the labyrinth. Giants represented the supernatural workers of an ancient world for Adso. He believed like many, that their existence was of ages past, like the Roman Empire that no longer existed.

In his first venture in the labyrinth library, Adso once again mentions a giant he sees, mistaking it for a devil. He described it as a “giant of threatening dimensions” (Eco 183). This giant had a light with it, like Adso, and approached him as the boy entered another room inside the library. Adso recoiled in fear without having realized that this giant was in reality nothing more than an illusion created by a mirror within the labyrinth. Eco was showing one of the tricks that the labyrinth contains within it but also showing us how there was, from at least one perspective, a giant within the labyrinth. It is also curious to note how Adso, with all of his self-

doubt and insecurities, saw himself as a larger-than-life figure. He became a giant in a world where all the others described themselves as small and weak.

When other monks in the novel speak of the “age of giants” they are referencing the ancient days of the Roman Empire where technology and many abilities were thought to have been at their height. One example of this is the monk Nicholas of Morimondo, the master glazier, who had been speaking with William in reference to his spectacles. Nicholas had been somber when speaking of what the ancients were capable of creating, mentioning the limpid blue they could attain and then saying, “It’s hopeless... we no longer have the learning of the ancients, the age of giants is past” (Eco 93). There is a melancholic feel of loss when Nicholas speaks. The knowledge of the past is gone, their ancient wisdom no longer within their grasp. Nicholas doubts his own abilities of craftsmanship comparing himself with the idealized giants of the past. What makes this sadder still was the fact that neither the reader nor monks have any idea what knowledge could have been inside the library. They no longer see themselves in the same potential as the giants and often call themselves small or even dwarves, though it was William who turned this thought on its head by stating the potential of the dwarf looking farther ahead in the shoulder of the giant.

While giants were beings of supernatural proportions capable of altering the landscape and doing incredible things, in the novel giants represent lost knowledge, to a past that man had lost. It was while speaking with Nicholas that William spoke in defense of the men of their age saying that they are but, “dwarfs who stand on the shoulders of giants, and small though we are, we sometimes manage to see farther on the horizon than they” (Eco 93). This discussion uses giants as a metaphor for the knowledge which was lost and the hope of not only recovering it, but surpassing it by being capable of seeing farther into the future. It is no wonder then that

William had an elated fascination at wanting to enter the massive library, and once he entered it, of wanting to protect the knowledge within. William saw these hidden books and saw only the possibilities of learning from and building on what the giants had left behind.

Giants are associated with the earth, capable of understanding it and shaping it like no other; thus, making them the ideal architects of this element. This connection with the earth connects giants with labyrinths which are often symbols of earth as well. In the metaphorical sense, ancient men were giants capable of constructing incredible monuments out of stone and rock. These ancients were the first ones to construct labyrinths which are nothing more than man-made caves. As mentioned in the introduction, caves are often seen as labyrinths because of the many choices and confusing paths one is presented with. Doob connects labyrinths with objects often associated with the earth: for instance, “labyrinth of a sacred tomb” (81), “labyrinthine caves” (76), or a “series of caves, any confusing or trackless waste with superabundant choices and no unambiguous path” (48). She also mentions when speaking of Dante’s *Inferno* that Boccaccio had an unusual view of “the Cretan maze as a series of caves” (282). This interpretation of the maze as a part of the earth turns it into a symbol of facing the unknown. In the myth, Theseus had no idea what was hidden within the maze. He knew of the Minotaur but of little else. He faced the unknown and came out victorious all the while protecting the other sacrificial victims.

If we look at what the Aedificium represents in the novel, we see that it not only is the largest and most imposing of the buildings along with being the oldest, but it is also the most secretive of all. We know this because of what the labyrinth library represents forbidden knowledge. Very few of the monks have ever had access to all the books from the library. Those that have had access have already passed away but not before passing their knowledge on to the

next generation. This is because there is a rule in place: anyone can visit the scriptorium and work but only with special permission may they access the books from the Aedificium. None may enter except the librarian and his assistant, Jorge of Burgos and Malachi respectively, and only with permission from them may a codex be taken out. Jorge de Burgos hoards the knowledge the labyrinth has to offer.

The once pagan building is being controlled and held prisoner: “The Aedificium represents culture interpreted as a typology of opposites. It is an emblem of the dominant culture itself, symbolically structured, hierarchically ordered, and institutionally sanctioned” (Coletti 128). The Aedificium is older than the abbey itself as we know and now a new order has come and taken control of the ancient pagan site. This ancient work of Giants is being controlled by the smaller Jorge of Burgos who has stumped the growth of the monks of abbey and has prevented them from reaching their potential. The control of knowledge dwarfs the monks, who remain subverted by their ignorance: doomed to remain at the foot of the towering work of giants, they are never allowed a view of things from the summit.

The dominant culture of the Medieval setting was Christianity, which defined the culture and knowledge of Medieval Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Eco chose the year 1327 in which to set his novel, when medieval Europe was not only at its height but also at its most vulnerable state due to the schism of the church and the complexities of papal politics. The Christian world was built around the Aedificium, Christian ideals were imposed upon it. Symbolically it has been redesigned to fit into a Christian world view while the pagan roots were either ignored, subdued, or hidden away like a pagan scroll or text never to be read. Every piece of information was devoured by the mind, the cave of the Aedificium and hidden away in its subconscious, locked away from active memory and hidden in a labyrinth.

Another way of looking at the Aedificium is not only as a creation of giants but also as a sleeping giant. If we see the structure of the Aedificium, it becomes clear that Eco built it specifically for certain functions. The kitchen on the first floor becomes the belly of the beast where the food is cooked and where the desires of the flesh are met. Right next to the kitchen is the refectory, where the monks devour food for sustenance. The second floor is the scriptorium, it is the heart and circulatory system of the giant. This floor is where the information of the monks is exchanged and spread. The scriptorium acts as the giant's active mind, monks from all over the world come to the scriptorium to donate a book and read, copy, translate and illustrate another. It has become the heart of the Aedificium because this is where the purpose of the library is met: the exchange of ideas, the preservation of wisdom, and expansion of knowledge.

The third floor, however, is the most complicated. It is the labyrinth library and it represents the subconscious of the giant. The third floor is where the secret knowledge is hidden, where our heroes dive in and try to decipher its puzzles and map out its secrets. William and Adso are the dwarves, as William and Nicholas had spoken about, but they are not standing on the shoulders of the giants to gaze into the future; rather, they are exploring the giant's mind seeking its knowledge. Jorge de Burgos is the labyrinth's Minotaur preventing them from learning all the forbidden secrets and the one trying to control the world.

The Aedificium's origin is left unanswered. It is suggested that whoever built the Aedificium might have been responsible for the building of the labyrinth as well, but it is never certain. Eco created a world with many questions and few answers, a labyrinth of ideas, speculation and imagination.

The Labyrinth

Adso refers to those who created this labyrinth as “the builders.” These mysterious builders are often spoken of in awe and admiration of their work and the brilliance they possessed to create such a fascinating structure, the maze. An example of this is when William and Adso first entered the labyrinth on the night of the second day and Adso said, “the builders of the library had been shrewder than we thought” (Eco 181-182). This speaks of how the design of the labyrinth was underestimated by both Adso and William. They entered the library knowing it was a labyrinth but arrogantly assumed they would master it easily. These builders and their plans are shrouded in mystery. Their history long forgotten or just as legendary as the giants Adso mentioned before. By the way they are spoken of it is clear that these builders are the very giants that both William and Adso has spoken about before. They are the same pagans that created the Aedificium.

Another example of what the main characters thought of these mysterious builders is when William is telling Adso of the genius behind the layout of the design. This occurred after they escaped their first venture into the maze and were trying to design a map so as to not get lost again. “The maximum of confusion achieved with the maximum of order; it seems a sublime calculation. The builders of the library were great masters” (Eco 233). This speaks of the labyrinth’s mixture of order and chaos. It is a man-made structure of organized chaos. The labyrinth is a structure of mathematics to create this very effect William described, confusion and order. William and Adso had actually given up finding a way out in their first venture, so confused and lost were they. William speaks of the desperation within the maze and in admiration of the builders who had a mastery over the mathematical laws and mentions how everything obeyed these laws.

This element of control is seen from the beginning of the novel. As mentioned before, Adso's first interpretation of the Aedificium is an immediate attention to geometrical, mathematical, and numerical order that informs the architecture. Finding order and structure in the world is a common element seen again in what the monks speak as they try to have some sense of control over their seemingly chaotic world. Adso was trying to find symbolism in the geometric shapes that defined the Aedificium and in the figures of the door to the church. William prides himself in logic, understanding, and cause and effect. He was summoned to the abbey because of this.

Jorge de Burgos controls the library and by extension controls the knowledge of the other monks and seeks out even more control by imposing fear. He had placed in position of power, monks whom he could control, like Malachi who, as William said, "never took a step without consulting you" (Eco 497). In fact, the murders were also a system of control surrounding the book that had been prohibited to read. The only way Burgos could control the abbey was by committing the murders and afterwards by creating and giving symbolic meanings that reflected the seven trumpets of The Book of Revelation to the murders as a way to explain the deaths and exploit the unease and distress it caused in the others. This control becomes evident on the final night, when William and Adso discover him sitting in the *Finis Africae* awaiting them. He explained the order of events and how William fit into them. Jorge saw William as his intellectual rival, but it was not until the fires were out that Jorge de Burgos screamed demonstrating his method of control in the darkness, "Find me now! Now I am the one who sees best!" (Eco 515). While our protagonists are both literally and figuratively in the dark and unable to perceive their present state, Burgos is so at home in the labyrinth that his blindness is not seen as an impediment

Mathematics and labyrinths are intricately connected. Labyrinths are commonly compared to caves. The labyrinth in the novel seems to act like a cave when William and Adso become lost in it. It is dark, indoors, claustrophobic, and confusing. It was easy for them to get lost in it. However, even though it acts like a cave it is a man-made cave. A maze is nothing more than a cave with an intelligent mathematical human design behind it. One historical example of a genius of creation is from the original myth of Theseus discussed in the introduction, Daedalus. According to Boorstin's work *The Creators* Daedalus was an inventor, "the legendary craftsman... [his] ingenuity made him famous. To confine the Minotaur, he created the labyrinth." It was Daedalus who crafted the cow which Pasiphae would enter to seduce the bull, later it was Daedalus who gave Ariadne the tool she needed to help Theseus find his way back once he entered the maze. Daedalus knew the dangers of his creation, the maze, first hand: as Doob put it, "so bewildering were the maze's path that even Daedalus could scarcely find his way back to the entrance" (12). After the escape of Theseus and Ariadne, Minos imprisoned Daedalus in his own creation with his son Icarus and from there he crafted two sets of wings so that they might escape.

The myth speaks of genius and ingenuity even in the face of defeat; Daedalus' name has been interconnected with mazes and labyrinths for ages. It perhaps speaks of the amount of ignorance or lack of information that William and Adso never mention the name of this legendary craftsman. They spoke of mysterious builders without ever learning who the most famous of the maze builders was.

Building a labyrinth comes with an intention behind the design. While many labyrinths today are used for entertainment and fun, the original creation of labyrinths served a variety of complex purposes as they do when used in literature. The labyrinth of the myth used Daedalus'

genius to create an intricate and near inescapable maze so that it would act as a prison not just for the Minotaur but also for the victims of the ritualistic sacrifice that Minos hosted with the Athenian children. In a similar fashion the maze of *The Name of the Rose* is a prison for all of the books and knowledge kept within its walls.

An example in popular culture of how the labyrinth is used as a prison comes in the young adult book, *The Maze Runner*. Like how the original myth used young adults as sacrifices, this novel and its movie places teenagers inside what is called the glade⁶ which lies in the center of an enormous labyrinth. These children are kept inside as prisoners as part of an experiment to see who has what it takes to escape the maze. Similar to the books, the teenagers of the glade are kept under a watchful eye of the company that placed them there, *Wicked*. Thomas, the main character, experiences the desperation that Adso and all maze runners face to get out of the maze. This desperation is ignited when Thomas begins to uncover clues on the layout and design of the maze and deciphers how to get out. The walls cease to close and the vicious grieverers are let in, this novel's equivalent of Minotaur. The book turns into a thriller as the teenagers escape only to realize that what seemed prison was a fortress built to safeguard them from the outside world.

The maze in *The Maze Runner* takes a new turn when Thomas and his friends realize that the world had been devastated by disease and natural disaster. The children in the *Maze Runner* have a similar value as the books of *The Name of the Rose*. While the books are stored knowledge, the young adults placed within the maze walls were valuable and kept away from the world. The maze was a prison, they could not leave, a laboratory, where they were experimental

⁶ The glade is a square green field. From the "box" which is an elevator from the underground the children are deposited here, one every month along with supplies enough for the entire group to ration and make due. They are protected by the walls of the labyrinth which close everynight and locks them within the center of the maze. Anyone stuck outside of the glade and in the maze during the night will be executed by Grieverers, maze dwellers that devour any stragglers.

subjects, but above all it was a defense to protect the children inside. The kids within were immune to the disease and were therefore taken care of by being placed in what was for them a prison but was created for their own protection. This symbolism of prison and protection appears in *The Name of the Rose* as well. As it was mentioned, the labyrinth was a prison for the books. No other, save the librarian and his assistant, had access to this information. For the librarian however, the labyrinth was seen as a shield to protect the books from decay, from the elements, from people who would damage or misuse the knowledge inside. Jorge told William when discovered as the murderer that Malachi, his assistant, “did not yet know what I had been trying to protect—he has never precisely understood the treasures and the ends of the library” (Eco 496). Jorge, however, hoarded the books and even poisoned one, turning a book of laughter into a murder weapon. For him, there was no experiment only his monstrous manner of control. Jorge, like the organization *Wicked*, saw himself as a protector of the treasure while becoming the Minotaur within.

Another way to look at the labyrinth in Eco’s novel, as well as in real life, is a defense mechanism from outsiders trying to reach the treasure hidden at its center. W. H. Mathews describes how the ancient Egyptians used labyrinths to conceal and protect the tomb of the pharaoh. These labyrinths would then be filled with traps and dead ends to throw off invaders and grave robbers. This use of the labyrinth allows it to become a guardian of sacred information, and he who wanders in it is an invader seeking the truth or treasure hidden within. In this sense the labyrinth of *The Name of the Rose* is keeping out invaders as well. Adso and William were told not to enter the library. Once they do enter the walls of the library, it acts like an Egyptian tomb, filled with traps and misleading doorways, but also with sacred treasure that could change their entire understanding of the world.

Adso and William disobeyed the rules of the abbey and entered the maze. They became the invaders, grave-robbers in this tomb of knowledge. However, once inside, they found themselves prisoners to the claustrophobic cave of interconnected rooms that made up this labyrinth. Adso described the experience by saying:

“I cannot explain clearly what happened, but as we left the tower room, the order of the rooms became more confused. Some had two doorways, others three. All had one window each, even those we entered from a windowed room, thinking we were heading toward the interior of the Aedificium. Each had always the same kind of cases and tables; the books arrayed in neat order seemed all the same and certainly did not help us to recognize our location at a glance” (Eco 182).

This was their first experience in the labyrinth and it clearly tricked them, confused them and made them unsure whether they would ever find a way out. Every room, as it was described, connected to another room. Some of these rooms had several openings, while others had one, the vast majority of them had the same design; one window, cases and tables, and the organization of the books looked nearly identical to the others (Eco 282). Creating this similarity between the rooms encouraged desperation, playing with the monks’ sense of time and space. If each room appeared the same and no matter how much they moved within they found themselves in a similar room as before, then it is almost as if the labyrinth is unaffected by the laws of time and space, creating this sense of vast endlessness. This idea of an infinite labyrinth was also written about by Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges in his work *The Library of Babel*.

For Borges, his library was equivalent to the universe, the same way Eco’s library is the world. It is described as composing an, “indefinite, and perhaps infinite number of hexagonal

galleries with vast air shafts between, surrounded by very low railings... One of the free sides leads to a narrow hallway which opens onto another gallery, identical to the first and to all the rest” (51). As we see, both libraries had the same sense of infinity by creating identical or nearly identical galleries. However, for Borges the library is equivalent to the universe and it “exists *ab aeterno*” (52). The books within are unique in how they are organized and the information they contain pertaining to any and all possible combinations of letters similar to how the books in the Aedificium are unique for the reader and the characters. However, while the Borges library may contain information that has no immediate meaning, Eco’s library contains books from all over the medieval world which eventually are lost to William and Adso and therefore their context can never be read.

The day after their first venture into the maze, William and Adso try to decipher the organizational schematic of the labyrinth. William tells his young novice that, though the builders had exceptional skill in mathematics he believes that, “what does not correspond to any mathematical law is the arrangement of the openings” (Eco 232). These openings connect each room to one another. However, as Adso had pointed out before, the number of openings seemed random. Sometimes these entryways led to a single room with no exit, other times they had up to three openings. At first it seemed for William that openings were simple a part of what made this chaotically organized maze so complicated. It is then that they understood what the openings represented.

Each opening, when looked from above represented a letter. This letter was found in the inscription that was over the entrance to each room (many of these inscriptions were repeated, this is how they were able to make the connection). These letters formed words, the names of the

locations where the books of the library had originated from and where they were located. As Adso and William discovered:

“...overlapping sequences that said *IUDAEA* and *AEGYPTUS*... to the north we found *ANGLIA* and *GERMANIA*, which along the west wall were connected by *GALLIA*, which turned then, at the extreme west, into *HIBERNIA*, and toward the south wall *ROMA*... and *YSPANIA*. Then to the south came the *LEONES* and *AEGYPTUS*, which to the east became *IUDEA* and *FONS ADAE*” (Eco 342).

The library labyrinth found in the Aedificium is literally in the center of the Christian medieval world. It stands north of Africa and Italy, south of Germany, Scandinavia and the British Isles, east of Spain and France and west of the Middle East. In it is the world itself and the world is represented in the microcosm of the library. This building is alive, a sleeping giant. It has a stomach in the form of the kitchen and the refectory. It has a conscious brain and a heart in the form of the scriptorium in the second floor where the monks gather and it has a subconscious in the form of the library that consumed them, changed them, made them experience fear, hope, and inspiration, much like our own sub-consciousness. It is a labyrinth of hidden pleasures and things that will forever remain unknown.

Unlike dwarves, Adso and William stand not on the shoulder of the giant to gaze into the future but rather they wander within the giant's unconscious eager to understand its history, treasures and design. They have within their grasp the entire world. It is at their fingertips, making the apocalyptic ending where in library is consumed in flames all the more tragic. By the end, they lose access to the world of the Aedificium. The villain, though defeated, ultimately won by ensuring that the wisdom of the ages dies with him. While the labyrinth in *The Name of*

the Rose had a closed ended design, it should be noted that in the film adaptation of Eco's novel the galleries were not adjacent to one another, which will be spoken of in more detail in the third chapter.

The labyrinth representing the world has shown up several times in fiction, but in different guises. For Eco, the world was the labyrinth and the library within with books from all corners of the medieval world. Borges, however, had his *Library of Babel* which in itself was not only the world, but all possible worlds found within a complex and yet seemingly meaningless code for it representing man's failed attempt to ever understand God. There is another instance where the labyrinth is the world but only for a certain Borgesian character in *Asterion*.

The original myth of Theseus has many variations and complexities. In one version the Minotaur had a proper name. He was half man and half bull, but he was still a prince, a half-brother to Ariadne and Androgeus. His mother, Pasiphae, called him, Asterion, also mentioned as Asterius (Leeming 44), and Asterios (Jaskolski 57). Jiwon Hahn briefly explains the meaning of this name in his article "Labyrinth, the Shape of the Modern Mind; Kafka, Auster, Borges", "Another name of the Minotaur is Asterion, "star-like." shared by Minos' foster father, this name underscores the paternal lineage that continues from Asterion to Minos to Minotaur/Asterion" (6). His name referring to "star-like" brings to mind the gods Helios and Apollo, as Han had also mentioned (6). Both these gods are associated with the sun. It should be noted that Aeneas' passage⁷ was described while Aeneas was about to enter the temple of Apollo. This meaning of "star-like" gives a new motive for the hero Theseus who was reaching the center of the labyrinth, the light of illumination.

⁷ Mentioned in the introduction

Jorge Luis Borges took the name of the Minotaur and created a short story named *The House of Asterion*. It explores the psychology of what was thought to be a savage beast. With a turn similar to the monster in Shelley's *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*⁸, Asterion is not only a sentient being, but quite intelligent. He speaks to the reader about his life and how he lives in the labyrinth claiming that, "another ridiculous falsehood has it that I, Asterion, am a prisoner. Shall I repeat that there are no locked doors, shall I add that there are no locks?" (Borges 138). For him this maze is no prison, it is not containing him, it protects him. He informs the reader that he could leave but chooses to stay, having seen the fear that was shown to him from the outside world. In fact, for Asterion, his "house [labyrinth] is the same size as the world; or rather, it is the world" (Borges 139). For him, the only world he is interested in was his own world. It is the place where he rules, where he knows every corner and in it, he wanders aimlessly. The reader of this short story is usually taken aback by the eloquence and insight Asterion demonstrates. One can empathize with him and understand the importance of this world as his only refuge from the outside; it is his haven and home from the humans who would do him harm.

Expressing the labyrinth as the world, or the universe is a creative task, and authors have taken several approaches to showing this representation. Some authors have used books, while others take advantage of a different point of view. Rick Riordan in his novel *The Battle of the Labyrinth*⁹ explores a sentient labyrinth that also represents the world. In Riordan's story world the gods, goddesses, and monsters of both Greek and Roman mythology have been integrated into the modern world. The ancient gods adapted with civilization: thus it is no wonder then that

⁸ The similarity lies in the expectation of the monster. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or, the Modern Prometheus* the monster created by Dr. Frankenstein came to him not as a savage beast, but as a learned man. He was an intellectual, eloquent and yet, very capable of violence. Prometheus in Greek mythology is the name of the trickster titan who gave the fire from Olympus to man-kind. He was a deliverer of light.

⁹ Riordan, Rick. *The Battle of the Labyrinth*. This book is the fourth of the five books of the Percy Jackson and the Gods of Olympus series. In this novel the figures studied about in Mythology actually exist and interact with people. Percy and his friends are demigods (one human parent and one godly parent) and are currently (for this fourth installation) prepping to fight Luke Castellan and his army of monsters who fight alongside the rising Titans.

the labyrinth of Crete did the same. Percy Jackson and his friends are on a quest to find Daedalus and prevent him from giving Luke Castellan the legendary “Ariadne’s String.” With it Luke and his army of monsters would be able to navigate inside the labyrinth without any detours or accidentally setting off a trap within.

In the original myth, Ariadne’s string was a ball of twine, called a *clue*, which was used by Theseus to find a way out of the maze. In the film *The Name of the Rose*, it is Adso who unwinds the cloth of his Franciscan habit and uses it as a string to orient himself and William in the labyrinth. However, the reason “Ariadne’s string” is so powerful in Riordan’s novel is because the labyrinth Daedalus created to entrap the Minotaur in the ancient world developed in parallel with civilization and began absorbing pieces of other cultures and time periods into its many paths. As Annabeth, Percy’s friend, describes, “The Labyrinth is right under the surface of the mortal world, kind of like a second skin. It’s been growing for thousands of years, lacing its way under Western cities, connecting everything together underground. You can get anywhere through the Labyrinth” (Riordan 46). It is a world under our own and as, as she mentioned, it allows anyone inside to travel great distances in little to no time. The same way Adso and William see books from all over the world and can travel virtually from the Middle East to northern Europe by simply walking into that section of the library, so too can Riordan’s demigods travel literally from one part of the Continental United States to another. It is described as “a Patchwork” (Riordan 96) and the same could be said of Eco’s library. It is a patchwork of the known medieval World.

Riordan’s labyrinth is much more dangerous because, unless you have the string, you will be led down the wrong path, and in a labyrinth the size of the entire United States, maze runners are sure to lose their way and their lives. As Annabeth said, “the Labyrinth can lead you almost

anywhere. It reads your thoughts. It was designed to fool you, trick you, and kill you” (Riordan 49). This labyrinth is an entity conscious of its history. In this parallel world, one can be led down into the underworld or into the lobby of a hotel in New York City. In fact, Percy discovers his own “String” not in the form of a literal ball of twine but in the form of his personal Ariadne. She was named Rachel, and she was one of the few human beings who could see beyond the tricks of the labyrinth similar to how William saw through the many traps in the library, especially the hallucinogenic gas that consumed Adso.

While exploring the labyrinth in *Battle of the Labyrinth*, Percy met mythological figures such as a sphinx and the double-headed god Janus, which both represent choice or a crossroads within the labyrinth for the demigods. Just as Adso had mentioned giants and even saw one in the library the first night, Percy meets several giants as well. Such mythological gints include the Geryon in Texas, who in the original myth was killed by Hercules and Briares, a hundred handed giant or Hekatonkheires, who was found on Alcatraz Island and had once fought alongside the gods but now joins the demigods in this novel. Another giant Percy faced and fought inside the tunnels of the labyrinth was the world-bearing giant Antaeus. Antaeus had been defeated in the original myth by Heracles in a battle of brute strength. Heracles, like Percy was in this novel, was at a disadvantage because of Antaeus’ ability to heal while in contact with the earth. In the myth, Heracles lifted the giant from the ground and crushed his spine. Percy, however, had to use his wits and dangle the giant from the chains of the underground ceiling to be able to lift him off the ground and deliver a deadly attack. Percy used the knowledge of Heracles’ battle to create his own strategy to defeat the ancient giant. Rick Riordan shows the reader how the modern heroes can learn from the past to create new opportunities.

Similar to Riordan's Percy, Eco's character, Adso, is also a young adult adapting and learning new skills in the world. For them the labyrinth was a tool so that each could undergo their own maturity and hero's journey. The exploration of *The Name of the Rose's* labyrinth connects with the world and gives the reader insight into the symbolic nature of the ancient cavern-like minds of giants. This single maze echoes the ancient myth, the exploration of knowledge and allows our heroes to grow and explore their own understanding of the world.

The Library

As a library, this labyrinth becomes more than just a manmade cave. The labyrinth serves as a hive of information and each book, manuscript, scroll, and page within it become a valuable piece within a sanctuary of knowledge. As a honeycomb-shaped maze representing the world, the books inside are like bees communicating. Adso mentions the importance of the knowledge passed down through generations, "books speak of books: it is as if they spoke among themselves" (Eco 306).

The library is highly valued amongst all the monks in the novel. Coletti mentions how "the novel carefully represents monastic attachments to books and the life of letters" (33). The writing and rewriting of information are the primary function of the scriptorium. The library is a result of the hard work hundreds of people over the ages; hence it is symbolically the world. And yet, it is also the written history of the known past, a collective consciousness of thousands of writers.

When William spoke with Abo¹⁰ on their first encounter he said, "you have among you Germans, Dacians, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Greeks." William knew the importance and significance of the library and the work done in it. He also understood how many people

¹⁰ Abo of Fossanova was the Abbott of the Monastery (Eco 247).

throughout Europe equally value the library, “I know that the Emperor Frederick... asked you to compile for him a book of the prophecies of Merlin and then to translate it into Arabic, to be sent as a gift to the Sultan of Egypt” (Eco 39). This abbey is seen as the guiding light for the Christian medieval world causing many to perform a pilgrimage towards it. William concludes that the people who come into the abbey are there to help in the accumulation of the library’s information going so far as helping in international relationships such as he mentioned with the sultan in Egypt.

The books are the key to Jorge’s control and power, after all it is because of a book taken out of the library, that the murders were committed. Jorge de Burgos understands better than most the importance of the library for the world he lives in; that is why he is so jealous and hordes information, not permitting anyone to enter.

The scriptorium, as I mentioned before, is in a way the conscious mind of the Aedificium and it perfectly embodies Coletti’s description, showing the reader the curiosity of the monks and their love of learning. This monastic attachment is also represented by the pilgrimages that monks undertake from all over the world. As William said, “many of the monks living in your midst come from other abbeys scattered all over the world” (Eco 39). Pilgrimage is commonly associated with labyrinths. The labyrinth of the single path is a solemn trial of introspection that one faces alone in following a unicursal path. As many have traveled great distances for their expeditions such as the pilgrimages to places like the Mecca and Santiago de Compostela in Spain, so too have the monks traveled to the Aedificium just to get a limited glimpse of the knowledge here.

The purpose of their travels was in pursuit of knowledge. In a way this library, the Aedificium and the surrounding abbey became a symbolic lighthouse for those who seek information not found anywhere else. As William commented to Abbo:

“Some stay here a short time, to copy manuscripts to be found nowhere else and to carry them back then to their own house, not without having brought you in exchange some other unavailable manuscript that you will copy and add to your treasure; and others stay for a very long time, occasionally remaining here till death, because only here can they find the works that enlighten their research” (Eco 39).

The system the library has in place is one of constant circulation and growth. Monks cannot simply arrive in the abbey and copy what they need. They must also contribute knowledge if they wish to have access to the books of the abbey. This is the reason that any request for a book must be approved by the librarian. The library is constantly growing, adding to its collection bits and pieces from all over the world and hiding these donations within the walls of the labyrinth. William understood this and yet questioned Malachi, the assistant librarian, about the organizational method for the books within. Malachi explained that the organizational system must only be understood by the librarian and his assistant since no other may enter the library. “The library dates back to the earliest times,” Malachi said to William and Adso as they first came into the scriptorium, “and the books are registered in order of their acquisition, donation, or entrance within our walls” (Eco 82). This increased William’s curiosity and made him want to find a way to uncover the secrets of the labyrinths by finding a way inside.

The library gives the labyrinth value which Jorge of Burgos uses for his power. The library is the heart of Eco’s medieval world and its loss is an apocalypse in microcosm. William

knew the amount of information that came into the library and resented Malachi and Abbo's restrictions. As William informed Abbo:

“[This library] has more books than any other Christian library. I know that in comparison with your cases, those of Bobbio or Pomposa, of Cluny or Fleury, seem the room of a boy barely being introduced to the abacus... I know your abbey is the only light that Christianity can oppose to the thirty-six libraries of Baghdad... the number of your Bibles equals the two thousand four hundred Korans that are the pride of Cairo.” (Eco 39)

As a labyrinth of words and information, the library holds secrets that we as readers as well as our protagonist never acquire. In the course of the novel the accumulated knowledge of the library is transformed into a puzzle, a maze. Being a labyrinthine library makes the mystery of it all the more valuable. The library eventually perishes in a fire that devours all knowledge from the past. The giant's mind is consumed by an apocalyptic fire ignited by the labyrinth's Minotaur and supposed protector. This occurs at the end when Jorge de Borges sets fire to the *Finis Africae*, the final room, the end of our journey to solve the mystery and unlock the final piece of the labyrinthine puzzle. With the help of the winds and the flammable pages the fire spreads easily, eating everything in its path including the mad Jorge de Burgos.

Eco mentioned how important it was that he design a labyrinth that would function as a library and yet still have enough ventilation for a fire. The design he had created had to be maze-like with several passages and dead ends, yet not so much that air would cease to flow. The airflow needed to be adequate, “if it was too complicated with too many passages and inner rooms, not enough air would circulate, whereas circulation of the air was necessary to feed the fire” (Eco, Postscript 28).

The library was created for its destruction as was seen with the constant references to the *Book of Revelations*. Passages from the book are written above entrances to each room to indicate its location and name. Each of the murders was done in reference to the *Book of Revelations*. During his second venture into the labyrinth, Adso happened upon another copy of the *Book of Revelations* landing in the same page he had in his previous venture into the labyrinth but in a different edition (Eco 258). Adso recognized that it was a Hispanic book and yet opening the book to the same imagery of the woman of the apocalypse moments before he has his encounter. It was in room *Y* of *Yspania* that Jorge of Burgos eats the book of Aristotle and sets fire to the library (Eco 517). The fate of the labyrinth was decided by the monster who inhabited it and who set it afire. The library with a seemingly infinite amount of knowledge met an abrupt end.

In stark contrast to Eco's library is the previously mentioned *The Library of Babel* of Jorge Luis Borges. The reader is informed that, "the Library exists *ab aeterno*. This truth, whose immediate corollary is the future eternity of the world" (Borges 52). Borges wrote a literal infinite library that could not possibly be explored completely. The style and structure of this library is completely different and yet oddly similar to that of the library Eco wrote. They both share references to ancient unknown architects and the numerical symbolism.

Adso may not have recognized some words or languages but given time he would eventually have come to understand what is written in certain passages. However, in Borges' library the information could seem nonsensical with no clear order or means to understand it. As was described, "for every sensible line of straightforward statement, there are leagues of senseless cacophonies, verbal jumbles, and incoherencies" (Borges 53). This organizational schematic of Borges' library gives an existential unease to the reader. Knowing that whoever

wanders in this maze may never find any information of worth, and if this information is found, the mere fact that all possibilities written exist, then the information found cannot be trusted. This Babel seems almost a computer-generated combination of all possible combinations of the characters presented, no clear writers, just information.

However, the Esonian library of hidden knowledge is destroyed in a fire and is therefore unattainable for our characters. The Borgesian library is infinite and its information is so vast that it is therefore unreachable and equally unattainable. They are both libraries of knowledge and libraries shrouded in the mystery as parts of labyrinths. Both of these libraries express the limitations of humanity in acquiring all the knowledge, information and understanding that the universe and god can offer.

Chapter II: The Characters in the Labyrinth

The characters in *The Name of the Rose* are intertextual devices which Eco uses to allude to other characters, ideas, and stories found in other works of fiction and historical characters. Eco's expertise as a semiotician gave the physical labyrinth several meanings, but also provided each character individual traits and abilities that allowed each to realize their wit and powerlessness in the presence of such an overwhelming force. Each character represents a different trait within the labyrinth. Each one becomes an archetype when they experience the labyrinth trek and interact with each other.

This chapter focuses on the interaction between the labyrinth of the abbey and the three central characters of the story: Adso of Melk, William of Baskerville, and Jorge de Burgos. Adso underwent maturity and growth in the maze. William, bright and troubled, was challenged intellectually and experienced loss and failure. Jorge of Burgos did everything he could to have control over the abbey, but he failed and was consumed by his own vanity. While other characters are discussed, this chapter focuses on those who changed within the maze or were destroyed by it. I draw comparisons between them and other characters who have faced their own labyrinths in other works of fiction such as: Thomas from *The Maze Runner* Trilogy, Percy Jackson from *The Battle of the Labyrinth*, Detective Lonrot from "Death and the Compass" along with other characters from Jorge Luis Borges' short stories, and Mark Z Danielewski's use of the labyrinth in *The House of Leaves*.

A Word on Authors and Structure

At its core, *The Name of the Rose* is a first-person recollection of events. However, Eco created mystery to the validity of what Adso wrote by adding a layer of history unto the fictional manuscript of Adso of Melk. Leo Corry and Renato Giovanillo assert in their article, “Jorge Borges, Author of the Name of the Rose”, how powerfully influenced Eco was by Borges and they describe the introduction of the novel, his adventure to acquire the manuscript, as completely inspired by Borges. Regarding the way the manuscript was attained:

“Eco describes his sources in a typical Borgesian fashion: we are told that we are dealing with a French, neo-gothic version of the seventeenth-century Latin edition of an original manuscript from the end of the fourteenth century, which was written in Latin by a German monk” (Corry and Giovanillo 427-428).

The quote describes the labyrinth of references and interconnectedness of Eco’s novel. Through this method, the story we read feels aged. The reader understands that it is not simply a recollection of memories, but that Adso’s writings were forgotten, moved, translated, transcribed, and nearly lost to history. Through the adventure of the speaker in the text before the prologue, the reader understands the value of the historical lenses this story is being presented through.

The manuscript was written decades after the events took place by Adso who, “having reached the end of my poor sinner’s life,” wrote what transpired in the days before the fire (Eco 11). The manuscript has become an international and historical maze unto itself. Its adventure reflects what Borges wrote in “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” where, through written and mysterious inserts in certain encyclopedias, a detailed description of a hidden world in Asia Minor.

The Name of the Rose differs from “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” in that Borges explores the nature of writing and how it influences reality, “Centuries and centuries of idealism have not failed to influence reality” (Borges 13). It became a search for the truth, a labyrinth of words and sources leading back hundreds of years where a secret society took up the mantle in the creation of a fictional city and eventually fictional world with its own use of language and grammar. Eco referenced this Borgesian story to make the reader doubt and question what was lost in translation and how the mentality has shifted from an aged medieval monk to the modern reader while still relating to his experiences.

Adso of Melk

It is through the words of Adso, a Benedictine monk, that we see the experiences he went through as a teenager. Adso’s principal purpose in the story is to be the reader’s guide as he too is inexperienced in this world and is only starting to understand the complexities that are within. For Eco, Adso was the perfect surrogate for the audience who is also learning about the complex and dense world he created. As he wrote in his *Postscript to The Name of the Rose*,

“Adso was very important to me. From the outset, I wanted to tell the whole story (with its mysteries, its political and theological events, its ambiguities) through the voice of someone who experiences the events, records them all with the photographic fidelity of an adolescent, but does not understand them,” (Eco 556)

This lack of understanding the narrator possessed for the events that transpired around him gave the others a chance to explain it to him and therefore explain it to the reader. It is through Adso’s photographic fidelity that he was able to recollect the events that transpired but

with the combination of his immediate reaction along with a reflective overtone of experience and understanding.

Adso, at his parent's request, came under the tutelage of the Franciscan monk, William of Baskerville. His parents were afraid of the undisciplined freedom he was having in the Italian country and therefore thought it necessary for him to have a teacher, a guide, that would lead him to a greater understanding of the world (Eco 14). Their student-teacher interactions were more akin to a parental figure passing down the knowledge and method of understanding to the younger generation willing to learn contrary. However, this relationship had its limitations. Adso admits, "I did not then know what Brother William was seeking, and to tell the truth, I still do not know today" (14). Adso would occasionally question William's reasoning and questioning skills which sometimes led to Adso gaining insight into how the world of nature works and therefore God's place in the universe, though there would be times when Adso was not given an answer. This relationship made Adso capable of examining and evaluating things for himself. While others would react with fear and horror at the murders, Adso learned that the situation must be studied before jumping to irrational conclusions.

Regardless of the naivete that characterized Adso, the labyrinth did in fact change him. In the seven days he spent in the abbey he underwent a critical transformation that separates him from the experiences that defined William. As a young European male, Adso seemed fitting to be a part of the myth's group of youths sent to Crete. He was about the same age as Theseus when his story took place, and similarly to Theseus he experienced love. However, the cultural mentality and the purpose of the labyrinths are vastly different. For Theseus, the labyrinth was a test, defeat the Minotaur and eventually become king and hero. One important aspect in the myth is Athen's rise in power over the Mediterranean and Crete's eventual decline. Theseus' love for

Ariadne was a means to an end, as seen when he abandoned her on their way back to the Greek Mainland. For Adso, he was not the center of attention of the maze, instead the murder mystery that drives the story was focused on William's ability to discern and investigate the murders. Adso's experiences in the maze were almost accidental. His love affair with the nameless peasant girl took place merely by chance and it was an infatuation that haunted Adso for decades to come. He did not arrive to the monastery with a purpose but just happened to be the student of the ex-inquisitor who was the one summoned. Adso's maze was a world that was eventually lost. The only shift in power that occurred was Jorge's self-destruction and the burning of the books.

Adso's first experience in the maze revealed his demons. The first monster he encounters in the maze was a giant, "of threatening dimensions," that Adso assumed and shouted that it was a devil. It turned out to be a mirror and the giant was nothing more than a reflection of himself (183). William quickly pointed out how bravely Adso was willing to go headfirst into danger but when confronted by his own distorted reflection he was afraid. Giants are usually monumental and yet this one fit in the gallery of the maze. It was curious that the novel mentions giants several times often regarding incredible architecture, magnificent landscapes, and the great knowledge of the lost ancients. Nevertheless, Adso's view of the giant in the maze was immediately associated with a demon. Adso's simple view of the world makes him see all these giants as threats to his simplistic view of the world.

The mirror's reflection was "enlarged and distorted," and therefore unrecognizable for Adso who was surprised by the light reflected. The fact that the giant ended up being nothing more than himself shows the reader that while Adso has the arrogance of a teenager, leaping into danger, he is unwilling to face his own insecurities. William points this out by poking fun at his fear making Adso reflect on what happened. This moment is reminiscent of Jorge Luis Borges as

to how the mirror is the first obstacle that Adso faced. In “Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” one of the most intriguing lines of the short story states, “mirrors have something monstrous about them” and “mirrors and copulation are abominable, because they increase the number of men” (Borges 3). These lines came to the characters through the encyclopedia that ignites the labyrinthine investigation. If we apply this to Adso’s situation then we see another Econian connection to Borges’ short stories. Adso not only faced a mirror and saw a monster, but he copulated and therefore acted on both abominations that Borges spoke against. It also calls to question whether Adso saw himself as the monster and if he had a child he was unaware of.

Adso’s insecurities often arose when he compared himself to William and the other monks. Adso would usually admire and be highly curious about how Brother William would approach problems. In the prologue Adso mentioned how much more energy William had for his old age, how William’s curiosity would have him pick herbs from certain parts of their travels and how often they would be awake at night, studying. William would often challenge Adso intellectually as a teacher would to a student but through the book Adso would second guess himself. If he would ask a question that William would have considered simple, he would reply with, “May the Holy Ghost sharpen your mind, son!” (Eco 27) or “Dear Adso” several times. These reactions made Adso feel insecure making him often talk about himself as ignorant and for a moment Adso even called himself stupid in his train of thought (Eco 391).

These fears and insecurities manifested themselves the first time they entered the maze after seeing the fake giant. After this, he approached a brightly colored book that, along with him having inhaled certain herbs and smoke he was unaware of, made him see visions of beast, a women and monks of the abbey.

“A beast was set there, horrible to see, a great dragon with ten heads... I saw the dragon multiply, and the scales of his hide become a kind of forest of glittering shards... I heard something like the hiss of a thousand serpents, but not frightening, almost seductive, and a woman appeared, bathed in light, and put her face to mine, breathing on me. I saw Berengar staring at me with a hateful smile, oozing lust” (Eco 186).

William saved him and told him that the demons he saw were simply an extension of what was colored in the book. For the second part of the visions, “you let your desires and your fears speak out” (Eco 187). His lust for a woman and his fear of being lusted after made Adso’s insecurities rise and eventually betray him. Adso’s journey in the maze was much more personal and internalized when it came to obstacles. The woman he saw in the vision appeared first as the hiss of thousands of serpents. His immediate reaction was to push her away as he feared the seductive light. Later, when he sees the peasant girl in the kitchen, he assumes it was a succubus but when he sees her frightened, he succumbs to his innate sexual desires.

His experience with love forced him to change, grow, and to question his loyalties. This human experience was unlike what the other monks had gone through. Berengar, who was a part of vision, is the only other monk (along with Adelmo) in the story who the reader is told had an intimate human experience. However, Berengar’s intimacy with Adelmo was erroneous as he had coerced Adelmo into sex. The guilt of what he had done was overwhelming and led to his death and eventually lead others to the poisoned book. For Adso, it was consensual with her. She represented to him a world that he could never be a part of. Two separate worlds coming together and through this experience Adso felt love and a somewhat deeper understanding of intimacy that not even William had experienced. They had their sexual encounter in the kitchen which is

two floors below the labyrinth. The kitchen is the belly of the giant Aedificium and it represents human base desire such as food and for Adso, sexual physical desire.

Seeing the kitchen this way, underneath the labyrinth, makes the intimacy between them seem like the intimacy that Aeneas and Dido experienced in a labyrinthine cave as well. Adso went through a maturing experience which began to distract him and tether him to the earth and away from the heavenly Father. Aeneas and Dido slept together in the womb of the earth after the storm that was sent by Juno (Virgil 86). This was done in order to make Aeneas forget about his destiny to Italy. Juno had offered peace with Venus in the union of Aeneas and Dido, but this all changed when Jupiter, outraged at what had happened, sent Mercury to talk sense into Aeneas. Like the servant girl in the abbey, Dido became a distraction for Aeneas from his responsibilities. Adso was consumed by lust and constantly thought back to her and away from his duties. Aeneas was reminded by Mercury in a vision about his responsibilities and was told to leave Carthage (100).

Adso slept with a woman disobeying his vows. He was then haunted by the sin he committed and the conflicting feelings. It was William who reminded him of his duties, his vows, and purpose in life. The main difference between Adso and Aeneas was the concept of destiny. For Aeneas, the gods had a plan and he needed to enact the path fate has chosen for him. For Adso it was his submission to God's will as a servant. In fact, it is this idea of the "chosen one" and fate that separates Adso from all other Maze walkers in modern fiction.

As we see with Thomas from *The Maze Runner* and Percy from *The Battle of the Labyrinth* individualism and destiny plays a big role in their stories. Theseus was the son of King Aegeus, destined to kill the dreaded Minotaur and become king. Aeneas was the son of Venus and destined to be the founder of Rome. In *The Maze Runner*, Thomas was immune to the virus

that wiped out humanity and therefore his blood was the cure. It was Thomas who became the most important player and leader of the others he eventually guided outside of the maze. Percy Jackson was the son of Poseidon and destined to help defeat the rise of the titans as was told by an oracle. Percy, with the help of his friends was able to stop a titan invasion and eventually defeat Cronos from destroying the Olympian gods. Adso, though he is similar in age to the other heroes, was not destined by any prophet, god, or oracle. It was not his destiny to become a hero to save the world, to become king or founder.

Adso's ideals and view of the world was not that of his own individual successes in comparison to others. While the young adult novels show a big importance in teamwork and individuals working together, Eco understands that Adso is part of a bigger world. He is part of the Benedictine order and a student. He questions and understands his place in the order of the world. Eco put this historical hero in a medieval setting and Adso simply grew in it. Thomas and Percy were put in fictional dystopian fantasy world where they, as heroes and individuals could change the world and save humanity. Theseus and Aeneas are cultural stories of how their world was shaped. Adso was a simple monk sharing with us an experience that led to a symbolic apocalypse and metaphorical collapse of the world.

Adso's role in this novel was kept human and grounded. He was not a superhuman, with unique abilities or qualities, in fact out of all these labyrinthine heroes he is the most relatable one. Adso doubts himself, listens to those who do have experience and a better understanding of the world while still trying to find his way in it. Adso did try to go into the maze on his own, but it was in that second entry that he made a grave mistake by sleeping with the girl. He succumbed to temptation and sought to redeem himself for it. Hence, Adso is the most human of these heroes.

Decades later in a scene reminiscent of Jorge Luis Borges' *Circular Ruins*, Adso returns to the mysterious abbey. There, he finds the ruins of the ancient abbey. There he finds the places empty, the vegetation overgrown and unkept and complete abandoned. Only distinct features were the cemetery and the Aedificium which, "seemed yet to stand and defy the course of time," (Eco 536). Like the nameless man from the *Circular Ruins* determined to dream up a man into reality, Adso wanders between his present and his past. From this visit, he gathered what he could and eventually came to have a small lesser library based on the fragments and pages he had been able to find. It was a library "made up of fragments, quotations, unfinished sentences, amputated stumps of books" (Eco 537).

William of Baskerville

William is first described as, "larger in stature than a normal man and so thin that he seemed still taller. His eyes were sharp and penetrating; his thin and slightly beaky nose gave his countenance the expression of a man on the lookout, even if his long freckled-covered face could occasional express hesitation and puzzlement" (Eco 15-16). Adso continued his description of William as curious which could be mistaken as hesitant, a fatherly figure and one who was shrouded in mystery. William's passion in the novel was what most drove him. His curiosity could be seen with metal works, plants and herbs, while observing and understanding the world around him and in books. He did not seek out justice or order, just a look into the inner workings of the universe. He was a modern man in medieval Europe.

As the smartest character in the novel, William was also the most complex. Some of his interests lied in astrology, in botany, and the acquisition of knowledge. He had some spectacles that were created to help his vision, and this inspired awe by others. He would often work with herbs and in examining the human body when it was necessary. He was a natural born scientist

of the middle ages and the most active character of the novel parallel to Jorge. Because the reader could not see the story through his point of view, much of what he is remains a mystery.

Adso saw William with great admiration the same way a child would look up to a father.

When it came to the creation of William of Baskerville, Eco wrote in his *Postscript*, “It is only between Bacon and Occam that signs are used to acquire knowledge of individuals” (Eco 552). This was regarding how he chose the time where the events of the abbey would take place, but it also influenced in his creation of the detective. Originally, Adso’s teacher was to be William of Occam himself, but because of the shift in timeline he changed the last name to Baskerville, making the reference to Sherlock Holmes, while keeping the first name, in reference to the original inspiration. Bacon, Boethius, and Occam’s philosophies, views on the earth and human nature led to the development of the medieval detective and scientist, William.

He was designed and influenced by the trope of the gentleman detectives. This trope started with Edgar Allan Poe’s C. Auguste Dupin in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” and slowly became its own genre in fiction. The most famous detective is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes. The name Baskerville is taken directly from one of Sherlock’s adventures called “The Hound of the Baskervilles”, which also uses the element of hallucinogenic gasses that greatly affected Adso when they first ventured into the library. Adso’s name was also inspired by Doyle’s creation having taken away the first and last letter from the name Watson, who was Sherlock’s sidekick. The result is Adso, is near identical to Adso.

William was Umberto Eco’s medieval detective and thinker in a world of ignorance and superstition. It was William who was summoned to the abbey. In his first show of his acumen William successfully, and to the other’s surprise, identified the location of the horse Brunellus. Later on, when questioned, Adso understood then that William saw the small subtle clues left for

them as they made their way up the mountain, from hoof prints to the shrubbery. Adso mentioned how he, “knew how to read the great book of nature” (Eco 27). It was here, however, that the reader is also presented to William’s vanity. For William, recognition was important. This was shown when he and Adso waited for the other monks to come back with the found Brunellus. Adso mentioned that this was just his way of allowing others to know his intelligence beforehand. Like many of these detectives, William was not interested in serving justice but only in uncovering the truth behind the mysteries. William tells Adso in several occasions that one must learn from the world and rediscover knowledge, secrets, and magic from nature and ancient peoples for the betterment of mankind (Eco 94).

William would challenge authority and disobey when needed, he challenged Adso to think critically and was the one who was most motivated to enter and find the labyrinth. Within the walls of the labyrinth William was the true Theseus of the maze. Theseus chose to be sent to Crete to be sacrificed with the intention of finding and defeating the Minotaur, the same way it was William who actively sought to solve the mystery of the abbey and explore the library. Adso did have his own personal journey, but in the grand scheme of *The Name of the Rose* Adso was the observer of William’s detective story.

The Name of the Rose’s mystery is set around a set of several murders which William and Adso are plunged into¹¹. Like Jorge Luis Borges’ detective, Detective Lonnrot from *Death and the Compass*, William is the detective who bases his suspicions and investigation in Christian symbolism. As Ilana Shiloh explains, “the investigator, detective Erik Lonnrot, operates within the rationalist tradition laid down by his illustrious predecessor Auguste Dupin: he attempts to solve the crime mystery by means of logical deduction” (102). In the same way that Lonnrot

¹¹ David Baxter in his work “Murder and Mayhem in a Medieval Abbey” expands on the philosophy of *The Name of the Rose* and its connection to the murders in the abbey.

prides himself on deductive reasoning and the use of logic to solve mysteries, William sees the events of the abbeys and dissects them with this same mentality. Lonnot's personality is much like William's and even Sherlock's. They think, they hypothesize and create great conjectures based on the symbols and information they find. William, like the other detectives, finds that the world works in order, everything is logical and therefore human nature works in a logical order as well.

As Hanh described it in his article, *Labyrinth, the Shape of the Modern Mind: Kafka, Auster, Borges*, "The literary genre of detective fiction is evoked as a labyrinth that superimposes order on primal chaos" (63). In a world of superstition, William prides himself as being the logical thinker and able to see the patterns in nature. To his great surprise, both detectives follow their respective leads and clues only to find out that they were purposefully led to the end of their respective mazes by their villains who waited for their arrivals. William tried to impose order in the abbey, he was sure that a human, and therefore an explainable force, was behind the murders. In each story, however, the opposing force was one of chaos. Their parallel antagonist seeks to destroy the order the detective imposes.

Both Jorge of Burgos and Scharlach used the detective's acumen and conjectures to their advantage. They used Christian and Jewish mysticism respectively and set out symbols that could only be interpreted by the detective, who stands as their adversary. Lonnot and Scharlach, and William and Jorge are the reflections of each other. "William's deconstruction can occur only through Jorge's metaphysics: the blind monk's medievalism enables the Franciscan's modernity" (Coletti 167). In both cases, there is a juxtaposition of the mystic religion at play and the modern rational thought of science and logic.

They became each other's weaknesses and enabled the other's greatest strengths. In *Death and the Compass*, Lonrot was given the answer to the murders but for the detective the answer was, "possible but not interesting" (Borges 77). This showed how Scharlach understood the detective's mind and used it to his advantage leading him to his eventual death. The same way William, led by his arrogance, fell into Jorge's trap in the *Finis Africae*. William was often overtaken by the puzzling mystery the case presented. He looked at the symbolism and much like Lonrot flung himself head first into where the signs pointed to. He was often more fascinated by the investigation than worried about the answer. The labyrinth showed William a perfect world. It represented for him perfect harmony and order in a man-made structure that, when understood, represented order upon chaos. William solved the puzzle of the maze by using logic and mathematics. As William explains to Adso, "Mathematical notions are propositions constructed by our own intellect in such a way that they function always as truths... without mathematics you cannot build labyrinths" (Eco 231). With this train of thought, they were able to map out the basic layout of the labyrinth after they had become lost the night before. Through this reasoning and understanding of William's personality, Jorge of Burgos was able to get the upper hand.

The maze challenged him and when he completed the puzzle finding the *Finis Africae* and uncovering the mystery of the murders it was all destroyed right before his eyes. Jorge of Burgos, in a fit of madness, set fire to the maze eliminating the world of information from his grasp. Coletti points out that even though the library was lost and the apocalypse burns the abbey, "each achieves his desired end: William solves the mystery, and Jorge brings about the permanent suppression of Aristotle's book on comedy." (167). By solving the mystery of the book and the *Finis Africae*, William lost everything. He underestimated his villain the same way

Lonrot underestimated Scharlach not knowing that he was the last victim who was purposefully guided to the end of the maze.

This chain of events brings into mind another of Borges' works, "The Garden of Forking Paths". In this short story the nature of the universe is brought into question when the spy who, having crossed a hedge maze following another spy, stumbles upon a mystery surrounding an ancient text that was a labyrinth. "I thought of a labyrinth of labyrinths, of one sinuous spreading labyrinth that would encompass the past and the future and, in some ways, involve the stars" (Borges 23). This kind of ever growing and infinite labyrinth is common for Borges who mentioned it in "The Library of Babel" as he described the infinite library. For the spy this was nothing more than a thought before he arrived at the house and his fate changed.

In "The Garden of Forking Paths", the metaphysical and the scientific come together in an overlapping labyrinth that extends beyond space and time. It has a similar set up in the fact that it resonates with detective fiction with a mystery to be solved. Like *The Name of the Rose*, the mystery of "The Garden of Forking Paths" is centered around a book which is a maze that falls into itself, thus becoming infinite. In Eco's novel the contents of the book are important but what is more important is the connections the books have with one another and how they become a maze of information and references much in the same way that the actual story is intertextuality of so many other works of fictions. "Books speak of other books" as William pointed out when explaining to Adso the nature of information and human interconnectedness (Eco 168). In this sense, the labyrinth that is revealed in much of Borges' and in Eco's meaning is the Rhizome.

"The rhizome is so constructed that every path can be connected with every other one. It has no center, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite. The space of conjectures is a rhizome space. The labyrinth of my library is still a mannerist labyrinth,

but the world in which William realizes he is living already has a rhizome structure: that is, it can be structured but is never structured definitely” (Eco 565).

The above quote was from the *Postscript to The Name of the Rose* where Eco talks about the different meanings and kinds of labyrinths that exist and how he defines them. His library maze is one that can be drawn and mapped out, but the truly complex maze is the one that is interconnected, the rhizome. It is the most unpredictable and postmodern of the mazes. It is the rhizome maze that Borges uses in his short stories that deal with space, time, consequence and repetition, like *The Garden of Forking Paths*.

William of Baskerville is the open reader while Adso is the closed reader. William is willing to analyze the world and question everything and tries to understand the laws of nature. He creates conjectures based on his logic and mathematics and even though he may be wrong at times, he never allows this to falter his determination. This is what makes him the hero and the Theseus against Jorge of Burgos’ Minotaur-like antagonism.

Jorge of Burgos

Becoming the Econian incarnation of Jorge Luis Borges’ *Asterion*, Jorge of Burgos was the blind monk whose faithful devotion and blind faith drives him to madness. This is most true because he believed himself to be a tool of God, a weapon of the lord and through His will he enacted horrible and unspeakable crimes with the intention to control the monks of the abbey. Jorge of Burgos was literally and metaphorically blind given that he was unable to see change, unwilling to accept new ideas, or even entertain the idea of arguing over many interpretations of the ancient texts. The labyrinth was his hoarded treasure trove, his world, and what ultimately drove him mad.

This prideful authority became apparent the first day when William of Baskerville began to challenge him on the idea of laughter. Jorge's first words in the novel were, "Verba vana aut risui apta non loqui" *Speak not words which are idle or suitable for laughter*¹² (Eco 85). This first utterance was in reference to the laughter that brother William incited when referencing Adelmo's creative approach to several drawings of abnormal creatures. Through this line, Jorge's entire personality was revealed. It is through laughter that William and Jorge meet and eventually through laughter that Jorge faces death. From the very beginning, Jorge and William are at odds in ideals and approaches to the world. Jorge was unyielding in his beliefs and used his age and wisdom to control others. William, on the other hand, invited conversation and ignited curiosity in others. When this got too out of hand Jorge took the only approach he could use, his power to end the conversation and leave. With his age and renowned devotion to the faith the moment he raised his voice he sternly put an end to any discussion. William chose not to pursue the discussion any further, so as not to openly disrespect him.

Adso's description of Jorge was that of "a monk bent under the weight of his years, an old man white as snow, not only in skin, but also his face and his pupils. I saw he was blind" (Eco 85). At first glance and without Malachi telling them, Adso could see that Jorge's "voice was still majestic and the limbs powerful... He started at us as if he could see us" (85). The lack of sight, Adso noted, did not hinder him or make his gaze any less intimidating, instead Adso describes his movements as if he could see. His voice is described as prophetic which speaks how respected and heard Jorge was in the abbey. This kind of power demanded respect.

¹² Translation from: *The Key to The Name of the Rose*.

Jorge of Burgos stands as the opposing force to the heroes apart from being the antagonist of the story.¹³ He was aged and blind where Adso was young and willing to see new things; however, Jorge was most at odds and parallel to William. He was aggressive, stern, and unwilling to change or appreciate the world outside of the abbey while William explored the world, saw to understand the laws of nature and man and openly laughed and inspired others to create. William had intellectual conversations with monks like Severinus of Sankt-Wendel the herbalist, and Nicholas of Morimondo, who was fascinated by William's spectacles, whereas Jorge of Burgos kept to himself in the heart of the labyrinth and only allowed Malachi, the assistant librarian to enter¹⁴. The books were kept inside and their leave had to be approved by him.

The use of Christian mysticism in *The Name of the Rose* parallels Scharlach's use of Jewish mysticism in Burgos' "Death and the Compass". However, though many things are similar in the two stories their differences lie in the setting where they took place as this changes how the characters see the mysticism at play and in the villains' minds. The Ecomian Medieval setting brought historical and philosophical conversations that added to the novel's deep historic feel. Here, Jorge of Burgos used the symbolism of Christianity not because he was enacting some revenge scheme like Scharlach, but in order to enact control over the world he knew. The apocalypse that was brought was both a literal fire consuming the abbey and a symbolic gesture of control.

¹³ Reyes-Tatinclaux's article, "The Face of Evil: Devilish Borges in Eco's *The Name of the Rose*," expands on Jorge of Burgos being the face of evil and reflection of Jorge Luis Borges.

¹⁴ Jeffrey Garrett's "Missing Eco: On Reading 'The Name of the Rose' as Library Criticism," expands on the juxtaposition between William the scholar and Jorge the librarian and their antagonism in regards to the library's collection and value.

Through the use of vivid and horrible imagery using the corpses of his victims and trumpets, Jorge convinces the subjects of the abbey to be in a total state of fear and turmoil and therefore much more susceptible to manipulation. The abbey was his dominion and when others enact sin on his grounds, he took it upon himself to impose punishment on those who deserve it and use them as examples for future sinners. For Scharlach, the murders were part of a personal vendetta against Lonrot and he succeeded in enacting his revenge. For Jorge, who never saw himself as a villain but as a servant of God, the murders were a means to an end and only when he was intellectually challenged by William did it become a vendetta. It is in the *Finis Africae* that William tells Jorge what he truly was:

“They lied to you... the Devil is the arrogance of the spirit, faith without smile, truth that is never seized by doubt... You are the Devil, and like the Devil you live in darkness... And now I say to you that, in the infinite whirl of possible things, God allows you also to imagine a world where the presumed interpreter of the truth is nothing but a clumsy raven, who repeats words learned long ago” (Eco 511).

Here, moments before the fire, Jorge realized and embraces his pride, arrogance and hubris that eventually consume him in a fit of rage and laughter. He, being blind, lives in darkness perpetually and therefore, as William said, lives wholly in ignorance. Jorge is unable to change and embrace a modern world. If Jorge is the one who ignited fear in the abbey through the murders, it is because he is the most frightened of them all. A changing world challenged his authority and the world he knew.

For Jorge, the labyrinth became his world. He was like Asterion, the literal Minotaur from the Cretan myth, in Borges' short story “The House of Asterion”. Here, the reader enters the mind of the supposed villain of the Cretan myth. The maze is the only world that Asterion

truly feels safe in and trust. When Theseus comes in to kill him he does not fight and instead accepts his fate. In *The Name of the Rose*, Jorge lives like Asterion for the most part, wandering the maze at night knowing nothing else of the outside world. However, where they differ is in Jorge's selfish inability to accept change and instead sets fire to his home and world in an attempt to hide away its secrets forever.

This accumulation of books and knowledge speaks volumes of Jorge's selfish approach to the world of man. For the blind monk, he is ignorant of the information that is to be kept secret and hidden so as not to influence in a negative way those who read it. It is through information and the acquisition of the Aristotelian text, forbidden knowledge, that the monks die with a black stain on their tongues. The black stain was made from the poison in the page and the turning of the page by licking the fingers stain it. The stain is a symbol of false or grimy information entering their minds. Jorge begins to devour the pages of the text before igniting the flame that would consume him.

The hoarding of information, the murders in the abbey and the symbolism of the coming apocalypse were nothing more than reflections and ultimate causes of his insanity. He became the blind minotaur of the maze, gathering knowledge which he considered sacrilege, he prevented others from expressing themselves or their opinions and thereby prevented the growth of knowledge in the abbey. When William came to the abbey to investigate the murders it was Jorge who immediately challenged William's freedom by arguing with him on the ideas of laughter and shutting down any attempt at an argument.

Eco's symbolism of blindness brings to mind two particular examples of contemporary texts. The first can be found in George R. R. Martin's *World of Ice and Fire* which is the companion book to *The Song of Ice and Fire* series, where blindness is associated with religion

and with identity. In the free city of Lorath, “In ancient days, the isles were home to the mysterious race of men known as the maze-makers, who vanished long before the dawn of true history, leaving no trace of themselves save for their bones and the mazes they built” (Martin 253-254). After their disappearance, much like the ancient architect of Eco’s *Aedificium*, came others, followers of the blind god Boash. These blind monks would cover their eyes, meditate, and live out their lives within the walls of the maze city losing all sense of identity and would instead refer to themselves as “a man” or “a woman.” Similarly, Jorge of Burgos lost his identity and considered himself a weapon of justice saying, “I have killed no one. Each died according to his destiny because of his sins. I was only an instrument.” He then continues, “my duty was to protect this library” (Eco 504).

Jorge’s blindness is symbolic as it literally and metaphorically kept him in the dark. The second example which showcases how this method of darkness and madness can be combined is in Mark Z Danielewsky’s postmodern experimental novel *The House of Leaves*¹⁵. While the novel is organized like a rhizome, where no page is sacred and footnotes, endnotes, and pieces of the story intertwine, extend and bifurcate, the literal maze is inside the House on Ash Tree Lane. It is in this physically impossible maze, which makes the house bigger inside than out, that the characters of the Navidson group experience blindness, fear, and ultimately insanity. In the novel, blindness comes in the form of literal darkness that prevents even light from extending too far in front of them and here is where the fear sets in as the maze adjusts itself psychologically to the people inside. The same way that *The Name of the Rose* is a novel about stories, *The House of Leaves* is composed of film scripts, recordings, diaries, letters, and other irregular forms of writings that mesh together several stories into a single maze.

¹⁵ In her Article Katharine Cox expands on the symbolism and impact of the labyrinth in the characters of Danielewsky’s *The House of Leaves*.

The unwillingness or inability to see causes fear and insecurity in several of the characters of the novels covered. William fears returning to his past as an inquisitor and Adso is afraid of his own mind and punishment for his sins while Jorge is terrified of change. In the Percy Jackson's novels, the Olympian gods are afraid of the titans from seizing control. Thomas and his group are afraid of the world at large and the unknown forces that put them in the maze. In most of Jorge Luis Borges' short stories the characters are afraid of losing control. As Kurt Riezler wrote on "The Social Psychology of Fear":

"Man, a striving being, finite, in a world that is never entirely of his own making, is forever in between some kind of fear and some kind of hope, some kind of knowledge and some kind of ignorance. Fear and hope are at odds: hope wants fear removed: it demands action. Fear let's hope dread its end" (489).

The labyrinth is the incarnation of choice and the fear that these choices present. These mazes present themselves to the characters as obstacles where hope of escaping and fear of imprisonment are forever at odds with one another.

The House of Leaves shows how fear can drive one to madness, and in *The Name of the Rose* we see the madness overtake Jorge Luis Borges as he both wins in his mission but loses his sanity and life. The apocalypse he ignited burned the abbey and destroyed nearly all of the text that inhabited the world of the library labyrinth. Through fear and blindness Jorge of Burgos prevented others from growing, understanding and seeing the world in a new light. William of Baskerville and Adso of Melk saw first-hand what fanaticism could do. Eventually after the fires, Adso and William left leaving behind the ashes of a labyrinth that transformed them and taking with them new experience.

Chapter III: The Movie and the Book

It is through the movie inspired by Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, and directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud, that the grandiosity of this Ecomian medieval world came to light. Though the movie cuts out much of the political and religious conversation and information that the book had provided, understandably so, the movie did what the book could not. The film showed how small humans are in the face of the world. It truly depicted how dwarfed humanity is against the giants of the past and the magnitude of nature. Annaud's use of contrasting colors like the gothic black and shades of blue gave an uneasiness and insecurity to the audience trying to decipher what was happening in the background. Yet these deep shades of dark colors were contrasted with the bright greens of nature and the white of the snowy landscapes. Annaud's use of darkness was complimented by the emphasis on the ugly and grotesque figures both in the gargoyles of stone and the ugly monks.

This chapter is divided into three parts. First, a brief analysis on the film's adaptation from the book; in particular how the visuals, light, and tones of the movie add or take away from the book's original inspiration. Secondly, I compare the two labyrinths of both film and novel to differentiate their structures and how they draw inspiration from Borges' *Labyrinths*. Finally, I study *The Name of the Rose* in juxtaposition with another film that used the labyrinth as the center tool for its storytelling, Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth*. Other labyrinths in films are mentioned, such as Wes Ball's *The Maze Runner*, and Jim Henson's *Labyrinth*.

Jean-Jacques Annaud's *The Name of the Rose*

Eco's *The Name of the Rose* is a thoroughly investigated and researched novel that took him about two years to write in its entirety (Eco 546-547). Before his writing process he had gone through decades of research. The novel itself consist of over five hundred pages of text expanding in continuous details regarding character description and attitudes. His words, "I felt like poisoning a monk," Eco describes in his postscript which was the "yen" to begin writing (546). Of course, this is not to say that Eco had been investigating with the purpose of writing the novel for decades. Instead, his background and academic papers, such as lists of names of monks, and scattered notes dating back to the late 1950s became essential parts of what later manifested as his novel *The Name of the Rose*.

Coming from an academic background, Eco prided himself in the understanding of how the medieval mind would function. "Since the Middle Ages were my day to day fantasy, I might as well write a novel actually set in the period" (Eco 547). His immersion into the medieval mind gave us a detailed and thoroughly vivid take on medieval Europe. The principal characteristic that set Eco apart from other novels set in the same time period is the amount details used to described events, people, and the setting. His descriptions turned into large amounts of lines, paragraphs, and even pages dedicated to detail. This is done through Adso, who would pause, which therefore created a pause in the narrative to emphasize the characteristics of certain moments.

An example of this kind of narrative can be found in the near seven-page description of the doors which stood as the entrance to the church where the protagonists would meet Ubertino of Casale. Adso's lengthy train-of-thought on details of the doors expanded from the description of the seated one and the adorned angels, the satanic bestiary of mythological demonic beasts, to

the saints such as Isaiah and Jeremiah in a labyrinthine interconnectedness of detailed admiration of art and the foreshadowing apocalyptic events. Other views of Eco's descriptions in the novel include the illustrations of the creative monk, Adelmo of Otranto, the facial characteristics and speech of Salvatore, his imaginative train of thought while engaging in intimacy with the peasant girl, and the precise description of the library.

These expansive descriptions were just a few compared to the immense amounts of lengthy anecdotes and stories other monks describe. There are long discussions on the nature of the world, politics, and conspiracies Adso listens to throughout the abbey. This amount of detail adds to the novel's setting and atmosphere allowing Umberto Eco to create a story where a murder mystery is second to the medieval world created. The mystery is the driving force of the plot, but the novel is about symbols, stories, and books. The description of the Aedificium at the beginning of the novel speaks of the grandiosity of human ingenuity, the symbolic mathematics, and a world full of ignorance. Umberto Eco dove into languages, books, and historical figures that all existed outside the novel and yet influenced the characters in this abbey.

Adapting this book into film was no small feat. To take from all of this and visually tell a story without losing its essence was a herculean task that Jean-Jacques Annaud took on. Annaud already had a reputation as a creative director having directed movies such as *Quest for Fire* (1981) and *Hothead* (1979). After filming *The Name of the Rose* (1986), Annaud would take on larger projects such as *Seven Years in Tibet* (1997) and *Enemy at the Gates* (2001). *The Name of the Rose* won several awards in France, Italy, and Germany including Best Foreign Film (1987) and Best Art Direction (1987).

In a short clip called *Photo Video Journey with Jean-Jacques Annaud* (2003) the director of the film explores the images and photographs taken on set. He reflected on several choices

that he and writers of the film had to make. The first thing taken into consideration was the focus. Understandably, many of the lengthier conversations are cut short or eliminated to emphasize the murder mystery that becomes central to driving the story. Using the murders and eliminating many conversations took away from the essence of the book. The audience is then expected to follow these characters who, in the surface are somewhat relatable, but completely foreign to a modern mind.

Through the interview, we understand that Annaud's principal goal was to create an authentic feel of the middle ages for his audience and to do justice to the book. However, because Eco was able to pause the story and give us a true taste of his descriptions, the reader was able to imaginatively grasp the objects and events described. In a film this all needs to be cut short for time's sake and dwelling on a set of doors or the facial characteristics of a monk must be sped up. Adso may have seen the doors, and so too does the audience, but it is only of a couple of seconds before introducing Salvatore. The audience may see the Aedificium, but, unless the book was read beforehand, they may never grasp the immense mystery behind its history and mathematical perfection that allowed Eco, through Adso, to make a statement about mathematics and God.

Annaud begins with the landscape. It is through wide shots and vivid colors of the land and the contrast to the damp dark hues of blue, grey, and black that are associated with the abbey that the film really feels authentic. For Annaud, the landscape was as important as anything else. In an anecdote resembling the opening of the novel, he recalled how in early November, in the outskirts of Rome, he stumbled upon a field which he found perfect to begin the movie with. After receiving permission to film, and with Dante Ferretti, famous for his designs and work with Martin Scorsese and Tim Burton, they created the set of the abbey. It is through this setting

that the audience understands just how isolated this abbey on the Italian Alps actually is. As Annaud described, “A lot of it is inspired from German Romantic painters. They carried the sort of gothic spirit... the danger... the weirdness of the Alps in winter” (Dessites). Through the landscape we see the vivid beauty of the Middle Ages but also the sense of smallness. Humans in this film really are the metaphorical dwarves described in the book compared to the magnificent giant scope of the landscape which surrounds them. The majesty of the mountains shows how giant the world was, but a sudden cut to dark tones show how dim the human are.

Annaud tried to give this world as much of an authentic feel as possible. From the hand-made garbs of the actors, the authentic pages drawn by Italian monks, to the actual catacombs that they filmed in under a restaurant. Annaud’s vision slowly but surely came to life. The people that inhabited this world needed to be as faithful to the source as possible. For this process Annaud spent approximately two years collecting actors that he thought best represented the characters of the novel.

The character choice of Adso of Melk was Christian Slater in his debut movie. Through this teenager’s inexperience many of his surprised and disturbed expressions are authentic. He did not know the details of the kitchen scene until the very recording. Slater needed to be guided by the actress of the peasant girl and therefore many of his reactions are authentic. Slater considered Sean Connery a personal hero and therefore the admiration we see in Adso towards his mentor William of Baskerville seemed genuine as well. In the film the audience is not in the mind of Adso as the readers are in the book therefore, we hear older Adso explain certain things but for the most part Adso does not go on tangents like his book counterpart does.

The details he usually gives in the book are now told visually. One example of visual storytelling was when Adso comes across the doors to enter the church and sees the very

grotesque and disturbing gargoyle figures of the door and walls start to move. At first this movement is barely noticeable until it feels as if the audience itself is being pulled in by the ugly unnatural claustrophobic movements. This choice of subtle yet uneasy movement creates a sense of distrust in the audience, who are not sure what to make of it and therefore the audience understands Adso's frustration and unease.

Through these visual techniques and a jump scare, the audience is introduced to Salvatore of Montferrat played by Ron Pearlman whose portrayal of the character along with prosthetics and heavy makeup made the grotesquely described monk of the book come to life in a cringy and ugly show of ignorance and innocence in the hunchback monk. As with the other monks of the abbey the ugly is emphasized making the audience distrustful of seemingly villainous characters. Malachi is seen, as it is described in *The Medieval Filmscape* by William Woods, as, "Tall, stern, emaciated, with an enormous beak of a nose and bald except for a ring of wispy hair that stands out from his head like a halo, he has the look of a large, predatory bird." (Woods 122). This kind of description allows the audience to remember the monks individually. Each one had unique characteristics even though, for the most part, they were dressed the same. Even blind Jorge of Burgos appears to look more like a living gargoyle than an actual man which makes him appear as both wise and temperamental. Ubertino of Casale, the monk described in the book as wise, caring and expressive, is seen here as one who crosses the line of personal space and uncomfortably approaches young fifteen-year-old Adso.

This ugly view of the dark and superstitious medieval world extends to the village outside the walls of the abbey. Adso first sees the peasants scavenging for food in the trash of the abbey. Each one was fearful, hesitant and overall unpleasant. All except the peasant girl even though she was presented as dirty and desperate her beauty was apparent and immediately distracting to

the young Benedictine monk. Following her in a later scene which did not occur in the book, Adso peers into the hut and there he sees the girl and her family share the small space with the farm animals to keep them from being stolen. A chicken poops on the older man, and they all overexpress their vigorous and obnoxious laughter. Their laughter mixes in with the squeals of pig and the clucking of chickens in a hut much too small for comfort but enough for warmth in the late November weather.

In stark contrast to the ugliness portrayed in the film are the two main characters. Adso is young, clean, innocent, and new to this world. He is shown as smarter and more outspoken than his book counterpart. William's acumen and power are shown through the portrayal of Sean Connery who had previously been casted as James Bond. Sean Connery's William of Baskerville was shown as taller than many of the other monks, quieter with less expression, more stoic and solemn. His only true show of emotion was in the entrance of the library upon discovering the thousands of books within its walls. Baskerville's joyous banter did not become obnoxious but inviting to book readers and scholars everywhere. There was no need to show his acumen through the deciphering of the mystery behind the missing horse Brunellus that was so quickly resolved in the book. In the book this was an important part in marking William's personality as not only smart but somewhat vain when it came to his reputation. In the film, Williams imposition and handsome demeanor was more than enough to show his power as an orator and intellectual.

William's contrasts the other characters, who would quickly move away and bow their heads, showed a great medieval detective. The other monks wallow in their ignorance and obedience to the power of Jorge of Burgos. Berengar squeals uncontrollably at the site of the mouse, Salvatore cries and weeps while William stands seriously in the background. Both William and Adso are also for the most part usually shown as the cleaner, more hygienic of the

monks. This might have been a choice considering that they are the main characters and Sean Connery is a more famous actor than many of the others at this time. But this difference in hygiene gives the audience a sense of William and Adso's self-awareness and cleanliness as if they understand how appearance makes them seem in the eyes of the other monks.

This transition from book to film made Eco's world into a dark gothic representation of the middle ages. The black silhouettes on the dark blue sky of sunset are common throughout the movie. Before the inquisition takes place, the cross itself stands against the light blue in the background giving way to the darkness ahead. This use of darkness for the human world and light for the world of nature clashes as the fire of the apocalypse brings into the abbey the first true light and illumination. Though many notice the lack of politics and history discussed in the film compared to the book one thing is for certain, the greatest change occurred in the labyrinth.

The Labyrinth of the Film and the Book

Umberto Eco was part of the creative process of the film. Annaud spoke with him often and together they chose to make many of the changes during the filming process. During the interview, Annaud mentions one moment when he noticed something particularly odd about Umberto Eco's labyrinth library.

Annaud had wondered about the construction of the library in the novel, and in Milan he proceeds to ask Eco if the hundred or so rooms are, "all on the same level?" When Eco, having answered yes, realized that the labyrinth was all on a single level Annaud responded with, "what you have is a pizza. It's an immense pizza, but it's not a tower." Comparing the labyrinth to a pizza references the flat and wide layout of the third floor of the tower. For the film they decided to work together and add levels to the library and open up the labyrinth and stretch it so that it would be a tower.

With this realization, the take on the library labyrinth in the movie was changed from its book counterpart. Inspired by the books, *The Staircases* by M. C. Escher and *The Prisoners* by Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Eco and Annaud created a new gothic labyrinth. These black and white atmospheric images and illustrations served as the catalyst for what would later become the Aedificium labyrinth. Escher and Piranesi's concepts bring a visual distortion of patterns. The look of these labyrinthine worlds defies the concepts of reality in art and turned many staircases, passages, doors and tunnels into interconnected vast labyrinths. The Piranesi *Prisons* offer a Kafkaesque grandeur to a surreal maze hidden in an underworld. When seeing *The Name of the Rose* it is easy to identify in the helplessness that William and Adso face in the maze. The grandeur of the library seems as if they stumbled upon one of these illustrations out of time and space.

In the article "Drawing Borges: A Two-Part Invention on the Labyrinths of Jorge Luis Borges and M. C. Escher," written by Allene Parker about the extensive and details creations of both Escher and Borges' labyrinths. In this article, she said, "Escher constructs his visual labyrinths with images that lead us further into, and then back out of, a particular scene; Borges constructs his literary labyrinths with words that wind and unwind until we are somewhere neither inside or outside, but both" (Parker 12). When looking into M.C. Escher's *Relativity* one can clearly identify the maze-like dream state of the staircases drawn. Both of these labyrinth structures feel as if the reader or viewer is sucked into a dreamlike state where not everything needs to make sense but allows one to wonder. This is the same effect, but in a much more grounded sense, that the labyrinth of Annaud's film has.

Escher and Piranesi portray just a small glimpse of a larger world that could never fit in a single page. These are labyrinths with no beginning or end and while mathematics and geometry

play a part in depicting these mazes, the logic is abandoned and replaced with marvel. With these images, the once confusing but solvable nature of labyrinths takes a postmodern twist. Like Jorge Luis Borges demonstrated in his *Library of Babel*, *The Garden of Forking Paths*, and *Death and the Compass*, the world itself is unsolvable. These mazes are no longer hindered by humanity, but they are much bigger. Like the Esonian definition of the ultimate maze, the timeless rhizome, the labyrinths in these works of art, in Borges, and in the floating maze of the Aedificium, are labyrinths that have no clear center, and cannot be solved or fully explored by humans.

The use of stairs in these mediums only say that while a person can climb the stairs it does not mean that there will be an end. Escher's stairs bring into question the logic of our reality as the eyes wander in no direction when looking upon this art. Stairs are meant to elevate humanity to a new level. They are the backbone of the house or building, but the stairs in "The Library of Babel" go on to infinity, a never-ending structure.

The Postmodern view of labyrinths is one of humanity facing the overwhelming cosmos. Detective Lonrot paid with his life trying to make sense of a senseless world. The book labyrinth in "The Garden of Forking Paths" broke away with time and space falling into itself as an eternal maze. The description of the universe in "The Library of Babel" clearly states that there is no beginning, middle, or end to an infinite labyrinth library or all possible combinations of letters. The images one sees in Piranesi and Escher invoke these ideas endlessness, infinite, and the void.

Taking these as the inspiration for the labyrinth library, Annaud and Eco created a new labyrinth, one of scope, vast oblivion and a terrestrial magical library that floats inside the Aedificium. The depiction of the maze in the book seemed to be reminiscent of a beehive, though Annaud preferred using the term 'Pizza.' It was a flat hive that had allowed the

mathematics comes together when seen from above as Adso and William do when they map it out in the book. However, this view of the labyrinth gave the reader a somewhat congested feeling as the corridors were described as immediately falling into each other and leading from one room immediately to the next. This close-knit labyrinth made it more traumatic if one would get lost in it.

Inside the labyrinth of the novel, each corridor led to the next; there was no long passage between rooms and no wide-open air areas where the characters would breathe. As it was described in the first chapter, the organization of this labyrinth was made so to reflect the world. every room represented a letter, that together would spell out the different corners of the known world. this labyrinth represented a close-knit world of information where Africa and Asia can be traveled to and from within a few hours by traveling between the corridors and reading the books. However, the movie version discards the idea of a microcosmic world in the heart of the medieval world and instead presents the floating maze as an echo of Borges' infinite library. While there is mention of books from all over the world it was never as fully explained in the film as it was in the book.

When Annaud noticed the stairs missing from this pizza labyrinth, as he described it in the interview. It became clear that the labyrinth of the book is much more logical as it was created to perfectly fit inside the third floor of the Aedificium, whereas in the film it does not appear to do so. With the use of darkness and small lights upon the black of the abyss, the labyrinth of the film seems to much larger within the Aedificum than outside. It feels like it is floating in space and time as its own world upon an empty void. Windows are seen in the outside of the Aedificium but they are never mentioned within the labyrinth so there is no idea how this library looked during the day. If light would have been permitted to enter, the labyrinth would

have then had a defined earthly feel to it. The floor or ceiling would have been visible and the anxiety of traversing the darkness in handless staircases would have diminished. It would have seen like a more serene and less wicked labyrinth. The film, however, kept the tone dark and gothic. The only light seen was gray glimpse of light upon the characters and natural light upon vast landscapes.

Having added several levels in the darkness to the labyrinth makes this maze feel more alive. Like the hidden maze in the walls of *The House of Leaves* where the spiraling staircase seemed to shrink and grow depending on the fear and frustration of the person within. The labyrinth of *The Name of the Rose* seemed to breathe as the air entered the void of the Aedificium. *The House of Leaves* plays with the combined feeling of congestion and oblivion as the maze that appears to never end seems to have a mind of its own. Like the maze in the film which appears to be larger inside than outside, the maze of *The House of Leaves* is literally bigger than the dimensions of the house it was in. In all of these dark indoor mazes, the people within feel helpless and as small as the dwarves that William talks about when speaking of the might of the ancient giants.

This creative decision of giving these qualities to the film's Aedificium makes it easier for the audience to feel a sense of wonder. Of feeling as if they are within the maze walking the paths in the darkness with our two heroes. Here Adso cleverly creates an Ariadne Thread and together they escape through a trap door, face the giant in the mirror, and eventually ignite the Apocalypse as they face their Minotaur, Jorge de Burgos in the *Finis Africae*. Both labyrinths show the awe of the Aedificium but while the book version focuses on the importance of books, words, and the wonders of the microcosms, the film shows spectacle and grandeur in a visually appealing way to inspire wonder in its audience.

Other Labyrinths in Film

Intertextuality as defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary is, “the complex interrelationship between a text and other text taken as basic to the creation or interpretation of the text.” William of Baskerville pointed this out while exploring the book’s maze when he mentioned how all books refer to or talk about other books. Expanding on this statement, all works of art speak of other works of art and therefore the films which use mazes and labyrinths are for the most part intertextual works that constantly reference other works be it as satire, irony, inspiration, or as pastiche.

From the play on the detective genre referring to Poe’s Dupint, Doyle’s Holmes, and especially Lonnot’s experience in Borges’ *Death and the Compass* and all of the other works of Borges used in this novel to the constant array of mystical, historical, philosophical, and religious discussion *The Name of the Rose* truly is a book inspired and speaking of other books. The intertextual references go far beyond simply reimagining the middle ages, it celebrates it. This pastiche builds on how William of Occam and Francis Bacon along with Boethius and the works of Aristotle influenced and indirectly determined the conflict in the novel indirectly. The works in the library are works from all over the world in a myriad of languages speaking about countless topics and themes from mystical beasts to botany and the nature of laughter.

As Kristine Kotecki wrote in her article, “Approximating the Hypertextual, Replicating the Metafictional: Textual and Sociopolitical Authority in Guillermo Del Toro’s ‘Pan’s Labyrinth’” where she explains, “The extensive intertextual links between *Pan’s Labyrinth* and other films, fairy tales, and historical events produces an aesthetic excess; these links also link to each other, recontextualizing their meanings in relation to each other thematically and in relation to the film as a film” (Kotecki 244). This can also be applied to Eco’s work as *The Name of the*

Rose invites for discussion and arguments. It is a story about stories and in the film, we see this intertextual connectivity with how the characters were constructed and their relations with one another. The films themselves become labyrinths that invite for further investigation and finding links to other works of art.

Some of the major similarities that both *The Name of the Rose* and *Pan's Labyrinth* share is the dark gothic tone of the film. *Pan's Labyrinth* takes advantage of the special effects available to del Toro in his time but similarly to *The Name of the Rose* there are entire scenes when the audience won't be able to properly see what happens. When the dim light illuminates the characters, we see sickness, despair, and the ugly. The faun in the movie is not a traditional charismatic satyr from traditional fairy tales, but a dark sinister looking creature that sends a young girl in dangerous quests for the promise of salvation from the horrid world in the midst of rebellion. The ugliness of this film appears in the character Captain Vidal who is a fascist abuser with a twisted moral compass. It is seen in the dirty, dark, and congested feel of the film and especially in the supernatural such as the toad in the tunnel of her first quest, it is seen in the Pale Man that, like *Saturn Devouring his Children* painted by Francisco de Goya, devours the fairies that guided Ophelia on her quest¹⁶.

Ophelia is the main character, her name references Shakespeare's *Hamlet* amongst other works of art. It is through her eyes that we see the grotesque nature of this world of hers. Here sacrifice is a major symbol as it is in *The Name of the Rose*. Sacrifice and labyrinths are connected since its first story with Theseus and the Minotaur. Both films use sacrifice and ritual as essential for the progression of the plot. In *The Name of the Rose* death seemed to correspond with the impending apocalypse. The audience and reader understand that that these deaths and

¹⁶ Michael Atkinson expands on how horror and fear play a role in *Pan's Labyrinth*.

the ritualistic way they are displayed and intentionally placed there for the misinterpretation of the fearful characters. However, when it comes to the final death, the burning of Jorge de Burgos, his death is the victory of his goals and extends beyond his own body and eventually consumed the maze in its entirety. He, like the pale man eating the fairies, devours the poisoned book and therefore steals from William any satisfaction of ever reading and preserving the book.

In *Pan's Labyrinth* death is a day to day as Captain Vidal is as comfortable torturing his victims for information as he is killing other with several bullets to the head to guarantee death. The doctor mercy kills one of the victims and Ophelia's mother eventually dies in child birth. In the final scene, however, death becomes ritualistic sacrifice. *Pan's Labyrinth* is a clash of two worlds the real world and the imaginative world which Ophelia is torn between. Through these adventures the faun guides her, helps her and asks for one final thing so that she may fulfill prophecy and become the long-lost princess, Moana. The faun asks the young girl to hand over her baby brother so that the faun may draw blood. In an act of defiance, Ophelia refuses to put the life of the baby in any danger.

In this moment the audience sees a parallel between this unquestionable loyalty the faun demands with how Vidal controls his people. Ophelia disobeys and chooses not to kill her baby brother. This theme of blind obedience and disobedience is found in both films as central to the development of the plot and the characters. In *The Name of the Rose* Jorge of Burgos, much like Vidal, demands blind loyalty to his orders and the status quo of the abbey. They are both ignorant and rule with an iron fist, they require complete and blind obedience from their subjects and use their experience and fear to control others. Those who stand against them are punished in brutal and fatal ways. Captain Vidal is dealing with an insurrection of rebels in the country side while also suspecting of spies and traitors in his midst.

As Jennifer Orme points out in her article “Narrative Desire and Disobedience in ‘Pan’s Labyrinth,’” Jennifer Orme talks about the importance of disobedience in not only the choices the characters make, like Ophelia constantly disobeying Vidal and then the faun, but also how the film itself is an act of disobedience. “The refusal of characters to submit to the narrative desires of others at their own expense as well as the disobedience of the film itself to satisfy audience desires and conventional generic expectations” (Orme 219). The film itself begins with the death of Ophelia spoiling the ending even before the movie itself has begun. This disobedience causes in the viewer a sense of anxiety as the moment of her death approaches and it all began with books.

Ophelia’s reading of books and questioning is what gets her in trouble. As the film itself begins and ends with the opening and closing of a book, Ophelia uses books as an escape from the horrors of the real world. With her disobedience she shows agency in her own story. She does not obey the faun when he tells her not to eat the Pale Man’s food during a mission, a choice that almost gets her killed. She chooses to go on this adventure and not to sacrifice her brother. These choices eventually lead to her death, but they were her choices, nonetheless.

“As a disobedient text, *Pan’s Labyrinth* produces critiques of patriarchal forms of political rule of the family and the nation, and these critiques emerge in the film as directly related to narrative” (Orme 223). The established order in the film is the order and control imposed by Captain Vidal. It is his iron fist that Ophelia actively chooses to disobey, however, the human element of the film is all about rebellion and revolt. The film is set in a post-civil war Spain and Vidal is a fascist leader seeking to gain control of the countryside. Eventually, after killing Ophelia he becomes victims to the very rebels he set out to kill. In this sense, Vidal’s use

of power, fear, and death parallels Jorge of Burgos methods of control in the abbey. As Jorge sought out to control information, He is eventually killed by the very book he tried to silence.

Adso himself for the most part is a result of his time. He does not question or actively disobey the order established, instead it is William the more defiant one. However, Adso's ultimate act of defiance is finding courtship in the arms of the peasant girl, disobeying his vows. This form of disobediences causes great guilt in his which he carried for the rest of his life.

While both *Pan's Labyrinth* and *The Name of the Rose* use a labyrinth within a historical setting, the effect of these labyrinths and the meaning within the films are vastly different. In Annaud's film the labyrinth is a concrete structure that can be mapped out and deciphered by the main characters. Even with the films multileveled floating maze there is still a definition to it, the stairs lead to logical places and there is no magic. In Del Toro's film, while there is a drawing on the stone floor at the bottom of the steps where the faun meets Ophelia which represents a single pathed maze, there is no clearly defined labyrinth. Instead, the mazes in the film intertwine and interact with the more 'real' elements. She enters a muddy tunnel to meet the toad, she draws her own entry to the tunnel where she meets the Pale Man, but there is no clearly defined multiple paths that would constitute these tunnels as mazes. However, in the end she does enter the ancient stone maze near the cottage but as she walks through this maze with her brother at hand the walls themselves open up and allow her immediate access to the faun. Vidal enters the maze after her in his own in a drunken poisoned state and is left to decipher the maze himself. The maze holds him back enough for Ophelia and the faun to have a conversation, but he arrives just in time to kill Ophelia.

Ophelia and Adso share many characteristics. They are both young adults, in a world full of grown men and women and they have nobody of their own age to share any friendships with.

Adso is a monk in an abbey and Ophelia is with her mother, stepfather, and his entire garrison in the country side. Both are results of their time and are isolated in their historical settings. While the cottage itself is not a defined historical setting the conflicts are, Ophelia lives in a time of civil unrest in Spain during the Franco regime following the era of the Spanish civil war. Adso lives in the heart of medieval Europe in a monastic setting during the height of the inquisition. They stand alone in history.

For both characters the maze becomes a method of escape from the world around them. Adso and William enter the maze to uncover its mysteries and discover a world of books. Outside the maze however, Adso experiences horror in the murders and moments of uncomfortable attention such as Berengar lustfully staring after him. For Adso entering the maze was entering a world of wonder. Book Adso entered on his own one night and then stumbled upon the peasant girl. For Ophelia, the maze became an escape as well. The world outside was full of sickness and death and being found by the faun and being sent on these missions gave her a sense of purpose.

Both labyrinths are houses of stored knowledge and micro worlds within the macro scope of the films. It is within the walls of the maze that Ophelia discovers new and terrifying creatures and it is within the maze that she finally finds peace. Contrasting this, Adso loses all connection to the maze, to the events of the abbey and instead dwells on the events for the remainder of his life. He loses all connection to William who is eventually claimed by the plague while book Adso returns decades later only to find ruin.

Both characters experience the maze in different ways but ultimately, they both seek to escape the world outside, the gargoyles and war. Adso seeks comfort in a woman and even at night seeks out William's hand while having a nightmare. We know nothing of his relationship

with his parents in the film, but we see his desire for companionship. Ophelia seeks out her mother and wishes to escape the constricting world only finding escape in her death. Ophelia's desire to escape is an escape into her mother's womb. The imagery of *Pan's Labyrinth* reflects the uterus from the broken tree twisting away from the center to the faun's horns.

This imagery of the maze as the ultimate mother can be seen in several other labyrinths in film. If the maze for Ophelia is a return to the womb, and for Adso it is a call for companionship, then the prison maze in *The Maze Runner* is the desire for the boys to grow up. The glade in the center of the maze has everything they need to survive, however the boys challenge this and seek freedom outside of the maze. On their way to escaping the maze Thomas loses several of their friends including the youngest, Chuck. The loss of this innocence prepares Thomas and the others to face the horrible world outside. When they find freedom from the maze, they face a much harsher reality in the world outside. For them escaping the maze was equivalent to coming of age and entering adulthood.

Pedagogical Implications

As with any work done in research, *The Name of the Rose* was looked at with an educational lens. Eco's vast researched novel is a rich hub of narratological and literary structure. The organization and premise of stories within stories extends far beyond the physical labyrinth of the Aedificium and consumed the very history of the vast medieval world and the individual stories of the characters. This Text-to-Text element of the novel invites for further research and understanding of a historical age that should have a bigger presence in the literary classroom. This engaging narrative encourages further study and understanding of what is said and meant. The broad use of different languages and knowledge invites a Text-to-Self analysis. While this era of history seems to be isolated in a once considered 'dark age' of man-kind, recent studies and the popularity of this book, prove how much people still look to the Middle Ages for understanding of their religious and spiritual ideals.

As a work that invites comparative literature, this novel's similarities and contrast with detective fiction and the works of Jorge Luis Borges can be greatly expanded on. In Text-to-World the great amount of work that went into the creation of the novel invites the creation of a multibranching rhizome maze of strings that can be followed for further study such as how plants, herbs and spices are seen with a historical lens, as well as the implication of Christian mysticism, the view of animals, demonology and architecture. The use of ancient mythology and the view of the liturgical institutions can also be seen in an educational setting when talking about the development of the ecclesiastical order in history and the use of mythological elements as well.

For the young adult classroom, for example a high school or a university English class, *The Name of the Rose* can be used in the medieval setting to expand on a history class based on

the middle ages. The politics of the church or the inner workings of the Abby and the life of the monks can also be brought into the classroom. Also, Adso of Melk should be a tool for comparison with other teenagers in fiction. Many of the young adult novels and movies such as, *The Maze Runner*, the Percy Jackson movies, *The Hunger Games*, and *Pan's Labyrinth* all use young adults, predominantly white with a modern mentality as the true maze walkers. Heroes such as the males Thomas and Percy, are idealized white, heterosexual men that are the heroes of a prophecy or born with a special quirk. Adso, while also being white and heterosexual, has a completely different mentality when viewing the world. He does not challenge authority and even when he breaks the rules, he regrets this. The medieval mentality in contrast to the modern hero could be shocking and even eye opening for younger readers. Adso still walked the maze, but he was not destined to by some ancient oracle or because of his special blood. He is pious and quiet, he introspects and understands that there are things in the world he does not know and will never understand.

He also greatly contrasts with Katniss and Ophelia. Katniss is an emotionless strong female heterosexual lead while Adso is completely overcome with emotion. Adso's mind is how we explore the novel and it is through this that he expresses his joy, fascination with architecture, and wonder in learning. He also expresses fear, sadness, and conflicting emotions after having had sexual intercourse with the peasant girl. Ophelia is the embodiment of disobedience and a desire to return to her mother. She greatly contrasts with Adso not only in gender but in goals. He is not outspokenly disobedient or rebellious. These contrasting personalities may help other students see a hero in a new light but those who may come from a conservative background would understand Adso's thoughts and motives.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research can, like a maze in and of itself, be expanded upon through different strings. Originally the research into mazes and labyrinths was going to be focused solely on the reinterpretation of the Theseus myth and how it has been presented in contemporary literature in novels such as the entire *Maze Runner* trilogy, the *Percy Jackson* series, and the *Hunger Games* novels. Essentially, it was to have a sole focus on the Young Adult genre expanding onto the movies that have been made based on those books. For further research the maze as a modern Young Adult trope and the revival of *maze mania* in the nineties invites further study at seeing how the myth has taken on new incarnations and how the labyrinth is used as a storytelling narratological device.

If we look solely at mazes and labyrinths, then this novel invites analysis of the detective fiction genre and the use of puzzle solving through critical analysis and thought. Following the adventures of William of Baskerville and expanding on the influence that Sherlock Holmes had on his creation as well as Detective Lonnot and Dupin from their respective stories. Adso's adventure can be expanded on in any study regarding the life of young monks living and growing up in monastic Europe and the importance of vows and belief in the middle ages.

This novel has been studied and further study can be done in its historical setting, the Christian mysticism, and the value of stories and storytelling. Additionally, many other works were taken into consideration when planning the thesis itself and were only briefly mentioned or expanded on such as the labyrinth in *Pan's Labyrinth*, and Mark Z Danielewsky's *House of Leaves*, Stephen King's *The Shining*, Kubrick's take on it, and Christopher Nolan's *Inception*. Each of these invites audiences to research and study the story and structure of the films.

Other things that may be considered are poems and other forms of storytelling, TS. Elliot's *Gerontion* and *The Love Poem of J. Alfred Puffrock* were taken into consideration for this thesis, but they deserve much more than just a simple mention as a part of the introduction. Both poems work with intertwining passages and similar themes that can be connected to *The Name of the Rose*.

Eco's novel offers a wide array of possibilities for future research and investigation. From the development and intertextual element found in the characters, to the architectural and mathematical symbolism found throughout the abbey, *The Name of the Rose* is a play of signs that invites criticism and analysis.

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