



As a child, one of my favorite  
summertime games was to walk through the fields  
of ripe wheat. The plants were taller than me. I'd thread my way  
among the ripe, golden stalks, timidly tracing out paths, often circular, first  
one, then another, successively. My body experienced the subtle pleasure of rubbing  
against these flexible spears of grain, and of hearing them rustle as I advanced among them.

In my wake they remained bent over, and only slowly rose to stand upright again. I was making my  
way toward something unknown and unexpected, and pretending to be courageous and daring. What  
would I find at my very next step, and what might be the path that would take me back out of the field, once  
again into the open? That was the essence of the challenge. This was my first experience of labyrinths. || At the  
time, clearly enough, the experience was primarily physical: the mind was simply focused on the gentle violence of  
treading forward, and on the feeling of an imagined, omnipotent ability to confront the discovery of things unknown,  
veined with unconfessed trepidation. || As we reach adulthood, the body and mind inevitably suffer the loss of a certain  
virginity: our mental maps become powerful filters that modulate perception, and our relationship with things, with the  
world, undergoes a change. || Greater consciousness, but also perhaps less courage? A separation of body and mind? || What  
then becomes of the labyrinth, for an adult?... || I remember my response – as an adult – visiting a labyrinth constructed  
by an artist: my first and most powerful reaction was to attempt to shape an overview of its forms and pathways, and to  
predefine the path that would lead to its exit. || It was difficult simply to abandon myself to the experience of the personal  
vibrations of my own particular contact with the work, with the place. Impossible to let my energy flow freely, not even when  
I closed my eyes. I was entirely seduced by the need for an intellectual interpretation of that topos, and I strove to relate  
to it on the terms of cultural categories which had stratified within me over the course of the years: history, mythology,  
religion. The labyrinth: a place of loss, punishment, death, spiritual search, magic initiation, interior voyage: a plethora  
of concepts, of symbols, of thoughts... || When, much later, I grew aware of this, I looked back on my childhood  
experience with different eyes. My “labyrinths of wheat” had allowed me to experience an awareness of my  
physical identity that at times congealed into precise outlines, almost antagonistic to the environment, while  
at others it dissolved into a fluid energy that lay within a vaster energy of which I was a part. || There is no  
consciousness without all of this. || And isn't this perhaps the attitude of the artist who reactivates  
the virginity of his body and mind – like the mind of a child – in order to find himself again, to  
reach a new awareness of himself and the world, in the eternal labyrinth of his voyages  
through matter and spirit, meandering by way of trial and error, and discovering  
the ability to give new ways of seeing also to those who happen to  
encounter his vision? || The labyrinth thus reappropriates  
its true symbolic and initiatic value. ||

Blanche Mere