

## A Jungian Analysis of *the Matrix*

Ciarán Lynch<sup>1</sup>

This dissertation will explore The Wachowski Brothers' movie *The Matrix* (1999) using the theoretical lens of Carl Gustav Jung's archetypes and the collective unconscious. It will begin with an overview of Jung's life and career, before an analysis of his key theoretical concepts, primarily that of the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious refers to the hereditary structures within the unconscious which are shared by all of humanity (Jung, 2014, 43). Jung's belief is that the archetypes are universal unconscious images and patterns that derive from the collective unconscious (Jung, 2014, 43). They reside within the mind and are made conscious by humans through the act of myth-making. It is through this myth-making that the knowledge contained within the archetypes is passed on (Campbell, 2001, np). It can be said that the role of mythology is to guide the reader on how to live optimally. Following the analysis of the theoretical framework of the archetypes and the collective unconscious, the dissertation will conclude with the application of Jung's theories to *The Matrix*. The goal is to examine to what extent *The Matrix* can be considered and acts as a modern-day mythological text.

The first section of the dissertation will give an overview of Jung's background and career up to the end of his relationship with Sigmund Freud. As it will illustrate, the conservative religious upbringing experienced by Jung, his dysfunctional family life and the study conducted by and with Freud all contributed to Jung's fascination with the unconscious mind. Carl Gustav Jung was born to Paul and Emile Jung in Kesswil, Switzerland on the 25th of July 1875 (McLynn, 1997, 8). Jung's father's academic career looked promising as a youngster. However, he suffered from depressive tendencies which halted his progress and in his mid-thirties found himself the local pastor in the Swiss Reformed Church Evangelical (McLynn, 1997, 7). Emile and Paul Jung's marriage was one of tension. It was through his experience of growing up in this tense household that Jung would develop some of the basis for his psychoanalytic thinking. Jung described his mother at night as being: "strange and mysterious" (Wehr, 1988, 32). These strange and mysterious ways were in fact psychotic episodes which surfaced at night time. These episodes led to Jung's parents temporarily separating and saw Emile Jung sectioned into a mental institute (McLynn, 1997, 8).

Emile Jung later returned from the institute but the household was already damaged beyond repair. Jung perceived his returned mother to have two personas. The first persona, the conscious, gentle, submissive mother figure was sometimes overshadowed by outbursts of the powerful and resolute second persona of the unconscious mind. Each time this persona revealed itself, Jung was frightened and unprepared (McLynn, 1997, 7). With his parents sleeping in separate rooms, Jung experienced what he labelled as one of the most significant dreams of his life, a precursor to his infatuation with the unconscious mind and its relationship to the conscious (Wehr, 1988, 25). In the dream, after descending into a subterranean chamber in which an altar or king's throne was present, he was faced with what he believed to be a flesh covered tree trunk with a rounded head and single eye on the very top of the head. Jung later realized this symbol to be a ritual phallus. Jung was woken from the dream by his mother's voice screaming "That is the maneater!", as if the voice was coming from outside of the dream. Such dreams had a substantial impact on his theories regarding dreams, their relationship with the conscious and religion (Wehr, 1988, 26).

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Growing up in rural Switzerland, Christianity and superstition were largely intertwined within the community. Two of Jung's uncles and six of his mother's relatives were members of the clergy. Religious and theological discussions were a constant part of Jung's life (Wehr, 1988, 47). Jung believed that these representatives of Jesus would hear nothing in the form of debate. This dogmatic attitude toward Christianity by his family and peers left Jung dissatisfied with the religion as a whole as it left no room for discussion or investigation (Wehr, 1988, 49). Jung's relationship with Christianity was also affected by his "man-eater" dream: "this dream seems to be a subterranean God 'not to be named', and such it remained throughout my youth, reappearing whenever anyone spoke too emphatically about Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus never became quite real for me, never quite acceptable, never quite lovable, for again and again I would think of his underground counterpart, a frightful revelation which had been accorded me without my seeking it" (Jung et Jaffe, 2013, np). Jung's analysis of the dream representing a subterranean god can be seen as the precursor for his infatuation with the unconscious mind and the messages it carries.

Following his childhood, Jung was educated at the University of Basel in medicine, passing his natural sciences exam in 1896 and his anatomical and psychological exam the following year. While studying, Jung discovered that he had a true passion for psychiatry (Elliot, 2018, np). From reading the psychiatry textbooks of Richard von Krafft Ebing, he read that psychosis was a disease of the mind and he realised that psychiatry would be his calling (Wehr, 1988, 76). Through this medium, Jung saw an opportunity to study both the factual and spiritual sides of life. After receiving his medical degree in 1900 he worked as a physician in Zurich, publishing his dissertation on the *Psychology of Pathology* (Elliot, 2018, np). In 1906, Jung sent Sigmund Freud a copy of *Diagnostic Association Studies* as well as an important paper of his own. Freud is widely considered to be the founder of modern psychoanalytical research (Wehr, 1988, 96). He is credited with implementing modern psychoanalytic procedures such as free association which lets patients speak freely and instinctively in an attempt to gain access to the unconscious. He is also credited with the theory that dream analysis can aid in revealing elements of patients' unconscious. Such revelations can then aid in patients moving on from past trauma (Gay, 1998, 74-75). Jung had previously read Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) which had left its mark on him and lead to a fondness toward Freud. Commenting on the paper, Jung stated that he, "discovered how it all linked up with (his) own ideas" (Jung et Jaffe, 2013, np). The interpretation of dreams as a window into the unconscious can be likened to the interpretation of myth carrying out the same function.

When Jung and Freud first met in 1907, the two talked for thirteen hours, discussing their theories. Jung comments on the first meeting: "Freud was the first man of real importance I had encountered...no one else could compare with him" (Jung et Jaffe, 2013, np). Their relationship would last for six years. Freud was already a world-renowned psychologist. Jung, twenty years his younger, had great admiration for Freud who even then was considered to be a pioneer of psychology. Their relationship began to falter when Jung said to Freud: "Let me enjoy your friendship not as one between equals but as that of father and son" (Holowchak, 2012, 175). This statement alarmed Freud, the theoriser of the Oedipus complex, a theory that states that on an unconscious level, the son wishes to kill the father (Vernon, 2011). Shortly after, while talking in Germany, Jung began to speak of mummified corpses. Freud interpreted this as Jung wishing to kill his father, in this case, Freud himself. Freud ended up fainting. These events were just the precursor to actual intellectual disagreements (Vernon, 2011). Freud was obsessed with sex. He believed the libido and its repression to be the basic cause of all human behaviour. For Jung, this was a bit excessive.

Jung did not disagree with the idea that repressed sexual emotions can have effects on the conscious mind. However, he did not believe them to be the main cause (Vernon, 2011). Freud wrote to Jung urging him never to abandon the sexual theory, stating that it must be treated as dogma. This plea came as Jung was beginning to show interest in studying the collective aspects of the unconscious. Jung stated that the use of the word dogma alerted him. Dogma implies an indisputable fact (Wehr, 1988, 107). Similar to Jung's view on Christianity being impacted negatively through the dogmatic beliefs surrounding it, his opinion of Freud suffered a similar fate (Wehr, 1988, 107). After his split from Freud, Jung focused his attention on the collective elements of the unconscious mind. This particular focus of Jung, which is the foundation of this dissertation, rarely appears on lists of psychoanalytical training. Despite this exclusion, there are currently over three thousand Jungian analysts today, and over fifty-three Jungian societies (Colman *et al*, 2013). Jung passed away on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1961 at the age of eighty-five (Wehr, 1988, 454). His major influence on the profession of psychoanalysis is irrefutable.

The next section of the dissertation will give an overview of Jung's theories of the collective unconscious and its archetypes. Jung argues that within the collective unconscious, are a species' shared archetypes (Jung, 2014, 43). An archetype can be defined as a: "primitive mental image inherited from the earliest human ancestors" (Google, 2019). Jung states that: "Myths are original revelations of the preconscious psyche, involuntary statements about unconscious happenings, and anything but allegories of physical process" (Jung et Segal, 1998, 1). Seeing as mythology is the revelation of the preconscious psyche, after investigating the theoretical framework regarding the collective unconscious, this dissertation will aim to see to what extent *The Matrix* operates as a modern day, mythological text.

Jung suggests that the concept of the unconscious was first limited to the personal unconscious. In this realm of the unconscious mind, gather repressed and forgotten memories (Jung, 2014, 3). He goes on to say that this personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer: "which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn" (Jung, 2014, 3). This deeper layer is what Jung refers to as the collective unconscious: "The collective unconscious is a part of the psyche which can be negatively distinguished from a personal unconscious by the fact that it does not, like the latter, owe its existence to personal experience and consequently is not a personal acquisition" (Jung, 2014, 42). Jung believed the collective unconscious to be a humanity-wide cultural melting pot of sorts, contained within the unconscious of everyone. Unlike the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious does not owe its existence to the personal experience of the conscious mind. It is attained within one through hereditary means (Jung, 2014, 42).

Jung states that: "the concept of the archetype, which is an indispensable correlate of the idea of the collective unconscious, indicates the existence of definite forms in the psyche which seem to be present always and everywhere. Mythological research calls them motifs" (Jung, 2014, 43). What Jung is saying here is that within the collective unconscious, there are definite archetypes. The recurring illustrations of these definite forms within mythology are known as motifs. An example of this being the story Romulus and Remus which draws parallels with the Aboriginal story of the Bagadjimbiri brothers (Eliade, 1998, 8).

Jung uses the examples of similar theory in other fields of knowledge as examples that his theory of archetype is not a standalone one. For example, he highlights the fact that biological factors play a role in determining the psyche of the individual conscience: "even this psychology is based on a certain general biological factor, for instance on the sexual instinct"

(Jung, 2014, 43). Jung uses the biological influences present in the personal unconscious as an example of the truth that the unconscious mind is influenced by factors that are not obtained solely through personal experience. Going on from this, Jung speaks of natural instincts which further our understanding of said archetypes: "Instincts are impersonal, universally distributed, hereditary factors" (Jung, 2014, 43). Using the example of instincts, Jung describes how they: "form very close analogies to the archetypes, so close, in fact, that there is good reason for supposing that the archetypes are the unconscious images of the instincts themselves, in other words, that they are patterns of instinctual behaviour" (Jung, 2014, 44).

Most significant to this dissertation is the role Jung believes that mythology plays in shaping our understanding of how to live optimally. In *Man and his Symbols* (1964), Jung states: "If we are to see things in their right perspective, we need to understand the past of man as well as his present. That is why an understanding of myths and symbols is of essential importance" (Jung *et al*, 1964, 58). What Jung is saying here is that through the medium of myth and symbols, man is conveying the archetypes within his unconscious. The understanding of these archetypes will aid us in living to our maximum potential by bringing to the surface our own unique potential and true nature. This dissertation aims to see to what extent *The Matrix* can function in the same way Jung views mythological texts of the past.

Aniela Jaffé, a co-worker of Jung's, describes archetypes as: "unconscious quantities, they themselves remain irrepresentable and hidden, but they become indirectly discernible through the arrangements they produce in our consciousness...The archetype per se, stands like a "producer" behind the archetypal motifs, but only these are accessible to consciousness" (Jaffe, 1986, 15 ). What Jaffe is saying here is that the archetypal motifs produced by the conscious mind are the conscious production of an ever-unconscious content. Jung comments on this occurrence: "The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear" (Jung, 2014, 15). This means that the archetypal motifs are merely the conscious production of something that will always remain unconscious, the archetypes themselves. The general makeup of the produced archetypal motif will remain similar amongst different producers. Jung states: "It is not enough for the primitive to see the sun rise and set; this external observation must at the same time be a psychic happening: the sun in its course must represent the fate of a god or hero who, in the last analysis, dwells nowhere except in the soul of man" (Jung, 2014, 5). Primitive man is unable to look at things objectively, he must apply the archetypes within himself to the external world. For example, the idea of the sun as god and giver of life is an archetypal motif generated by the conscious mind within primitive man as an attempt to satisfy the archetypes residing within his unconscious.

Keeping in mind Jung's statement that primitive man must apply the archetypes residing within him to the outer world, another way of understanding clearly the concept of the collective unconscious is to refer to the description of Jordan Peterson. Peterson points toward Greek mythology and its linking of what we would call 'emotions' with Gods. For instance, the system which mediates biological affection within mammals is tens of millions of years old. Peterson states that you are deluded if you think you have control over this emotion rather than it having control over you. This seems a logical statement as for many people, love has negative consequences for those who are under its control. However, it is not something that someone chooses, it is an organically occurring phenomenon (Peterson, 2015). In Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1606) Gloucester states that humans are the playthings of



the Gods (Shakespeare, 1606, IV, I, 32-37). Keeping this statement in mind, for the Greeks to portray phenomena such as love, as Venus, the God of Love makes sense. To primitive humans, and modern ones also, “love” can seem very much like a “possession” of oneself. For one to have no knowledge of biology it would make perfect sense to characterize this overwhelming, irresistible archetypal feeling, “love” as a God. This possession is also immortal in the sense that it is ever-present through all of mankind, and its biological system even predates that. It is this immortality that makes conceptualizing such archetypes as deities a logical move (Peterson, 2015). The linking by Peterson of biological instincts to the projection of gods aligns itself with Jung’s statement that: “the archetypes are the unconscious images of the instincts themselves, in other words, that they are patterns of instinctual behaviour” (Jung, 2014, 44).

The archetypes can be projected as both characters and situations/events, for instance, *rebirth* and the *wise old man* are representations of archetypal projections (Jung, 2014, 46, 374). These archetypes are made visible through myths, dreams, hallucinations and even modern-day productions such as movies and novels. Jung states: “The primitive mentality does not invent myths, it experiences them” (Jung, 2014, 154). This is an important distinction. Myths are not invented for entertainment purposes. They are the conscious production: “first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul” (Jung, 2014, 6). Joseph Campbell, possibly the most renowned pioneer of comparative mythology, and a great admirer of Jung, states that one of the main objectives of myth is to show us: “how to live a human lifetime under any circumstances” (Campbell, 1988, np). What Campbell is saying here is that deep-rooted within myths are the lessons humans as a whole have accumulated throughout history. These myths can be used to educate oneself on how to live under any sort of trials and tribulations. The aim of this dissertation is to examine to what extent *The Matrix* can act in the same facet as mythological texts of the past.

*The hero’s journey* also known as the *monomyth* is described by Jung as symbolising man’s “unconscious self, and this manifest itself empirically as the sum total of all archetypes” (Jung et al, 2015, np). What Jung is saying is that the hero myth represents the bringing to the conscious level, all of the unconscious archetypes. As described earlier, the bringing of these unconscious archetypes to the conscious allows for one to live optimally and to bring to the fore their unique potential and true feelings. *The hero’s journey*, as portrayed within mythology, can be seen as the archetypal motif of the process of bringing the archetypes within the unconscious mind to the conscious level. This process of realising the archetypes within the unconscious is called what Jung describes as *individuation*. The realisation of these archetypes is what Jung refers to as reaching wholeness (Jung, 2014, 290). Jung states that the mythological depiction of individuation directly corresponds to that of *the hero’s journey* (Jung, 2014, 290). What Jung is saying here is that the mythological depiction of bringing the unconscious archetypes to the conscious is illustrated by the contents of the archetypal *hero’s journey*. This dissertation aims to see to what extent *The Matrix* can be viewed as a modern-day mythological telling of the process of individuation which can then help the reader progress on their own path of individuation, the realising of the archetypes within.

Campbell is most famous for his work on the monomyth, contained in his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Campbell comments on the monomyth: “The usual hero adventure begins with someone ... who feels there is something lacking in the normal experience ... The person then takes off on a series of adventures beyond the ordinary” (Campbell, 1989, np). Campbell states that we all take part in the journey, if not in the typical grand sense but in a spiritual and psychological sense (Campbell, 2001, np). The psychological sense that

Campbell is referring to is the psychological process known as individuation. We all take part in the process of individuation in an attempt to reach wholeness. Wholeness is the realisation of the archetypes within the collective unconscious. This realisation allows for the blossoming of one's true and unique identity. This process is illustrated in the archetypal *hero's journey*.

The basis of Jung's theories is that the role of mythology is to aid us in our attempt to unlock our true potential (Jung et al, 1964, 58). This is done through realising the archetypes within the unconscious, a process known as individuation (Jung et al, 2015, np). This section of the dissertation will aim to give a background on *The Matrix*. This will then be followed by a Jungian analysis of certain elements of the movie to ascertain to what extent *The Matrix* can be viewed as a contemporary example of cultural mythology.

Directed by The Wachowski Brothers, *The Matrix* was their second feature-length movie following their debut *Bound* in 1996. *The Matrix* follows the plot of Thomas A. Anderson who is living two lives in the year 1999. During the day, he is an average software engineer and at night he is an elite computer hacker who goes under the alias "Neo". Through his latter activity, he is made aware of the notorious computer hacker Morpheus. Morpheus informs Neo that the world in which he currently resides is artificial. The actual year is somewhere around 2199 and the perceived world of 1999 is the result of the Matrix, an artificial intelligence system which taps into the minds of humanity, giving them the illusion of a real world, all the while using their brains and bodies for the necessary energy required by the ruling machines to continue their domination over the planet. Morpheus is convinced that Neo is "The One" who has the ability to free humanity from the clutches of the Matrix, liberating it both physically and psychologically. To aid Neo on his journey he is acquainted with Trinity, who ultimately resurrects Neo. Along with Trinity, the other most influential crew member upon the ship is Cypher, who eventually chooses to betray the crew. His justification for doing so is his inability to endure the trials and tribulations associated with fighting the machines. He strikes a deal with Agent Smith, the head of the agents, who act as the security forces of the machines within the Matrix. The agents have the ability to shapeshift and obtain skill sets which make them a force to be reckoned with within the Matrix. Agent Smith is Neo's main adversary and a counterpart with whom he must battle with on more than one occasion.

The Wachowski Brothers cite their passion for Kung Fu movies and science fiction as the main inspiration behind *The Matrix* (Wachowski, 1999). The topic of questioning the "nature of reality" is something that has always resonated with them: "the whole idea of cyberpunk it's a great way of creating a sense of alienation and disconnection and alternate worlds being caught in these quasi dreams and quasi conscious states" (Wachowski, 1999). Their comments on quasi conscious and dream states highlight their interest in exploring elements of the unconscious mind.

Bestselling author David Mitchell, who wrote *Cloud Atlas* (2004), which the Wachowskis would later adapt into a movie, stated that: "The Wachowskis have a mythic sensibility, consciously clothing ancient stories in new dress, language, and form" (Hermin, 2012). The Wachowskis themselves stated that: "The Bible seeks to answer a lot of relevant questions for man...In the film... there's the whole idea of the messiah" (Corliss, 1999). The statement that the Bible acts to answer many of man's questions aligns itself with the Jungian belief that mythology serves the same function (Jung et al, 1964, 58). Mitchell's view that the Wachowskis dress mythological stories in new forms highlights the potential for

mythological semiotics within *The Matrix*. The Wachowskis state that within *The Matrix* there are Greek mythological references: “We have Orpheus and Morpheus... It’s a story about consciousness, a child’s perception of an adult’s world. *The Matrix* is about the birth and evolution of consciousness. It starts off crazy, then things start to make sense” (Corliss, 1999). This description of *The Matrix* starting off crazy and then beginning to make sense can be likened to the process of individuation, bringing the unknown unconscious archetypes to the known conscious realm.

The final section of the dissertation aims to apply Jungian theory to *The Matrix*. Using this research, the dissertation will aim to see to what extent *The Matrix* can be read as a modern-day mythological cultural text, its ultimate goal to bring the archetypes within the collective unconscious to the conscious realm (Jung *et al*, 2015, np). Campbell in his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) sets out the common steps associated with *the hero’s journey*. For the purpose of this dissertation, the steps as he describes them will be followed. These steps will be examined under Jung’s theories on the archetypes and the collective unconscious.

*The hero’s journey* can be found in myths all over the world and throughout history. *The hero’s journey* in myth represents the quest for the treasure that is wholeness, which as described earlier is the realisation of the archetypes residing within the collective unconscious. Jung states: “one who has risked the fight with the dragon and is not overcome by it wins the hoard, the treasure hard to attain” (Jung *et al*, 2015, np). Commenting on *the hero’s journey*, Jung is stating that within the human psyche is the knowledge that if one wishes to unlock the human potential associated with the realisation of the archetypes, partaking on *the hero’s journey* and slaying the dragon is the only way to achieve such wholeness.

*The hero’s Journey* follows a basic pattern in the majority of its incarnations. The patterns that this dissertation is concerned with are as follows: *The immaculate conception*, *call to adventure*, *refusal to the call*, *supernatural aid* and *the ultimate boon*. Also discussed is the Jungian concept of what can be seen as the opposite to the concept of individuation, *participation mystique*. Campbell states: “Mythology is to relate found truth to the living of a life” (Campbell, 1991, np). Campbell here reiterates the Jungian belief that mythology is the projection of the knowledge contained within the archetypes of the collective unconscious.

*The immaculate conception* is often associated with the beginning of *the hero’s journey*. Jung states that a child’s connection with the instinctive, archetypal stage of consciousness might get lost throughout the course of its life. This fear over a child losing its birth parents has led to the tradition of giving a child two godparents in addition to the biological parents. A “godfather” and “godmother” represent those responsible for the spiritual well-being of the child. This is known as “dual birth” (Jung, 2014, 68). Jung states that within hero mythology, “dual birth” is often represented by the descent of the hero from both human and non-human parents (Jung, 2014, 68). This motif is present in *The Matrix* where humans are born and grown through a combination of machine and human. This dual birth can be found in stories such as that of Jesus of Nazareth, who was immaculately conceived by the Holy Spirit and then carried by the Virgin Mary. In the ancient Greek play *Ion* (414-412 BC), Ion is the son of Creusa the princess of Athens and the god Apollo. Such a birth acts as a precursor to the potential the human has for transcending mere human nature, this being the continued ignorance in regards to the archetypes within the collective unconscious. In relation to Jungian theory, giving children godparents can be viewed as the archetypal belief that such

an act bestows them with the spiritual ability to partake in their own *hero's journey*. The dual birth in *The Matrix* can be viewed as a modern-day projection of this archetypal knowledge.

What can be considered as one of the most important stages of *the hero's journey* according to Campbell is the *call to adventure* (Campbell, 1949, 42). Upon awakening at the start of the movie, Neo is met with text on his computer screen stating for him to “follow the white rabbit” (Wachowski, 1999). Not sure what to make of this, he ends up spotting a white rabbit tattoo on the shoulder of a girl who insists he follows the group to a nightclub. In Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Alice follows a white rabbit down a hole to Wonderland. The rabbit acts as a metaphor for following one's curiosity and calling to the underworld. According to Campbell, a freak event such as the spotting of the rabbit on the girl's shoulder is an example of how the adventure can begin. It “reveals an unsuspected world, and the individual is drawn into a relationship with forces which are not rightly understood” (Campbell 2008, 42). Campbell makes reference to Freud's belief that a blunder is not just mere chance. It is the result of suppressed desires and conflicts, and a blunder may result in the opening of a destiny (Campbell, 1949, 42). This illustration by the movie of chance leading to the unknown can be viewed as the archetypal knowledge that one's *call to adventure*, their chance to partake on the quest of individuation, can appear in the most basic of ways. This knowledge gained from watching the movie can aid the viewer in being ready to act when their own *call to adventure* presents itself.

Jung comments on how the call may not seem encouraging to begin with: “This path to the primordial religious experience is the right one, but how many can recognise it?” (Jung, 2014, 217). Jung goes on to say that there will be a small voice from afar “presaging danger and hazardous adventure” (Jung, 2014, 217). This element of temptation to retract from the journey, if acted on, is known by Campbell as the *refusal to the call* (Campbell, 1949, 40). While initially intrigued by the potential of meeting Morpheus, Neo then refuses to follow Morpheus' directions to escape the incoming agents (Wachowski, 1999). This acts as Neo's *refusal to the call*. To Jung, this would represent the succumbing to the voice deterring one from the journey of individuation. Similarities can be seen in *The Lion King* (1991), in which Simba refuses his call to return to the Pride Lands and take his place as king as he feels guilt over his father's death (Allers and Minkoff, 1994). Campbell states *the refusal to the call* within myth is essentially a refusal to give up one's own interests for the greater good (Campbell, 2008, 40). Neo ultimately does answer the call to adventure. This suggests that his realisation that the sacrificing of oneself for the greater good is one of the major archetypes in the process of one's quest for wholeness. The viewer can obtain the archetypal knowledge that self-sacrifice is key to unlocking one's true potential through watching Neo's acceptance of the fact. This highlights the continued relevance of *The Matrix* has acting as a modern-day cultural myth.

What is potentially the most recognisable stage of *the hero's journey* is the stage in which the hero comes into contact with ‘the guide’. Campbell refers to this stage as the stage of *supernatural aid* (Campbell, 2008, 57). Often this aid comes in the form of a: “little old crone or old man, who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass” (Campbell, 2008, 57). In *The Matrix*, the wise old man appears in the guise of Morpheus. Neo is acquainted with Morpheus who is named after the Greek god of the same name. In Greek mythology, Morpheus is the god of dreams, a fitting name considering Morpheus' quest to break humanity free from the dream state in which it finds itself. Jung refers to the archetypal wise old man as “the superior master and teacher”, the archetype “who symbolizes the pre-existent meaning hidden in the chaos of life” (Jung, 2014, 35).



This status of superiority, knowledge of the truth of life and willingness to pass down knowledge to an apprentice is a trend often seen throughout myth and story. Yoda in the *Star Wars* series represents the archetypal old wise man, passing his knowledge onto Luke Skywalker. Jung states that the wise old man appears where: “insight, understanding, good advice, determination, planning, etc., are needed but cannot be mustered on one’s own resources” (Jung, 2014, 216). Morpheus fills the gap in Neo’s psyche in regards to his lack of knowledge of what the Matrix is and also his lack of ability in regards to fighting it. In describing the Matrix to Neo, Morpheus states: “The Matrix is everywhere. It is all around us. Even now, in this very room... You are a slave, Neo. Like everyone else, you were born into bondage. Into a prison that you cannot taste or see or touch. A prison for your mind” (Wachowski, 1999). This description of the Matrix can be viewed as a metaphor for what Jung refers to as *participation mystique*, which he explains is nothing but an unconscious identity (Jung, 2014, 126).

To further explain the term originally coined by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Jung uses the example of the audience at the theatre. While there, everyone is connected through an invisible unconscious relationship. This scenario can lead to one feeling: “borne along by the universal wave of identity with others. It may be a pleasant feeling- one sheep among ten thousand!” (Jung, 2014, 126). The term can be viewed as an opposite to that of individuation. Instead of one partaking on *the hero’s journey* and recognising the archetypes within, they lack a sense of an individual persona. They are defined by the external world. Their personality is dictated by the social setting they find themselves in. Seeing as the role of mythological texts is to educate on how to live to one’s full potential, the highlighting by Morpheus of Neo’s lack of individual self within the Matrix can be interpreted by the viewer as a warning about how conforming to participation mystique, lack of individuality, can hinder one’s development in their quest for individuation; with the ultimate goal, wholeness, the celebration and realisation of one’s unique self. The highlighting of *participation mystique* and its warning against it supports the view that *The Matrix* acts as a modern-day mythological text.

In *The Matrix*, Neo ultimately defeats the agents. This latter stage of *the hero’s journey* is known as *the ultimate boon* (Campbell, 2008, 148). *The ultimate boon* for Neo is the newfound abilities that he acquires after he defeats Agent Smith. In a mythological sense, this is representative of the hero bringing the archetypes within the unconscious to the conscious realm. The hero has succeeded on the path to wholeness after realising the archetypes within. He has transcended mere humanity. Neo defeating Agent Smith can be viewed as the modern-day equivalent of mythological tales in which the hero slays the dragon and obtains the “treasure hard to attain” that is wholeness, the realisation of the archetypes within the unconscious (Jung *et al*, 2015, np). The victory by Neo can be viewed as inspirational. This inspiration aligns itself with the Jungian belief that the role of mythological texts is to inspire and guide one on their own path to individuation.

In conclusion, I feel the Jungian analysis of *The Matrix* has provided enough evidence to suggest that the movie can and does act as a modern-day mythological text. Jung’s belief that a mythological text acts to reveal the knowledge within the archetypes of the collective unconscious appears to be true when viewing *The Matrix*. If we are to look at the particular archetypal motifs of *the immaculate conception*, *the call to adventure*, *supernatural aid* and *the ultimate boon*, as well as the concepts of *participation mystique* and *the hero’s journey* as a whole, the knowledge and guidance believed to be conveyed in these motifs and concepts appear to be equally conveyed in *The Matrix* as it is in mythological tales of the past. It is for this reason that *The Matrix* can be considered a modern-day mythological text.

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