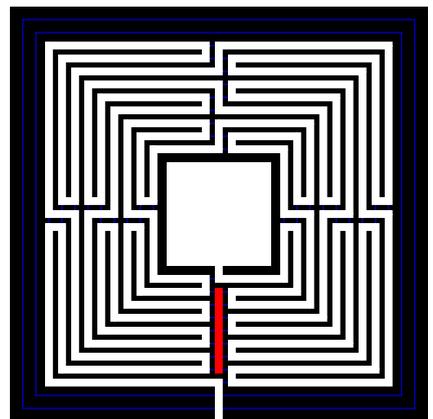
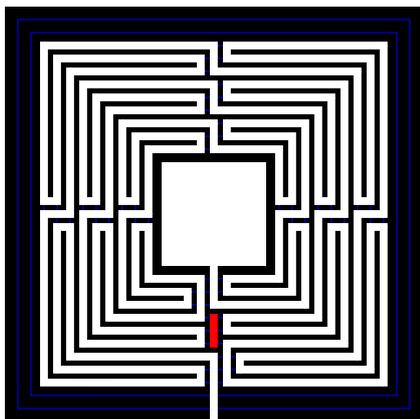
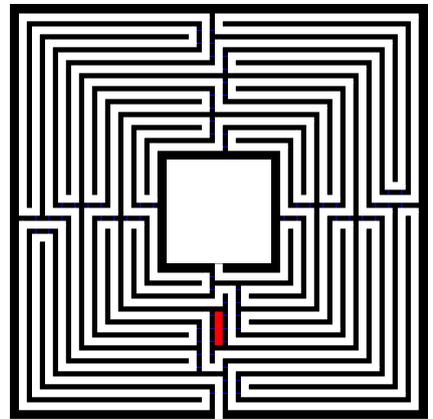
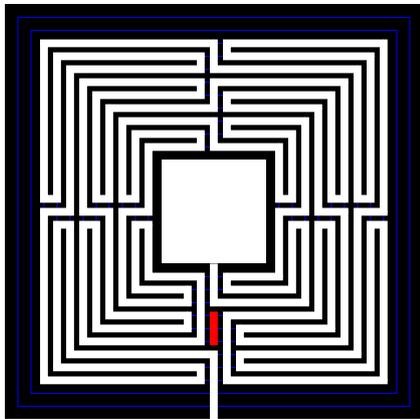
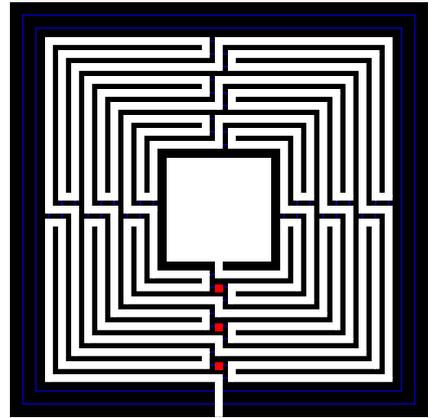
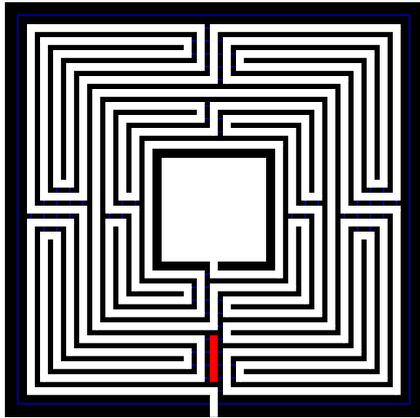
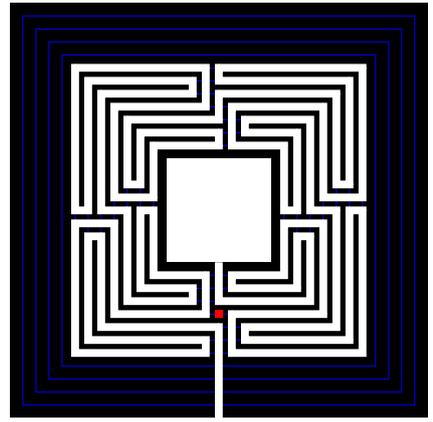




The NAPOCA labyrinth

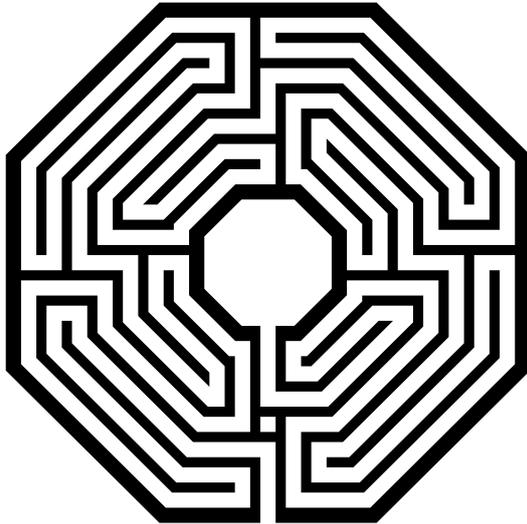
A selection of preceding steps (1- 6)
from the creation process of
the proposed model (7)



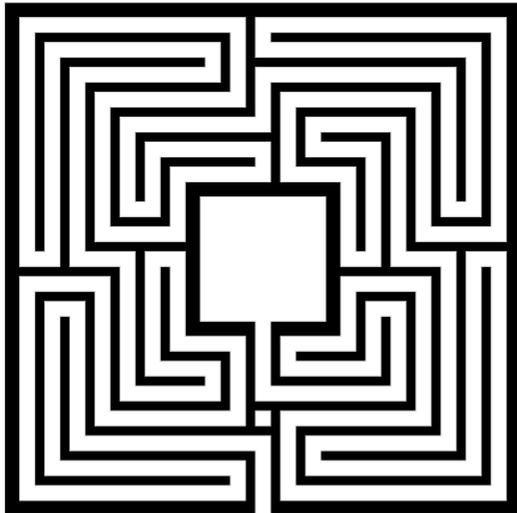
1



2



3



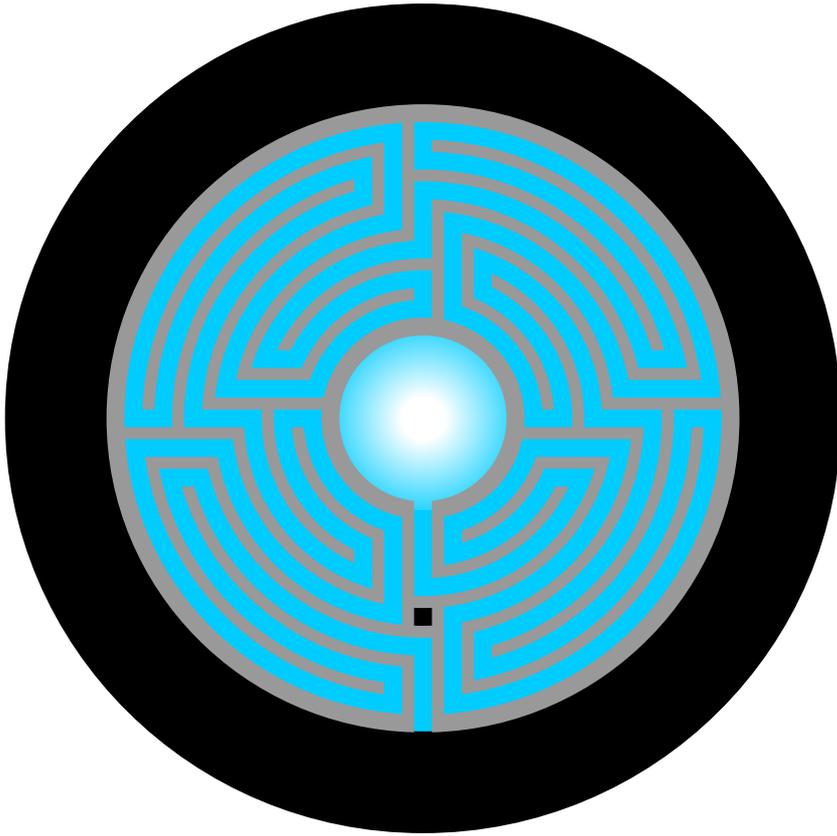


1



2

1



IIII

2





1

V



2

The goals of the creation process / the characteristics of the model

I. Type: unicursal.

This needs no explanations since it is a labyrinth, not a maze and the goal was to adhere to the norm and not to create an exception in this matter..

II. General path direction to the center: right handed winding (page III/1)

(and as a consequence, left handed entrance turn).

Chosen:

1. considering the walk to the center of the labyrinth as the significant one and the walk out merely a reminder/recollection of the first.
2. in connection with the symbolic meanings of directions in general as well as with that of the spirals (1). Therefore the path advances in its general movement from left to right, similar to a planar spiral considered to lead to the center (centripetal). A left-handed general path would in this regard make one walk "against the stream", against its general direction which would be that from the center outwards (centrifugal). Page III/2 shows with green the path sectors which allow movement towards the center along with the general path direction.

III. Positions of the entrance to the labyrinth and entrance to its center:

- centered on the same axis coincident with the central point of the labyrinth.
- on the same side of the labyrinth center.

The most important consequence of this goal, in relation mainly with III.3 was the given choice to comply or not with the rule of completely covering the labyrinth surface with the path/parting walls.

The necessary compromises in relation with III.3 in the case of the filled surface alternative proved less acceptable, as they didn't bring any significance to the model - they were there just to "cover the field".

The choice to comply rather with III.3 than with the "filled surface" brought in the solution of one or more empty surfaces between the possible path sectors in the entrances region (page I/1 - 6). The empty surfaces could be ascribed certain symbolic qualities and the decision to use them was further sustained by the similar solutions listed in [References/Links](#).

In the end, one single square empty surface (equal in dimensions to the intersection of two perpendicular path sectors) proved to be the best alternative in terms of compromise versus structural and symbolic gains. This choice partially called for the use of 7 levels, resulting in the location of the empty surface at the 4th level between the now equally long first and last sectors of the path.

It can be said that the use of the empty surface(s), other than that of the center, in the structure of an otherwise classical labyrinth creates a distinct subclass to which the models listed in [References/Links](#) and this one belong.

Regarding the symbolic function of this empty surface, the proposed one is that of a **negative center** (page III/1), based on the following possible interpretations:

- if the labyrinth is seen as a sacred space, symbol/image of the Cosmos, similar with the city and church (2), then the surrounding space is seen as being as one of the uncreated, of anarchy, chaos, destructive forces. However by not entirely covering the space inside the labyrinth perimeter with its structure, a "sample" of this void, uncreated, chaos is allowed to exist, albeit in controlled conditions "in" the labyrinth. Thus, if the labyrinth as image of the Cosmos has the geometrical center as the positive pole, then perhaps the uncovered spot could act as a negative pole, "representative" for the surrounding chaos - a fact which rather parallels than substitute for the main opposition between the center and the exterior.

- if the labyrinth is seen as the symbol of the man's inner universe then the negative spot could serve as an equivalent of man's dark side, of the Jungian shadow one has to learn to deal/control/live with (3).

It can be observed how this "negativity sample" serves the positive purposes of the labyrinth:

- it allows for the alignment of the first and the last points of the path contributing to its symmetry and to the focus on the corresponding entrance actions.

- in terms of path "generation" from start to end it could be said that the void "causes" the labyrinth to "happen" by blocking the direct access to the center and then causing further deflections of the path on its trajectory, until one last time when having got "past" it, the path finally heads for the center. One must confront negativity several (in this case three) times in order to be able to understand and "get past" it.

One can also see the negative spot as a well through which the negativity has access to the inside of the labyrinth. The outside pressure makes the negativity flood the labyrinth, therefore the "owner" must visit it periodically, in order to wipe the negativity out and keep the "dark well" under control.

Might the Minotaur be today better placed in this spot (page III/2), in a labyrinth which, being unicursal, without false centers and dead ends, could not prevent its escape?. It could be imagined an application of the model containing a moveable tridimensional symbolic representation of the negativity. Placed at the center of the labyrinth by the "event supervisor", the "Minotaur" would have to be "wrestled" with and brought back to the negative spot - the place it normally occupies - by those who walk the path.

Regarding these aspects it could be noted that one proposed use by other creators of “aligned entrances/empty spot” labyrinths (placing various objects on the spot in discussion) could be seen as offerings destined to neutralize/mask the negativity and take it out of attention, a solution which isn’t necessary right in all the cases - one doesn’t solve problems by hiding them. The inevitable negativity should be contemplated, understood, assumed/controlled and lived with. In the same way, the other use (standing on the negative spot, for any reasons) should perhaps be either avoided (one has left the outer chaos to follow the ordered path and reach the center and not to immerse again in negativity) or done only when reaching behind it, as an action signifying taking the negativity under control.

III. Path structure: of roman type

1. grouped in four quadrants defined by two perpendicular axis lines, (“vertical” and “horizontal”) of which one serves as alignment axis for the labyrinth entrances. (see III).

An obvious choice because of the rich symbolism of the cross/center.

2. each quadrant being filled with the path folded in a double meander (4) (page V/1).

3. Symmetrical, as much as possible, in both the classical and modern/geometrical meaning of the term.

The result of this for the circular version, is a path with either:

- $4 \times 7 = 28$ circular sectors and $8 + 3 \times 7 = 29$ straight sectors - a total of 57, if all sectors are counted.

- 28 circular sectors and $4 \times 7 = 28$ straight sectors - a total of 56, if the first one at the entrance of the labyrinth is seen as merely a “preparatory” section.

- 28 circular sectors and $4 \times 3 = 12$ straight sectors - a total of 40, if the entrance section and the ones connecting two adjacent levels are not taken into account.

It has to be seen whether a parallel between the number of circular sectors and that of the days in the month of a lunar calendar could prove appropriate for the use of the labyrinth and if yes, in which ways; likewise, what other symbolic meanings could be given to the path sectors with regard to their numbers.

V. Level walk start: 3rd.

Determined by III and IIII.

VI. Level numbers: 7.

Initially set for 10 levels, mainly for the symbolic meanings of 10. However I gave up this initial parameter in favor of choices III and IIII and opted for the 7, an even more powerful symbolic number (5, 6).

VII. General labyrinth shape/geometry: circular, octagonal, square.

This aspect is more intimately linked to that of an application of the model and its particular goals.

The round version (page II/1) is the simplest one and because of this, arguably the most powerful.

It has a good balance between the roundedness of its general shape and the angularity of its perpendicular axis lines with their corresponding straight path segments. The circle and the cross, “work” here together, in a powerful archetypal combination (5, 6)(page V/2).

However, the symbolic meanings of the square version (page II/3) could be better suited for certain cases in which the stability of the right angle might be more beneficial.

The octagonal version (page II/2), a hybrid between the round and square ones (5, 6) could also work although its geometry is more complicated and requires a more complex proportional “tuning”.

The models shown here don’t deal with the details of the geometry. Rounding certain angular joints and corners, adding supplementary geometrical details, as well as the proportions between the different geometrical parts of the labyrinth are aspects to be dealt with when creating an application of the model. It should be noted, though, that for the circular model, keeping the path turns angular, not rounded like those of the Chartres labyrinth, preserves better the presence of the cross pattern.

Final notes

I propose for the model the name of **NAPOCA** ('nã-põ-kə), after the ancient Daco-Roman name (and also modern half-name) of my city, Cluj-Napoca. I thought it would be fit for a model inspired by the Roman labyrinths to be named after a Roman municipium.

Anyone interested, is invited to create applications of it, with my only request of using the proposed name when referring to the model. Although by law I own the copyright for it, I’m in no way going to turn the model into a cash cow or have any pretensions regarding it other than the one expressed above.

(I would of course be happy to receive any kind of feedback regarding the use of the model: notifications from those intending to use it, photos from the completed constructions, observations regarding how is it perceived by those who walk the applications, etc.).

REFERENCES

Bibliography

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 - (2) Mircea Eliade // *Images and Symbols* // Princeton University Press // 1991 // =
Mircea Eliade // *The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion* // Harvest/HBJ Book // 1968 // =
 - (3) C.G.Jung // *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious* // Bollingen // 1981 // =
C.G.Jung // *Man and His Symbols* // Anchor Books/Doubleday // 1964 // x
 - (4) Hermann Kern // *Through the Labyrinth* // Prestel // 2000 // Chapter 1 / p.38 / addendum / double meander labyrinth illustration A and explanation by Jeff Saward. // x
 - (5) Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant // *Dictionnaire des symboles: Mythes, rêves, coutumes, gestes, formes, figures, couleurs, nombres* // Robert Laffont // 1997 // =
 - (6) Michael S. Schneider // *A Beginner's Guide to Constructing the Universe: Mathematical Archetypes of Nature, Art, and Science* // Harper Paperbacks // 1995 // x
- W. H. Matthews // *Mazes & Labyrinths - Their History and Development* // Dover // 1970 // x
Paolo Santarcangeli // *Il Libro Dei Labirinti: Storia Di Un Mito E Di Un Simbolo* // Frassinelli // 1984 // =

x - own a copy of it.

= - equivalent from Amazon.com of the Romanian translation I own.

Web Links

General

Jeff Saward [Labyrinthos](#)
Robert Ferré [Labyrinth Enterprises](#)

[The Labyrinth Society](#)

Creators of “aligned entrances/empty spot” labyrinths

Lea Goode-Harris / [The Santa Rosa Labyrinth Foundation](#)
[The Santa Rosa Labyrinth](#)©

Lisa Moriarty / [Paths of Peace](#)
[The Circle of Peace™ Labyrinth](#)

Robert Ferré / [Labyrinth Enterprises](#)
[The Rainbow Labyrinth](#)

[The Labyrinth Company](#)
The St. Paul™ model
à la Chartres™
Neo-Medieval™
Octagonal™
Round Classical™

Yvonne Jacobs / [Harmony Labyrinths™](#)
Contemporary Medieval:

[Danube](#)
[Eventide VI](#)

Hymnody Series:
[Hymnody I](#)

Luna Series:
[Luna II](#)

Meander Labyrinths
[Andante](#)
[Petite Andante](#)
[Peace Labyrinth with Doves](#)
[Wings of Peace](#)

Gemini™ Labyrinths
[Andante \(rotated\)](#)
[Cretan \(rotated\)](#)

