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Reassessing The Matrix/Reloaded

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Abstract

Much has been written about Larry and Andy Wachowski's film *The Matrix* and on practically every angle: from philosophical precedents to the realities of artificial intelligence. Religious scholars, too, have thrown their hats into the academic ring, expounding on the Gnostic, Buddhist and Christian aspects found therein. But as many have discovered, the Wachowski brothers are syncretists, pulling bits from here and there and then mixing it all together in a science fiction-martial arts stew. They do this so thoroughly that when one tries to impose a singular religious paradigm on top of the film(s), slotting in the characters one-by-one, it seems to work only until put back within the context of the film(s). It is then when everything begins to unravel. Even though scholars have done it time and time again employing one religious worldview to understand *The Matrix* and *The Matrix: Reloaded* simply does not work. It's almost too simplistic a method for a film this complex. And this paper will demonstrate why.

The Matrix: Reloaded opened May 15 with much anticipation and fanfare. Not only did it vanquish its competition, knocking *X2: X-Men United* from the No. 1 spot, but on its opening weekend it also earned $93.3 million, making it "the second-highest first weekend grossing film of all time."[1] It has been four years since part one of the trilogy opened and many wondered how, now that Neo (Keanu Reeves) was freed from his artificial intelligence slave masters, the saga would progress. Now we know - not well. Two hundred and fifty thousand sentinels are rapidly drilling into Zion, the last human outpost, and Neo can't sleep, for his dreams contain unsettling images of Trinity's (Carrie-Anne Moss) fate.[2] But it's worse than that. When he encounters the Architect (Helmut Bakaitis), the Godlike creator of the Matrix.[3] Neo learns that the prophecy might end the war but not in the way Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) has envisioned. In the final reel the film's spiritual leader is left a broken man, "I dreamed a dream, and now that dream is gone from me."[4]

A number of scholars have looked to The Bible to understand *The Matrix*, and rightly so. The basics seem to be there. Neo/Thomas Anderson is the One, the predetermined messiah who has the innate purpose of and ability to save humanity. His name says it all - as so many have pointed out - Neo is an anagram for the One. This Greek word also means new with the additional mantle of being something in a different or abnormal manner.[5] This certainly fits Neo, who really is a "new and

improved" human; he's superhuman. Unlike his shipmates, he can read the raw code without need of a computer monitor. By *Reloaded* he can fly, dodge and stop bullets and move at unimaginable speeds; he's Superman in a dystopian milieu.[6]

Before transforming into Neo, his hacker alter-ego, he is Thomas Anderson, the respectable corporate programming drone. Even when he is enmeshed in the "dream world" his name hints at greater things. When broken into its components, Anderson becomes "Son of Man."[7] The name Thomas also furthers ties the Bible to *The Matrix*, for in the beginning this character suffers from doubt. "No! I don't believe it. It's not possible," he tells Morpheus once he's learned the truth - that human beings are grown in fields so that their body heat can be converted into batteries to run the master machine. Put all of this into a Christian context and it is not difficult to envision Neo as Christ, the man-God sent to save humanity from evil forces. Building on this connection, in Reloaded when Neo and Trinity come out of the elevator into Zion, a large group of followers have assembled; waiting for the messiah's return. Many extend offerings or ask for help. "I have a son Jacob, please watch over him," one woman pleads. Another begs Neo to watch over her "daughter on the Icarus."[8]

Other scholars have turned to Buddhism to understand Neo, casting him as the Buddha or a bodhisattva, an enlightened being who forsakes nirvana to stay behind and help humanity. And evidence in the film(s) supports this, too. Morpheus

wakes Neo to the fact that the world he has taken to be real is anything but. It is maya, literally "deception, illusion ... The continually changing, impermanent phenomenal world of appearances and forms, of illusion or decision, which an unenlightened mind takes as the only reality."[9] Only by seeing the truth will Neo be released from this "prison for your mind." One visual hint in *The Matrix* that Neo has surrendered himself to his new life takes place after his muscles have been rebuilt.[10] When he goes to meet the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar his head is still covered with a dark stubble and his shoulders are wrapped in a blanket, making this recent initiate resemble a Buddhist monk. And life on the ship is anything but luxurious. Like the monks of so many traditions, these prophecy-followers subsist on a single bowl of bland "gruel" and cope with cold, cramped accommodations.[11] In addition to Buddhism, Flannery-Dailey and Wagner look to Gnosticism for elucidation and conclude that Neo must be the "redeemer figure who willingly enters the world in order to share liberating knowledge, facilitating escape for anyone able to understand."[12]

All of these approaches work on a certain level but are far from decoding *The Matrix* trilogy. The problem with associating Neo with Jesus, the Buddha or the Gnostic redeemer is that all these traditions have negative attitudes toward the physical body. In Matthew 16:21, Jesus tells Peter, "You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." In

Galatians 5:16 Paul writes, "live by the spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the spirit, and what the spirit desires is opposed to the flesh ... Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness ...envy, drunkenness, carousing ... I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." And in 1 Peter 11, the author writes "I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against your soul." Finally consider what God did to the wicked cities Sodom and Gomorrah[13] in Genesis 19:15-22. Even today Christians think of Jesus as celibate and when anyone tries to present him as anything else - *The Last Temptation of Christ* springs to mind - the placards come out and the teeth gnash.

Before he became the Buddha, the enlightened one was Siddhartha, a married prince who also had a son, appropriately named Rahula or "fetter." When he "woke up" to reality - that sickness, old age and death wait for us all - he cast off his family, becoming an ascetic. Even when he found the Middle Way, he didn't go back to being a householder. At the core of his teachings is the fact that not only is craving or desire, the thirst for sensual pleasure and the becoming and passing away, the root of suffering but it is the very thing that keeps us shackled to the wheel of birth and rebirth.

As for the Gnostics, they were dualists who had a revulsion of the human body. To them the spirit was everything. "The majority of the sects demanded an ascetic life with rules for the mortification of the flesh and a special prohibition on marriage (or at least on procreation), so that the divine soul might be liberated from the bonds of sense and bodily appetite and assisted to turn itself toward higher things."[14]

So what does all this have to do with Neo? Although he may seem to be celibate in *The Matrix*, by *Reloaded* his lust is clearly a driving force. The first time we see that the love between Trinity and Neo is far from a Platonic ideal is in a Zion elevator, when alone the two grapple passionately. Their relationship escalates to an almost five-minute sex act intercut with images of sweat-drenched Zionists bumping and grinding in the Temple. Those who have equated this serene messiah with the chaste Jesus and Buddha might be left scratching their heads.

What's more puzzling is how does this make us reassess Cypher (Joe Pantoliano), the supposed Judas Iscariot of the piece. In *The Matrix* he meets with Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving) at a cyber-created restaurant where he drinks fine wine, smokes a cigar and eats a juicy steak.[15] He will give up Morpheus if the Agent will reinsert him into the Matrix. "Ignorance is bliss," Cypher says. From this scene, scholars have shouted a mighty "aha." Cypher, who embraces the sensual world and its distractions, must be the villain. Then we remember what Mouse (Matt

Doran) tells Neo while he and the crew of the Nebuchadnezzer are dining on their bland bowl of "synthesized aminos, vitamins and minerals:" "To deny our impulses is to deny the very thing that makes us human." Mouse refers here not only to the woman in the red dress[16] but also to those things that give a person pleasure. The only significant difference between Cypher and Neo is that one responds to his "impulses" in the dream world and the other acts on them in the real world.[17]

Those using Buddhism to understand *The Matrix* cast Morpheus as a sort of Zen dogen or master. Unfortunately, he's neither an expert warrior nor very "enlightened"[18] - nothing more than a trick; a way to control the humans. Although the freed humans believe they can make a choice, their choices only lead them closer to their obliteration. When looking at Morpheus through a Christian lens, some scholars have labeled him the story's John the Baptist, the desert prophet who in John 3:28-30 said, "'I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him ... He must increase, but I must decrease."[19] Since being freed from the construct by the original "man born inside that had the ability to change what he wanted, to remake the Matrix as he saw fit" Morpheus has been on a zealous quest for the One. Not everyone believes in the prophecy, though. The camp is split between those who label him crazy and those who treat him like an uber-cool rock star. I would suggest he is more like Moses, the Biblical prophet who leads the Israelites out of bondage, in this case the Matrix could stand in for pharaoh.[20]

For scholars the most problematic character in *The Matrix* trilogy has been Trinity. And for good reason. This warrior maiden who fights alongside the men and several times rescues them - even our savior Neo - really has no equal in Christianity or in Buddhism. Her name signifies the coequal triune elements of the Godhead, which consists of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,[21] which is interesting because this character also functions on a variety of levels. As Neo's eternal, predestined mate, who also proves nurturing and protective, Trinity has been interpreted by some as Mary Magdalene, the woman who waits near Jesus' tomb to attend to his body and who witnesses his resurrection. Trinity, too, hovers protectively over Neo's body when he goes into the Matrix. After he's been fighting the Agents, at the end of the first film, and he flatlines, she says to him, "Neo, please, listen to me. I promised to tell you the rest. The Oracle, she told me that I'd fall in love and that man, the man I loved, would be the One. You see? You can't be dead, Neo, you can't be because I love you. You hear me? I love you?" She kisses him lightly on the mouth then commands him to "get up," which he does. In this capacity not only is she the divine spark that resurrects Neo it also is her love that transforms him from the confused and lost Thomas Anderson into the still-conflicted-but-getting-there, ready-to-get-the-job-done Neo. This raises the question then, as one of my students asked, is Trinity God? She certainly watches over Neo and on several occasions seems to be directing his actions. For instance, in *Reloaded* Neo meets 100 copies of Agent Smith and Trinity, who is watching

the code, tells him to get out of there, which he eventually does, Superman style. More importantly, though, at the end of the film she goes into the Matrix - disobeying Neo in the process - to "tear the whole goddamn building down" and, as so many times before, ensures that the mission is a successful one. In the ship's hierarchy Trinity also out ranks the chosen one and even refuses to let him single-handedly rescue Morpheus. Incidentally, she is the first freed human to make face-to-face contact with Neo.[22]

In this paper, I've suggested that no one religious worldview helps to connect the dots. And, in some ways, as exegetical tools Christianity, Buddhism and Gnosticism don't always offer the truest interpretations. Hinduism is one worldview that has not yet been applied to the trilogy and, depending on the curve ball thrown by the Wachowskis in *Revolutions*, it may or may not be helpful in the end. Despite that, let's press on. In *The Matrix*, Morpheus explains there's a problem with the date. Neo might think it's 1999, when in fact it's much later, sometime in 2199. In *Reloaded*, during his rousing speech at the Temple, Morpheus reminds the Zion inhabitants that after 100 years of fighting they are still standing. But then the Architect throws a spanner in the works. He explains that the current Neo is the sixth "One" to navigate the Matrix. We can surmise that when this messianic anomaly chooses the (wrong) door that supposedly saves humanity, the whole process starts over again. Now provided this simulated "video game" resets itself

every 101 years - an important number in the Matrix - then that means that existence is an unending cycle of creation, growth and death. Although the numbers don't match up exactly, this concept of cyclical time comes close to the Hindu idea of yugas or epochs, which start out with everyone doing his or her duty and obeying one law but ends with people becoming weak and lazy and morality disappearing completely. Both Agent Smith and the Architect suggest that the first Matrix was perfect; a kind of Eden. However, when the human minds refused to accept it, the Architect had to look to an intuitive program, the Oracle, to solve the problem. Her solution - to offer the slaves a choice. "99 percent of the subjects accept (the program) if given a choice," the Architect tells the bewildered Neo.

Hinduism also explains how our savior can copulate with Trinity. As in the Greek tradition, Hindu deities typically have a consort - Shiva has Parvati; Vishnu has Lakshmi and Brahma has Sarasvati - and their relationship is often a physical one. Of these three male deities, Neo has more in common with Vishnu, who throughout history has assumed a certain shape or avatara.[23] According to Jan Knappert's *An Encyclopedia of Myth and Legend*, "what distinguishes Vishnu from the other gods, it is his sattyaguna, his virtuous character, i.e. the kindness and mercy for human beings. This quality is sometimes described as narayana 'moving the waters', i.e., granting rain on the desert of human needs." The entry goes on to explain that Vishnu often gets compared to Jesus Christ, "who also was born in

human form to take on evil." In these stories "whenever Vishnu descends to earth ... his wife Lakshmi will also arrive ... to grow up, meet him, destined to be his wife on earth as well as in heaven."[24]

Unlike the majority of "orthodox" religions, Hinduism is populated with strong and powerful female deities. In fact, in one of the branches of Kali-puja, adherents worship the powerful tripartite goddess as exemplified by Kali-Durga-Shakti. "In this doctrine Brahma and Shiva are inactive, but Kali is the Shakti, the fountain of energy."[25] Kali is a ferocious, blood-thirsty world-ruler who "leaves behind her a trail of death and destruction."[26] Devi Durga, comprised of aspects from the 12 gods in the Hindu pantheon, is depicted with eight hands, each one holding a weapon. She is, as Knappert said, the goddess of defense, warfare, wisdom and knowledge. "The goddess promised that she would arise and intervene each time the Asuras (demons) returned to the world to resume the fighting in their efforts to revive the forces of evil in the cosmos."[27] Trinity, the black leather wearing warrior, who can more than hold her own in battle, perhaps owes more to this tradition than any other.

Finally, Hinduism might help us fathom how a messianic figure could unflinchingly murder countless innocents (as evidenced during the rescue mission in *The Matrix*.)[28] In the *Mahabharata*, there is a 606 verse poem called the *Bhagavad-gita*, which means "the song of God." In this section, Arjuna, an archer

from the kshatriya class, has doubts about going into battle against his family. Krishna, who is his charioteer, explains why Arjuna must fulfill his dharma or duty. "Do not fear to kill," the God says, "I have already killed them." As Knappert explains, Hinduism teaches that "everything that happens is the manifestation of immutable universal laws. The warriors must kill, the victim must die, both should do so resignedly, since it is their destiny."[29] Gavin Flood further elucidates the lessons taught in the *Gita*, writing that "dharma and renunciation are compatible: action (karma) should be performed with complete detachment; the soul is immortal and until liberated subject to rebirth ... The soul is not killed nor does it kill." The crucial element here is to perform one's dharma without attachment, which is why, even if the movie audience feels uncomfortable at how quickly and without remorse Trinity and Neo blow away the policemen and soldiers, "no action accrues to a person who acts with a controlled mind, without expectation and contented with whatever comes his way. Through non-attachment to action, and knowledge of the Lord, a person will be liberated and be united with the Lord at death."[30]

Although Hinduism elucidates some elements contained in *The Matrix*, it's also far from the perfect key. Taoism, Shintoism, popular literature, anime and manga, and even popular films from *Star Wars* to *Vertigo* help us peel away more and more layers. Why this film has been so frequently discussed is undoubtedly

because of its innovative, and often unconventional, use of myth and religious thought. The question that drives many of us truly is - What is *The Matrix*?

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[1] The Associated Press, May 19, 2003.

[2] There is a real ambivalence about dreams in the films. Morpheus is the one who "awakens" Neo to the fact that he has been living in a "dream world," a false and deceptive reality, and yet this character is named after the god of dreams in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In *Reloaded* Neo's dreams do reflect reality; they depict things that come to pass. "You have the sight. You see without time," the Oracle tells him in the second film. The Judaeo-Christian tradition makes extensive use of dreams as revelation. For instance, in Matthew 1:20-24, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream and prophesizes the coming of Jesus. Interestingly, the Nebuchadnezzer is named for the Babylonian king whose "spirit was troubled and his sleep left him" (Daniel 2:1).

[3] It's interesting to think that this God, who now controls humans, is actually the child of the humans. Morpheus: "Through the blinding inebriation of hubris, we marveled at our magnificence as we gave birth to A.I. ... a singular consciousness that spawned an entire race of machines." The way to be freed from bondage, Morpheus claims, is to destroy the Matrix, which would mean the elimination of "God." So, does the film present an anti-religious sentiment? Are humans, metaphorically, "imprisoned" by their creation of God? Sigmund Freud might have agreed. Should the Zionists succeed in their task, then as Councilor Hamann (Anthony Zerbe) ponders in *Reloaded*, how will they survive without the machines to create the air to breathe and water to drink? The last human outpost is, after all, in "deep underground. Near the earth's core, where it's still warm."

[4] This phrase echoes Edgar Allan Poe's poem "A Dream Within a Dream" (1827): "Take this kiss upon the brow! And, in parting from you now, Thus much let me avow- You are not wrong, who deem That my days have been a dream; Yet if hope has flown away In a night, or in a day, In a vision, or in none, Is it therefore the less gone? All that we see or seem Is but a dream within a dream. I stand amid the roar Of a surf-tormented shore, And I hold within my hand Grains of the golden sand- How few! yet how they creep through my fingers to the deep, While I weep- while I weep! O God! can I not grasp Them with a tighter clasp? O God! can I not save One from the pitiless wave? Is all that we see or seem But a dream within a dream?"

[5] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* online.

[6] In *Reloaded*, when asked where Neo is, Link (Harold Perrineau), the pilot of the Nebuchadnezzer, says he is "doing his Superman thing." At this point Neo soars through the sky, his Monsignor-inspired robe swirling behind him like a cape. Another Superman nod comes at the end of the film when Neo must save the fatally wounded Trinity, who is falling from a skyscraper. Flying at speeds that blow apart buildings and leave cars lifting in his wake, Neo scoops his soulmate into his arms, much as Superman (Christopher Reeve) saved the falling Lois Lane (Margot Kidder). Neo then reaches into her body and extracts the bullet. When Trinity dies, he

performs another miracle by restarting her heart. When Lois dies in *Superman* (1978), the superhero performs a commensurate miracle by orbiting the Earth, counterclockwise, so as to turn back time.

[7] Andras in Greek translates to man. Frances Flannery-Dailey and Rachel Wagner point out this out in "Wake up! Gnosticism and Buddhism in *The Matrix*," in *Journal of Religion & Film*, Vol. 5, No. 2, October 2001. They also mention that when Neo enters the Nebuchadnezzar for the first time and the camera pans across the ship's interior, it rests on Mark III no. 11, the Biblical reference that reads "Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and shouted, 'You are the Son of God.'"

[8] In the Synoptic Gospels, great crowds gather around Jesus, asking to be healed.

[9] *The Shambhala Dictionary of Buddhism and Zen* (Boston, Shambhala 1991), 141-2. The definition explains that in the case of Zen, "it is not actually an illusion or deception to regard the phenomenal world as real; the deception consists rather in taking the phenomenal world to be immutable and only reality and thus to misplace the view of what is essential." The absolute and the relative are the same.

[10] The sequence during which the crew of the Nebuchadnezzer rebuilds Neo might remind some of the opening lines of television series *The Six Million Dollar Man*, "We can rebuild him. We have the technology. We have the capability to make the world's first bionic man ... Better than he was before. Better ... stronger ... faster." On more than one occasion, Neo is referred to as "some kind of machine." When the Architect explains to Neo the meaning of everything he says, "although the process has altered your consciousness you remain irrevocably human," which is interesting because several times in the film people or Agents remark that Neo is still "only human." Does this foreshadow his transformation into something else? Like a machine? Several publications have mentioned that the anime films *Ghost in the Shell* and *Akira* influenced the Wachowskis. If they follow the format of these two, then a physical transformation is inevitable. See Susan Jolliffe Napier, *Anime From Akira to Princess Mononoke: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

[11] Christians, Buddhists and Hindus have a long tradition of asceticism. In Christianity, asceticism was practiced for the purpose of penance and purification, because as Thomas Head explains in his essay "The Holy Person in Comparative Perspective," "the body was seen as sinful and in need of punishment in order to attain spiritual perfection. Thus it was not sufficient to withdraw the soul from the body; rather the ascetic had to withdraw from human society, which was sinful in its fallen state." Found at the *ORB: The Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies* (*http://orb.rhodes.edu/encyclop/religion/hagiography/compare.htm*).

[12] There is a problem with interpreting *The Matrix* as Gnostic, because Neo is never shown passing his "gnosis" onto anyone else. (In *Reloaded* Morpheus says that "they have freed more minds in six months than in six years" and the Kid, who is played by Clayton Watson and who figures into one of the *Animatrix* sequences, says he owes his life to Neo, because the messiah pulled him out of the Matrix. Neo, however, denies he did anything.) And even when Neo does gain knowledge, either from the Architect or the Oracle, he is close-lipped about what he has learned, saying only what the others need to know. He is not a teacher, as Morpheus is, he is, for the most part, Zion's weapon - the Zen archer or the Shaolin monk. Also problematic is the fact

that he, himself, does not really understand what's happening to him. Gnostics are dualists who reject the body and embrace the spirit, which seems to be what is happening in *The Matrix*. But it is not. In this context, it is the spirit that is problem. To be in the Matrix, one's body is asleep in a cocoon-like pod filled with ooze. All that is engaged of that person is his or her mind; the synapses that have been tapped and used by A.I. In *Reloaded* Councilor Hamann tells Neo that he hates sleeping, because that is all he did for 11 years of his life. Now he is making up for lost time. In Zion, particularly, the body is embraced and celebrated. During Neo and Trinity sex scene, the inhabitants of Zion dance, sweat and express their sexuality. They are their bodies. It's important, too, that this takes place in Zion's Temple, the holy of holies. (If there's any doubt about this, the Kid removes his shoes before entering the space.)

[13] The scene mentioned in endnote 13 conveys a sense of these famed cities but also contains elements of a bacchanal.

[14] Henry Chadwick. *The Early Church* (Penguin, 1967): 36.

[15] Before Trinity, Morpheus and the Keymaker (Randall Duk Kim) get onto the interstate in *Reloaded* they drive past a billboard with steak written on it.

[16] She is an expression of carnality, perhaps original sin, that gets picked up again in Reloaded. This time she's a blond, dressed in pink, and eating a aphrodisiac-laden piece of chocolate cake, courtesy of Merovingian (Lambert Wilson).

[17] I would argue that in *The Matrix* Cypher could not be Judas as this Biblical character was working against Jesus, who scholars have associated with Neo. In the context of the film, Cypher is not working against Neo. He is gunning for Morpheus. In fact during the climactic scene, Cypher leans over Morpheus and says, "Surprise asshole. Bet you never saw this coming, did you? God, I wish I could be there when they break you. I wish I could walk in just as it happens, so right then, you'd know it was me." In the shooting script, found in *The Art of the Matrix* on pages 329-330, Cypher knows that Neo is the sixth "One" and even informs Neo of this fact, "I'm going to let you in on a little secret here. Now don't tell him I told you this, but this ain't the first time Morpheus thought he found the one ... It keeps him going. Maybe it keeps all of us going ... (There have been) Five. Since I've been here (Neo: What happened to them?) Dead. All dead. Honestly? Morpheus. He got them all amped up believing in bullshit. I watched each of them take on an Agent and I watched each of them die." Later in the script, p. 338, before he takes Neo to the Oracle, Morpheus laments his actions: "I believed what the Oracle told me ... No, I misunderstood what she told me. I believed it was all about me. I believed that all I had to do was point my finger and anoint whoever I chose. I was wrong, Neo. Terribly wrong. Not a day or night passes that I do not think of them. After the fifth, I lost my way. I doubted everything the Oracle had said. I doubted myself. And then I saw you, Neo, and my world changed ... You are the sixth and the last. You are the One." Removing these sequences does several things: it makes Cypher seem more diabolical because we no longer understand why he might doubt the prophecy and, in some ways, it makes Morpheus less fanatical. Being so zealous as to watch five men die for your cause seems a bit extreme and fundamentalist; we might begin to see him as a "terrorist." Removing this detail makes him seem more reasonable.

[18] In *The Matrix* Agents capture Morpheus and nearly kill him and in *Reloaded* Agent Smith nearly hacks into him. More often than not, Neo and/or Trinity have to save him. Compare that to

the reptilian Yoda, the quintessential Zen/Jedi master, of the Star Wars series. Over his long-lifetime, he has learned to manipulate objects with his mind and to see into the future and present. As a warrior, he is unbeatable, because of his lightning-fast martial arts abilities. (At the end of *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* HE comes to everyone's rescue.)

[19] I have often wondered if the Wachowskis are attempting to do what the early church writers, such as Irenaeus and Justin Martyr, did in their writings - show that the Old Testament, here typified by Morpheus, predicts the coming of the Christ. "So the history of salvation is a progressive education in which God has gradually brought man forth step by step in a long process culminating in the incarnation of the divine Word with a universal gospel diffused throughout the world by the church" (Chadwick, 80-81). What is more, we might see Morpheus, in his weakness, as the last gaspings of the Old Testament, which is giving way to the rightful and triumphant Christianity, as represented by Neo, the "new" Christ.

[20] On the Nebuchadnezzer Morpheus must endure the same kind of complaints that Moses might have while in the wilderness (Numbers 11). Cypher: "I'm tired of this war, I'm tired of fighting, I'm tired of this ship, of being cold, of eating the same goddamn goop every day."

[21] Some have suggested she is closer to the Celtic concept of the three goddesses: maiden (young woman), mother and crone.

[22] The "knock, knock" Morpheus sends to Neo at the beginning of *The Matrix* seems to come straight out of Matthew 7:7-8, "Ask and it will be given you; search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." The thing that Neo is searching for, of course, is an answer to the question - What is the Matrix.

[23] According to *An Encyclopedia of Myth and Legend Indian Mythology*, these are Matsya (fish), Kurma (tortoise), Varaha (wild boar), Narasimha (man-lion), Vamana (dwarf), Rama, Buddha and Kalki ('White horse'). The latter is predicted to arrive at the end of the world to dispatch the last demons and all the wicked people before the world can be renewed.

[24] Found on page 266.

[25] Found on page 220. Kali is depicted as a "black woman," which is interesting in that when she is in the Matrix, Trinity is garbed head to toe in black vinyl or rubber. During British rule of India, the Thuggees, an organized band of thieves and murderers who strangled their victims as sacrifices to Kali, were suppressed. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* incorporates the worship of Kali into its plot.

[26] Found on page 133.

[27] Found on page 88.

[28] In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments states "You shall not murder." And Exodus 21:12 reads, "Whoever strikes a person mortally shall be put to death." Although Jesus teaches, "Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also"

(Matthew 5:39), he also says "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 11:34). If we interpret Neo as the second coming of Christ, there was a first man born into the Matrix, then this would be more in line with the gun-toting messiah. Consider in Revelation 19:11-16: "He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is Word of God ... from his mouth comes a sharp sword ... On his robe and on his thigh has the name inscribed 'King of kings and Lord of lords.'"

[29] Found on page 48.

[30] *An Introduction to Hinduism* (1996):125-26. Matthew 10:28 offers a similar sentiment, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."