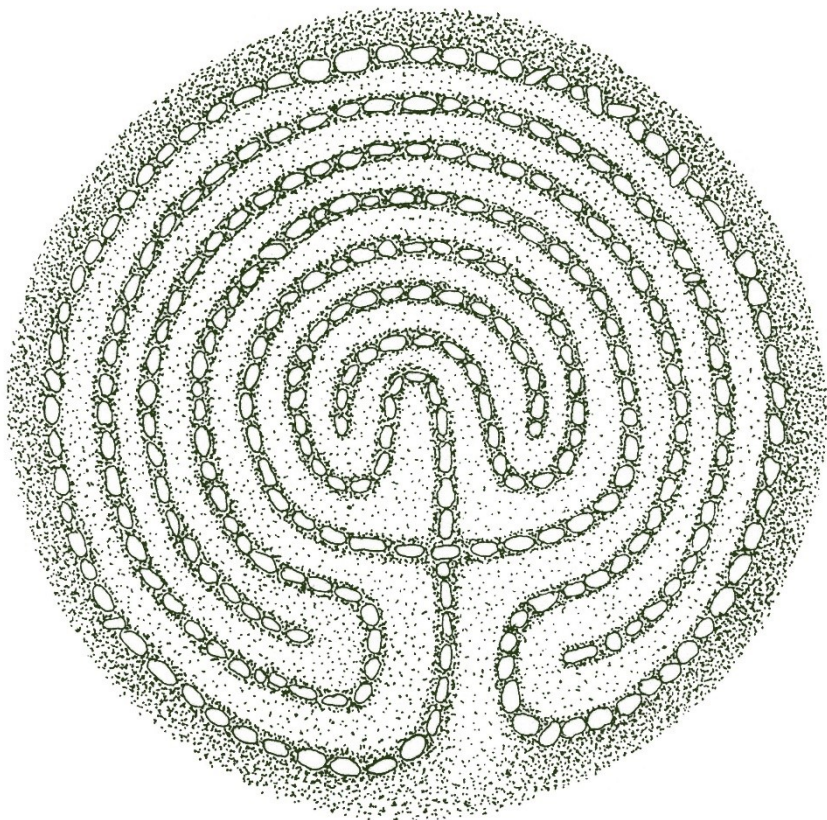


CAERDROIA

THE JOURNAL OF
MAZES & LABYRINTHS



: XLVII :
CAERDROIA 47

CAERDROIA

The Journal of Mazes & Labyrinths

47th Edition



Laborintus id est domus dedali - the island of Crete as depicted on the Mappa Mundi in Hereford Cathedral, England. Created in ca. 1300 on a single sheet of vellum, it depicts the world as known in the Medieval period. Photo: Jeff Seward, March 2016

CAERDROIA 47

The Journal of Mazes & Labyrinths

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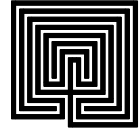
Caerdroia 47 was produced during April & May 2018 by Jeff and Kimberly Saward at Labyrinthos HQ. Opinions stated by contributors are not always those of the editors, but *Caerdroia* welcomes open discussion and endeavours to provide a forum for all who are lured by the labyrinth.

Editor & Publisher: Jeff Saward – Associate Editor: Kimberly Lowelle Saward, Ph.D.

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Editorial - Caerdroia 47



Jeff Saward, Thundersley, May 2018

Welcome to the 47th edition of Caerdroia, something of a stone labyrinth special, with studies of two groups of these enigmatic monuments from the opposite corners of their distribution in Northern Europe – the Solovetsky archipelago in Arctic Russia and the Isles of Scilly in the extreme southwest of England, with another paper on the labyrinths midway between in Southern Sweden. We also have studies of the names of English turf labyrinths and the spread of mosaic labyrinths throughout the Roman Empire, and an article on a labyrinth lost in an earthquake in New Zealand; along with our regular Notes & Queries and publication reviews, another packed edition.

The new Labyrinthos and Caerdroia website – www.labyrinthos.net – is now online with a wealth of new material, including a wide selection of downloadable PDF files of commonly requested articles from old out-of-print editions of Caerdroia, and more recent editions as well. The photo library pages are gradually coming online to showcase the photographs, prints, artefacts and other archival material in our extensive collection, accumulated over the last 40 years.

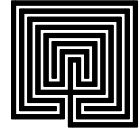
Our next edition, Caerdroia 48, is scheduled for publication in spring 2019. As always, if you have a paper or shorter article you wish to submit for inclusion in the next edition, send it to me as soon as possible, along with the usual labyrinthine snippets and curios that help fill the pages...

Jeff Saward, e-mail: jeff@labyrinthos.net – website: www.labyrinthos.net



Part of the “Maze Field” on the island of St. Martin’s, Isles of Scilly. This complex of stone mazes and labyrinths first appeared some 70 years ago. Photo: Jeff Saward, May 2018

The Earthquake and the Spirit



Jan Sellers

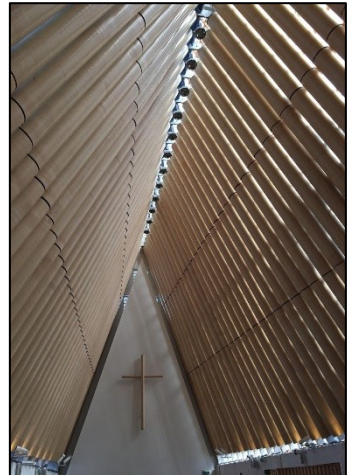
In March 2018, I was privileged to visit the St. Luke's in the City Labyrinth in Christchurch, New Zealand/Aotearoa. This article tells the story of that labyrinth, and the passion and resilience that has led to its making and continuing presence. I am grateful to Heather McLeod and to Anne Conroy for information about New Zealand labyrinths.¹ Special thanks go to Jenny Drury, who generously gave a morning of her time to discuss the history, background, present and future of the St. Luke's in the City labyrinth initiatives.

St. Luke's in the City is an active, broad-based Anglican community with strong ecumenical and community links. Local Buddhists used to visit, as the church was a peaceful, safe space to light candles, closer to home than the city's Buddhist Centre. The Salvation Army food van made regular calls to support local street people, and there were initiatives in place to support street workers. The church site is a five-minute walk from Cathedral Square in the heart of the city.

The labyrinth initiative at St. Luke's was led by Jenny Drury and dates back to 2000. The church used a 12-metre-wide, vinyl labyrinth with the Chartres labyrinth pattern painted in purple. The labyrinth became a very well-used resource, with open walks, guided meditation and labyrinth-based church services. The labyrinth was available in the nave of the church for a full week, once a month, and made available to other groups on request.²

In 2010, the city of Christchurch suffered a significant earthquake. Following this, buildings were reviewed for their structural safety and earthquake resilience, and St. Luke's was no exception. By early 2011, plans were under way: the necessary building works were approved at a vestry meeting on the evening of 21st of February, 2011. Then came the 2011 earthquake.

On 22 February 2011, the life of the city of Christchurch changed irrevocably. In this major earthquake, 185 lives were lost and many more people were injured. The damage is still clear to see today: those of us who grew up in 1950s London, for example, would recognise the empty, bulldozed lots, the boarded-up spaces, the intimate glimpses through damaged walls of homes and workspaces gone forever. In Cathedral Square, Christchurch Cathedral is now an unsafe structure. Yet the strength and resilience of the city of Christchurch shines out today in the welcome extended to visitors, in adaptation, temporary structures and rebuilding, in art and craft, and in dreams for the future. The cathedral is replaced for now with a transitional cathedral, largely built of cardboard tubes.³



Inside the Transitional Cathedral. Photo: Jan Sellers, 2018



St. Luke's Church as seen from Kilmore Street on 25 February 2011.

Photo: Schwede66, Creative Commons, reproduced with thanks

Half a mile away, the Church of St. Luke's in the City, dating from 1909, was also badly struck by the earthquake. The building sustained considerable damage, though fortunately no lives were lost. Remarkably, the main roof-beam protected some of the church's much-loved possessions including the altar, lectern and christening font. The portable labyrinth, however, was lost, along with much else.

As with many groups, communities, businesses and organisations within the city, there was a very painful process of decision making to go through. Should the church be demolished or might it be saved? With great reluctance, the decision was eventually taken to demolish, and the church was levelled. Demolition was completed in October 2011. Original building materials were saved, including red bricks from the interior and the New Zealand Halswell Bluestone on the exterior of the building. The congregation meets, for now, in a room at another church. At the time of writing, the future of the St. Luke's site continues to be debated.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, different communities throughout the area mobilised to help clear roads, shift sludge, dig ditches and take part in many immediate steps to support rescue efforts. Christchurch is a thriving university city, the home of several higher education institutions including the University of Canterbury/Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha (New Zealand's second oldest university, founded in 1873). Following the 2010 earthquake, students had mobilised to help, and were ready to rise to the challenge again, notably through the Student Volunteer Army, created at the initiative of Law student Sam Johnson.⁴ This has now become a substantial organisation, with over 9000 volunteers by 2016; Sam Johnson received the accolade of 2012 Young New Zealander of the Year for his on-going work.⁵

Students turned their hands to everything. In addition to their work in the midst of the rubble, the Student Volunteer Army wanted to create something joyful and playful – something different for the city. The proposal emerged for an outdoor labyrinth to be built on the St. Luke's site, using materials from the demolished building. St. Luke's accepted the proposal, and plans moved ahead. The design for a Chartres labyrinth was ready to hand, as this pattern had been used in the making of the vinyl labyrinth. A member of staff at the

University developed this into a working plan, a design for the labyrinth that could then be built. The aim was to use the red bricks from the church's interior and from the collapsed chimneys of the old vicarage. The plan also incorporated pieces of the blue-grey Halswell stone that formed the exterior facade of the church. A substantial amount of the remaining materials have since gone to the Arts Centre in Christchurch to help in its repair – a powerful link between church and city.

The labyrinth building team included members of the Student Volunteer Army, members of Entré (a University staff association), and members of the church community. The building of the labyrinth took place (in parallel with other creative initiatives around the city) on 28 July 2012. The labyrinth path is three bricks wide, set in gravel, leading to a traditional Chartres centre with six petals created from Halswell stone. At the very centre of the labyrinth, a beautiful liquidambar tree has been planted, its strong, dark green leaves rustling in the warm breeze on the day of my visit.

The labyrinth today can be easily found on the St. Luke's site, at the junction of Manchester and Kilmore Streets. The white wooden bell tower, a structure that has always been separate from the church, survived and stands near the sidewalk. The site is levelled and un-fenced, with nearby benches and an information board about St. Luke's. Like so many other demolition sites in Christchurch, this is a place with a rough and ready feel. The church community does its best to maintain both the site and the labyrinth itself but has no staff presence on site. Visitors can help with a quick bout of litter picking before walking the labyrinth. I can make a comparison here with the University of Kent's Canterbury Labyrinth in England, a popular and peaceful outdoor site with wonderful views, where there is often evidence of smokers and lunch breaks – and of course, everyone is welcome! I usually walk a labyrinth twice during each visit: once for the labyrinth, removing even tiny scraps of waste paper or plastic, and once for myself, a practice I find satisfying and peaceful. There must be many who tend city labyrinths in this way.

The labyrinth under construction
Photos: Jenny Drury, 2012





St. Luke's in the City Labyrinth. Photo: Jan Sellers, 2018

The St. Luke's site has a clear place in the creative on-going response of the people of Christchurch to the rebuilding and re-shaping of their city. It also offers a very powerful example of the links between church, community and university. This is, at present, the only New Zealand labyrinth with a strong university connection (so far as I have been able to discover).⁶ The creation of a labyrinth for community use, as part of university engagement with the community, has also been evidenced in other countries. International examples include:

- At a hospice: the Wallace Labyrinth in Australia, in association with Andrew Mackenzie and students of Landscape Design, University of Canberra ⁷
- At a refuge for women and children in Naples, Florida: a labyrinth at The Shelter, built by students of Florida Southwestern State College, USA ⁸
- For a major community festival: labyrinths of light, installations for Liverpool LightNight, designed by Alex Irving of Liverpool John Moores University, England.⁹

The St. Luke's in the City Labyrinth has become a strong presence, a peaceful place for quiet reflection where all may come. A college group visits regularly and there are also group visits to walk the labyrinth every Saturday morning, but more numerous are the individual visits. As we experienced during our visit, people simply drop by. The congregation's vision for the site includes a spirituality centre open to all, with community resources and support for homeless people and street workers who are beginning to return to the neighbourhood.¹⁰

The feet of St. Francis, beside the labyrinth

Photo: Jan Sellers, 2018

Planting of scented plants around the labyrinth has settled in well. Rosemary, symbolising remembrance, flanks the entrance. Emerging from the rosemary is a fragment of statue – just from the knees downward, a monk’s robes and sandaled feet, standing on a stone base. This is a statue of St. Francis, a gift to the church that has since been vandalised. Yet the saint’s feet are still there, at the entrance to the labyrinth. One step at a time. A steadiness, in weathered stone, in the face of uncertainty. A powerful reminder, deliberately left in place by and for a community that in the face of great loss and sorrow is looking ahead to a renewed and continuing spiritual life and service, here in Christchurch.



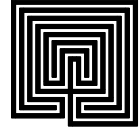
Jan Sellers, Leyton, England; May 2018

Website: www.jansellers.com - Email: jansellers.labyrinth@gmail.com

Notes:

1. For detailed information about labyrinths in New Zealand, see: www.labyrinths.nz Anne and Glenn Conroy also provide information & resources at www.activesage.co.nz
2. For a well-illustrated history of the labyrinth at St. Luke’s, visit the above website (note 1) and follow links to South Island and to Christchurch City. There is also a link to the blessing of the newly built labyrinth. The church has its own labyrinth page: www.stlukesinthecity.org.nz/spirituality-centre
3. The transitional cathedral: www.cardboardcathedral.org.nz
4. The Student Volunteer Army: www.sva.org.nz
5. New Zealand Law Society, 22 February 2012: www.lawsociety.org.nz/news-and-communications/people-in-the-law/lawyer-profiles/law-student-sam-johnson-is-young-new-zealander-of-the-year
6. There is growing interest in work with the labyrinth within higher education internationally. For more on this, see Jan Sellers and Bernard Moss (eds), *Learning with the Labyrinth: Creating Reflective Space in Higher Education*, London and New York: Macmillan, 2016. The introduction, contents pages and index are freely available at the publisher’s website (use search term ‘labyrinth’): www.macmillanhe.com
7. For more on the Wallace Labyrinth at Clare Holland House hospice, see the Palliative Care ACT (Australian Capital Territory) website: www.pallcareact.org.au/clare-holland-house
8. The YouTube film ‘College students build labyrinth’ was created by The Shelter in Naples, Florida: www.youtube.com/watch?v=82m71oIQ1IQ
9. Alex Irving writes about her work in university and community settings with labyrinths, in museums, arts and professional development, in *Learning with the Labyrinth* (see Note 6).
10. www.stlukesinthecity.org.nz/vision

Treading Lightly: Using GIS to Understand the English Turf Maze



Moriah Kennedy

Introduction to the Turf Mazes of England

A turf maze is a unicursal maze or labyrinth pattern made out of grass in which the paths or walls are cut features in the ground making the turf stand out [Saward 2003, p.120]. Shakespeare wrote of the turf maze as a feature of the Elizabethan village, “and the quaint mazes in the wanton green / for lack of tread are undistinguishable” [Act II, Scene I, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*]. Though only a few mazes are known to have existed before he wrote these words in the 1590s it is likely they were common enough that his audience could understand the reference. The turf mazes of England are documented from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth century with a variety of names, styles and topographic locations. This article will explore the naming trends of these turf mazes across Britain through the use of GIS (Geographic Information Systems). At the end of this article it will become clear that Shakespeare’s choice of the word ‘maze’ perfectly suits his geographic location.

Use of GIS to Map English Turf Mazes

Most maps documenting turf mazes have focused on giving the reader an idea of the location of former and extant turf mazes within Britain. However, another important angle to further an understanding of the turf maze visually is for the creation of a map in order to see their names and their topographical location. A limitation of such a map is that it gives the impression that these mazes existed concurrently or that their names did not undergo changes over time. This type of map does not differentiate between private estate versus public turf mazes, nor does it make note of how long a maze was in existence. Furthermore, there are likely dozens, if not hundreds, of turf mazes lost to time due to their ephemerality which may negate any regional trends uncovered.

The maps of Great Britain used in the creation of this map were obtained from OpenData on the Ordnance Survey website. These were available to download for free and were uploaded onto ArcGIS software. A separate Excel spreadsheet was created to contain information on all the turf mazes with names. Historic Edina Digimap was used to locate the exact location of the mazes that still existed in the nineteenth century, detailed Ordnance Survey maps on Edina were used for basic current topographical information and Google Earth was used when the mazes did not appear on historical maps but were extant today. The precise coordinates were gathered when the site was known. When the site was not known the appropriate town or village centre was used as the nearest reference. These coordinates were gathered using the UK Grid Reference Finder website. As the map would feature the entirety of Britain and each maze would be represented with a single point, overall this did not alter the information on the map. The data used for the spreadsheet was created with information gathered from Matthews (1922), Kern (2000) and Saward (2003).

The Ordnance Survey map of Britain was used as the base map which utilised ArcGIS's inbuilt grid coordinate reference system and so all the X, Y coordinates listed in the attached excel spreadsheet correctly appeared in their geographic locations (figure 1). The symbology on ArcGIS was then altered to show the information based on whether the maze was located on a high point or outlook, with three possible 'values' listed as 'Yes,' 'No,' and 'Unknown.' Thus, each maze retained its location's information while clearly displaying the land type. The final step was to add the names of the mazes which ArcGIS accomplished through the 'add labels' feature. Immediately trends were made apparent.

Figure 1: Map of Britain displaying names & topographic locations of known turf mazes, created using ArcGIS



Maps of Geographic and Naming Trends

Based on the map created in ArcGIS it is clear that there are geographic trends not only in the existence of the turf maze in England but also in naming trends. This is important because for a turf maze to have survived to the present day means that its upkeep was continuously maintained and its location remembered throughout its history. Lincolnshire and Yorkshire have the most turf mazes documented, while nearby Nottinghamshire has two and County Durham none. The majority of the North-West, South-West and Central-West of England have no known named turf mazes. It is possible that they had mazes but they did not survive into the eighteenth to twentieth centuries when antiquarians were combing through the country in search of curiosities. Conversely, it is also possible that turf mazes rarely existed in these counties. It is possible that the turf mazes of the western counties were more ephemeral than those of the south and east and thus new ones were cut when needed and left to overgrow when not in use. Traditions behind western turf mazes may have been from different sources than those of the south and east.

The next important piece of information that this map reveals is on naming trends. There is a slight east versus west divide in known maze location, and there is also a north versus south divide in names. The southernmost counties of England show a trend for naming their mazes 'Mizmaze' and 'Troy Town' (figure 2). It is possible that newer mazes were named after their closest neighbours. 'The Maze' at Chequers was renamed 'Druid Maze' in the nineteenth century, while the maze itself dates back to at least 1629 [Saward 2003, p.123; Kern 2000, p.168]. A number of mazes north of London are known as 'Troy Town' or 'The Maze' while there is also a 'Tarry Town,' 'The Mazles' and 'The Old (or Ancient) Maze.'

The ‘Troy Town’ maze that existed in Pimperne in Dorset was destroyed in 1731, however, the cemetery built upon it retained the connection to its past and was known as Miz-Maze in 1814 and Maze Field by 1861 [Saward 2003, p.128] so its roots were never entirely forgotten. The ‘Old Maze’ of Wing, Rutland is the northernmost known occurrence of the name including the word maze. ‘Miz-mazes’ seem restricted to southernmost parts of England.

Figure 2: Detail of Southern England displaying names & topographic locations of known turf mazes

The Central and Western part of England shows a different but definite trend. In Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire there are three types of names that are very distinct from the South (figure 3). These names are ‘Shepherd’s Ring’ or ‘Shepherd’s Race,’ ‘Shoemaker’s Race’ and ‘Robin Hood’s Race,’ while the southernmost one is a blend of southern and central-western trends with a ‘Shepherd’s Maze.’ The turf maze at Sneinton, Nottinghamshire used the popular Robin Hood legend to lend a sense of history to its maze. The mazes of this region are generally associated with shepherds, shoemakers and racing or rings. There is also a far more sporting connotation to these mazes.

Figure 3: Detail of Central England displaying names and topographic locations of known turf mazes

These mazes do not have the same attempt at historicity or connection with Troy that those of the south do. Shepherds and shoemakers may lend the turf mazes a pastoral air. The inclusion of the word ‘race’ or ‘ring’ might also point to the village’s imagined use of the turf maze in the past or present. This may explain the low number of known turf mazes in this part of England. It is possible that they were created by bored shepherds and used simply for games



and sports and were left to become overgrown when they were no longer needed. Perhaps they were ephemeral objects that did not have the same tradition of upkeep as those with more historic names in the south and as will be evident, in the north.

Like the other regions of England, the northern part of England which here includes Lincolnshire and northwards has different naming trends than the South and Central-West (figure 4). These mazes are primarily found along the eastern part of the country. In this region the most common naming trends are ‘Julian’s Bower’ and ‘Walls of Troy,’ neither of which is found anywhere else in England. Other unique examples include ‘Maiden’s Bower,’ ‘City of Troy’ and ‘Fairy Hill.’ There is no single known instance of the use of the word ‘Maze’ as a name rather than a descriptor. Though Trojan names are found in the south, those are exclusively ‘Troy Town,’ whereas the north associates Troy with walls.

Figure 4: Detail of Northern England displaying names & topographic locations of known turf mazes



Topographic Trends

Finally, the topographic nature of the turf mazes must be explored. To simplify the look of the map the information is separated into three categories. These are based on the type of land that the maze was likely situated upon, focused on village greens and hilltops or overlooks. The majority of those known in the south were built upon hilltops or overlooks. The only one known to have been built upon level ground was the very large and unusual Troy Town at Pimperne in Dorset. This is fitting because of its size of 76 metres across [Saward 2003, p.128] and it is likely due to the lay of the land available to the villagers. Moving northwards, the ‘Maze’ of Greenwich and the ‘Druid Maze’ of Chequers are both on private lands and thus garden features for the gentry and had little association with the turf maze traditions. The majority of the mazes north of London and south of Nottingham are on level ground. This could be due to the land available in the village, or due to the fact that their nearest regional neighbours placed their mazes upon village greens thus starting a trend. Perhaps to the people of central England turf mazes were understood to exist on common, easily accessible ground in the middle of the village. In Lincolnshire and northwards there is a slight tendency to situate mazes on hilltops or overlooks, but far more mazes existed in unknown locations within a village compared to southern England. The mazes of Marfleet and Alkborough were both built along the River Humber, or a tributary of it, so naturally they overlook it. The maze in Cumbria also overlooked the nearby river. The maze at Ripon was built upon the town common, but in nearby Asenby it was built upon

a Norman motte and bailey mound [Saward 2003, p.124]. Furthermore, there are no correlations between naming conventions and topography.

Discussion on Findings

This short study has revealed a multitude of geographic naming trends, but few clear topographic trends in the study of the English turf maze. Beginning with the ‘Julian Bowers’ of the North, sometimes spelt ‘Gelyan’ or ‘Gillian,’ these have been theorised to represent St Julian, patron saint of travellers [Saward 2003, p.120-121]. An older theory connects the name Julian to England’s mythical association with the events of *The Aeneid* through Ascanius, also known as Iulus, grandfather to the legendary first king of Britain, Brutus [Matthews 1970, p.158]. This same Iulus was the son of Aeneas and supposedly introduced the Trojan Games (*Lusus Trojae*) to the Romans [Saward 2003, p.121].

Newer theories connect the name Julian to a derivation from the women’s name Gillian and brings the maze known as ‘Maiden’s Bower’ fully into the common northern naming tradition (as Gillian is the feminine version of Julian) [Saward 2003, p.121]. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century Gillian was a name associated with rural women, especially in poetry about the debauchery of the peasantry and their festivities [Hutton 2001, p.351-352]. This is fitting, as ‘Julian Bowers’ or ‘Gelyan Bowers’ were trying to capture a romantic or pastoral spirit of an imagined past. This is important as the earliest known English turf maze was spelt as ‘Gelyan’s Bower’ [Matthews 1970, p.77].

In this same vein, the word ‘bower’ may hark back to the Medieval ‘Rosamund’s Bower,’ supposedly a labyrinthine building meant to house and hide Edward II’s mistress from his wife Queen Eleanor [McLean 2014, p.100; Matthews 1970, p.164]. Medieval traditions understood the word ‘bower’ as a built structure, but Renaissance romanticising of the past saw the bower as a garden, or perhaps even a hedge maze [Matthews 1970, p.165], although in some cases in the sixteenth and seventeenth century ‘Rosamund’s Bower’ in verse was still understood as an architectural feature of stone and timber with twists and turns [Matthews 1970, p.166-167]. Similarly, in Renaissance-era classical tales, love was seen as a fortified place that needed to be stormed or captured in order to be won [Highet 1949, p.58]. During the Renaissance this bower had romantic connotations and might have a connection to so-called labyrinths of love [Saward 2003, p.121; Kern 2000, p.226]. Another theory for the inclusion of the word ‘bower’ is that it refers to ‘bore’ or ‘burgh’ meaning city, which also connects it with Scandinavian ‘Trojaborg’ mazes [Hildburgh 1945, p.190].

Trojan names represent a much larger and European-wide trend. It is important to note that the north associated Troy with walls and cities and not towns as in the south. Three Troy Wall mazes exist very near each other on the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire border while another existed on the Cumbrian border with Scotland. The northernmost turf maze in Aberdeenshire was also named ‘Walls of Troy.’ Like the turf mazes of the south, those in the north have a sense of historicity and an almost mythological recalling of a more ancient time. Antiquarian Abraham de la Pryme refers to these turf mazes as both labyrinths and ‘Roman Games’ [De la Pryme 1697, p.164]. Though these names seem to offer an exciting link with the Roman occupation of Britain, it is likely that this is an imagined association with the ancient British past. The people who created these turf mazes may have believed that the practice dated back to Ancient Rome and named them accordingly or wished to create a link to their mythological past as the inheritors of Troy.

Mazes were used as a source of fun and befuddlement; this was represented in names such as 'Miz-maze' (mizzled meaning confusion [Stubbes 1583, p.365] or with the labyrinthine town or walls of Troy. The use of town versus walls is similar to the Jewish versus Christian use of Jericho as a labyrinthine city. Jewish 'Jerichos' had the walls represented as a maze with the town at the centre, while Christian usage had the walls *and* city represented as the maze [Kern 2000, p.128]. There is an interesting dichotomy between the ways that Troy was viewed in Northern England versus Southern England. It is possible that in the North and South residents ascribed different parts of the city of Troy with labyrinthine qualities. It is possible that the centre of the maze in Northern England was a safe haven, while in the south the entirety of the maze was a place of befuddlement. The name 'Julian' or 'Gelyan' Bower does not evoke confusion but rather a place of safety and nature, like Rosamund's Bower or the bowers associated with May games [Hutton 2001, p.258]. It is possible that the traditions associated with Northern and Southern England were different.

Conclusion

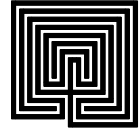
Shakespeare's maze in the wanton green is perfectly situated within the central-southern naming and geographic trends. Though the dataset of these maps may be limited, it is still a useable model for further research into known turf mazes and those yet to be found. A larger discussion of the meaning behind the names requires further research. Further research may focus more on the chronological trends and compare these names chronologically and geographically with similar mazes in Germany, France and Scandinavia. It is, however, clear that in England there are very different trends across the country and every minute difference between the names may reveal more information about the use of mazes and the reasoning behind their creation.

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The Dissemination of Roman Mosaic Labyrinths



Herman G. Wind

Introduction

Roman mosaic labyrinths were disseminated throughout the Roman Empire, as can be seen from figure 1. Clearly most of the labyrinths are found in Italy (24%), but these labyrinths are also found from Libya (5%) to Britain (10%). In the past decades a wealth of data related to Roman mosaic labyrinths has been gathered. The objective of this paper is to analyse this data, focussing on two questions. The first is related to the process of dissemination of the Roman mosaic labyrinths. The second deals with the role these labyrinths played in the buildings of those people conquered by the Romans.

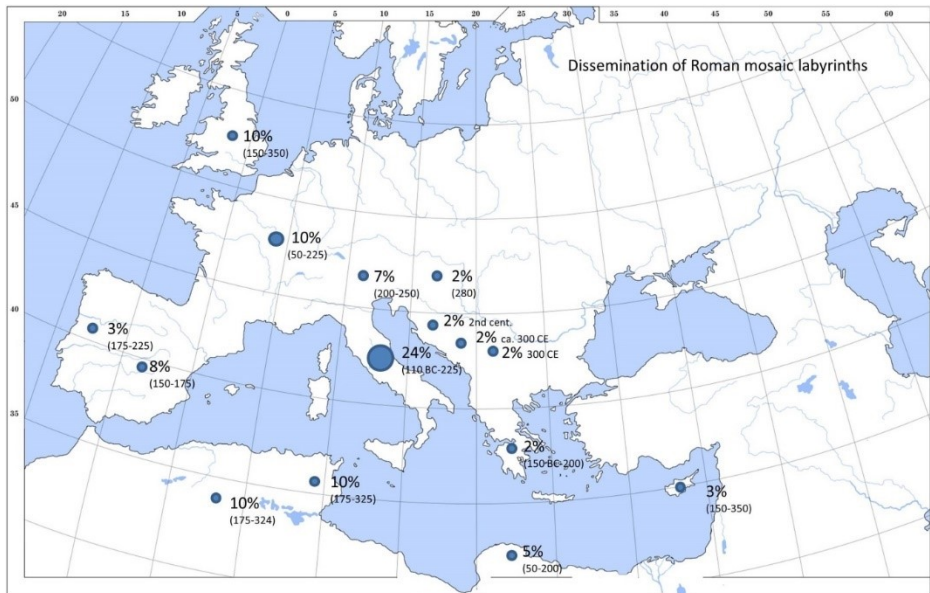


Figure 1: Spatial dissemination of Roman mosaic labyrinths

In the analysis of the data the dissemination of the labyrinths will be represented in time as well as in space and time. In this last case it becomes clear when and where the expansion of the labyrinths has taken place. These representations of the data allow us to test whether the dissemination follows either the spread of the empire or if other processes are more likely to explain the data. If other processes are more likely to explain the observed dissemination, then the mixing of Roman culture with the conquered Gallic and Celtic people may be a key element. What does the labyrinth data say about these two options?

Data

This paper looks specifically at Roman mosaic labyrinths, but what is meant by this type of labyrinth? The following definition can be found in Kern [2000, p.85]:

The vast majority of Roman mosaic labyrinths are square with sides between 3 m and 4 m long, and surrounded by depictions of fortifications with battlements, protected by towers, and divided into quadrants which must be crossed successively to reach the centre, which usually bears a polychromatic illustration of exquisite workmanship.

An example of such a labyrinth that once formed part of a sumptuous house at Cremona, Italy is shown in figure 2.

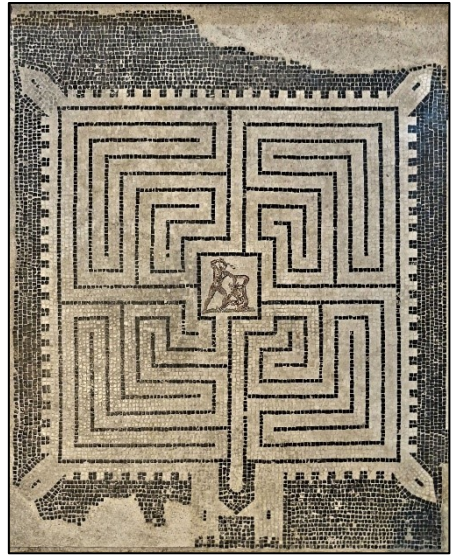


Figure 2: A typical Roman mosaic labyrinth from Cremona, Italy. Photo: Jeff Saward

In a number of Roman mosaic labyrinths three elements are combined: a labyrinth, the fortified city and the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. These three elements stem from quite different periods. How did the Romans take the step from the fairly simple, classical designs to the more complex designs, including the fortified city and the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, used in their mosaics and why did they do that? In his analysis of Roman labyrinth designs, John Kraft [1985, p.86] comes to the conclusion that:

...it is possible – even probable – that the Romans at an early stage came into contact with an old labyrinth myth in which the classical design was used to represent the magic defences of Troy, as depicted on the oenochoe at Tragliatella. The same design was borrowed by the mint at Knossos ca. 320 B.C. and was quickly associated with the Cretan labyrinth by all those who came into contact with the coins. This may explain why the Romans combined the notion of the labyrinth as a fort with the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur in their mosaics.

A brilliant analysis of Roman mosaic labyrinths is provided by Anthony Phillips [1992, p.321-329]. He assumes that the paths through each of the sectors of a labyrinth are similar. This does not mean that they are identical as can be seen from the labyrinth in figure 2. The path at the entrance, say north, is paralleled by an uninterrupted path to the centre. This is not the case at the eastern, southern and western paths. Phillips' theory is very helpful in reconstructing damaged labyrinths as well as analysing the wider field of feasible Roman mosaic labyrinth designs.

Jeff Saward [2003, p.50-57] provides an overview of 64 Roman mosaic labyrinths and mentions that the labyrinths from Saint-Côme (France), Keynsham (Great Britain), Salinas de Rosio (Spain) and two of the labyrinths at Coimbra (Portugal) are of Classical, not

Roman design. The remaining 59 mosaics are the mosaic labyrinths of Roman design that will form the basis for this study of their dissemination. Details of these 59 mosaics are listed in Appendix A. It is important to note that these 59 mosaic labyrinths often only provide partial information for analysis. Sometimes the construction date is unknown or only a fraction of the actual labyrinth was found or is currently preserved. However, depending on the question which is addressed, this partial information can still be very helpful.

In figure 1 the spatial distribution of the Roman mosaic labyrinths per country is shown. The percentage for each country is the total of the labyrinths per country divided by the total of 59 mosaic labyrinths selected for this analysis. In figure 3 the documented Roman mosaic labyrinths are presented as a function of their construction dates. Along the horizontal axes the construction dates are represented in periods of 50 years, while the vertical axis represents the number of mosaic labyrinths which have been recorded for each period. In fact, it is probable that many more labyrinths were constructed, however their construction date and locations are unknown. The shape of the distribution of the actually constructed labyrinths as a function of time can be derived from figure 3, assuming that in each period of 50 years the same fraction of labyrinths has been recovered. In that case the shape of the distribution of the actually constructed labyrinths, with an unknown vertical axis, is identical to the distribution of the recovered labyrinths in time. This assumption will be used in the following paragraphs.

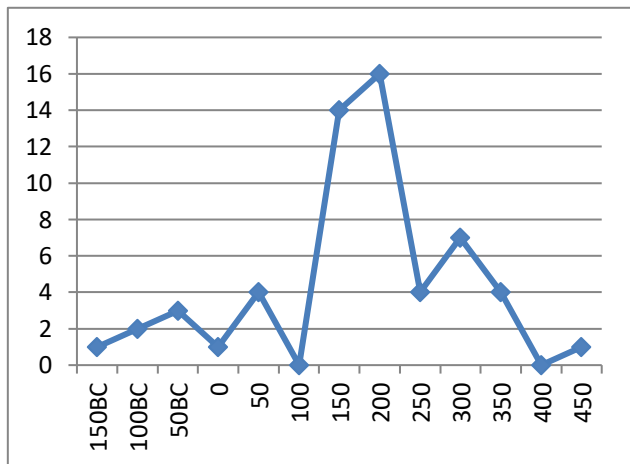


Figure 3: Construction of the recorded Roman mosaic labyrinths as a function of time

The total number of Roman mosaic labyrinths in table 1 and figure 3 is 57, because, as can be seen in Appendix A, the construction dates of the labyrinths in Sainte Colombe, France and Baugy, Switzerland are currently unknown.

It is interesting to note from figure 3 that the majority of the mosaic labyrinths have been constructed between ca. 125 and 225 CE, but from the period just before that, ca. 75 to 125 CE, no labyrinths have been found. How can this difference be explained? This may be partly due to the selected width of the intervals but changing the width will not change the rapid increase in labyrinths built in the period after ca. 125 CE. The discontinuous development in the number of Roman mosaic labyrinths will be discussed further in the analysis.

When and where the construction of the labyrinths took place becomes clear in table 1. A few conclusions catch the eye. The labyrinths in the period between 175 BCE and 25 CE are all constructed in Italy, except one labyrinth at Mieza (Greece) dating from the late 2nd century BCE, which is among the first of the Roman mosaic labyrinths. The construction of Roman mosaic labyrinths outside Italy starts in the period 26 - 75 CE with labyrinths in France and Libya. With the expansion of the Roman Empire, the labyrinths subsequently appear throughout the empire.

175 - 125 BC	124 - 75	74 - 25	25 BC - 25 CE	26 - 75	76 - 125	126 - 175	176 - 225	226 - 275	276 - 325	326 - 375	376 - 425	426 - 475 CE
Greece	Italy	Italy	Italy	France		Croatia	Algeria	Britain	Algeria	Algeria		Algeria
	Italy	Italy		Italy		Cyprus	Algeria	Spain	Austria	Cyprus		
				Italy		Britain	Algeria	Switzerland	Bosnia	Britain		
				Libya		France	France	Tunisia	Britain	Britain		
						France	France		Britain			
						Italy	Italy		Serbia			
						Italy	Italy		Tunisia			
						Italy	Libya					
						Italy	Libya					
						Portugal	Portugal					
						Spain	Spain					
						Spain	Switzerland					
						Spain	Switzerland					
						Tunisia	Tunisia					
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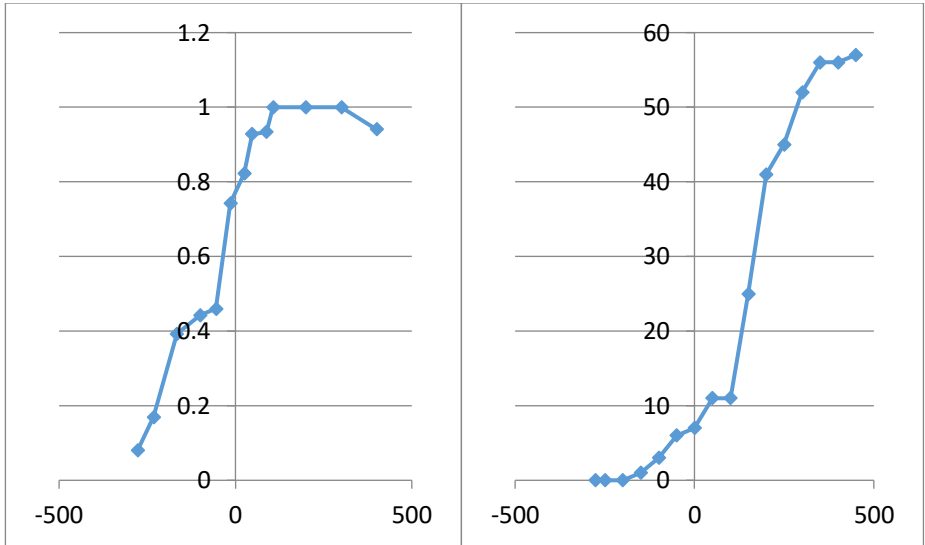
Table1: When and where the recorded Roman mosaic labyrinths were constructed

With this data of the recorded Roman mosaic labyrinths presented, the dissemination of the labyrinths in space and in time can be reconstructed and compared to the patterns shown in figure 1. Some of the questions raised will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Analysis

In this section the results of the data analysis will be briefly discussed, with a focus on the question: ‘the majority of the Roman mosaic labyrinths have been constructed between ca. 125 and 225 CE, and yet from the period just before that, ca. 75 - 125 CE, no labyrinths have been found. How can this difference be explained?’ One hypothesis to explain the rapid increase in the number of mosaic labyrinths in the first part of the 2nd century could be that there is a relationship between the growth of the empire and the increase in the number of labyrinths. This idea will be tested in this section.

In figure 4 the area of the Roman Empire is compared to the rise of the number of observed Roman mosaic labyrinths. Along the vertical axis in figure 4a the area of the empire relative to its maximum extent in 117 CE as a function of time is shown, based on historical and geographical data. A rapid increase took place during the reign of Julius Caesar (67 - 44 BCE) and then stalled after the conquests of the emperor Trajan who died in 117 CE. In figure 4b the increasing number of Roman mosaic labyrinths in time is shown. The number of labyrinths increases rapidly from 100 to 200 CE, after which the increase slows down.



*Figure 4a (left): The relative increase of the area of the Roman imperium as a function of time.
Figure 4b (right): Increase of the number of the observed Roman mosaic labyrinths with time.*

Comparison of both figures suggests that the rapid increase in the number of labyrinths lags a century or more behind the conquests of Julius Caesar and Trajan. Clearly the empire had to be conquered before the mosaic labyrinths could be constructed, but in fact the labyrinths tended to appear much later. Hence there must be an additional reason to explain the growth in the number in mosaic labyrinths in the period after parts of the empire were conquered. In the following section a few considerations will be given.

Some theoretical considerations

The noted archaeologist Wiktor Daszewski [1977, p.96-99] came to the following conclusions about the owners of the Roman mosaic labyrinths:

They were rich people, the elite of their community. The mosaics of the provinces in general show a great uniformity in taste and preferences. This points towards the tendency to underline the participation to the reigning culture. The richness of some of the buildings and their ceremonial character, shows that the owner was a Roman, a member of the imperial government. The mosaics with Theseus and the labyrinth often situated in locations clearly visible to the owners, but also to the visitors who could form in this way their opinion about the owners. For countless ‘Provincials’ from the imperial era the mosaic became in this way a manifestation of the degree of Romanisation.

Although not explicitly, Daszewski seems to indicate that ‘Provincials’ also used the labyrinths as a manifestation of their degree of Romanisation. This manifestation is the result of the mixing of Roman and native cultures. On this matter Millet [1990] provides the following comment:

When the Romans conquered the world, they brought with them their language, their law, their economic system, etc. After the conquest, a process of mixing of the Roman culture with the local culture took place. This process of mixing differs in time, location and subject. A number of models have been provided, describing how populations adopted Roman culture. At the one hand native elites were encouraged to increase their social standing through association with the powerful conqueror be it in dress, language, housing and food consumption.

Mattingly [2004] likewise explores what it took and what it meant to 'be Roman' in Britain and other provinces:

At one level the question is a facile one. It is self-evident that the highest degree of social conformity occurred at the upper levels of society, especially amongst those involved in the governance of empire. The Roman senate and equestrian orders eventually consisted of individuals from most regions of the Empire and these people shared in a metropolitan Roman culture. Yet they were always a small élite. What of the rest of society? On the one hand, there is broad acknowledgement that a Romano-Briton would have perceived considerable differences between himself or herself and, e.g., Romano-Africans or Syro-Romans, the cultural mix in individual provinces differed markedly from place to place.”

Mattingly [2006, p.281] also describes the influence of Roman architecture on Celtic architecture, an influence that results in the Romano-Celtic style temples found across Britain. A similar effect on Gaulish architecture is briefly recalled by Frank Sear [1982, p.213]:

The influence of the Romans on the Gaulish architecture was strong and direct. However, although the Gauls were quick to accept Roman fashions, some buildings of sacred character were largely unaffected by the Roman taste. At the same time Gallo-Roman temples with a tall *cella*, were built all over Gaul, Brittany and Germany. Some bath buildings too, had an irregular layout dedicated by the presence of a sacred spring, as at Bath.

Conclusion

From the previous theories and observations, one would expect that the mixing of Roman culture with native culture was a more or less continuous process, which took place sometime after the Romans migrated into an occupied area. At first an area had to be conquered and then it took some time before this area became safe for Roman citizens to live. After that, the migration of Roman citizens took place and the mixing of both cultures would have taken place as described above. This could explain why the construction of the labyrinths lags decades behind the time an area is conquered. Table 1 shows that this process took place throughout the Roman Empire.

Roman mosaic labyrinths mainly in Roman buildings?

Appendix A also includes a column for the specific locations where the labyrinths were situated. Except from two churches in Algeria, almost all the mosaic labyrinths are found in Roman dwellings. If we focus on France or Britain, there is no mention of Roman labyrinths in the houses of indigenous people like Gauls or Celts. However, based on the ideas of cultural mixing, as well the influence of Roman architecture on the local architectural styles, one would expect to find a number of Roman mosaic labyrinths in dwellings of indigenous people among the remains of the 11 buildings in France and Britain in the appendix. The fact that this is not the case is surprising. This implies that the Romans brought the labyrinths with them, to show them in their homes and public buildings. Despite the mixing of cultures, as well as the influence of the Romans on local architecture, there is little evidence in the data that indigenous people in France and Britain adopted the labyrinths to show them in their houses. However, it may well be that the data is inaccurate because it is possible that the villas were built and/or inhabited by indigenous people. It will be a challenge for the archaeologists to prove the difference, but based on the data as it is today, the conclusion seems to be warranted that the Roman mosaic labyrinths remained 'a Roman thing.'

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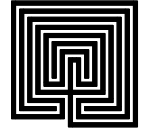
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Appendix 1: Roman Mosaic labyrinths, in alphabetical order

No	Reference	Location	Country	Construction Date	Situation
1	K 117, 118	Al-Ansam	Algeria	324 CE	Christian basilica
2	K 119	Annaba	Algeria	150-200 CE	<i>Frigidarium</i> , bathhouse
3	K 124	Cherchell	Algeria	ca. 200 CE	Unknown
4	K 134	Dellys	Algeria	ca. 200 CE	Bathhouse
5	K p.101	Tamefoust	Algeria	4 th cent. CE	<i>Frigidarium</i> , bathhouse
6	K p.101	Tigzert	Algeria	ca. 450 CE	Christian basilica
7	K 175	Vienna	Austria	ca. 275-300 CE	Baths of large villa
8	K 167	Sarajevo, Stolac	Bosnia	ca. 300 CE	<i>Frigidarium</i> , bathhouse
9	K 162	Pula	Croatia	2 nd cent. CE	Roman house
10	K 144	Paphos	Cyprus	2 nd century, CE	Roman villa
11	K 142, 143	Paphos	Cyprus	4 th century CE	Proconsul's residence
12	K 123	Caerleon	Britain	early 3 rd cent. CE	Uncertain, <i>principia</i> ?
13	K 126	Cirencester	Britain	2 nd cent CE	Roman town house
14	K 127	Cirencester	Britain	early 4 th cent. CE	Roman villa/farm?
15	K 137	Fullerton	Britain	4 th cent. CE	Roman villa
16	K 145	Hull, Harpham	Britain	early 4 th cent. CE	Roman villa
17	S p.57	Keynsham	Britain	ca. 150 CE	Roman villa
18	K p.96	Oldcoates	Britain	3 rd cent. CE	Roman villa
19	K 121	Blois	France	200-250 CE	Bathhouse
20	K 125	Chusclan	France	150-200 CE	Roman house
21	K 146	Lyons	France	200-250 CE	Roman house
22	K 161	Pont-Chevron	France	150-200 CE	Roman house
23	K 166	Sainte Cyr-sur-Mer	France	1 st cent. CE	Roman villa
24	K p.99	Sainte-Colombe	France	unknown	Unknown
25	K 151	Saint-Côme	France	late 1 st cent. CE	Roman house
26	K p.103 A	Mieza	Greece	late 2 nd cent. BCE	Villa complex
27	K 122	Brindisi	Italy	200-250 CE	Roman house
28	K 132	Cremona	Italy	1-50 CE	Roman villa
29	K 139	Giannutri	Italy	150-200 CE	Roman villa
30	K p.96	Nora	Italy	ca. 200 CE	Roman temple?
31	K 153	Ostia	Italy	ca. 150 CE	Imperial palace
32	K 155	Piadena	Italy	25-50 CE	Roman house
33	K 157, 158	Pompeii, Casa del Labirinto	Italy	80-60 BCE	Roman villa
34	K 159	Pompeii, house regio VIII	Italy	60-40 BCE	Roman house
35	K 160	Pompeii, house	Italy	c. 50 CE	Roman house
36	K 156	Pompeii, Villa di Diomede	Italy	80-60 BCE	Roman villa
37	K 164	Rome, San Giovanni	Italy	100-80 BCE	Roman house
38	K p.99	Rome, Sant' Agata	Italy	ca. 130 CE	Bathhouse
39	K 168	Selinute	Italy	125-100 BCE	Unknown
40	K 171	Syracuse	Italy	ca. 150 CE	Roman house
41	K 133	Cyrene, Shahhat	Libya	ca. 200 CE	Roman villa
42	K 165	Sabrata	Libya	1 st cent. CE	Roman villa
43	K 172	Tripoli, Gurgi	Libya	ca. 200 CE	Roman villa
44	K 128	Coimbra	Portugal	150-200 CE	Roman house
45	K 129	Coimbra	Portugal	2 nd /3 rd cent. CE	Roman house
46	K 130	Coimbra	Portugal	200-250 CE	Roman villa
47	S p.57	Coimbra	Portugal	200-250 CE	Roman villa
48	K 138	Gamzigrad	Serbia	ca. 300 CE	Roman citadel
49	K p.88	Altafulla	Spain	ca. 230 CE	Roman building
50	K 131	Córdoba	Spain	150-200 CE	Unknown
51	K 141	Italica	Spain	Ca. 150 CE	Roman villa
52	S p.57	Merida	Spain	2 nd /3 rd cent. CE	Unknown
53	K 154	Pamplona	Spain	ca. 150 CE	Roman building
54	K p.103 B	Salinas de Rosio	Spain	150-200 CE	Roman house
55	K 120	Avenches	Switzerland	ca. 250 CE	Roman building
56	K p.88	Baugy	Switzerland	unknown	Unknown
57	K 136	Fribourg, Cormérod	Switzerland	200-225 CE	Roman villa
58	K 152	Orbe	Switzerland	ca. 200 CE	Roman villa
59	K 135	El Djem	Tunisia	175-225 CE	Roman house
60	K 140	Henchir el Faouar	Tunisia	early 4 th cent. CE	<i>Frigidarium</i> , bathhouse
61	K 169	Sousse	Tunisia	ca. 200-250 CE	Roman tomb
62	K 173	Tunis, Dougga	Tunisia	150-200 CE	Roman villa
63	K 174	Tunis, Henchir Kasbat	Tunisia	late 3 rd cent. CE	Roman villa
64	K 147	Makthar	Tunisia	199 CE	Bathhouse

Note: reference numbers refer to Kern (2000) catalogue or page numbers,
or Saward (2003) page number, i.e. K 117 or K p.101, S p.52

Two Stone Labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky, Russia



Vyacheslav Mizin

Introduction

This article considers a number of key problems concerned with the stone labyrinths on the island of Bolshoi Zayatsky in the Solovetsky archipelago in Arctic Russia: the variable dating of the labyrinths, the thickness of the sod covering the stone structures as a criterion for dating them, and the construction peculiarities of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 (figures 1 & 2), possibly indicating either their antiquity or a more recent context. Arguments are also presented in favour of the construction of a number of labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky at the time of a visit to the island by the Russian emperor Peter the Great in 1702.



*Figure 1:
Labyrinth No. 2
Bolshoi Zayatsky
Arctic Russia*

*Photo: Jeff Saward
August 2001*



*Figure 2:
Labyrinth No. 3
Bolshoi Zayatsky
Arctic Russia*

*Photo: Jeff Saward
August 2001*

Definition of the Problems

By the mid-2010s, a problem was put forward in Russian 'labyrinthology' similar to that defined in the West several decades earlier. Thus, following the publication of John Kraft's *Labyrinth och ryttalek* study in 1977, Scandinavian researchers noted that the majority of stone labyrinths in Sweden are undoubtedly datable to the Middle Ages or Early Modern Period, with the possible exception of a small group situated inland from the coast, near prehistoric sites in Southern Sweden. This paradox in the localization of stone labyrinths can be solved theoretically using two different approaches:

1. An approach presuming a fairly early appearance of the tradition of constructing stone labyrinths in Southern Sweden, perhaps as early as the Iron Age. However, this approach yields no facts suggesting the possible purpose of these labyrinths and the logic of their spread many years later throughout the littoral (shoreline) region in another cultural and geographic context.
2. It also seems possible to make an attempt to substantiate the construction of all the labyrinths during a single epoch, i.e. in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period. The main problem of this approach is the complexity of identifying the possible common purpose of these structures tied to so many diverse locations: fishing camps, prehistoric cemeteries, mediaeval churches and places of execution, etc.

In Kraft's classic study [1977, p.73] we can see an attempt at resolving this problem: "The proximity to the stately tombs, old fortresses, meeting places and execution sites, probably demonstrates different aspects of the same [phenomenon]." In a more recent study, Christer Westerdahl also discusses this issue:

These locations pose a major problem in finding a possible common denominator... One of the possible ways out of this dilemma is simply to date the complex occurrence of labyrinths in the region to various different times, with differing customs and beliefs. A consequence would be to suggest that the design of a regular classical labyrinth must have been introduced in the North quite early, perhaps as early as the Bronze Age. But I will refute this idea, for which there is, I believe, no evidence at all. Another conclusion, which does not seem out-dated, is to assign them to manifold contexts, to find various venues to "a means of universal magic" as they have been defined (Kraft 1982). However, I think that this may be an unnecessarily defeatist position. [Westerdahl 2014, p.9]

Thus, it seems possible to state that the resolution of the problem of the location of labyrinths within different geographic contexts, allowing us to date them differently, is an important stage for understanding the meaning of these stone structures.

It seems that a similar situation is observable concerning the labyrinths on the Russian White Sea coasts. Although the majority of Russian archaeologists now accept the mediaeval dating of these labyrinths [Shahnovic 2007, p.140-147; Shumkin 2016, p.102; Kosmenko 2013, p.127-153; Kolpakov 2016, p.108], a number of structures of this type still raise serious questions. In an article by the archaeologist Aleksandr Ya. Martynov, the variable dating of the labyrinths is considered in the following way:

The labyrinths of Solovky, in my view, were constructed at different times. A small group of the 'vavilons' (labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 on B. Zayatsky Island, labyrinth no. 1 on Cape Mys Labirintov ('Cape of Labyrinths') on Anzer island) presumably are dated to the end of the pre-historic epoch. The rest of the labyrinths (up to 12 m. in diameter, located on low terraces, with the walls constructed of one row of stones, without stone cairns in the structure of the masonries or nearby) can have been constructed only in the Mediaeval period, not earlier than the second half of the 1st millennium AD. [Martynov 2016, p.94]

It will be of interest for this discussion to examine in detail the construction features mentioned in this citation, as suggesting an earlier dating. It is also worth mentioning that the term "vavilon" = Babylon, the local name for these monuments, akin to the Troy names encountered elsewhere in Northern Europe.

Peculiarities of the 'large' labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky

Let us refer once more to the article by Martynov:

Examining only the labyrinths of B. Zayatsky Island of the Solovky Archipelago it is impossible not to recognize that there at least two groups of masonries constructed at different times to be found: labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3, on the one hand, and masonry structures no. 5 to no. 8. The first two structures are located 14-16 metres above White Sea level. Their diameters are 18 and 25.4 metres correspondingly, the walls are constructed in the form of 'banks' up to 1 metre wide; within the structure of the masonries from two to 11 stone heaps are found; the extent of patination of the stones and deepness of the sod over the figures are the same. Close to them there are at least 600 stone cairns. Beneath 10 of the latter, waste products of a quartz industry were found during excavations. Labyrinths of the second group are located on a terrace 5 m high. Four of them are constructed of stones of rather small size untypical for labyrinths of the first group. The width of the walls does not exceed 30 cm and there are no stone cairns nearby. The tradition ties the construction of one of these 'vavilons' with the visit of Peter I to Solovky in 1702. [Martynov 2016, p.93]

The peculiarities of stone labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 on Bolshoi Zayatsky noted above suggest an earlier date to Martynov. In order to demonstrate these peculiarities more vividly, below they are presented point by point:

1. Large dimensions, diameters of 18 and 25.4 metres respectively
2. The presence of stone cairns incorporated into the construction of the labyrinths
3. Thick external walls, up to 1 meter in width – more usually ca. 0.3 m.
4. Location adjacent to stone cairns
5. Identical extent of patination and sod thickness over the stones of the labyrinths and stone cairns

After summarizing these differences, basic to the presumed dating, it will be of interest to consider them in more detail and compare them with construction peculiarities of similar stone labyrinths of the White Sea region.

Sod cover and patination

Of primary interest is to examine the sod cover and extent of patination at the two stone labyrinths under consideration. Indeed, in terms of these two parameters they are similar to the nearest stone cairns. However, it seems necessary to compare their sod depth with that of other structures located nearby. Approximately 50 metres to the north-east of labyrinth no. 3 there is an Orthodox cross formed of pieces of stone laid on the ground surface. It is notable that although the cross is located near the largest stone labyrinth, it is several metres higher than the latter with reference to sea level, and the sod thickness covering the cross in no way differs from that over labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3.

Taking into consideration that the Orthodox cross formed of rocks cannot have been installed earlier than the Middle Ages, it seems well grounded that labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3, with the same sod depth, can be dated to the same period. Moreover, the location of the cross is similar to that of the labyrinths, i.e. near stone cairns close to the summit of Mt. Signalnaya. The example of the Orthodox cross, which is located higher than the labyrinths, also suggests that the height of an object above sea level cannot be relied upon for dating without additional reasoning.

The present author has previously proposed that stone labyrinths were constructed near sources of available building materials [Mizin 2014, p.105-109]. In the case of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 discussed here, the stone cairns near which the labyrinths were constructed can be considered as such sources. If one presumes that the boulders from these stone cairns were used for the construction then they naturally must have the same extent of patination.

The nuances described above lead to the conclusion that the extent of patination and the thickness of sod over the stone structures on Bolshoi Zayatsky, cannot be taken, without any additional investigation, as the basis for dating the labyrinths to an earlier period.

Construction peculiarities

The construction peculiarities of the two large Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths seem worthy of separate deliberation. The hypothesis that these labyrinths might have served as prototypes for other similar structures in the White Sea region is hardly worthy of consideration, since it provides no answer to the question about the historical and cultural context of such an evolution. In other words, the key questions of when and why the labyrinth tradition could have spread from Bolshoi Zayatsky Island throughout the White Sea region remains a moot point. The above-mentioned construction features of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 also are not free of contradictions when applied to the question of dating. This fact is especially notable when they are compared with particular stone labyrinths possessing similar characteristics.

By way of example, we can compare labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 at Bolshoi Zayatsky with other stone labyrinths around the White Sea on Oleshin Island, Bolshoy Solovetsky and the large labyrinth at Ponoy. For more exactness, these all share similar construction features.

Labyrinth	B. Zayatsky (2 examples)	Oleshin ¹	Ponoy ²	B. Solovetsky ³
1. Height above sea level	14 – 16 m.	25 m.	20 m.	ca. 1 m.
2. Diameters	18 and 25.4 m.	10.5 m.	ca. 18 m.	ca. 11 m.
3. Presence of stone cairns in the construction	Present	Present in the centre	Present near the entrance	Present
4. Thickening of outer walls	Present	Absent	Present	Present
5. Located near stone cairns	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Table 1: features of certain White Sea labyrinths

Table 1 demonstrates that characteristics of the labyrinths such as altitude, presence of stone cairns within the labyrinth and location near stone cairns, i.e. three of the five main features, are also found at the labyrinth on Oleshin Island. The differences are only the absence of thick external walls and a smaller size. It is also of note that the design of the labyrinth on Oleshin Island is a mirror image of the labyrinth located near sea level on the Krasnaya Luda peninsula in Karelia [Manukhin 2002].

If we accept Martynov's hypothesis, then according to the number of features listed above the latter labyrinth should also be recognized as a more ancient one. However, in that case it would also seem that labyrinths formed with walls of single stone rows were used in the earliest period, i.e. this was not a feature of simplification in the Middle Ages. If the Oleshin labyrinth is not recognized as a 'prehistoric' example one, then it provides an obvious indication that the labyrinths in the Middle Ages were built at higher altitudes above sea level and hence some of the proposed criteria for an 'early date' become not so evident.

Comparison of Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 with the Bolshoi Solovetsky labyrinth also reveals a number of contradictions. The description of the 'greater labyrinth' on Solovetsky published by Nikolay N. Vinogradov [1927, p.36] can be presented as an example of such contradictions. Vinogradov's description states that: "The external ring of the labyrinth is constructed of boulders slightly larger than those in the other rows." Considering the location of this labyrinth near to sea level, it is possible to conclude that labyrinths with the thickened outer walls must also have been constructed in different epochs. Moreover, these construction peculiarities were far from being always simplified with time. If we accept that labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 on Bolshoi Zayatsky Island were earlier prototypes for the later labyrinths, then it turns out that in one case on Bolshoi Solovetsky island they were for some reason copied more carefully (with the cairns of stone and thickening of the external ring) while on Bolshoi Zayatsky Island itself they were simplified in the course of copying – the various labyrinths at lower elevations on the island have no cairns or wall thickening. These various discrepancies suggest that, most probably, all of these labyrinths were constructed within a single historical and cultural context.

It is important to note that the original Bolshoi Solovetsky labyrinth described by Vinogradov was destroyed in the Soviet period and the present labyrinth at this location was reconstructed by archaeologists in 1977-78 [Kuratov 1978, p.21].

Comparison of the two Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths under consideration with the large labyrinth at Ponoy shows similarity in terms of their altitude above sea level, the presence of stone cairns in the structure of the labyrinths and thickening of their outer walls. It is only the absence of stone cairns near the Ponoy labyrinth that is different, but it is also worth noting that the Ponoy labyrinth is linked with a Pomor hunting camp and is situated on a river bank far from the sea.

To conclude, it seems worth emphasising that the construction peculiarities discussed here are in no way exceptional features of the two large labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky but are, in fact, manifested at other labyrinths at different locations around the White Sea region. Hence it is impossible to recognize these features as evidence for an earlier dating of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3.

Two further assumptions are considered below. Accepting that all the labyrinths discussed, i.e. the Bolshoi Solovetsky, Ponoy and Oleshin labyrinths also are older than the Middle Ages then, since their construction shows the same properties as the larger Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths, the dating criteria become less clear. Furthermore, the low elevation of the Bolshoi Solovetsky labyrinth casts serious doubts on the idea that the construction of labyrinths was simplified with the passage of time. Furthermore, it must also be taken in consideration that labyrinths with a simple, single row of stones were also constructed at higher altitudes above sea level (i.e. Oleshin, Ponoy). If one accepts the premise of Martynov's paper, this fact can indicate either that this peculiarity was already widespread at an early stage, or that in the Middle Ages labyrinths were constructed at higher elevations, more than 5 to 6 metres above sea level. The existence of the mirror image designs of the Oleshin and Krasnaya Luda labyrinths suggests rather the second variant. Indeed, this version does not demand an answer to the complicated question why the designs of these labyrinths continued throughout millennia. Thus, the higher location of labyrinths cannot be recognized as an indication that their date is earlier than the Middle Ages, indeed, labyrinths showing distinctly mediaeval construction features (walls with a single row of stones, smaller dimensions, etc.) are also found at higher elevations. It is certainly of interest that the labyrinths constructed fairly high above sea level, e.g. Zayatsky no. 2 and no. 3, Anzer no. 1 [Martynov 2016, p.94] and the Oleshin labyrinth are found near stone cairns. This fact, however, is possibly not an evidence of simultaneity of the cairns and labyrinths but rather indicates that the labyrinths were constructed near a convenient source of building material. The thickening of the outer walls and the presence of stone accumulations in their construction are characteristics of labyrinths constructed almost at sea level (Bolshoi Solovetsky) and those with a single row of stones (Ponoy, and to some extent Oleshin). Hence all these structures can be considered as more widely distributed and employed in the Middle Ages. Certainly, they are not unambiguously acceptable as exceptional features of early labyrinths.

Examination and comparison of the construction peculiarities noted in Martynov's article concerning the Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3, generally speaking, do not allow us to convincingly date these labyrinths to a time earlier than the Middle Ages. Instead we must recognize the existence of a greater number of supposedly 'early' labyrinths displaying certain construction differences between each other and construction similarities with presumably more recent labyrinths. Otherwise we must agree that the construction peculiarities mentioned cannot definitely indicate earlier dates and that they were

widespread in the Middle Ages too. Consequently, the unusual large stone labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky should be discussed not in terms of their earlier dating, but rather as an elucidation of the possible ‘exceptional’ cause of their construction. The available historical and folklore evidence suggests just such an example of a possible cause for the construction of one or two of these labyrinths – a visit to the island by the emperor Peter the Great in 1702.

The Labyrinth as an Image of the Mediaeval Town

Interpretation of the construction features of the large Bolshoi Zayatsky labyrinths is of special interest. Below, these features are discussed within the context of the stone labyrinth as an image of the mediaeval town. This version seems quite acceptable since many stone labyrinths across Northern Europe were named in honour of one or another famous city. Construction features such as the thickening of the outer walls and the presence of stone cairns near the entrance, arranged around the perimeter, as well as in the centre are all easily explainable if the labyrinth is considered as an image of mediaeval town:

1. The thickened outer ring of a labyrinth can be likened to a ‘defensive wall’
2. Stone cairns on the outer ring and near the entrance are ‘towers’
3. The stone cairn in the centre of a labyrinth is an analogue of a ‘citadel.’ Perhaps, the cairns at the ends of internal rows can be viewed the same, but this is not so evident.

In summary, it may be stated that construction peculiarities of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 on Bolshoi Zayatsky are explainable as attributes of a stylised image of a mediaeval town, encircled with a defensive wall. They can then be considered within the general mediaeval context of stone labyrinths without attraction of any other, more complicated explanations (early sanctuaries, etc.).

Dosiphey’s Account Concerning the Construction of a ‘Vavilon’ by Peter the Great

Firstly, it seems necessary to note that Martynov mentions in his study that: “Building of one of the ‘vavilons’ is linked by a tradition with the visit of Peter the Great to Solovki in 1702.” The earliest information about the construction of a labyrinth on Bolshoi Zayatsky by Peter the Great is presented in the work of archimandrite Dosiphey, published in 1834 under the title *Topograficheskoe i istoricheskoe opisanie stavropigial'nogo pervoklassnogo Solovetskogo monastyrya* (Topographic and historical description of the stavropegial first-class Solovetsky monastery). On page 164, it mentions the visit of Tsar Peter and construction of a ‘vavilon.’ A new edition of the Dosiphey’s work issued in 1853 again presents the above citation without any alteration.

On the basis of Dosiphey’s citation Martynov links one of the lower, presumably chronologically late, labyrinths with the visit of Peter the Great. Meanwhile, in the original text it states only that: “in the same place, close to that church, a Vavilon or a Labyrinth was constructed from two rows of boulders over the ground surface. It is still discernible even now.” [Dosiphey 1834, 164; 1853, 174]. Hence there is no direct statement in the original text that one of the smaller labyrinths at lower elevation was constructed during Peter’s visit. Probably this conclusion was deduced from the phrase “close to that church,” since a series of small labyrinths are indeed located closer to the church (figure 3) than the larger labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3.



Figure 3: The church on Bolshoi Zayatsky and one of the 'smaller' labyrinths, with the church in the distance. Photos: Jeff Saward, August 2001

The distance from the church to the small labyrinths is ca. 150 - 200 metres, while it is nearer 400 metres to the largest (no. 3) labyrinth. Although twice the distance, compared to the overall size of the island – 1.9 km in length – all of the labyrinths might be referred to as ‘close to’ the church. Furthermore, mentioning that the labyrinth was constructed “from two rows of boulders” perhaps indicates one of the larger labyrinths as exactly this feature, i.e. the thicker walls, not a single line of stones, distinguishes these labyrinths. Hence there are grounds to state that the reference to ‘close to the church’ as the location of the labyrinth constructed, according to Dosiphey, on the order of Peter the Great cannot conclusively be identified as one of the ‘lower’ labyrinths of Bolshoi Zayatsky and that the mention of “two rows of boulders” may indeed refer to the thickened walls of one of the larger labyrinths.

The present author has already suggested that one or two of the large labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky really could have been constructed on the order of Peter the Great [Mizin 2014, p.105-109]. In favour of this hypothesis the following arguments can be offered:

Examination of a detailed plan of the monuments on Bolshoi Zayatsky reveals a strange stone setting in a form resembling a four-bastion fortress from the time of Peter the Great. It is located ca. 60 metres to the north-east of labyrinth no. 3, but surprisingly, this stone feature has until now received little attention and no explanation, however, the Novodvinskaya Fortress built in 1701 by order of Peter the Great in Arkhangelsk, has an almost identical plan to that of the stone setting under consideration (figure 4). The Swedish fortress of Nyenskans and the Peter and Paul fortress in Saint Petersburg were also of a similar plan. Moreover, it must be noted that a stone setting of this type is extremely uncharacteristic of the early stone structures in the North and has no parallels among the ‘prehistoric’ monuments.

It can be supposed that Peter the Great, a well-known enthusiast of various ‘amusing’ military games, might have ordered the construction of a model of a fortress for training, especially since in 1702 a raid on the Swedish town at Nyenskans was under preparation. The similarity of the plan of the Novodvinskaya (1701) fortress to the shape of the stone setting on Bolshoi Zayatsky certainly suggests that the latter possibly was constructed in

1702. This fact seems to provide proof that figures constructed from stone were created on Bolshoi Zayatsky, exactly by order of Peter the Great. The fact that works of this kind were not carried out on the island in earlier times is also suggested by the Orthodox crosses formed of stones, which naturally could not be dated prior to the Middle Ages. Another interesting conclusion following from the above-mentioned consideration is that an Orthodox cross ‘sanctifies’ the model of the fortress. Taking into account that some traditionalists in the Orthodox Church at the time considered Peter the Great to be almost the Antichrist himself, it is quite logical to suppose that after his departure somebody might wish to sanctify with crosses the place ‘desecrated’ by the Tsar.

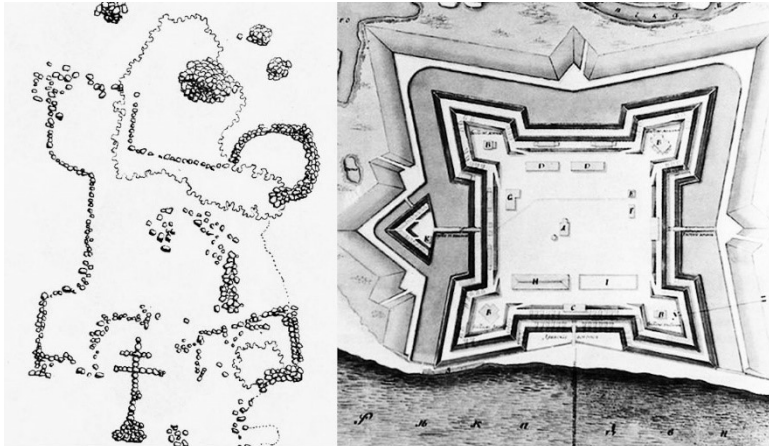


Figure 4: Left, the stone setting on Bolshoi Zayatsky (Martynov, 1990); Right, plan of the Novodvinskaya Fortress.

Writing in 1914, a description by S.N. Durylin informs us that:

On Bolshoy Zayatsky Island where there is a wooden church in the name of St. Andrew the ‘first-called’ Apostle, built in 1702 by Peter the Great, the construction of the labyrinth closest to the church is ascribed to Peter the Great. According to an old monk the circumstances were as follows: “Peter the Great stayed here with the ships, and there was no wind, you see, the men should be occupied with something – what are they without any work? But is it easy [to find work] with such a host! Four thousand men. He therefore ordered them to lay out a vavilon. [Durylin 1914, 9]

This story is usually believed to be a legend. Peter visited the island and there are labyrinths there, hence there must be some connection between these two facts. The citation as presented tells that Peter simply kept his idle soldiers fully occupied during the calm weather, although interestingly this information coincides well with the folklore traditions, widespread in the Baltic region, that tell of using labyrinths to control the weather. Such traditions had been recorded until the early 20th century, i.e. they undoubtedly pertain to the Modern Period [Kraft 1977, p.66-67].

There are grounds to suppose that when preparing for his raids, Peter the Great collected from the Pomors sailors, who knew the area well, information about all things concerned with marine navigation in the region and, *inter alia*, their traditions for ensuring favourable winds at sea. It is quite logical that Peter the Great was then made aware of the tradition of building a ‘vavilon’ for walking, which he may then have ordered his soldiers to carry out while they were becalmed. Since it would be no hard task for several men to build a small labyrinth over the course of several hours, and Peter had at his disposal several thousand soldiers, it seems quite natural that maybe one or two of the large ‘vavilons’ were constructed by his order. Creating these large labyrinths would certainly have required considerable manpower and motivation, and Peter the Great had both.

It is notable that the largest labyrinths (no. 2 and no. 3) are also the best-preserved on Bolshoi Zayatsky, and this might in fact suggest that they are younger than the smaller labyrinths located at lower elevations. The location of the large labyrinths close to the presumed scheme of a fortress, near the summit of Mt. Signalnaya, may have been determined by the presence of the numerous stone cairns, a convenient source of building material. According to this proposed origin, the construction peculiarities considered above could indicate a wish to render a realistic image of ‘Babylon’ – with distinctive towers and a defensive wall. Consequently, it seems quite natural that the largest labyrinths must have been built on the order of Peter the Great.

To summarize my hypothesis concerning the construction of the large labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky during the visit of Peter the Great, several points must be noted:

1. Judging by several written sources beginning with the 1834 report of the archimandrite Dosiphey and ending with the 1914 account of S.N. Durylin, the tale of the construction of a labyrinth on Bolshoi Zayatsky was fairly well-known on the Solovky Islands in the 19th century. Moreover, in 1883 Eliseev mentions that Peter’s men built several ‘vavilons’:

The monks living on the Zayatsky islands ascribe the construction of the vavilons to associates of Peter the Great compelled by a storm to live several days on that island. It is because of the idleness that they built these vavilons. [Eliseev 1883, p.14]

2. The presence of Orthodox crosses formed of stones and a stone setting resembling the plan of the Novodvinskaya Fortress of 1701 on the ground near the summit of Mt. Signalnaya evidently confirm the fact that stone structures and settings were constructed here not only in prehistoric times but also during the Middle Ages through to the Modern Period. Additionally, the same is suggested, by the presence of radial stone rows, the so-called ‘sun rosette’ (figure 5), the perfect analogue of the ‘compass card’ figures widely distributed in the Baltic, and likewise accompanying labyrinths from the Middle Ages [Kraft 1977, p.65; Westerdahl 2011, p.261-300].

Examination of the above-mentioned facts and circumstances suggests that the legend about the construction of one (or two?) of the large labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky on the order of Peter the Great could reflect a real historical fact.



Figure 5: Radial stone figures, left Bolshoi Zayatsky (Martynov, 1990); right: analogous 'compass card' near one of Swedish labyrinths (Westerdahl, 2011)

Conclusions

To conclude my discussion of the construction peculiarities of labyrinths no. 2 and no. 3 on Bolshoi Zayatsky it must be noted that these peculiarities cannot serve as convincing indications of the early dating of these labyrinths. Their examination shows that analogous features are found also at a number of other labyrinths in different parts of the White Sea region (Ponoy, Solovki, Oleshin).

Furthermore, the construction features under consideration are quite comparable with the mediaeval image of stone labyrinths as a 'town.' The latter supposition is additionally suggested by toponymic evidence – 'Vavilons' (Babylons) in Northern Russia, 'Trojaborgen' or Troy Towns, 'Jerusalems,' 'Ninevehs,' etc. in the Baltic. Thus, the present study reveals the possible interconnection between the names of stone labyrinths and their construction peculiarities and designs as complementary features.

There is also some indirect evidence to indicate that the information recorded by Dosiphey in 1834, concerning the construction of a stone labyrinth in 1702 on the island of Bolshoi Zayatsky on the order of the Russian emperor Peter the Great, could well be valid.

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Notes:

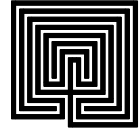
1. The data on the labyrinth on the Oleshin Island is taken from Manukhin 2002.
2. The data on the Ponoy labyrinth is taken from Spitsyn 1904 and Kolka & Korsakova 2012.
3. The data on the Greater labyrinth on Solovky is taken from Vinogradov 1927. In the article Vinogradov gives the diameter as 16 steps, i.e. ca. 11 meters, assuming one step is approximately 0.7 m.

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The Cradle of Coastal Labyrinths



John Kraft

The many stone labyrinths found in the Nordic countries can be divided in two categories: those situated along the coasts and those found in the interior, often far from the sea. I think those two categories might have very different backgrounds.

Many labyrinths of the latter interior category are found in southern Scandinavia, particularly in Sweden. They are often situated on high ground, on top of dominating hills or hillocks, most are found in areas with prehistoric settlements, and a number are situated adjacent to prehistoric grave fields. I suspect that many of these inland labyrinths are quite old, probably more than a thousand years ago, and some might be as old as two thousand years or even older.

The coastal labyrinths are different. They are usually found on islands, many of them in the outer skerries. Many of these labyrinths are situated in close connection with places used as seasonal fisheries, particularly during the 16th to 19th centuries CE. These labyrinths often form clusters, with several built close together at the same site. They don't accompany prehistoric graves and most are built on low ground, often just a few metres above sea level.

The Nordic countries were compressed during the last ice age, due to the enormous weight of the ice cover, and since the melting of the ice the ground has risen slowly and steadily. The land along the northern coasts of the Baltic has risen up to seven metres and at some places even more during the last thousand years alone. This proves, since most of the coastal labyrinths in northern Sweden and Finland are situated less than ten metres above sea level, that they cannot be of prehistoric age, i.e. before the 11th century CE.

Neither can the fisheries be very old. The herring they exploited was of little use without a steady supply of cheap salt to preserve the fish. It would seem that the salt trade in the Baltic increased considerably from the twelfth century onward. Lübeck, founded in 1143, had a controlling position in the salt trade from Lüneburg (south of Hamburg) to the Baltic. Big new ships which could carry large volumes of salt added to a boom in the fishing industry all over the Baltic, but particularly at Skanör on the southern coast of Scania.

Another indication that the coastal labyrinths are not prehistoric is their presence in Finland and Estonia, where they are usually found in areas settled by Swedish speaking farmers from the latter part of the 12th and the 13th century. It is difficult to believe that there were any coastal labyrinths in Finland and Estonia before the arrival of those Swedish settlers.

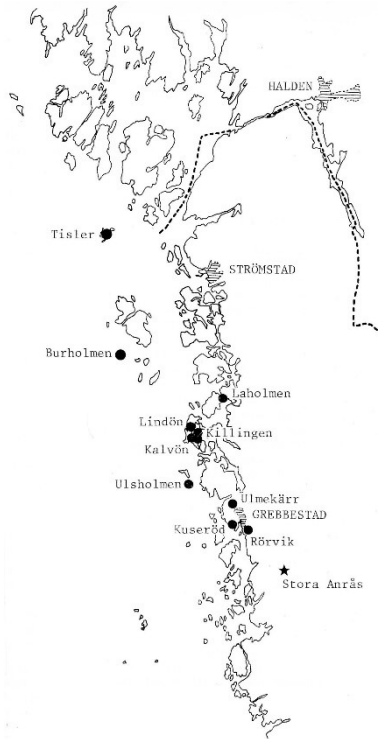
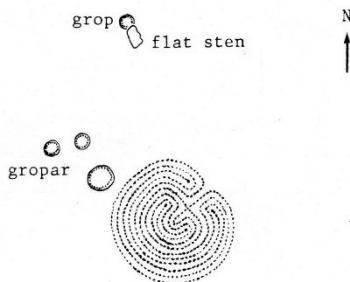
But there is also more solid evidence. Rabbe Sjöberg and Noel Broadbent have measured the lichen growth on many labyrinths along the coast of northern Sweden [*Caerdroia* 27 (1996), p.10-17] and used that to date the construction of 46 coastal labyrinths. None were of prehistoric origin, the two earliest dated to 1299 (\pm 50 years), three others were from the 14th century and six were from the 15th century. Most of the labyrinths they were able to date were from 1500-1650 with a peak around the middle of the 16th century.

How did it all start? What is the origin of the seemingly younger coastal labyrinths? It is reasonable to assume that the coastal labyrinths have developed from the probably much older, prehistoric, labyrinths in the interior of southern Scandinavia. Somewhere in southern Scandinavia labyrinths took on a new purpose in connection with the fishing industry and this cannot have happened earlier than the 12th or 13th century. The new role was probably for magical practices in connection with the seasonal fishing, to improve the weather, the catch, or to bring good luck in general. This magic was probably closely related to the use of the old labyrinths, but it also gave a new aspect to the labyrinth magic in the north. From this time the number of stone labyrinths in the north multiplied and expanded over vast new areas.

I have looked for possible places where this crucial step from old to new might have taken place. The cradle of the coastal labyrinths ought to be an area where old and new labyrinths are geographically linked together in clusters. Along the Baltic coast there are no such places where seemingly prehistoric labyrinths could have initiated this new habit of building coastal labyrinths, but on the west coast of Sweden there are three old labyrinths which might be related to the earliest coastal labyrinths:

1. At Ulmekärr, close to Grebbestad, there is a beautifully preserved labyrinth with twelve walls. Just a few metres from it there was a small grave field with four standing stones. Unfortunately, three of the stones were carried away for bridge building in the 19th century, and all that is left today is one prone monolith and four holes in the ground where the stones formerly stood. This seemingly old labyrinth, variously called *Trinneborgs-slott* (1850), *Trinnebergs-slott*, *Träbergs-slott*, *Tribergs-slott*, *Trällebergs-slott* (1890) and *Trälleborgs slott* (1983), might have been the nucleus of a cluster of 9-10 younger coast labyrinths found at eight places along the nearby coast, many of them on small islands.

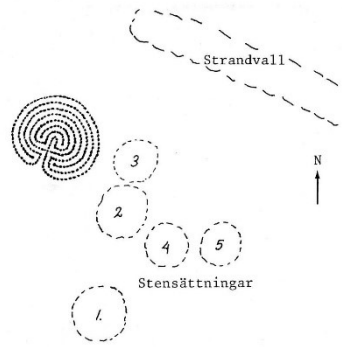
Below: The Ulmekärr labyrinth, with holes for the four standing stones once forming a prehistoric grave field



Above: The cluster of coastal labyrinths in the vicinity of Ulmekärr

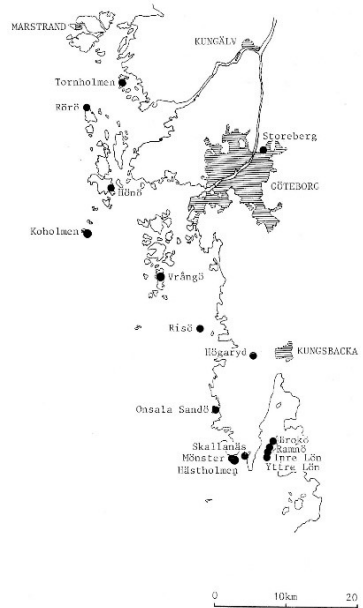
- On top of the Storeberg mountain, close to the Kviberg cemetery in Göteborg (Gothenburg), there is a labyrinth with eight walls. It has been called *Troyenborgs Slätt* (1827) and *Froijenborg* (1855). Just a few metres away are five small stone settings, probably prehistoric graves. This seemingly old labyrinth might have been the nucleus of a cluster of nine younger coastal labyrinths found at five locations in the archipelago just outside Göteborg.

Right: The Storeberg labyrinth with five stone settings, probably a small prehistoric grave field



- On a sand ridge (Bråtås) at Höga Ryd, less than a kilometre from Vallda church, in northern Halland there was an Iron Age grave field with a labyrinth. Unfortunately, much of the sand has been quarried away, together with most of the graves and the labyrinth; today only a couple of grave mounds (6-7 metres in diameter) remain. According to local tradition this was a meeting point for people from the neighbourhood early on Easter day when they used to “walk *Treddenborg*” in the labyrinth. This seemingly old labyrinth might have been the nucleus of a cluster of 9-10 younger coastal labyrinths found at nine locations along the Halland coast, mostly on small islands.

Right: Clusters of coastal labyrinths in the vicinity of Storeberg and Höga Ryd

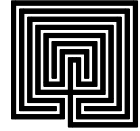


These three examples give clues to where the step from the old labyrinths in the interior to the younger labyrinths along the coasts might have taken place. The transformation probably occurred on the west coast of Sweden, but when did it happen? It is difficult to imagine a start before the 12th century because that’s the supposed beginning of the large-scale salt trade and flourishing seasonal fisheries along the Nordic coasts. It probably took some time for the coastal labyrinths to spread from the west coast of Sweden to the Baltic, where the earliest coastal labyrinths have been dated to approximately 1300 CE. My guess is that the first coastal labyrinths on the west coast might then have been built sometime around 1150-1250 CE.

John Kraft, Copenhagen, Denmark; April 2018
Email: johnkraft44@gmail.com

Illustrations by John Kraft, first published in “Labyrinter på Svenska Västkusten och Norska Sydkusten” *Fynd-rapporter 1983, Rapporter över Göteborgs Arkeologiska Musei undersökningar*, p.159-186. Gothenburg 1984. All references to sources are also found in this article.

The Isles of Scilly Troy Towns



Jeff Seward

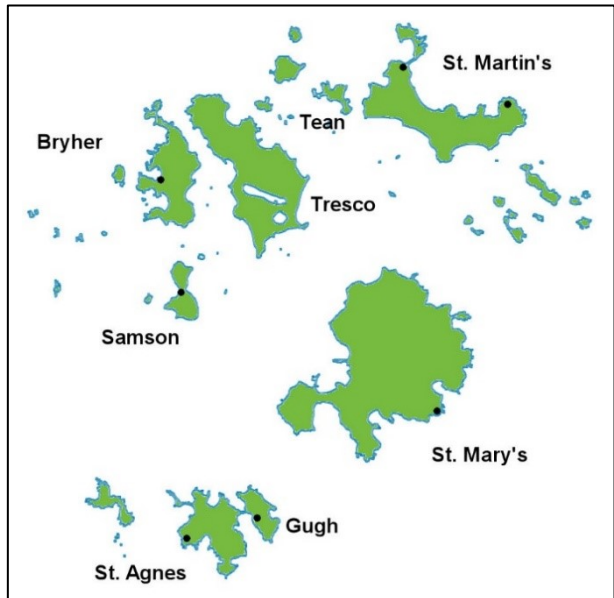
Introduction

The Isles of Scilly archipelago is situated 28 miles (45 kilometres) southwest of Land's End, Cornwall, the most south-westerly point of the British Isles and is formed from over 100 islands and rocky crags, of which only half a dozen of the largest are inhabited. The islands are famed for their climate, wildlife and scenery and are home to the largest collection of stone labyrinths in Britain. One of these is of some antiquity and the remainder are an ever-changing selection of more recent examples, often in dramatic and remote locations.

During the spring of 2017 and 2018, Kimberly and I were fortunate to spend two splendid weeks visiting the islands, and the report that follows records the stone labyrinths and mazes that we were able to find on those occasions, along with some historical background on their origins. In *Caerdroia* 23 we published a similar study based on a field visit during April 1990,¹ and comparison will be made to the labyrinths visible on that occasion, changes that have occurred since that time, photographs taken on an earlier visit in 1983 and archival material in the Labyrinthos collection.

Visiting the Isles of Scilly is a complex endeavour, but certainly worth the effort and expense. Accommodation on the islands is relatively limited, especially during the popular summer season, and travel between the islands is by small open deck launches that run at intervals from the harbour on St. Mary's, the largest of the islands. A passenger ferry runs to St. Mary's all year round from Penzance, Cornwall, and flights are available from Land's End, Newquay and Exeter, although all can be subject to the rather turbulent weather that can affect the islands, situated as they are out in the Atlantic Ocean.²

The Isles of Scilly and the locations of the stone labyrinths on specific islands



Likewise, finding the labyrinths on the islands is not always straightforward. A few are marked on maps and signboards on specific islands, but only the example on St. Agnes is well known and marked on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map of the islands. This map, widely available on the islands and various local guide books are essential for visitors wishing to explore, as mobile phone coverage is notoriously patchy and only a few of the labyrinths show clearly on Google Earth and similar online resources.

Historical Background

As is so often the case with such monuments, the origins of most of the stone labyrinths on the Isles of Scilly are surrounded with a considerable degree of uncertainty, as in many cases their construction was a spur of the moment event, and whether built by islanders or visitors, the details went largely unrecorded at the time.

Without doubt, the only labyrinth on the islands of any great antiquity is the “Troy Town” on St. Agnes. Early writers on the mazes and labyrinths of the British Isles, Trollope (1858) and Matthews (1922) included, overlooked this labyrinth. Likewise, early authors that describe the landscape and monuments of the Scilly islands, including notable works by Borlase (1756), Troutbeck (1796), Woodley (1822), North (1850) and Whitfield (1852), make no mention of the Troy Town, although most describe the nearby St. Warna’s Well in varying degrees of detail.

Ironically, the first positive record of the Troy Town would seem not to be in a book, but in the foreground of a photograph of the wreck of the S.S. Earl of Lonsdale, taken by the noted local photographers Gibson & Sons in 1885. The labyrinth, of perfect classical form at that time, is shown in fine detail and it is already possible to note that additional stones overlaid the originals (part-buried, but still poking out from the turf in the outermost circuits), although one might suspect that the Gibsons had perhaps ‘tidied up’ the labyrinth a little before taking their iconic image.

*The St. Agnes
Troy Town and
the wreck of the
S.S. Earl of
Lonsdale*

*Photo 1885 by
Gibson & Sons,
original print in
the Labyrinthos
Archive*



The first mention of the labyrinth in print then appears in a local guide book published two years later in 1887. The *Guide to the Isles of Scilly* by father and son authors J.C. and R.W. Tonkin had already appeared in earlier editions of 1875 and 1882 with no mention of the Troy Town, but its inclusion in the 1887 edition and the appearance of the Gibson's photograph of the monument a couple of years earlier might be connected. One can imagine that visitors might be asking about that unusual arrangement of rocks in the photo, and the Tonkins obligingly added the following description to the new edition of their guide book:

Close to the edge of the cliff is a curious enclosure called the Town of Troy. It takes its name from the Troy of ancient history; the streets of ancient Troy were so constructed that an enemy once within the gates, could not find their way out again.

This enclosure is composed of an outer circle of stones with an opening at one point, the whole supposed to represent the walls and gate of Troy. Within this there are several rows of stones, generally circular in form; the space between these represents the streets. It presents quite a maze, and but few who enter, can find their way out again, without crossing one of the boundary lines. It is not known when, or by whom it was constructed, but it has from time to time been repaired by the islanders.³

In the same year the Troy Town caught the attention of folklorists, when Miss M.A. Courtney described it in the 1887 edition of the *Folk-Lore Journal*:

There is a curious labyrinth on this island called "Troy-town," which it is popularly supposed to represent; but all intricate places in Cornwall are so denominated, and I have even heard nurses say to children when they were surrounded by a litter of toys that they looked as if they were in Troy-town.⁴

Several more descriptions follow in guide books of the period, all essentially repeating the same description, and all declare "the origin of this singular tracery is unknown" or words to that effect.⁵ Claims to know the identity of the creator of the labyrinth would not appear until the early 20th century, when writing in the *Isles of Scilly Church Magazine* in 1912, the Rev. J.C. Kerry states:

The old puzzle at Troy Town was put together in the year 1729 by Mr. Amor Clarke, who was at that time Master of the Lighthouse. He was buried on April 8th, 1741. Mr. Clarke has still descendants living on St. Agnes, and there can be no doubt that he introduced the Christian name of Amor into the island, which many have since had given to them. We hope that this old puzzle, said to be the representation of the streets of Troy, will always be maintained as it is an interesting link with the past, and now that the lighthouse is closed, is to us a connection with the old days when St. Agnes provided one of the few lighthouses in the Kingdom.⁶

The same essential story is then repeated, but with subtle differences by Robert Morton Nance in his presentation to the Royal Institution of Cornwall delivered in 1923:

... the St. Agnes Troy Town, built, as Mr. A. Gibson tells me, by one T.A. Clarke, son of a former lightkeeper there, and a collateral ancestor of a present one, when, in 1729, he was in the island on a visit – from what place, British or foreign, seems unknown.⁷

It was around this time, in May 1921 to be precise, that the St. Agnes Troy Town received a Royal visit from the Prince of Wales (subsequently King Edward VIII) and a splendid photo of the Prince and his party watching two smartly dressed chaps striding round the coils of the labyrinth, subsequently issued as a commemorative postcard by the Gibson's, shows the Troy Town in good condition at that time. Several further issues of postcards featuring the Troy Town also provide evidence for the continued care and maintenance of the labyrinth during the early and mid-20th century.



The Prince of Wales at the Troy Town, May 1921. Gibson & Sons postcard in the Labyrinthos Archive

The launch of *The Scillonian* magazine in 1925 subsequently became a splendid, if somewhat eccentric repository for local folklore and recollections, but it was not until the late 1940s that the topic of the origin of the Troy Town first triggered a flurry of correspondence within its pages. The noted author and poet Geoffrey Grigson started the ball rolling with an article in the September 1947 edition, where he questions the 18th century origin and pointing to the ‘ancient’ origins of stone labyrinths in Scandinavia postulates a much earlier construction.⁸ A potted version of his discussion on this topic, again favouring a Scandinavian origin, then appears in his 1948 book *The Scilly Isles*, where he summarises his thoughts with the following comment:

In guide-books the maze is ascribed to the handiwork of some bored sailor in the eighteenth century. But it is likely to have been made very much earlier, even if the stones have been renewed from time to time. And it has given its name to the neighbouring farm of Troy Town.⁹

Alongside Grigson’s 1947 article, the editor of *The Scillonian* provides a helpful footnote that clarifies that:

There is no tenement named Troy Town in the detailed survey of the islands made under the Commonwealth in 1650 when Troy Town farm appears to have been part of the tenement “commonly called Port Eagles” – i.e. Periglis – then occupied by Bernard Hicks.¹⁰

A further twist in the tale is then provided in a letter published in *The Scillonian* in 1948, where Mrs. Augusta Hicks – a direct descendant of the Hicks family that occupied the farm in 1650 – informs her readers, rather indignantly:

Having read the article by Geoffrey Grigson on St. Agnes Troy Town, I wish to contradict him in all his theories that Troy Town was put there prior to 1650. It actually was put there by an ancestor of mine in 1726, who was at that time a keeper on St. Agnes Lighthouse, by the name of Amos Clarke, a native of Rotherhithe, London, and whose death is recorded in the Church Register at St. Mary's.

I wish also to say that Troy Town Farm was built and tenanted by a William Hicks successively from early 1600 until it was vacated by the Hicks family in 1928.

P.S. – I would just say, if anyone had been interested enough to look, they could have seen the date and the name above the Troy Town in stone, which could be found there up to within 30 years ago when it was destroyed by hooligans. I have seen it there many times.¹¹

This letter is the obvious source of the alternate date of 1726 that is sometime repeated for the construction of the labyrinth, although her claim that a name and date, also formed from stones, was formerly to be seen alongside is a novel addition to the story. This additional feature does not appear in any of the early photos of the Troy Town, as far as I am aware, but is not without parallel at other stone labyrinth locations, historic and modern.¹²

A further flurry of notes and correspondence on matters labyrinthine, and the Troy Town in particular is then reported in *The Scillonian* between 1951 and 1953, seemingly triggered by the then recent 'discovery' of the labyrinth inscriptions at Rocky Valley near Tintagel on the North Cornwall coast, and the various speculative dates bandied about at the time for their origin. One correspondent goes so far as to suggest that the carvings "are of same design as our Troy Town on St. Agnes. Probably their origins are the same, and date back to the time of Solomon's famous labyrinth."¹³ Another letter writer, also talking about the Rocky Valley carvings, comments that while the "St. Agnes Troy Town can have no possible connection with the Tintagel carvings, or any other ancient examples of this design, but it seems to me just possible that Clarke may not have actually built the maze, but have restored, or uncovered it."¹⁴

These opinions add further confusion to the age of the Troy Town, pushing back its possible origin much further and suggesting that whenever in the 1720s Amor/Amos Clark built the labyrinth, he was in fact only restoring an earlier example. And just to muddy the waters further, into this discussion enters another version of the St. Agnes Troy Town story, when E.J. Honiton of Pendeen, Cornwall writes in June 1952:

From those who have been living on St. Agnes, and who have listened to tales by the old people, one understands that a shipwrecked sailor named Clarke made the maze named Troy Town. There is a possibility it may have been simply copied from a Greek coin on which it was depicted, perhaps likening the islands to that maze. Apparently, the sailor married a Hicks, of what is known as Troy Town Farm....¹⁵

Now a shipwrecked sailor has entered the arena, to join lighthouse keepers and their sons, Vikings and prehistoric tin traders as the original founder of the Troy Town. To attempt to make some sense of all of this, another contributor to *The Scillonian*, Kenneth Sisam, pens a lengthy note in the September 1952 edition, where noting that the Troy Town is not mentioned by any authors prior to 1887, sums up the various theories circulating at the time and comments:

It cannot be very old in Agnes. The farm there takes its name from the maze. The difficulty is that an old pattern may be imitated at any time. None of the turf or rock mazes [elsewhere in Britain or Scandinavia] has been dated with certainty, and there are at least three opinions about the age of Agnes Troy Town:

- (i) That it is one of the rare pre-Christian examples that appear along the Atlantic coast... Yet it is hard to believe that these small loose stones would keep an intricate pattern for thousands of years against weather, vegetation, rabbits etc....
- (ii) That it was made about a thousand years ago by Vikings who brought the design from Scandinavia. This second view, which is open to the same objection as the first, is taken by Mr. Grigson in his book "The Scilly Isles." The Vikings possibly had rock-mazes in their Scandinavian home, but on all the coasts they raided for two centuries they don't seem to have built any other specimen....
- (iii) That it was made by T. A. Clarke, son of the lightkeeper, when home on a visit in 1729. A statement so detailed must be based on a written note such as a lightkeeper might make. According to C. J. King's *Guide*, prepared about 1925, Mr. Albert Hicks says he has documentary evidence for it. One would like to know exactly what this evidence was, but I have not been able to trace it. Still, I can pick no hole in the story. Anybody who had seen the pattern in turf on the mainland, or in boulders on the Baltic coast, could quickly lay it out on this small scale with stones from the beach nearby. If a visitor made it for amusement with the materials that were handiest, that would explain why there are no others like it in Scilly or the British Isles. T.A. Clarke was a relation of the Hicks family, who are good authority for anything happening on Agnes; and the family interest would account for the maze being kept in repair in recent times.¹⁶

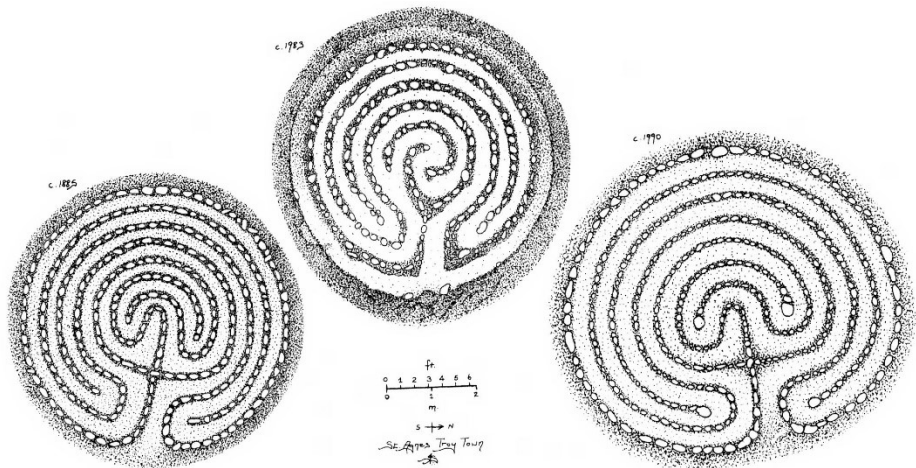
Sisam clearly favoured the notion that the Troy Town was most likely created by the lighthouse keeper's son in 1729. A further note from A.A. Dorrien Smith of Tresco Abbey appears in the June 1953 edition of *The Scillonian*, where the alternate dating of 1726 (clearly repeating the 'facts' as presented by Augusta Hicks in 1948) is again presented,¹⁷ and with that, the correspondence on the matter concluded for the time being.

At this point all of the principal variations of the story have been established in print, and mostly in the pages of *The Scillonian*, a journal widely read by those living on and with connections to the islands at that time – and indeed still in production to this day.¹⁸

This process of recording an oral tradition, and the subsequent accumulation of odd snippets of further information along the way, some perhaps reliable, others less so, all written down long after the event, is what has led to the range of slightly confused explanations that can be found for the origin of the St. Agnes Troy Town in guide books and serious studies alike. In reality, all of these variants on the basic story of an origin sometime in the 1720s lack documentary evidence, but on balance would seem to be quite plausible. Labyrinths were well-known and widespread in England during the early 18th century, indeed the chalked labyrinth graffiti in Chaldon Quarry, Surrey, are of the exact same classical design and were likewise created by young men in the same decade.¹⁹

At the same time as this interest in the history of the St. Agnes labyrinth is debated during the 1940s and 1950s, a new group of stone labyrinths start to appear on the Isles of Scilly. Scattered around various other islands in the archipelago, most are quite simple in form, often little more than meandering paths and spirals, but the majority are likewise in remote and often dramatic locations, adjacent to footpaths and trackways favoured by walkers and tourists. Examples at Giant’s Castle on St. Mary’s and on the northwest end of St. Martin’s (detailed below) are certainly from this time period and more were added by visitors throughout the subsequent decades as tourism to the islands increased. Curiously though, no mention of these ‘new’ labyrinths are recorded in *The Scillonian*, despite the evident local interest in the St. Agnes Troy Town at this time. Indeed, it is only the appearance of photos of some of these later examples in books and magazines that provides any sort of timeline for their existence until enthusiast interest since the late 1980s provides more details.

But the 1950s were not the last time that debate about the St. Agnes Troy Town seethed. In 1988 the Troy Town had deteriorated, largely due to an abundance of visitors with careless feet, and the design had become rather confused and prone to rearrangement. In November of that year, a group of “opinionated do-gooders,” as the author of an outraged note in *The Scillonian* described them, set about controversially ‘restoring’ the labyrinth.²⁰



*The changing design, size and orientation of the St. Agnes Troy Town in 1885, 1883 and 1990
Drawings by Jeff Seward, 1990*

Despite claiming to have found the remains of an earlier labyrinth buried beneath the remains of the damaged arrangement of stones, they removed those stones and created a new labyrinth on the site, slightly larger than the original and shifted slightly in position and orientation. Unfortunately, they made no record nor photographed their ‘discovery’ of a buried labyrinth and their written account of the process contained a number of discrepancies.²¹ Many on the islands (and much further afield) were outraged by this unauthorised reconstruction of the historic Troy Town, and articles about the whole sorry affair were published in *The Scillonian*, in *Caerdroia* and in national newspapers.²²

However, this unexpected and unfortunate publicity for the St. Agnes Troy Town also seems to have coincided with an upturn in the building of stone mazes and labyrinths elsewhere in the archipelago. A number of new examples were recorded in the following few years, including three together at Popplestones on the island of Bryher and several were added to the so-called “maze field” on the island of St. Martin’s. Again, *The Scillonian* helpfully documented some of this most recent phase of labyrinth building on the islands in an illustrated article published in 1991.²³

While the recorded histories of many of these more recent stone labyrinths and mazes on various islands in the Scilly archipelago is often scant and lacking in documentation, the existence of a range of photographs, both published and in photographer’s collections, coupled with eye-witness recollections allows us to conclude that they have all been created within the last 75 years or so. Details of their origins, such as they are, are provided in the catalogue that follows. Much like the uncertainty surrounding the precise age and origin of the St. Agnes Troy Town that was first debated a century or so ago, some of these more recent examples will undoubtedly survive to become the ‘historic monuments’ of the future and will surely trouble a new generation of writers and researchers in turn!

A Catalogue of the Stone Labyrinths and Mazes of the Isles of Scilly

St. Agnes

Situated adjacent to the shoreline on the west side of St. Agnes, north of Long Point and south of Troy Town Farm, the Troy Town stone labyrinth is undoubtedly the ‘original’ labyrinth of the Scilly Islands. OS map reference SV 875078. Early photos (from the 1880s onwards) show that it was originally of seven-circuit classical design, and around 5.7 meters in diameter, but by the early 1980s it had lost its outer circuit of stones and shrunk to 4.8 metres with a looping path arrangement at its centre. Following its controversial restoration in 1988, its design again reverted to classical form, but the diameter had grown to 7.2 metres and the orientation and location likewise shifted a little.²⁴ Now (2018) the design has once again become a little confused due to the wear and tear of many visitor’s feet, and the turf between the lines of rounded rocks is all but worn away, leaving the stones prone to disturbance and rearrangement.

While various authors have suggested that this labyrinth might be 1000 years old or more, usually based on little more than speculation and assumptions, the most popular, and probably most likely, explanation credits its construction to Amor Clark, the son of the island’s lighthouse keeper, when he visited the island in 1729. Others claim this event took place in 1726, but either way, a date in the 1720s would seem quite plausible.



The St. Agnes Troy Town. Photo: Jeff Seward, 2018

Another stone labyrinth briefly existed at Long Point, around 50 metres to the south of the Troy Town. OS map reference SV 875077. Constructed in August 1986, it was 9.1 metres in diameter and of a seven-circuit ‘Baltic’ design with a double spiral at its centre.²⁵ Although all of the stones that formed the labyrinth had been removed when I visited the site in 1990, traces of the worn pathway persisted at that time, and photographs of this labyrinth in photo albums and magazines will surely surface and cause confusion in the future.²⁶

The ‘Baltic’ style labyrinth, St. Agnes, 1986. Photo: Nick Mann



Gugh

Two small stone labyrinths, both of spiral form, one with five circuits and another with only four circuits were recorded in 1988,²⁷ both noted as fairly recently constructed at that time. A comment in an environmental assessment of the island published in 1986: “There is also a problem with the recent appearance of stone mazes which should be discouraged” would likewise seem to suggest an origin in the early 1980’s.²⁸ One of these spiral labyrinths, 2.8 metres in diameter is still clearly visible, if a little overgrown, to the southeast of the sand bar connecting Gugh to St. Agnes, beside the start of the path that leads up over the island to Dropnose Porth. OS reference SV 888083. While not the most exciting example on the islands, the location, looking across The Cove, with the sandbar and St Agnes in the background is quite beautiful on a sunny day.



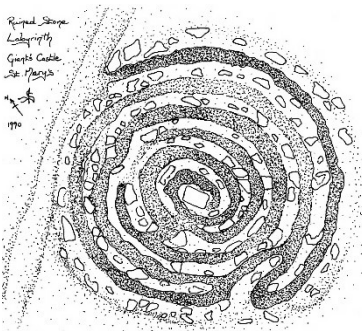
The simple spiral labyrinth, Gugh

Photo: Jeff Saward, 2018

St. Mary’s

Despite being the principal island of the archipelago, and the one that attracts most visitors, especially the day trippers from Penzance, only one stone labyrinth has been recorded on St. Mary’s. Commonly known as the “Stone Maze,” it is situated adjacent to the footpath running in front of the Giant’s Castle promontory fort, around 240 metres northeast of the seaward end of the island’s airstrip. OS map reference SV 924101. The design, a curious spiralling affair with a couple of choices in the path, is roughly circular and c. 6 metres wide with a large block of white quartz occupying the centre. Its origin is apparently undocumented, but islanders we spoke to on the occasion of our visit in 2018 could remember it being present ca. 1950, and essentially little changed since that time. It is known that there was a military lookout post situated on the cliffs here during WWII, and the maze might possibly date to that period?

The stone maze at Giant’s Castle, St. Mary’s. Plan by Jeff Saward, 1990; photo: 2018



St. Martin's

By far the largest collection of stone labyrinths and mazes on the islands are to be found on the island of St. Martin's. The oldest are the extensive group of stone mazes and labyrinths situated on a flat area (known locally as the "maze field") adjacent to the shoreline littered with rocks opposite White Island, on the northwest tip of the island. OS map reference centred around SV 923170. In total at least 15 stone mazes have been constructed at this location over the years, and the precise number at any one time fluctuates as new examples are constructed, old ones become overgrown and stones are plundered from one to build another. Once again, the initial origin of this group of stone labyrinths and mazes is uncertain. The first examples were supposedly constructed by bored aircrew stationed on the Scilly Islands during WWII, although no documentary evidence can be found for this assertion.²⁹ When we spoke to the Isles of Scilly Museum staff in May 2018, an inhabitant of St. Martin's in her youth clearly remembered their presence when she was a child in the late 1950s, so they certainly date from somewhere in the mid-20th century, maybe around the same time that the origins of the St. Agnes Troy Town were being debated locally?



A square maze at the St. Martin's maze field in the late 1970s. Photo: Godfrey Nall

Many more have been added since that time, principally by the steady trickle of tourists that walk the coastal pathways of the island during the summer months. Photos from the 1970s and 1980s show a number of recently installed constructions,³⁰ some with complex meandering designs, others little more than large spirals and when I visited the location in 1990 there were over a dozen clearly visible, both square and circular in shape. Now (2018) there are 5 or 6 examples walked by regular visitors to the site and consequently kept in good condition, and a number of others hidden amongst the long grass and encroaching vegetation. One of these survivors is of the classical type (the same as the original form of the St. Agnes Troy Town) and was originally constructed by the author in April 1990, one of the few certain construction dates and a good example of how a stone labyrinth of this type can survive for the best part of 30 years with no maintenance other than the steady passage of feet.



Above: part of the maze field in 1990, with the newly built classical labyrinth centre of frame

Below: the same classical labyrinth on St Martin's in 2017. Photos: Jeff Saward



Another stone maze on St. Martin's is to be found just a few metres to the northwest of the Daymark obelisk on the northeast tip of St. Martin's. OS map reference SV 942161. Although now rather overgrown and difficult to see amongst the grass, a photo of this maze (actually little more than four-circuit spiral arrangement) published in the winter 1991 edition of *The Scillonian* magazine might suggest that it was constructed shortly prior to this time, as I have no recollection of seeing this stone arrangement when I visited the site in April 1990.

*The St. Martin's Daymark
stone spiral, ca. 1990/91*

*Photo: Glynis Reeve,
courtesy of the editor of
The Scillonian*



Bryher

A small stone labyrinth is to be found adjacent to the footpath that runs between the shoreline of Popplestone Bay and Great Pool, on the central west side of the island. OS reference: SV 874150. The labyrinth is formed from rounded rocks gathered from the adjacent storm beach and is 5.0 meters in diameter with two larger rocks placed at the entrance. The design is basically a spiral with five circuits, but with several choices and switch-backs that increases its complexity and actually turns it into a simple maze of sorts. A few meters to the NW of this are a series of concentric rings of stones buried in the long grass, around 8.5 metres in overall diameter, that originally formed another larger labyrinth, recorded as being created in 1989,³¹ and beyond that was another square maze of similar size (built in 1990) and linked to it by a 'corridor' of rocks, all now buried in the long grass. The smaller labyrinth, still visible and in good condition (2017), was presumably also created by visitors sometime in the early 1990s, although it is not visible in a photo of the two larger labyrinths published in *The Scillonian* magazine in 1991.

*The Popplestone mazes
in 1990*

*Photo: Glynis Reeve,
courtesy of the editor of
The Scillonian*





The stone maze at Popplestone Bay, Bryher. Photo: Jeff Seward, 2017

Samson

A simple spiral labyrinth consisting of three concentric circuits was illustrated in *The Scillonian* magazine in 1991 and described as recently constructed at West Porth adjacent to the rocky shore on the western side of this small uninhabited island. It is not certain if this 'labyrinth' still exists.

Teän

Another recently constructed labyrinth was reported in *The Scillonian* in 1991 on the uninhabited island of Teän. No further information about this labyrinth has been reported in recent years and it probably no longer exists.

Summary

In total, around 25 stone labyrinths and mazes have been recorded on the Isles of Scilly over the years, one on St. Mary's, Teän and Samson, two each on St. Agnes and Gugh, three on Bryher and somewhat more than a dozen on St. Martin's, at two separate locations. Around ten of these labyrinths still exist in tolerably good condition or are clearly visible, if a little overgrown, at the time of writing (2018). Undoubtedly more will join the roster in coming years and a few of those currently in existence will in turn become overgrown. Built

predominantly by visitors to the islands, rather than local inhabitants, they are a dynamic and distinctive feature of the islands and have been surprisingly little influenced by the current popularity of labyrinths that has developed since the mid-1990s. Indeed, the peak period of construction was probably during the 1970s and 1980s, since when their popularity has declined a little and a number have become neglected and overgrown.

These numerous stone labyrinths and mazes documented on the Isles of Scilly provide a wonderful insight into the process by which groups of stone labyrinth of this type can become established, proliferate, come and go, and create a complex of monuments that can often be difficult to interpret and place in any sort of chronological order. This isolated group of labyrinths in the extreme southwest of England has obvious parallels with similar groups of labyrinths in Scandinavia and Arctic Russia, the numerous labyrinths on the Swedish island of Gotland and the labyrinths on the Solovetsky islands in the White Sea being obvious examples.³² On the island of Bolshoi Zayatsky in particular there is a similar mix of around 20 labyrinths (many overgrown), of various designs and sizes, some of obvious, but rather uncertain antiquity, others clearly more recent ‘copies’ and small-scale adaptations of the ‘originals’ standing nearby.³³ Fortunately, the examples on the Scilly Islands are of slightly more recent origin for the most part, and some are clearly documented by the existence of photographs and eye-witness accounts of their creation, but they remain none the less a model for how this process can, and surely has, panned out at locations throughout north-western Europe, wherever such labyrinths made of rocks, adjacent to a plentiful supply of materials and a steady stream of visitors, are found.

Jeff Saward, Thundersley, England. May 2018.

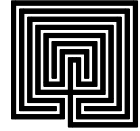
Acknowledgements:

The author would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Isles of Scilly Museum – www.iosmuseum.org – for their valuable assistance researching the numerous publications and references pertaining to the St. Agnes Troy Town, and also to the editor of *The Scillonian* for permission to reproduce archival images from his esteemed journal.

Notes:

1. Saward, Jeff. “Labyrinths of the Scillies” *Caerdroia* 23 (1990), p.43-47.
2. Visit: www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk for details.
3. Tonkin, J.C & R.W. *Guide to the Isles of Scilly*. Penzance, 2nd edition, 1887, p.48.
4. Courtney, M.A. “Cornish Folk-Lore” *Folk-Lore Journal* vol. 5 (1887), p.45.
5. Owen, James G. *Faire Lyonesse: Guide to the Isles of Scilly*. Bideford, 1897, p.78.
6. *Isles of Scilly Church Magazine* (October 1912, p.3). Notes by Rev. J.C. Kerry of St. Agnes. The only known (photo)copy of this obscure pamphlet, in the Isles of Scilly Museum, lacks the important page, but fortunately the text is reproduced in full in a note by Molly Mortimer in *The Scillonian* 110 (June 1952), p.119.
7. Nance, R. Morton. “Troy Town” *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, vol. XXI, pt. 3 (71), 1924, p.260-279. A transcript of a paper he read in June 1923 (incorrectly dated 1913 in the published paper), Nance credits his source as Alexander Gibson, one of the photographer family that documented the everyday life and shipwrecks of the Scilly Islands for many years, and also in the process provide the first record of the Troy Town, a photo taken in 1885.

8. Grigson, Geoffrey. "The St. Agnes Troy Town" *The Scillonian* 91 (Sept. 1947), p.119-122.
9. Grigson, Geoffrey. *The Isles of Scilly*. London, 1948, p.52.
10. Editorial note inserted in "The St. Agnes Troy Town" *The Scillonian* 91 (Sept. 1947), p.121.
11. Correspondence from Mrs Augusta Hicks. *The Scillonian* 93 (March 1948), p.54.
12. Initials and dates are sometimes seen at the "maze field" site on St. Martin's for instance, and a similar historic example comes from Aksi in Estonia, where a stone labyrinth had boulders spelling out "1849 DW" laid alongside, to mark the year that David Weckman, a Swedish officer, supposedly constructed the labyrinth. Kraft, John & Urmas Selirand. "Labyrinths in Estonia" *Caerdroia* 23 (1990), p.32-37.
13. "Scilly, Day by Day - St. Mary's" notes from Miss E.P. Rogers. *The Scillonian* 107 (Sept. 1951), p.140-141.
14. Correspondence from Alec Gray. *The Scillonian* 109 (March 1952), p.43-44.
15. Correspondence from E.J. Honiton. *The Scillonian* 110 (June 1952), p.119.
16. Sisam, Kenneth. "Troy Town" *The Scillonian* 111 (Sept. 1952), p.189-192.
17. Dorrien Smith, A.A. "The Maze in St. Agnes" *The Scillonian* 113 (March 1953), p.47-48.
18. *The Scillonian* (edition 286 and counting) is currently edited by Clive Tregarthen Mumford and published twice a year. Copies are available from Mumford's Papershop in Hugh Town, St. Mary's and a full collection of back issues is housed at the Isles of Scilly Museum, also in Hugh Town.
19. "The Chaldon Labyrinths" online at: www.labyrinthos.net/labyrinthosarchive.html
20. "St. Agnes" notes from Cyril Hicks. *The Scillonian* 229 (Summer 1989), p.119-121.
21. Broadhurst, Paul. "The Lost Labyrinth" *The Fountain* 23 (1989), p.11-12.
22. See for instance: *The Scillonian* 229 (1989), p.121; *Caerdroia* 22 (1989), p.6-11; *The Observer*, March 10, 1991.
23. Reeve, Glynis. "A-maze-ing" *The Scillonian* 234 (Winter 1991), p.155-157.
24. Saward, Jeff. "Labyrinths of the Scillies" *Caerdroia* 23 (1990), p.43-47.
25. Mann, Nick. "A New St. Agnes Troy-Town" *Caerdroia* 20 (1987), p.24-25.
26. see *Meyn Mamvro* 5 (1988), p. 19, for instance.
27. Personal correspondence from Mark Valentine, October 1988. A postcard mailed from the Isles of Scilly in the Labyrinthos Archive.
28. "Gugh" Natural England conservation report, published 1986.
29. Kern, Hermann. *Labyrinthe*, München, 1995, p.450. The 3rd edition (produced after the Kern's death) gives this origin but provides no reference. I was also told this story back in the early 1980s, but again the tale came with no factual evidence.
30. Bord, Janet. *Mazes and Labyrinths of the World*. London; Latimer, 1976, p.70, has photos of the St. Martin's mazes taken in the early 1970s and the Labyrinthos archive has various photos taken by Godfrey Nall c.1980 and Bo Malmberg in 1982.
31. Reeve, Glynis. "A-maze-ing" *The Scillonian* 234 (Winter 1991), p.155-157.
32. "Gotland Trojaborgs" online at: www.labyrinthos.net/labyrinthosarchive.html
33. Mizin, Vyacheslav. "Two Stone Labyrinths on Bolshoi Zayatsky, Russia" *Caerdroia* 47 (2018), p.23-34.



Our regular round up of matters labyrinthine brings together short contributions and notes from Caerdroia readers worldwide, also items from the Labyrinthos Archives that require further research, or simply deserve recording. Similar notes and queries are welcomed for future editions

A QR Code Maze in China

from the BBC News Website

The BBC website reported news of a curious new maze from China on September 15, 2017 – www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-41277549 – a truly colossal square maze, 227 metres (744 feet) long on each side, planted with 130,000 Chinese junipers trees, trimmed to between 80 cm and 2.5 metres in height. At first glance it might seem to be a ‘block maze,’ but on closer inspection, and from a sufficient height, it reveals itself to be a gigantic QR code, a barcode information system especially popular in China. Scan a photo of the ‘maze’ and it will take you to a website promoting the village of Xilinshui, in northern Hebei province, where the maze has been planted!



*The Xilinshui QR code maze
Photo: Xinhua/Shutterstock*

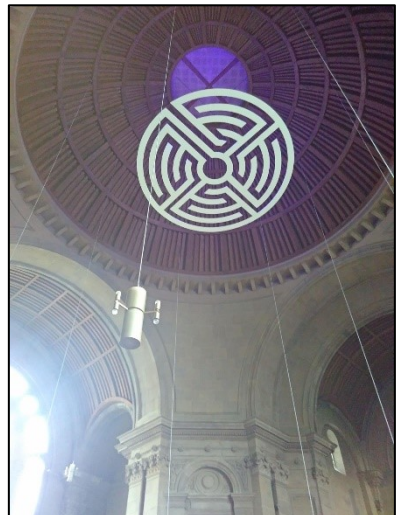
The Swaying Labyrinth

a note from David Irwin

The Evangelical Church of Christ (Christuskirche) in Mainz, Germany, is home to an unusual labyrinth work of art until 25 November, 2018. Artist Michael Wolff has created a suspended labyrinth that hangs 20 metres above the altar, in the dome of the church. Made of foam with fluorescent paint, the labyrinth is six metres in diameter and is illuminated by blue light which itself creates a striking effect in the city at night. A wide range of activities are planned to accompany the artwork. The church is open daily till 6 pm with some additional evening openings, for details please visit the church website:

www.mainz-evangelisch.de

*The labyrinth installation in the Christuskirche, Mainz
Photo: David Irwin*



While travelling in Arizona in January of this year I was kindly invited to visit a newly discovered petroglyph site on private property in the vicinity of Cocoraque Butte, around 25 miles west of Tucson. Around 8000 petroglyphs have been recorded on the rock outcrops in this area, ranging in age from archaic to more recent glyphs created by members of the Tohono O'odham tribe, who stopped here on their way to other sites near Tucson. In amongst the mix of diverse symbols is a perfect classical labyrinth petroglyph of uncertain age, a little over 50 cm in diameter.



The Cocoraque Butte labyrinth petroglyph. Photo: Jeff Saward

A Labyrinth Pictograph in Andhra Pradesh, India

from *The Hindu*

The Hindu newspaper in India published news of a fascinating discovery in its October 21, 2017 edition. Reported by freelance archaeologist Kadiyala Venkateswara Rao, a 'prehistoric' labyrinth (of perfect classical form, with its entrance uppermost) with a depiction of a bull and deer alongside, has been found painted with red ochre at the entrance of a rock shelter, known locally as the 'Pandavulavari Gani,' on top of a hill near Kolimeru village in the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

It's not clear how the painting has been dated to the "Neolithic" period as claimed, but it is certainly another important addition to the catalogue of historic labyrinths in the Indian sub-continent and will surely repay further study.

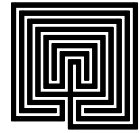


*The Kolimeru labyrinth pictograph
Photo: Kadiyala Venkateswara Rao*

The Labyrinth Society

The Labyrinth Society, affectionately known as TLS, was founded in 1998 to support all those working with or interested in labyrinths. Although based in the USA, it is an international organization with members around the world. Membership in the Society not only connects labyrinth enthusiasts to a worldwide community, but also supports websites and other labyrinth projects that provide information and resources to the world at large, including the Worldwide Labyrinth Locator website that now lists around 5600 labyrinths, and a few mazes, worldwide: www.labyrinthlocator.org

The TLS 20th Anniversary Gathering 2018, will be held October 5 - 7, at Woodstock, Illinois, USA. For details and more about The Labyrinth Society, visit: www.labyrinthsociety.org



Review copies of maze and labyrinth related books and publications are always welcome for inclusion in future editions of Caerdroia.

Please send to the editors at our regular address, or via email for E-books, etc.

Listening to the Labyrinths, by Herman G. Wind, editor Jeff Saward. F&N Eigen Beheer, Castricum, Netherlands, 2017. ISBN 978949254405-6. Hardcover, 143 pages, numerous colour illustrations, maps, tables, charts, diagrams etc. Ordering details can be found at: www.facebook.com/listening.to.the.labyrinths

Herman G. Wind, a retired professor at Twente University in the Netherlands, wanted to bring a new perspective to the study of labyrinth design. With his ideas and theories, he wants to deepen the understanding of the fascinating labyrinth symbol. He calls his study a recognition of the “DNA” of their designs.

His book focuses on the dissemination and the general meaning of the labyrinths, relying on the works of Hermann Kern, Penelope Reed Doob and Jeff Saward. Thus, he can access the data relating to around 200 historical labyrinths for his study. He brings together the data relating to their distribution and dissemination in space and time in a series of tables to distinguish the different labyrinth structures and offers a beginning to the investigation of the historical and social motives for their origin and meaning.

The tool to recognize the different families of labyrinths are their circuit sequences, presented in rows of numbers in tables and in diagrams with the circuit changes, so that their ground plans are easier to distinguish and compare, along with the structure of different groups of labyrinths to enable any specific design to be easily assigned to its correct family.

This leads to the question how many of these families can be constructed and how many have already been observed? And this gives rise to the next question: are there historical or social reasons for the connection between labyrinths with the same pattern?

The various chapters of the book focus on different themes and provide analysis of the data to make forward strides, of particular interest to those in the social sciences. The book provides a fascinating insight into an aspect of labyrinths not frequently discussed. These studies show how especially influential designs have been perpetuated over the centuries, and demonstrates the underlying common structures of labyrinths, independent of their form or shape.

Erwin Reißmann, Würzburg

Labyrinthe in der Schweiz, by Bruno Schnetzer. Tredition, Hamburg, Germany, 2018. ISBN 978-3-7469-1330-8. Paperback (hardback and Ebook also available), 225 pages with numerous colour and b+w illustrations. Order from: www.tredition.de/buchshop

This book, written in German but extravagantly illustrated with photos that make the text easily understandable, is a guide to the many and varied labyrinths in Switzerland. Although I don't speak German, I was drawn into the book, perhaps in part because I had to work that little bit harder to understand and connect with what was being presented. In a sense, the author has tapped into a shared language of Labyrinth that allowed him to communicate more widely and directly than if we were limited to just our mother tongues.

The book opens with information about labyrinths and mazes that shows them in both time and place – historically and geographically – so that it is clear that neither mazes nor labyrinths are restricted in their distribution, and attention is also given to the modern wave of enthusiasm as the author shows his participation in World Labyrinth Day activities, and gives links to the major specialist sites, no matter where they are in the world.

The bulk of the book showcases labyrinths from around Switzerland and concludes with a concise and useful catalogue, organised geographically, that would surely be of use to any labyrinth enthusiast fortunate enough to be able to travel about the Swiss cantons. It may, in fact, serve as a catalyst for future travel dreams!

Kimberly Saward

Labyrinths & Mazes: A Journey through Art, Architecture, and Landscape, by Francesca Tatarella. Princeton Architectural Press, New York, USA, 2016. ISBN 9781616895129. Paperback, 216 colour illustrated pages. Details: www.papress.com

This colourful paperback should be on the bookshelf of anyone with an interest in the modern artistic revival of interest in labyrinths and mazes. It starts with a brief historical introduction to the forms and features a few historic mazes and labyrinths to set the scene. Unfortunately, this section has a few niggling factual errors, mostly due to referencing the 1981 Italian edition of Kern, I suspect, but don't let these distract you. Once the book gets into the modern artistic and architectural mazes and labyrinths, it literally picks up where Kern left off and provides a colourful and informative guide to this important aspect of the subject. Its Italian author is an architect herself, and her keen eye for installations that push the boundaries of what is possible within the genre ensure that this compact work is actually a surprisingly comprehensive guide to the best of modern maze and labyrinth inspired artistic endeavours.

With everything from traditional hedge mazes, land art installations, sculptures of ice, wood, metal, mirrors and a myriad of other materials, it covers a wide selection from early works by Michael Ayrton, Richard Fleischner, Greg Bright and Randall Coate, through to modern works by Jim Buchanan and Jeppe Hein, to name but a few. Each featured installation typically gets two or four pages with potted information and a selection of splendid photos. A book I know that I will continually refer to for both facts and inspiring images!

Jeff Saward

Meiro Kodo, volume 1 and 2 (with more coming soon). ISBN 978-1546597551. Paperback, 80+ pages, profusely illustrated. Order from: www.meirokodo.com

Each volume in this series contains a set of 26 hand-drawn mazes – one for each letter of the alphabet – that are quite lovely just as simple illustrations, but also invite you to reach for a pencil, whether you consider yourself a maze person or not. *Meiro kodo* translates from Japanese as “maze code,” and as you trace a path from the Start, you make your way to one of several symbols on the page, and this symbol, once identified by your arrival, relates to a code that creates a secondary puzzle in the form of a secret message that is revealed only by solving all the maze puzzles. These are followed by worksheets for the embedded code, and finally the coded message itself. Answers to the mazes are provided at the back, but the artist/author, Stephanie Quanel, suggests only turning to them as a last resort as all the mazes are solvable and each has only one solution.

Of course, I had to have a go. I wound my pencil through the pathways and, somewhat to my surprise, found my way to the symbol that let me start solving the code. Now I want to pull out my coloured pencils to add my own touch to the black and white pages – the mazes are that pretty! And like any hand drawn puzzle, they feel different, more organic, than computer variants. They don't get boring, nor do they feel as coldly frustrating. I can't explain why, but they feel quite relational as my mind bends to follow the artist's imagination. I enjoyed the mindfulness required to solve her entertaining and intriguing puzzles, and felt my own creativity stirring as I worked through these books.

Kimberly Saward

Follow This Thread, by Henry Elliot. Particular Books (Penguin), London, UK, 2018. ISBN 978-1-846-14931-3. Hardback, 231 pages, with line illustration and doodles throughout!

Most books about mazes tend to be surprisingly linear, you enter the book and pass from page to page in a straightforward fashion, without too many twists and turns. And then there is Henry Elliot's book! Henry, an editor for Penguin Books, has teamed up with French graphic artist Quibe, who provides the simple line illustration that quite literally runs through every page of this book, an eclectic mix of potted history of mazes and labyrinths, a retelling of labyrinthine myths and legends, thoughts of philosophers moved by the subject and the author's own quest in search of the reclusive Greg Bright. Along the way the narrative continually jumps around, rather like excited children in a water maze, and then finds the path again to explore another avenue further or pick up the story where it left off. And a very entertaining read it certainly is.

So, where's the twist in that format? Well, quite literally, every turn of the page requires you to rotate the book in one direction or the other to follow both the narrative and the line that weaves in and out of the text, occasionally winding itself into a specific maze or labyrinth design. This may or may not drive you crazy, but then that rather depends on whether you enjoy the challenge of following the thread to navigate the maze – Theseus would have loved this book!

Jeff Saward



Submissions to Caerdroia

Caerdroia is always pleased to receive material for publication. Readers are urged to submit papers, shorter articles, notes, information, photographs – indeed, anything labyrinthine – for possible publication in future editions of Caerdroia. Articles and notes should preferably be sent as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word .doc or .docx format (although .rtf and most other formats are acceptable), or on CD for PC compatible computer.

Illustrations and photographs are preferred in .jpg or .tif format at 300 dpi resolution please, but please keep illustrations separate from text, and send as separate files, with position in text clearly marked. Photographs: colour or b&w prints and 35mm transparencies are also welcome if digital versions are unavailable and will be copied and returned if requested. A preferred style guide for authors is available on the Caerdroia Submissions page on our website: www.labyrinthos.net/submissions.html

Because Caerdroia is a specialised journal for enthusiasts, no payment can be made for submissions, but any reproduction fees required will be covered, and all significant contributors will receive a complimentary copy and/or digital PDF. Short notes and press clippings are likewise welcomed, along with plans, postcards, guide books, photographs, etc., from any maze or labyrinth you may visit, for addition to the archives. Deadline for inclusion in Caerdroia 48: January 2019 please, for scheduled publication Spring 2019.



Subscription to Caerdroia

As an enthusiast's journal dealing with a specialised subject, Caerdroia relies on reader subscriptions to allow it to continue to provide a forum for maze and labyrinth research and news. Subscription provides the next edition of Caerdroia and supports the production of the journal, maintenance of the Caerdroia Archives, covering all aspects of mazes & labyrinths worldwide, and our extensive website. A photocopy reprint service from out-of-print editions is also available to subscribers. The annual fee is:

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The story of mazes and labyrinths is as long and tortuous as their plans might suggest. For many, mention of the labyrinth may recall the legend of Theseus & the Minotaur. An increasing number will know of the ancient labyrinth symbol which occurs around the world, at different points in time, in places as diverse as Brazil, Arizona, Iceland, across Europe, in Africa, India and Sumatra. This symbol and its family of derivatives have been traced back 4000 years or more, but its origins remain mysterious. Modern puzzle mazes, however complex their form, are but the latest episode in this labyrinthine story.

Labyrinthos is the resource centre for the study of mazes and labyrinths, with an extensive photographic & illustration library and archive, offering professional consultation and services for owners, designers, writers and publishers. Labyrinthos also provides consultation for maze and labyrinth design and installation, lectures, workshops & presentations. Contact Jeff Seward or Kimberly Lowelle Seward at the address above, or visit our extensive website www.labyrinthos.net for further details of Labyrinthos and *Caerdroia*.

Our annual journal *Caerdroia*, first published in 1980, is dedicated to maze and labyrinth research and documentation. Produced by labyrinth enthusiasts for fellow enthusiasts, it keeps in regular contact with correspondents throughout the world, exchanging information and ideas, to help create a clearer picture of the origins and distribution of the enigmatic labyrinth symbol and its descendants, from the earliest rock carvings and artefacts through to modern puzzle mazes of ever increasing complexity and ingenuity.

Current subscribers to *Caerdroia* include maze and labyrinth researchers and enthusiasts, archaeologists and historians, artists and authors, designers and owners, and members of The Labyrinth Society. As a non-profit making journal dealing with a very specialised subject, *Caerdroia* relies on reader contributions, submissions and subscriptions for support. If you are interested in the history, development, diversity or potential of mazes and labyrinths in any of their forms, perhaps you would care to join us on the path...

Jeff Seward & Kimberly Lowelle Seward, Labyrinthos



CAERDROIA

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