

THE LIBRARY OF BABEL

METAPHOR GLOSSARY

Babel

The term originates from the biblical story of Babel, where people in a region called Babel sought to build a city and a towering structure to reach the heavens. In response, God created different languages, dispersing people to various regions and preventing the construction of Babel.

In Hebrew, it signifies "chaos," foreshadowing the disorderliness of the library described in this text. In Babylonian, it also signifies "the gate of the gods," and in this context, it can be understood as the library being a divine treasure bestowed upon humanity.

This glossary entry explains the origins and multiple interpretations of the term "Babel" in the context of a library.

Sleeping Upright

A perpetual state of being unable to find rest or peace due to vigilance and anxiety.

Hexagonal Rooms

The hexagon is the largest of all shapes that can be connected to a circle and can be tessellated in a plane, and its centre is equidistant from each side.

(The Library Is)A Sphere

Indicates the Library's relation to God, from *The book of Twenty Four philosophers*, "God is an intelligible sphere, whose center is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere." (Hermes Latinus: pars 1. Liber XXIV philosophorum, 1994)

25 Orthographic Symbols

Includes twenty-two letters, spaces, commas and full stops.

Most likely refers to Hebrew alphabet in which Hebrew language to be considered as the original language of the Bible that God choosen.

Combinations (of the twenty-two orthographic symbols)

Through the formula of permutations and combinations there are 25^1312000 combinations, and this may be the possible full arrangements of books in the library. Meanwhile the total number of atoms in our current universe is 10^78 .

The Library

The endless library is a metaphor for the metaphysical world of truth that never changes; the book is the representation of the library, and the twenty-five eternal, unchanging written symbols that make up the library are its permanent source.

Periodic

Indicates that the vast yet finite combinations of written symbols will inevitably cycle endlessly in infinite time and space. Thus the library is a reincarnation of the universe and existence.

Bibliography

Hermes Latinus: pars 1. Liber XXIV philosophorum. (1994).

Jorge Luis Borges, DesmazièresE., Hurley, A. and Giral, A. (2000). The library of Babel. Boston: David R. Godine.

Wikipedia Contributors (2019). Hebrew language. [online] Wikipedia. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language.

[www.zhihu.com](https://www.zhihu.com/question/31547556). (n.d.). Commentary on the Library of Babel - Zhihu. [online] Available at: <https://www.zhihu.com/question/31547556> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2023].

Image Reference List

(Figure 01.)libraryofbabel.info. (n.d.). Library of Babel. [online] Available at: <https://libraryofbabel.info/>.

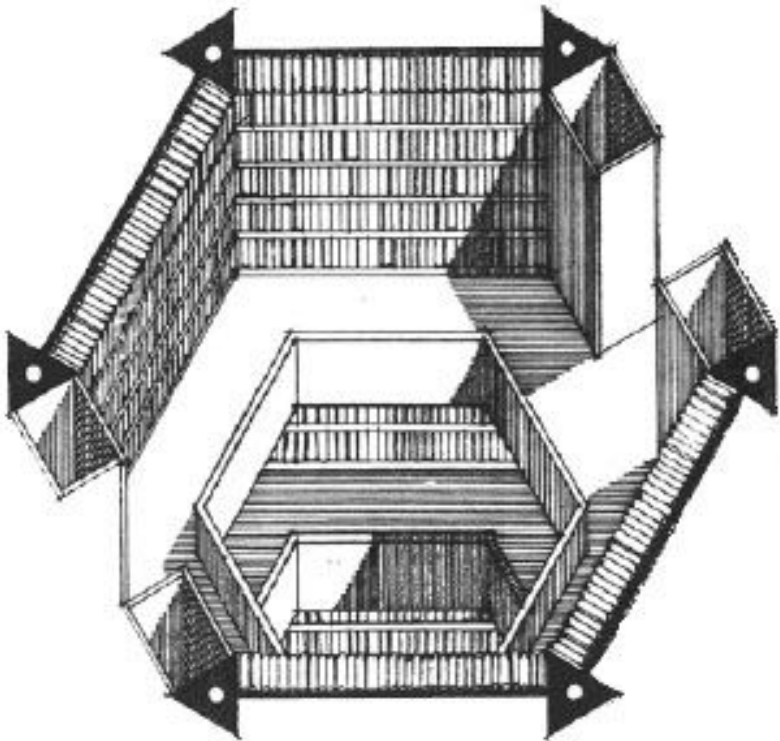


Figure 01. Images of the Imagined Library of the Babel