

Language & Labyrinths

A Metalinguistic Journey through Erdogic Literature

Multiplex Void

2022/04/25

CONTENTS

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

CH. 1: ABOUT THIS WORK	2
Respecting the Rubric	3
Transcending Text	3
Final Thoughts	3

PART 2: SESSIONS

Session Zero	5
On Translation	5
On Knowing	5
On Reference	5

PART 3: ERRATA

CH. 2: REFERENCE MATERIAL	7
Spells	7
Classes	7
CH. 3: APPENDIX	8
Glossary	8
Bibliography	8

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: ABOUT THIS WORK

IT SEEMS ONLY APPROPRIATE TO PRESENT a paper on ergodic literature in ergodic format—in fact, I would argue that such an approach is necessary to properly convey the ideas and concepts contained within this tome. By its very nature, ergodic literature demands active engagement on the part of its Reader(s).¹ It requires not only *interpretation* but *reciprocation*. It is not meant to be *consumed*, but *explored*. Only through non-trivial effort can one effectively traverse such work.

In this introductory section, I will define ergodic literature, explain its origins, present contemporary examples, and describe the advantages of ergodic media over more traditional means in engaging the reader on an interactive level. Furthermore, I will take time to explain my own intentions as author, and justify the means through which I have chosen to communicate these concepts.

HISTORY OF TERMS

The term *Ergodic Literature* was first defined by Espen J. Aarseth in his 1997 book *Cybertext*. It is derived from the Greek *ergon* and *hodos*, meaning *work* and *path*, respectively. The term *Cybertext* was first defined in Norbert Wiener's 1948 book *Cybernetics*.

DUNGEONS AND DIALOGUE

THIS WORK IS PRESENTED IN THE STYLE of a 5e Dungeons and Dragons manual. Why this format, and not another? As the Author of this text, I knew from the beginning that I was going to take an ergodic approach to this assignment. Initially, I had planned on taking on a form inspired by *House of Leaves*. It is a favorite of mine, after all, and has shaped a great deal of my own thoughts and perspectives. However, implementing this proved difficult: *House of Leaves* is maddening—intentionally so. Immersing myself in the text never fails to induce in me an altered state of consciousness—we find ourselves consumed by a kind of madness. This mental state, while phenomenologically interesting, presents significant writing challenges. The thoughts are *too* disorganized, *too* flighty and entangled and chaotic and confused. I was entirely unable to

¹The term Reader is perhaps too restrictive in describing the role of an "ergodic explorer". It may be more accurate to consider this individual a user or consumer of ergodic media. Moreover, such an individual need not act alone. Many ergodic works, such as MUDs, ARGs, and tabletop RPGs, require the participation and cooperation of multiple individuals for storytelling and puzzle-solving purposes.

write in such a way that could properly translate these states and ideas from Author to Reader. Any level of understanding would require significant effort on the part of the Reader. That's asking a bit too much, I think.

Beyond that, there were typesetting concerns—trying to program all of this in \LaTeX was simply taking up too much of my time. Searching for an alternative approach, I eventually stumbled upon a DnD 5e \LaTeX template—perfect! For one, a DnD manual is a perfect representation of ergodic text. It is not intended to be read like a novel (or a paper), from cover-to-cover in a linear fashion. Its format makes it perfectly suitable as a reference guide. This seemed particularly appropriate for this assignment. What better way to explain and demonstrate ergodicity than by using this format to explore course themes and answer questions of interest? Furthermore, I know that the primary Reader for whom this is intended is already quite familiar with tabletop guides, and thus there is a shared cultural context upon which to base this work. This means less explanation on my part and less confusion on theirs—a boon for all!

READERS AND ROLES

THE ROLE THAT THE READER PLAYS WILL shape how they traverse this document. Are they a (potential) Player? A GM? Perhaps they're curious about tabletop gaming, or perhaps they are unfamiliar with it entirely. Perhaps the Reader is me, the Author, as I read and reread and organize and edit this document. One particular Reader—our target audience—will play the role of '*professor who is grading a student's assignment according to a specific rubric*'. More specifically, this Reader is known to be '*a professor who is grading a student's assignment according to a specific rubric who already has familiarity with tabletop RPGs*' and thus, as previously mentioned, already shares a common cultural background with the author/student.² This gives us the advantage of being able to use tropes and jargon that the Reader is already familiar with and greatly simplifies the effort to communicate effectively. As I, the Author, will be playing the role of the Student, it would behoove us to detail how this document intends to fulfill the rubric assigned by the Professor.

²Hello Dr. Cash!

RESPECTING THE RUBRIC



E WILL NOW EXPLAIN HOW THIS DOCUMENT

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque cursus luctus mauris.

TRANSCENDING TEXT

Suspendisse vel felis. Ut lorem lorem, interdum eu, tincidunt sit amet, laoreet vitae, arcu. Aenean faucibus pede eu ante. Praesent enim elit, rutrum at, molestie non, nonummy vel, nisl. Ut lectus eros, malesuada sit amet, fermentum eu, sodales cursus, magna. Donec eu purus. Quisque vehicula, urna sed ultricies auctor, pede lorem egestas dui, et convallis elit erat sed nulla. Donec luctus. Curabitur et nunc. Aliquam dolor odio, commodo pretium, ultricies non, pharetra in, velit. Integer arcu est, nonummy in, fermentum faucibus, egestas vel, odio.

CYBERTEXT: A HISTORY

Nulla malesuada porttitor diam. Donec felis erat, congue non, volutpat at, tincidunt tristique, libero. Vivamus viverra fermentum felis. Donec nonummy pellentesque ante. Phasellus adipiscing semper elit. Proin fermentum massa ac quam. Sed diam turpis, molestie vitae, placerat a, molestie nec, leo. Maecenas lacinia. Nam ipsum ligula, eleifend at, accumsan nec, suscipit a, ipsum. Morbi blandit ligula feugiat magna. Nunc eleifend consequat lorem. Sed lacinia nulla vitae enim. Pellentesque tincidunt purus vel magna. Integer non enim. Praesent euismod nunc eu purus. Donec bibendum quam in tellus. Nullam cursus pulvinar lectus. Donec et mi. Nam vulputate metus eu enim. Vestibulum pellentesque felis eu massa.

ERGODIC EXPLORATION

Quisque ullamcorper placerat ipsum. Cras nibh. Morbi vel justo vitae lacus tincidunt ultrices.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Integer tempus convallis augue. Etiam facilisis. Nunc elementum fermentum wisi. Aenean placerat. Ut imperdiet, enim sed gravida sollicitudin, felis odio placerat quam, ac pulvinar elit purus eget enim. Nunc vitae tortor. Proin tempus nibh sit amet nisl. Vivamus quis tortor vitae risus porta vehicula.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Fusce mauris. Vestibulum luctus nibh at lectus. Sed bibendum, nulla a faucibus semper, leo velit ultricies tellus, ac venenatis arcu wisi vel nisl. Vestibulum diam. Aliquam pellentesque, augue quis sagittis posuere, turpis lacus congue quam, in hendrerit risus eros eget felis. Maecenas eget erat in sapien mattis porttitor. Vestibulum porttitor. Nulla facilisi. Sed a turpis eu lacus commodo facilisis. Morbi fringilla, wisi in dignissim interdum, justo lectus sagittis dui, et vehicula libero dui cursus dui. Mauris tempor ligula sed lacus. Duis cursus enim ut augue. Cras ac magna. Cras nulla. Nulla egestas. Curabitur a leo. Quisque egestas wisi eget nunc. Nam feugiat lacus vel est. Curabitur consectetur.

PART 2

SESSIONS

SESSION ZERO

ON TRANSLATION

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

ON KNOWING

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque cursus luctus mauris.

ON REFERENCE

Nulla malesuada porttitor diam. Donec felis erat, congue non, volutpat at, tincidunt tristique, libero. Vivamus viverra fermentum felis. Donec nonummy pellentesque ante. Phasellus adipiscing semper elit. Proin fermentum massa ac quam. Sed diam turpis, molestie vitae, placerat a, molestie nec, leo. Maecenas lacinia. Nam ipsum ligula, eleifend at, accumsan nec, suscipit a, ipsum. Morbi blandit ligula feugiat magna. Nunc eleifend consequat lorem. Sed lacinia nulla vitae enim. Pellentesque tincidunt purus vel magna. Integer non enim. Praesent euismod nunc eu purus. Donec bibendum quam in tellus. Nullam cursus pulvinar lectus. Donec et mi. Nam vulputate metus eu enim. Vestibulum pellentesque felis eu massa.

PART 3

ERRATA

CHAPTER 2: REFERENCE MATERIAL

SPELLS

SENDING

3rd-level Evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Unlimited

Components: V, S, M (a short piece of fine copper wire)

Duration: 1 Round

You send a short message of twenty-five words or less to a creature with which you are familiar. The creature hears the message in its mind, recognizes you as the sender if it knows you, and can answer in a like manner immediately. The spell enables creatures with Intelligence scores of at least 1 to understand the meaning of your message. You can send the message across any distance and even to other planes of existence, but if the target is on a different plane than you, there is a 5 percent chance that the message doesn't arrive.

CLASSES

GLOSSARY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aarseth, E. J. (1997). *Cybertext: Perspectives on ergodic literature*. JHU Press.
- Bowman, S. L. (2010). *The functions of role-playing games: How participants create community, solve problems and explore identity*. McFarland.
- Clark, A., & Chalmers, D. (1998). The extended mind. *analysis*, 58(1), 7–19.
- Crawford, J., & Mearls, M. (2014). *Dungeons & dragons: Dungeon master's guide* (5e). Wizards of the Coast, LLC.
- Kripke, S. A. (1980). *Naming and necessity*. Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard University Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2008). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago press.
- Mearls, M., & Crawford, J. (2014). *Dungeons & dragons: Player's handbook* (5e). Wizards of the Coast.
- Nye, A. (1998). *Philosophy of language: The big questions*. Blackwell.
- Wiener, N. (2019). *Cybernetics: Or control and communication in the animal and the machine*. MIT press.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1986). *Philosophical investigations*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

