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Identity, Hyperreality and Science fiction: *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer*

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Technologies can create and simulate unnatural and artificial events and occurrences, thus making them appear real to humans who encounter them. There are people in the world who foresee events differently, and with the help of technology they do many amazing things that change and influence others. Artificial intelligence is one of those technologies, and it is represented within the works in *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer*, confusing the differences between what is real, or not. The technologies discussed and shown in the science fictions *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer* change the way characters perceive reality, and thus they become confused in distinguishing between realities and also in the beliefs of their own identity. In *The Matrix* which is written and directed by Larry and Andy Wachowski humans are fighting against machines to free themselves and looking for the one, the person capable of fighting them, in order to do so. In *Neuromancer* by William Gibson humans are helping AI's (Neuromancer and Wintermute both are artificial intelligence computers and it is Wintermute which is controlling Case, Corto, Molly etc.) to merge, thus becoming one (Wintermute wants to merge with *Neuromancer* and ultimately builds the perfect One and names it Matrix). The minds (mainly Case and other main characters) are living a healthy life and these sudden changes change the lives of many. There are some illusions that the web has created for them and there is no escape out of it. Technologies have increased their sense of embodiment in the characters. Neo realized during his conversation with Morpheus (Matrix 37:30) that he is at two different spheres at the same time (Morpheus tells him while they were talking in the Matrix that he is no more in the year 1999 but actually he is now in the year 2199). Morpheus tells Neo that travelling in time is not a matter anymore, time is just an illusion for them. They can Jack In and Out (term used in *Neuromancer*) and they are in 2199 or 1999. In *the Matrix* this confusion of time is evident:

Neo: What is this place?

Morpheus: More important than what is when.

Neo: When?

Morpheus: You believe it's the year 1999, when in fact it's closer to 2199. (Matrix 37:30)

The above conversation between Morpheus and Neo, Neo starts to reveal the realities that are surrounding him in the form of the Matrix world and the world of humans (Zion), and he learns about these two different worlds that they are parallel to each other, one original and one created, by machines.

My research focuses on the shifting personalities within the ever changing realities throughout the movie and in the novel for both humans as well as machines (agents/sentients in the Matrix, AI's in *Neuromancer*). The context for this research is to understand these changes (identity, reality etc.) occurring in the characters of both novel. In my research I have come across different researchers and read many articles that deal with the above mentioned changes in *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer* like "β-Mentality" (Duncan Cartwright), "Cyberpunk Reloaded" (Steven Woodward), "The Narrative Construction Of Cyberspace" (Daniel Punday), "The Poetics Of Pattern Recognition" (Alex Wetmore). I explore the issues of identity and reality that comes up by comparing the science fiction novel *Neuromancer* and the movie *Matrix* on the characters. In my analysis I will reveal how human and computer interaction takes place in *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer*. I will argue about identity, hypereality issues in cyberspaces discussed in *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer*. I will argue the role of artificial intelligence and postmodern approaches in *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer*.

In *The Matrix* a major plot element is that machines are using humans as a source of getting

energy (*The Matrix* 42 min). This is also a theme which is taken by the concept from the movie *Monster Inc.* (An animated movie) in which monsters captures the screams of young children and uses those sounds for their energy source. This (energy source) is the concept which is also explained by David Icke “*Secrets Of The Matrix*” (documentary 2001, 32 min). He tells us the thoughts and ideas behind this concept. David Icke also in this documentary explains another important theme, that is oneness (42 min). These two themes will help to understand the issues of identities among different characters and this is the reason I am quoting David Icke. Cartwright’s “ $\beta$ -Mentality In *The Matrix* Trilogy” this article is about the  $\beta$ -Mentality of the trilogy *Matrix*.  $\beta$ -Mentality according to the writer means “it has its own coordinates, rules and reasons for existence.” Therefore it fits well with my topic on identity construction and existence of one. Here I will compare Cartwright’s theme with *The Matrix* and *Neuromancer* because as we will proceed I argue in *Neuromancer* that humans are helping AI’s to merge, thus becoming One (matrix). Another writer Wetmore argues about the impact of new information and communication technologies of the self and he claims that “In the urban, dystopic near future of *Neuromancer*, humans have become so entwined with their artificial surroundings that they are indiscernible from machines (71).” With reference to Nora, Wetmore argues that technology “destabilizes any sense of an essential selfhood, and problematizes the boundaries between real and artificial existence.” Furthermore Cartwright writes about representation of two worlds (*Matrix*) by differentiating ‘machine world’ that is shot in ‘green-filtered lenses’ and ‘real world’ shot in ‘blue.’ Most of his article is about reality and this is the reason I have used it. In the end he says that  $\beta$ -world and human world co-exist and  $\beta$ -elements cannot be replicated or divorced from the human origins. Thus it makes it easier to understand the two parallel worlds (a world created by machines and real world).

Punday argues that when some people go online in cyberspace they pretend to be someone else by changing their virtual identities. To support his arguments he includes Pavel Curtis's comments on this issue. "to some degree, they are interested in seeing 'how the other half lives,' what it feels like to be perceived as female in a community. From what I can tell, they can be quite successful at this (273)." He also writes about different kinds of cyberspaces that these individuals use, and about the use of MUDs (multi user dungeons) and MOOs (MUD object oriented chat spaces). Furthermore he writes about Case's entrance into cyberspace again and the pleasures that Case is having when integrating into the cyberspace. To understand cyberspace Punday cites, Howard Rheingold and describes it as a place free from the social-physical limitations of human interaction (197). Cyberspace seems to be a space that allows a fundamentally new and considerably freer form of social contact (198). Punday further in his article describes the term Cyberpunk and cites Brian McHale's examples as well as Clair Sponsler: According to Punday, Brian McHale, for example, has suggested that cyberpunk fiction in general translates into the formal experimentation of postmodernist fiction into speculation about narrative and meaning at the level of theme. Claire Sponsler takes this to signal a fundamental flaw in Gibson's writing:

Cyberpunk would have us believe that the selves it posits are indeterminate and fragmented, no longer unique, autonomous Individuals, but this is not the case for Gibson's protagonists. In seeming contradiction to the decentering of the subject that occurs with many of his minor characters, Gibson's protagonists still fit the well-known mold of the free-willed, self-aware, humanist subject (637).

Sponsler here makes a point that Gibson's writing suggests that all the characters have no self consciousness and are not able to make decisions on their own. This is what Gibson is trying

to convey through the novel but his main character/protagonist Case is acting the other way. Case is in full control of his decisions and is only helping Wintermute to return him the favor. Wintermute gave Case a new life.

Woodward tries to justify that the Matrix is not real and that Neo is the creation of the Matrix itself and according to Sheehan (another critic cited by Woodward) the general reader will likely prefer to “take the blue pill” and immerse herself in the world of the Matrix (447).

Woodward in his article writes about the sub-genre cyberpunk; which deals with the simulation, illusion and projection issues like the fight scenes in the movie etc. Woodward cites many critics in his article and one of those is Catherine Constable which claims that the trilogy does in fact not only express accurately Baudrillard’s notion of hyperreality but also that it proposes a solution to what Baudrillard sees as the impasse of postmodernity (446).

Yu writes about postmodern futures and oriental cities and postmodernism in general. He places *Neuromancer* (along with *Blade Runner* & *Naked Lunch*) as one of the foundational novels that explains “texts that establish an orientalist imaginative framework for the period of postmodernity’s emergence (48).” By using *oriental* here, Yu means Japan, China and other Asian countries. And saying that future postmodern cities are in Asia this makes it an “allegedly global scope.” Yu cites Fredric Jameson and describes it the problem of this alleged “scope.”:

Despite postmodernism’s allegedly global scope, and despite the insistence of Jameson and others that postmodernism is “the internal and super structural expression of the whole new wave of American military economic domination” (Jameson 5), postmodernism has for many writers and tourists come to be associated strongly with, even grounded in, Asia particularly in Japan and China (46).

In *Neuromancer* we see this role of domination performed by big corporations, and in *the Matrix* machines have already dominated the world and this perspective change later at the end of the film when we realize that there is an Architect involved in making all the editions of this world. Along with Yu, Brouillette also writes about postmodernism and capitalism. Yu also writes about science fiction but in a more blurred way whereas Brouillette has discussed it in a more clear way. According to Brouillette *Neuromancer* is a kind of postmodern fiction that attempts to address late capitalism and the increasing presence of corporate power within our global landscape. Brouillette also cites Fredric Jameson here stating that “the supreme literary expression, if not of postmodernism, then of late capitalism.” Basically Brouillette also writes about the domination (more explained in detail in the body of the essay).

I want to write about identity issues and feelings about what is real and what not according to the characters . I have chosen the above mentioned theorists and writers to explain my point of view. They are writing about the same issues that I want to write like Cartwright in “ $\beta$ -Mentality in *The Matrix Trilogy*” writes about the  $\beta$ -Mentality of the trilogy Matrix.  $\beta$ -Mentality according to the writer means “it has its own coordinates, rules and reasons for existence.” Similarly Sponsler here makes a point that Gibson’s writing “*Neuromancer*” suggests that all the characters have no self consciousness and are not able to make decisions on their own. The two writers write about two different ways of thinking and that is why I have chosen to include them in my discussion. On the other hand Yu writes about the postmodern future and oriental cities and postmodernism in general. And according to Brouillette *Neuromancer* is a kind of postmodern fiction that attempts to address late capitalism and the increasing presence of corporate power within our global landscape. Here is something about the place where the novel is written. It is also interesting to write and include this because places impacts the inhabitants (behaviors and thinking). Then I also

wanted to discuss reality and identities, so I added Woodward and Punday into the discussion: Woodward tries to justify that the Matrix is not real and that Neo is the creation of the Matrix itself and Punday argues that when some people go online in cyberspace they pretend to be someone else by changing their virtual identities.

The role of humans and machines in *Neuromancer* is quite unique as the novel is set in cyberspace, which was a new concept when it was written. The reader is introduced to gender identities, behaviors of machines/humans, and they must try to figure out who is sentient, who is human, what is real and what is not. Stevens defines cyberspace as a computer-mediated communication technology (414). Cyberspace is an analogue to culture and cyberspace is another word for culture. Among many writers Stevens tries to explain his point of view by comparing humans and machines. He uses different words for identity, like personality and profile. I argue that with *Neuromancer*, reality is mixed and minds (characters as well as readers) become confused about the difference, and Stevens has proven my point many times in his essay. I argue that humans are sentient by using a Stevens' definition. According to him in *Neuromancer*, we can perceive that there is no boundary between ourselves and our encompassing computing environments; that we are, though sentient, "merely" machines (415). And furthermore Steven asks this question by saying some will argue that computers cannot be intelligent; they are not alive. But granted that computers aren't in any readily recognizable sense alive, might we imagine that they could be cognizant? Conscious? Sentient? The definition of machine is, *that it is a combination of mechanical pieces combined together with the help of technology*, but the role of machines here in the novel is also full of motives and feelings, thus making them human like. The discussion between Case and Pauley about motives and being sentient or not takes place in the novel when construct (McCoy Pauley was teacher of Case and when he died a corporation named Sense/Net stored

his memory in a ROM, Case and Molly with the help of “Panther Moderns” breaks into Sense/Net and gets this memory ROM of McCoy Pauley which is named as ROM construct) reflects on motives:

“Motive,” the construct said. “Real motive problem, with an AI. Not human, see?”

“Well, yeah, obviously.”

“Nope. I mean it’s not human. And you can’t get a handle on it. Me I’m not human, but I respond like one. See?”

“Wait a Sec,” “Are you sentient or not?”

“Well, it feels like I am...(131)”

Construct describes the feeling of a machine being more understanding and more human-like and claims it is full of feelings and emotions. On the other hand Pauley a character in Gibson’s *Neuromancer* also named as ‘Flatliner’ comes back after his death as a ‘recording’ on a cassette (50). Stevens makes a point here that these ghosts in the machines are real like we are real. By this Steven means to say that humans are sentient: Artificial Intelligences (416). Also, Stevens justifies his statement by using Pauley as an example that Pauley says that he is not human because he cannot write poetry (417). Then again later in the novel the relation between humans and machines is mentioned in another way when Finn had a conversation with Case,: ““You guys, The Finn said, ‘you’re a pain. The Flatline here, if you were all like him, it would be really simple. He is a construct, just a buncha ROM, so he always does what I expect him to”” (417).

Machines have more power than the humans in *Neuromancer*. For example the production of

ICE, Armitage/Corto, 3Jane, and Wintermute all wanting to merge with Neuromancer is a major theme of the novel and is also driven and handled by machines. This shows the questions identity construction for the characters in *Neuromancer*. Who is in control? Is it Wintermute 'the' one in charge because it created Armitage /Corto, Molly and Case? Stevens makes an interesting point by saying that the novel intimate that the AI who attempts to communicate with or control a human finds stability of identity not in the particular bodies but in the gender of those bodies: Julius Deane, Lonny Zone, and the Finn (418). On the other hand Punday writes about identity as a "set of roles that can be mixed and matched, whose diverse demands need to be negotiated (197)." Thus supporting Stevens' claims above. To understand the role of identity we need to understand cyberspace. Myers describes cyberspace as the supreme example of a machinery of de-differentiation (898). Myers says that much of the Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* is around cyberspace (887). Punday uses the example of a MUD's cyber environment to explain how people change their identities online and experience different social, racial and gender positions. When Case enters again into the cyberspace he felt alive and felt like being home again:

Inner eye opening to the stepped scarlet pyramid of the Eastern Seaboard  
Fission Authority burning beyond the green cubes of Mitsubishi Bank of  
America, and high and very far away he saw the spiral arms of military systems,  
forever beyond his reach. And somewhere he was laughing, in a white-painted  
loft, distant fingers caressing the deck, tears of release streaking his face (52).

This passage from the novel explains the home coming of Case and the feelings associated with Case being in cyberspace and his relief to be home again. And in the quote below by Wetmore, we understand Case's obsession of going into cyberspace again. He likes to be in

cyberspace because he can penetrate into big corporation's security systems and takes out the information and sells it in the black market.

Wetmore describes Case as:

The novel's protagonist, Case, is a "cyberspace cowboy," a black-market computer hacker who has undergone dangerous and invasive neurosurgery that allows him direct mental access to cyberspace, where he can penetrate corporate security systems and steal information. Case is obsessed with the circulation of capital and information and daydreams of escaping "the prison of his own flesh" by spending eternity as a disembodied consciousness in cyberspace (72).

There are other characters in the novel who have reflected on issues of identity, like Molly; she understands that she is built to fight and until the end she will be like that. Wetmore describes Molly as:

Molly is Case's work partner and occasional lover. She is a "razor girl," or freelance enforcer, and has also undergone a series of major surgeries to "jack" her nervous system, install razor-tipped fingernails, and attach mirrored coverings over her eyes (72).

Both Molly and Case were employed by AI Wintermute to perform a series of tasks that involved hacking into the powerful Tessier-Ashpool corporation network and help Wintermute and another AI Neuromancer to merge together and become One.

Another character that was influenced by AI Wintermute is Corto. Wintermute changes the identity of Corto to Armitage, and later at the end Armitage dies. Corto was an American Colonel and had an accident during the mission and loses many body parts, which are later

replaced with the help of the government (along with the involvement of Wintermute). In Punday's words, Corto is cured and shaped through Wintermute's involvement:

But where have you been, man? He silently asked the anguished eyes.

Wintermute had built something called Armitage into a catatonic fortress named Corto. Had convinced Corto that Armitage was the real thing, and Armitage had walked, talked, schemed, bartered data for capital, fronted for Wintermute in that room in the Chiba Hilton. ... And now Armitage was gone, blown away by the winds of Corto's madness. But where had Corto been, those years? (193-94; ellipsis in original)

Furthermore Punday argues about humans being described as composed of parts just as is Linda Lee. And when their use is no more of the worth of machines, one must discard them. According to Turkle identity is "to develop new dimensions of self-mastery" (qtd. By Punday 204). This is perfect way to describe Wintermute, who hired Case through its employee Armitage to merge with another AI Neuromancer to become one 'Matrix'.

I would argue that Gibson's novel are affecting the lives, realities and identities of the characters like Case, Armitage (Corto), Molly by using technologies, that is technologies like "construct". I will start with Case. Case being a thief is, in every sense of the word, streetwise (Myers 889). Initially case lives in "outlaw zones" and then moves around different place and cities, but the impact of his home town has been always on him and in the end he comes back to the "outlaw zones/sprawl" (Gibson, *Neuromancer* 19). Case uses the construct to enter into cyberspace to help Wintermute. Stevens uses the word sentient (415) to describe many of the characters in *Neuromancer*, one of those is McCoy Pauley. He describes McCoy Pauley, a "ROM personality matrix" as a construct of a human within a computer to figure out the

uneasy perception that there is no boundary between ourselves and our encompassing computing environments; that we are, though sentient, “merely” machines. That they are, though machines, sentient (Stevens 415). McCoy Pauley was a good hacker and Wintermute knew that so he asked Molly and Case to retrieve construct (we know that McCoy Pauley died but his memories are stored in a ROM which is this construct) and by taking help of construct Case and Molly helped Wintermute and Neuromancer to merge and become One. So I argue that humans become computer programs and computer programs are acting like humans. Another example can be of Armitage. Armitage was controlled and built by Wintermute itself (Tyler 419). Armitage comes equipped with “broad shoulders and military posture,” a “special force earring,” and “handsome, inexpressive features” that offer “the routine beauty of the cosmetic boutiques, a conservative amalgam of the past decade’s leading media faces” (qtd. By Tyler 419). Armitage was Wintermute’s first attempt to build an employee in the process of getting merged with another AI to become one and later when the experiment was not successful Case came into the scene. Another interesting character is Molly, she is constructed as a Muscle by Wintermute. At one point in the novel she says anybody any good at what they do, that’s what they are, right? (50). Clearly it is evident in these examples that machines have autonomy and power over humans. I have argued the identity issues among these major characters and it clearly shows that they are looking for *who* they are, and for the purpose of their lives. Molly knows her purpose of living; Corto knows that he is going to help Case to succeed in the mission and construct knows its duty. Case also understands his purpose and this reality that if he wants to live he had to do anything necessary to help merge two AI’s. Thus all the characters understand the realities surrounding them.

I argue that the characters of *Neuromancer* are manipulated by machines about the nature of reality vs. virtuality, and they are often immersed in confusion about the differences in the

worlds they encounter. Wintermute uses Dean as his persona to explain his ability to construct and manipulate events (Tyler 419). Wintermute appears many times in front of Case when he is jacked in and they discussed many subjects like the death of Lind Le. Wetmore argues that in the urban, dystopic near future of *Neuromancer*, humans have become entwined with their artificial surroundings that they are indiscernible from machines (71). To explain it I would like to bring Case in to the discussion. Case believed that the boss he is working now is real because of his previous encounters:

Case had always taken it for granted that the real bosses, the kingpins in a given industry, would be more and less than people. He'd seen it in the men who'd crippled him in Memphis, he'd seen Wage affect the semblance of it in Night City, and it had allowed him to accept Armitage's flatness and lack of feeling. He'd always imagined it as a gradual and willing accommodation of the machine, the system, the parent organism. It was the root of street cool, too, the knowing posture that implied connection, invisible lines up to hidden levels of influence (203).

Case was not sure who is he working for in the beginning, for him Armitage was the boss and he felt alright but during the course of the novel he came to realize that who is he really working for and then everything changed and later at the end of the novel he succeeded in helping the two AI's merge and become one.

*Neuromancer* is full of themes, like the twisting of realities (the use of mirrors), simulation, and simulacra. Baudrillard describes the world of simulation as the generation by models of a real without origin of reality: as *hyperreal* (Baudrillard, the precession of simulacra, 20).

When Morpheous talks with Neo in the "Desert of real", which means reflections of reality

that no longer exist, it was again an indication of the Baudrillard's quote it is the reality, and not the map, whose vestiges subsist here and there, the desert of the real itself (Baudrillard, 166). What he meant by this is that one cannot understand truth by only understanding the feelings of simulation to set himself free. He can only do that when he is aware of the presence of simulation and totally separates it from himself. Similarly, Myers best explains these themes (twisting of realities, simulation, and simulacra) in his discussion (Myers 894, 895, and 896):

The move from the opacity of walls, with all their connotations of Density, solidity and substantiality, to the reflectiveness of screens is realized as something of a leitmotif in *Neuromancer*. Indeed, according to Gibson, mirror/silver is clearly the color of the future. For example, the Jarre is "walled with mirrors" (14), the Sense/Net building is "mirrors heathed" (80), the Chinese virus program has "black mirrors" on its flanks "reflecting faint distant lights that [bear] no relationship to the matrix around it" (216), boots are "sheathed in bright Mexican silver" (4), "the beach [is] silver-gray" (281) and even the aftershave has a "metallic edge"(111) (Myers 894).

*Neuromancer* is after all about the twisting of the realities and representation of simulations and simulacra. Myers here uses the example of mirrors that have been used throughout the whole novel to represent simulacra. We see the layered worlds of mirrors here, which represents simulacra and the simulation of the world of *Neuromancer*. To understand reality Myers describes the simulated world:

They were standing in a broad street that seemed to be the floor of a deep slot or canyon, its either end concealed by subtle angles in the shops and buildings that

formed its walls. [. . .] There was a brilliant slash of white somewhere above them, too bright, and the recorded blue of a Cannes sky (Myers 895).

Molly and Case here trying to understand the world they live in. Molly comes to the conclusion that "[t]he perspective's a bitch", she is unable to realize the world surrounding them but Case understands it in a much clearer way. Myers reflects on this understanding:

He knew that sunlight was pumped in with a Lado-Acheson system whose two-millimeter armature ran the length of the spindle, that they generated a rotating library of sky effects around it, that if the sky were turned off, he'd stared up past the armature of light to the curves of lakes, rooftops of casinos, other streets —But it made no sense to his body (Myers 896).

In *Neuromancer* I have discussed some main characters facing the issues of identity and reality. Characters included machines as well as humans, which makes it more interesting to read and see how these issues affect the characters in *Neuromancer*. The reader understands gender identities, behaviors of machines/humans, and he figures out who is sentient, who is human, what is real, and what is not. In the end everyone gets what they wished for: Case gets his cure, Molly finds peace with Case. Wintermute merges with Neuromancer and becomes one. I would like to finish it with Wetmore's quote about the ending's significance:

Once merged, Wintermute and *Neuromancer* become an omniscient, god-like "sum total of the works". In the end, though Wintermute and Neuromancer are free, very little changes for Case. Disenchanted with his hypercapitalist surroundings and no longer aspiring to transcend his physical existence, Case disavows his cowboy identity and, in the final pages of the novel, resigns himself to a more conventional life as a husband, a worker, and father in the American suburbs (72).

In *The Matrix* machines have taken over the control of the human race and are using them to gather enough energy to survive. A long time ago humans created machines for their ease, and it turned out that now the machines have taken over the world and are feeding off the energy of humans.

People have lost a war to an artificial intelligence (AI) computer network, *The Matrix*. Except for a few survivors living deep underground, and a rebel crew fighting the AI Net, the remaining humans—the only organic life left on earth—live in cocoon farms, functioning as organic batteries to power *The Matrix*. To keep them docile, they are provided with vivid dreams of life in the late 20th century. They believe they are living in this world (Hodges 308-310).

Hodges is telling us about the humans who were unable to control AI's and lost the battle and went into the hideout underground. Now for many years they have fought against these machines and one of them named Morpheus is looking for the one, in order to bring this fight to an end. Machines are using humans as a source of energy. Humans are being harvested as crops, and they are harvested in the form of babies. Machines have made cities of such babies, and these babies are sleeping and being deceived as that they are in a world living happily and that it is all reality. By using the energy from these baby cities, machines are fighting against rebel humans to finish their last human city called Zion. There are some people left in the “real” world who are fighting against these machines. Gills reflects on these confusing battles for reality:

*The Matrix* puts human against machine in a battle for life and reality, terms not merely inextricably linked but at times interchangeable in the film. Machines have taken over the world, and humans have become their unwitting slaves. *The Matrix* is a “neural interaction simulation,” a computer-generated dream world

in which sleeping humans live while the machines feed off the energy produced by their somnambulist bodies. Humans are kept alive in individual mechanical wombs, brains plugged into *The Matrix*, bodies connected to a mother machine that extracts energy and injects nourishment in the form of liquefied human remains (Gill 312).

Hodges talked about the people who lost the war and machine have taken control over them, whereas Gill explained how machines have used human babies to generate energy for their use. In *Neuromancer*, our protagonist with his friends are also enslaved by machines and is helping AI's to merge and become one. Case is not a rebel nor others but still they are in a way forced to help AI's. At the end of a novel AI's merged and Case gets his life back and he chooses to live a normal life but in the case of Neo he finishes his talk on public phone by saying that he will continue fighting against machines and matrix.

What is the role of technologies and how they have made this hyperreal world of matrix? The technologies that I am mentioning a lot here are the reasons that make this hyperreal world of the Matrix. Blackmore describes these technologies as magical:

Apparently magical technologies; these technologies govern closed worlds, imprisoning humans, who must awaken and escape. In their struggles for freedom, it is not so much action as the discovery of memory's power that allows the protagonists to bring about resolutions ( Blackmore 15).

Blackmore summarizes about technologies in both the novel and film. Machines taking help from the sentients (machines with many legs like octopus) in Matrix and AI itself controlling Case in *Neuromancer* are doing the same thing as Blackmore said above, that they are controlling humans and humans are fighting and surviving against them.

According to Kohn from Hodges's Cases and Commentaries, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics: Exploring Questions of Media Morality* "the film's technology is dazzling, visceral, and surprising—more possible than impossible, more real than hyperreal (Kohn 310 Commentary 1 Effective Defects in *The Matrix*).” Technologies such as uploading fight techniques and sequences in one's brain, by going into the matrix on many occasions, jumping over buildings by using a jump program, train man and his power as a program, change and affect the nature of the realities encountered and play with the minds of the characters in the Matrix by confusing the idea of what is real. Gill writes by using Morpheus: Rebel leader Morpheus insists to his student, Neo, that The Matrix "is the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth," (Gill 312 Commentary 2 Enforcing Freedom in *The Matrix*). Here Morpheus tries to free the Neo's mind and lets him realize the truth which the Neo was seeking for a long time, thus making him understand the realities. By so doing, Neo was able to finally differentiate between the matrix world and the real world. In *Neuromancer*, Case is also affected by the technologies which are quite similar to those in the Matrix. Case loves being jacked in the cyberspace and does what he is good at. Neo on the other hand had to put more effort to understand the matrix, find the answer he was looking for as a hacker. Eventually he frees himself from the human world in the later Matrix film series, he also gains more free will. Once he is able to do that he comes close to the end of the war by sacrificing his own life in the end of the last part of the series. Thus, at one point it is clear that both Case and Neo used and got help from technology and did what they had to do to survive.. They believed in themselves and tried to figure out real vs. virtual worlds and recognized the differences, and making the right choices for themselves and for the others they cared for (people of Zion, for example).

I argue there is a blurring between the world of Zion and the matrix worlds. To illustrate this I will discuss some of the characters in the movie like Cypher. Cypher one of the Morpheus crew members turns sides and joins agent Smith and wishes to be “normal” again. He wants to forget the Zion world and he chooses the “real world”. It seemed that Cypher found Zion’s life boring, as there are no emotions in it, just fighting against sentients or agents, and trying to save human babies becoming a source of energy for machines. And Cypher becomes dissatisfied with this reality and sees the opportunity to go back to the real by joining forces with agents. Gill claims, “Humans in *The Matrix* make choices, fall in love, feel pleasure, undergo pain, suffer remorse, and gain satisfaction (Gill 312 Commentary 2 Enforcing Freedom in *The Matrix*)”. Jeffers also supports this position, saying: Cypher chooses tasteless goop over delicious steak, home brewed hooch over fine wines—in other words, grim mundanity over sensuous fantasy (Film Review 239). *The Matrix* is full of simulations and the minds like Cypher’s loses the sense and becomes a traitor/unaware of realities. *The Matrix* is, after all, “about” simulations, even as it becomes an extremely seductive simulation itself (Kohn 311 Commentary 1 Effective Defects in *The Matrix* from Hodges’s Cases and Commentaries, Journal of Mass Media Ethics: Exploring Questions of Media Morality). In *Neuromancer* I argue that Molly is similar to Cypher, because she was just a self-described “muscle”. She was used as a bodyguard and lover in order for Case to “work” on the assignment without any difficulty. It illustrates that she was not happy with her job status. Molly is also somewhat similar to Trinity when it comes to sex and needs for the “saviors”. As in the *Neuromancer*, identity issues among the characters of the Matrix are also interesting to look at. The crew members of the Morpheus’s ship were all gathered by Morpheus was in order to find the one. Some were happy to pick the “red” pill and some were not, like Cypher, who then become a traitor and helped agents to capture Morpheus. It was Anderson that

Morpheus and others were looking for and when they found him then it all became clear to them that they are closer to winning the battle against the machines. For example, when Neo was Thomas A. Anderson he worked and lived two lives (a software worker in a big company called metacortex and a hacker in his spare time) and he liked it but the search in a matrix helped him understand his identity. Blackmore reveals the significance of Neo's search for identity:

Neither of Neo/Anderson's identities seems real: "It seems that you've been living two lives. In one life you're Thomas A. Anderson program writer . . . . Your other life is lived in computers where you go by the hacker alias 'Neo.' . . . One of these lives has a future, and one of them does not" (Blackmore 30).

Blackmore describes the two lives of Neo: in one life he is a computer program writer and in other life he is a hacker. If he chooses the life of a hacker than he have to leave the other life and vice versa. Neo/Anderson is trying to figure out which path he should take. He has an option to decide but in the case of Case he doesn't have a choice. He has to do the job in order to live and that is it.

Blackmore also writes about Neo's first appearance and the impression he makes: "Neo supplies illegal virtual environments to the underground, keeping his "drug" stash in an appropriately hollowed-out copy of Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation* (Matrix 08:18)." Neo was born in the Matrix world but he was looking for the answer about what is the Matrix. And on the other hand Morpheus is looking for the One and he was quite sure that Neo is the One. So they both meet and Neo decides to take the "red" pill. When Neo wakes up, from the whole process of entering into the "real" world, he gets his answer from the Morpheus. He tells Neo that this is the world that you can only feel to understand. Blackmore describes this scene and the confusing change in one's sense of personal identity.

Our first view of Anderson shows him asleep in his media womb, headphones blocking the exterior world, a technological sac of monitors, data processing units, keyboards, CDs, and a web of cables entangling him. Anderson the programmer falls asleep bathed in the wash of his computer screen, but it is Neo the hacker who awakens. Neo seeks answers despite warnings and questions what he has been told to leave alone: “You’re here because you know something,” Morpheus, god of dreams, tells Neo. “What you know you can’t explain, but you feel it” (Blackmore 20).

Neo was told that Oracle will see him soon and she will tell him that if he is the one or not.

When Neo was going to meet Oracle he had to go back into his previous world and he felt so strange by entering into his previous life as a “free” man. When he was going to meet Oracle he tells Trinity, while sitting in the car, by pointing out that is where he eats and work etc. In the Matrix “Neo will discover not only what Is, but who he is (Blackmore 25). Neo’s other identity is more likely as a religious figure. He is the savior and the one, who will rise from the dead and will save mankind once and for all. Blackmore describes the Neo’s character as a male hero who leaves his meaningful life and survives against agents and wins the battles and the religious side of his role:

White male Christians who will effect redemption and spiritual reawakening.

Morpheus, like John the Baptist, tells Neo, “You are the one Neo. You see, you may have spent the last few years of your life looking for me, but I have spent my entire life looking for you” (Blackmore 40).

Neo is a savior but he still needs someone to save his life on different occasions, Tank did so on one of the occasions by stopping Cypher from unplugging Neo’s brain from the body. Tank is a genuine son of Zion, and he is an operator of Nebuchadnezzar (ship). He along with others is trying to find the savior to rescue them from the machines and to bring peace, “In

*The Matrix*, Morpheus and his crew lurk fearfully inside the machine, waiting for their savior (Blackmore 30).” Blackmore describes him as: naturally (no metal plugs). He is, he tells Neo, a “genuine child of Zion . . . . The last human city (Blackmore 32). Maelcum’s character from the *Neuromancer* is quiet similar character as Tank’s. Maelcum is Case's Zionite pilot. He aids Case in penetrating Straylight at the end of the novel. Trinity is “the supportive women whose purpose is both redemptive and sexual (Blackmore 44).” Blackmore explains her character as follows:

Trinity, whose religious name suggests she will become the mother of Neo’s child in either Matrix II or III, tells an apparently dying Neo, “I’m not afraid anymore. The Oracle told me that I would fall in love and that man, the man that I loved, would be the One. So you see, you can’t be dead . . . because I love you. Believe me, I love you” (Matrix 2:03:00). Trinity, the tough killer with a heart of steel, packs enough power in her sacred kiss (“Believe me, I love you”) to raise Neo, the sleeping beauty. Trinity’s devotion (even the loss of cultural memory cannot dilute the love of a good woman), her fairy-tale actions (battling fate, awakening the dead prince), makes her redemption of Neo (Blackmore 42).

Trinity’s role is quite similar to the role of Molly from the *Neuromancer*. Both serve as bodyguards and lovers on different occasions, but Trinity has more power, because she has the ability to bring the dead prince back to life. When Neo was hit by the agent Smith’s bullets and dies, she kisses him saying that Oracle told her she will be in love with a dead man and she will have the power to bring him back to life and then he will save us from the machines.

Trinity whispers in Neo's ear. 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! (*The Matrix* 02:04:00).

Both in *Neuromancer* and *The Matrix* machines have taken over the control of humans. As I have discussed in my introduction and the *Neuromancer* part of the essay that machines are in control over humans like for example the production of ICE, Armitage/Corto, 3Jane, and Wintermute wanting to merge with *Neuromancer*. The quote used here is from Steven's writing, "Stevens makes an interesting point by saying that the novel intimate that the AI who attempts to communicate with or control a human finds stability of identity not in the particular bodies but in the gender of those bodies: Julius Deane, Lonny Zone, and the Finn (418)." Stevens here explores the appearance of Wintermute in front of Case on so many different occasions to guide, discuss and order him. AI used the bodies of Julius Deane, Lonny Zone and the Finn to communicate with Case. Similarly in *The Matrix* it is quite obvious who is in control. Machines are using human babies as their energy and controlling the world by using agents and sentients. So in a situation like this Neo along with others is struggling to save all humans and in the mean time also trying to figure out the purpose and identities for themselves.

Machines have taken over the control of humans by the end of the story (*Neuromancer*). Also they have agency over humans and humans have been converted into cyborgs. Alex Wetmore describes this phenomena:

By the end of *Neuromancer*, the AIs possess unlimited agency, panoptic vision, and transcendent consciousness. Information has quite literally become a god. Humans, by contrast, are subjected to massive bodily reconfigurations and turned into "commodified cyborgs" in the misguided pursuit of liberal humanist ideals of autonomous selfhood through financial independence. The result is

neither autonomy nor transcendence but fragmented, decentered subjects defined exclusively by their technological functionality and market value (Wetmore 77).

I have explored the identities of many characters in *Neuromancer* but as Case is the protagonist, I will conclude by discussing some more about his role as the subject-identity:

Case is incapable of imagining a subject position outside of those offered to him by late capitalism. Although he believes that the oppositional cowboy identity he has chosen places him outside the discursive and material boundaries of corporate control, the Foucaultian structure of his urban (and virtual) surroundings suggest otherwise. In this world, only information itself, in the form of Wintermute and Neuromancer, is capable of attaining the disembodied, transcendent existence aspired to by Case and promised (but never delivered) by postindustrial technologies. Through Case, *Neuromancer* depicts a world where the structure of subjectivity is entirely the product of the codetermining forces of technology and capitalism (Wetmore 79).

One can argue here that there is an important relationship between humans and machines. Both are trying to figure out their purposes and eventually succeeding to some extent. Stevens also explore this relationship:

Wintermute, though not human, appears in many forms to Case. The novel intimates that the AI who attempts to communicate with or control a human finds stability of identity not in the particular bodies it inhabits but in the gender of those bodies: Julius Deane, Lonny Zone, and the Finn (Stevens 418).

This science fiction novel was written to introduce the sub-genre cyberpunk and explain the relationships between subcultures and corporate upper class. Brouillette also explains about the reality of the novel and a way for us as readers to understand this text. Brouillette explains cyberpunk with reference to *Neuromancer*: “*Neuromancer* profoundly influenced the cyberpunk sub-genre, which has itself been regimented and marketed in accordance with all the trends against which the science-fiction community, and cyberpunk itself, articulate themselves (Brouillette 205).” She writes that novel is a fantasy and the characters that are living in are already a part of the environment presented in *Neuromancer* and readers when they read the novel should understand this and act accordingly. In reality the future cannot be like the one presented in this novel and users have to understand this. She writes:

The novel is not a fantasy about an impossibly dystopic future. Science Fiction never is. To the members of the science-Fiction community, *Neuromancer* represents their own struggles and experiences. It shows them the future they are already living in (Brouillette 205).

It is hard to understand that this novel is not a fantasy about an impossible dystopic future and being readers we just forget it while reading the novel. Brouillette explains why it is not real and allows readers to understand that it is all fantasy; it is not real. While reading we should understand then that the characters shown are already part of the future presented in *Neuromancer*.

*The Matrix* was written in the end of century, and it was the time when everybody was looking at the new millennium and was thinking about it and looking forward to see the coming future. Then this movie came and shown the world yet another future. It was horrible and scary and many of us believed in what they said in the movie. They used technologies that can take people to different worlds, which makes one learn quickly combat training

techniques and other things, like learning how to fly helicopters while you are in the middle of combat. It was not like that, it was also like *Neuromancer* where all was fantasy and nothing was real and Blackmore explains, “*The Matrix* is screen memories about what we face at the beginning of a new millennium. They are cultural notes about the loss of memory, the rise of technology, and the dangers of relying on technological artefacts for the storage of human thoughts and feelings (45).” The movie tells us that humans are the source of energy and machines have taken over the world, but that is all fantasy. Cartwright writes that “the matrix is only a virtual reality, a series of computer programs that simulate human existence at the peak of civilization in order to deceive them ‘readers’ (180).”

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