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Cultivating Docile Bodies in *The Matrix* Trilogy

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Abstract**—**Currently, philosophical interpretations of *The Matrix* trilogy have seen a decline. This study examines the human pods and growing fields in *The Matrix* trilogy. Their functionality is juxtaposed to Michel Foucault's concept of *docile bodies,* linking fictional and contemporary worlds. The comparison illustrates the effects of body manipulation. This paradigm is scrutinized through the power of invisibility. The invisibility of the human pods and fields parallels the hidden algorithms employed by contemporary tech giants. The utilization and secondary manipulation of user's data are further veiled in secrecy.

Keywords**—**Docile bodies, film trilogies, Matrix movies, Michel Foucault, visibility, invisibility.

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I. Introduction

THIS research will examine the initial three films of *The Matrix* trilogy – *The Matrix, The Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions*. All three films were directed by the Wachowski sisters. The study will exclude the fourth film, *The Matrix Resurrections,* and the animated version *The Animatrix*. The study explores the foundation of the matrix system – the growing fields and the pods. The first step of harnessing energy from a human is comprised of fields where humans are grown as plants. Second, the machines harvest and cultivate the babies into pods where their energy is extracted. This inquiry will use Michel Foucault's concept of docile bodies as a lens. Foucault coins the term in his book, *Discipline and Punish,* where he surveys various techniques used to tame the human body and to convert it into a productive machine. Foucault distinguishes three processes – elements of discipline, the control of activity and the organization of genesis that acts on the body. These three processes will be juxtaposed with the movies to find the answer to the question – How does the machine system created to manipulate human bodies portrayed in *The Matrix* trilogy correspond with the Foucault's concept of docile bodies? Lastly the research will explore the role invisibility plays in the construction of the human fields and pods.

The research is structured in the following manner. Section II covers the close-reading methodology used and Michel Foucault's lens through which the movies will be scrutinized. Section III pinpoints the pods and the growing fields as the focus of this research. It also explicates why we call the pods womb-pods. Section IV examines different aspects of docile bodies and relates them to the pods and the growing fields. In the Section V, the reader will find the outcomes of this research. Section VI deals with the invisibility aspect of the pods and the growing fields and explores the result of their opaqueness. The conclusion can be found in Section VII.

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II. Methodology

Looy and Baetens recognize that close reading allows the reader to choose their own avenue or interpretation and their own text. This way the text is not viewed as an end of an inquiry, but rather as a process. The process of reading relates to the act of taking apart different elements in the text in the search for a concealed significance. To Looy and Baetens, close reading as a methodology is not preoccupied with the generation of the ultimate meaning of the text, but rather discovering hidden components and obscurities. As such there is a tension between the text and the reader, because the text is not taken as presented. Rather the reader dismembers it and later re-assembles it again with an alternative meaning. Therefore, close reading changes the passive reader to become an active participant [1].

To Larsen, close reading is a methodology that stresses the importance of detailed examination of a text, because such a text carries insights undetectable at first glance. He states that this analysis has been transferred successfully to film studies [2]. Deacon et al. agree with Larsen by stating that documents are materials that go beyond textual format and documentary sources include "all forms of representation" [3]. The authors recognize film and video as one of the main roots of documentation related to communications research. They equate it to "cultural equivalent of rock strata, the sedimented remains of people's successive struggles to make sense of their world and give these understandings public expression" [3, p.22]. Jim Bizzocchi and Joshua Tanenbaum also recognize close reading as a fundamental approach in humanities that strives to explore and analyze media texts from literature to cinema. The authors recognize that close reading is a process-oriented method which generates insight with every reading. The use of a particular lens through which the media text is examined is an indispensable factor that needs to be incorporated into the methodology [28]. According to Sheldon, the purpose of close reading related to film analyses pertains to exploring how different aspects contribute to the experience. As such, close reading explores the artifact beyond its enjoyable experience and looks for how the text forms meaning [4].

Herbrechter recognizes *The Matrix* as "a (filmic) text … [that] needs to be "read" on its own terms" (emphasis in original) [5]. Following the above-mentioned sources, this research will utilize close reading methodology. The research will spotlight *The Matrix* trilogy and specifically pinpoint the pods harboring human bodies and the human growing fields. The pods will be juxtaposed with Michel Foucault's writings on docile bodies in his book *Discipline and Punish*. As such Foucault's exploration on the generation of docile bodies will

serve as a lens through which the pods will be scrutinized. Other academic sources connected to the movies will be used as well. Finally, the findings will be surveyed through literature on body visibility and power over the body.

III. Significance of the Pods

In the second segment of the trilogy, Neo, for the first and only time meets the Architect. In this meeting the Architect informs Neo that there were five previous versions of the matrix and future versions are expected. Thus, the machines allow the existence of free humans, and the Source is fully aware they will organize resistance with Zion in its center. Meaning, the machines not only can afford the building and destruction of Zion, but they are expecting it. This process of a circular beginning and end allows the machines to learn from previous versions and enables them to create a matrix that is best suited to their needs. Salah el Moncef Bin Khalifa connects the recurrent nature of the matrix with the name of the third movie *Revolutions* in a sense that revolutions relates to a "cyclical (re)turn" [6]. To him, Neo returns back to the computer processor by surrendering to the Source at the end of the trilogy [6, pp.234, 242]. The fight against the machines ends, the cycle is complete, and the process is ready to repeat again [7].

The cycle of destroying and rebuilding of the matrix leads us to believe that the matrix has a secondary function. Another aspect of the real world is more important to the machines, because it ensures their existence. The primary responsibility of the machines is to protect their life source – energy. As such, the pods are of primary importance to the machines. The pods are the cells where humans are nurtured and kept alive with one purpose in mind – to generate energy. They are connected with the human growing fields where the process of energy generation begins. Martens observes that human life in the trilogy actually equates with energy [8]. Therefore, the production and the conservation of energy is the most important aspect for the machines [8, p.413].

Reversely, examining the perspective of the Resistance, the humans in the matrix are avatars of the people in the pods. So, the Resistance strives to unplug and to free the individuals in the pods, not the avatars. Even though, the matrix harbors the existence of anthropomorphized programs who try to escape their deletion, the pods and the human growing fields are the only entity comprised of trapped humans.

Only one scene in the trilogy guides us through the process of awakening a human from the matrix. This scene documents Neo's detachment from the matrix and his initiation into the Resistance. He takes the red pill, the mercury like liquid engulfs him and he awakens in a pod. The pods have an elongated shape that resembles the outside of a female reproductive organ. The top of the pod is sealed with a membrane (uterus). The pod is filled with a gelatinous liquid (amniotic fluid) that ensures regular body temperature. The human inside breathes and eats from a cable connected through the mouth to the lungs (umbilical cord). The body parts are further connected through multiple cables and the brain is connected through a head-jack mechanism with a thread. Once the human awakes a sentinel arrives and unscrews the brain cable while the rest of the cables snap away as well. When all the cables are detached from the human the liquid is drained away (water breaks) and the body is ejected (birth). The birth of the human is figural (as seen from the above explication) but is also literal – the human begins a new life in the real world [6, p.237]. Khalifa calls them "designated replica of the biological womb," [6, p.236] where the human being is most comfortable and thus receptive to generate the maximum amount of energy. Barton further states that '"Matrix" is the Latin word for "womb"' (quotations in original) [9]. Those are the reasons we refer to them as a womb-pods.

The womb-pods and the growing fields are shown twice in the trilogy, once at the beginning of Neo's journey and then again at the end. The first time Neo rips through the membrane and takes out his breathing/nurturing tube. He feels the head-jack in the back of his head, covered in slimy goo, and stares in amazement as he discovers the other pods around him. The pods are organized in an endless circular skyscraper that seem to be going up and down to infinity. A sentinel arrives, unscrews the cable connected to Neo's head-jack and leaves. Once his brain is unplugged from the machine, all the cables attached to his body snap away with noticeable pressure. The liquid drains away and Neo is ejected into a pool of liquid resembling water. The Nebuchadnezzar arrives and rescue him. The growing fields are shown ten minutes later as Morpheus explains them to Neo. The fields are equally infinite resembling rows of vines where humans are grown and harvested by machines pickers.

The second time the growing fields are shown occurs in the third movie. Neo and Trinity encounter the growing fields upon entering a suburban of machine city. Rows and rows of human vines stretch into the distance. This time the growing fields take a primary role over the womb-pods. The womb-pod skyscraper towers reach to the top of the sunless sky. The placement of the growing fields at the entrance of machine city is a strategic move. They are the first thing a Resistance fighter encounters. The result being shock and mental disarmament – humans will not attack them as they are literally growing babies. The skyscrapers with the womb-pods are in the far background. They attract our attention and a less experienced messiah would have flown to them. However, Neo had prior visions before his arrival and knows to follow the three gigantic power lines to the right of the fields. The machine city is hidden among the rocky mountains.

The womb-pods and the growing fields are connected by the presence of humans inside of their enclosures and by the use of the same color scheme. Both have a warm red glow emanating from inside. While the surrounding area is bathed in cold blue light with overcasting shadows. This combination of complimentary colors – warm and cool light – is desirable in cinematography to symbolize balance. The womb-pods and the growing fields are present in three scenes in the entire trilogy with a total screening time of four minutes. This is intentional – using their invisibility to the movie audience to convey their parallel invisibility to the Resistance. This minuscule presentation in the trilogy and the reason they are visually unrepresented will be explored in Section VI.

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IV. Foucault's Docile Bodies

According to Foucault, disciplinary processes are needed to produce docile bodies. These processes of manipulation and training of the body to obey can be found as far back as the Classical age [10]. However, by the late eighteenth century, control over the body changed in scale, efficiency and modality [10, p.137]. Foucault distinguishes three disciplines that act on the body turning it into a docile body. The first one alters the scale of control to focus on controlling individual bodies over multiple bodies. The second discipline removes unnecessary body movements. And final discipline is the construction of a system that permits continuous supervision of the process (not only its result) and the protection of continuity. These three disciplines in concert strengthen the body's purpose while simultaneously lowering the body's resistance forces reshaping them to become docile bodies [10, p.138]. Let us explore every one of these three disciplines and witness their implementation or lack thereof in *The Matrix* trilogy.

A. Elements of Discipline

To facilitate the transition from en masse control of the body to individual control, Foucault recognizes a few elements that discipline requires – enclosure, partitioning, functional sites, interchangeable elements and record keeping.

Enclosure is needed to provide: 1) a space that is separated from the outside world; 2) a space that is different from other spaces. These two qualities ensure "the protected space of disciplinary monotony" [10, p.141], reduce interruption factors and protect the materials and machines while increasing productivity. The principle of enclosure is enhanced by partitioning individual workspaces. Segmentation ensures the separation of bodies and minimizes group formation. Discipline space is partitioned into as many fractions as bodies are present. This way the bodies are easily monitored, accounted for and judged on their productivity. Functional sites enhance this paradigm by adding usefulness; it is not enough for the space to ensure proper monitoring and limit organization of bodies into groups, but it must increase utility – fiscal, medical and administrative control. This structuring ensures the forming of a network that provides the supervision of individuals and their efficiency assessment. Moreover, the structure guarantees the monitoring of entire processes.

The towers with the womb-pods and the adjacent human growing fields are separated from the matrix, Zion and the machine city. This separation has a few results – 1) reduces possible causes of interruption (rebellion or machine malfunction); 2) protects the materials (humans) from outside forces; and 3) ensures the routine production of energy. The utility of the womb-pods is maximized by the three energy cables that move energy from them towards the machine city. In this way, the production of energy (pods) is separated from the area of consumption (machines). The partitioning is ensured by the separation of every individual into a separate womb-pod. This structure secures the most effective monitoring of the materials and their productivity. The pods network is monitored by flying sentinels that ensure fiscal and administrative control. As observed from Neo's unplugging, a sentinel is immediately present after his awakening. The sentinel assesses the awake individual and, to minimize the waste of energy, unplugs and releases him (fiscal control). This way the empty pod is available to be occupied by another harvested baby (administrative).

Foucault observes that the knowledge generated about an individual or a group is organized into tables. The tables arrange the data into meaningful information allowing the simultaneous micro-management of single and multiple individuals. The tables inform the administration of the functionality of the individual and allow for individuals to be replaced with other individuals. So, individuals are an interchangeable element [10, pp.145,147]. The system is ensured by the creation of a ranking system which allows for the replacement of the person without pausing the system. Therefore, the table has control functions and is a power method as well [10, pp.148,149].

Time-tables in a Foucauldian sense are missing from the matrix at first glance. According to Kera, "software has become the leading force behind all the transformations in our world" [11]. As such, time-tables are converted into a software that is invisible to the free humans. The fact that machines are keeping track of events is evident in the meeting between Neo and the Architect. The Architect explains that the machines have won the fight five previous times, so the Resistance movement is expected and it is manageable. The machines expect the Resistance to occur, because it is part of the design. The machines allow the Resistance to start with twenty-three individuals. Zion develops to a certain point – strong enough to form a Resistance, but ultimately weak in its capabilities to change the system. The growth of Zion is intercepted by the machines that kill everyone, minus twenty-three individuals. This in turn starts the process all over again. As such, the Resistance is calculated by a margin of error proven by the meticulous record keeping of the machines. This observation is further supported by During who sees Zion as "sub-sphere of the Matrix" [12] designed to maintain the status quo. The presence of record keeping manifests itself in the ranking arrangement between the humans in the growing fields and the humans in the womb-pods. The embryo humans are grown and once they reach a certain point (higher rank) at which they can produce energy they are harvested and moved to the pods section. Every embryo is cultivated with one purpose – energy production. As such they are interchangeable. The same is valid for the humans in the womb-pods. As observed above, the awakened Neo is immediately extracted from the womb-pod to make it available for occupation by another human.

The machines have implemented two different ranking systems – between the programs and between the machines themselves. The ranking system between the programs is evident in numerous instances that Agent Smith is prioritized over the other two agents accompanying him throughout the first installment of the trilogy. The main examples are – he leads the agents towards Neo's cubicle and gives hand-gesture directions to the other agent; he questions Neo and carries the tracking bug inserted into Neo's pelvis; he is the one that meets with Cypher and Agent Smith is the one that classified the human species. The evidence of rank and classification among

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the machines can be seen in the last movie of the trilogy when Neo visits the machine city. Many small machines (flying and crawling) are wandering around. Their inferior stance is evident when they all scatter away when the Source emerges. Ranking is the predominant organizational system in the city of Zion too. We are presented with a government body in charge of making decisions regarding the well-being of the whole society. The government councils outrank the military commanders. The military-defense body has clear and numerous ranking positions. Ranking is even present on the individual ships, as evident of the superior position of Morpheus on the Nebuchadnezzar.

B. The Control of Activity

The removal of the body's unnecessary movements and the control of the individual's activity is exercised by five elements – time-table, rhythm, correlation of body and movement, body-object articulation and exhaustive use.

Time-tables are also used to establish rhythm and manage the repetition of the activity. The existence of the five previous versions of the matrix show that the machines keep track of all the events. They manage the repetition of different versions and maintain the process of rhythm (start with twenty-three individuals and end with the same count of people). The system also shows its classification and effectiveness. The former is manifested in the presence of The One and his function to end and restart the process. The latter is visible in the Architect's explication that the machines have become exceedingly efficient in destroying Zion and its inhabitants. This implies that the machines are developing through machine learning and are mastering the ways to control and manipulate the humans (this is evident in the fourth installment, *The Matrix Resurrections*, where the machines have learned to be drastically faster than humans that they practically eliminate bullet-time). Therefore, the Resistance and its associated rebellion ensures the complete domination of the machines. It can be argued that this function is part of the design (the point is further explored in the section Organization of Genesis). Bryant takes this point to another level by saying that the machines are all linked, and the humans are linked to the machines as well. Therefore, the dual distinction (human-machine) is absent [13]. Martens agrees with him by saying that the actual matrix environment is the manifestation of the linkage [8, p.435].

To Foucault, the rhythm imposed on the bodies in the discipline societies is related to the control and the elimination of unnecessary gestures. This method is enhanced by linking the movement of the body with the best body position to ensure effectiveness. The body and its movement are further connected with the object (rifle, tool) that the body manipulates to ensure the economy of the body movement. So, the body, the movement and the object (rifle, instrument) are co-related in "instrumental coding of the body" [10, p.153]. The coding incorporates two simultaneous actions – the best part of the body to be used (elbow, left hand, right hand) is co-related with certain parts of the object to be manipulated (barrel, hammer). This ensures not only the economy and effectiveness of body, movement and manipulated object, but also unifies them in a power structure (body-weapon, body-tool).

The bodies in the womb-pods are completely restricted of gestures and movements. Emig sees the enclosure of the womb-pods and entrapment of the human body devoid of any mobility to be "the most horrific aspect of their enslavement" [14]. The ultimate rhythm is reinforced by the prone position of the bodies. This body position is paramount to extract the maximum amount of energy. Second, the machines have a supreme body-object articulation system. This system intrinsically connects the machine (object) to the body by the connecting cables to different parts of the body including the spinal cord, arms and legs, breathing tube and main head-jack. This system not only forms a power structure between body and machine, but also introduces a hierarchy system. The cables connected to the arms, the legs and the spinal cord are kept in position by a pressure mechanism evident from their snapping away from Neo. In contrast the head-jack allows for an attachment based on a thread. The cable attached to Neo's brain is unscrewed by the sentinel before his ejecting from the system. This semi-permanent contraption shows the superior position of the brain and its functions to the rest of the body. The variety of cables attached all over the body form the ultimate body-tool power system that is best suited for monitoring human functionality.

According to Foucault, the time-table was designed to prevent the wasting time, which has a negative connotation. Reversely, *exhaustive use* as a discipline has a positive connotation. It strives to create better use of one's time or "extracting, from time, ever more available moments and … more useful forces" [10, p.154]. This is achieved by an authority figure manipulating the body through different forms of training and exercise. These activities also serve as a learning tool. By observing the training and exercises, the authority figure notices natural predispositions and physical conditions a body must possess to be best suited for a certain activity. To make efficient docile bodies, discipline societies incorporate analytical methods (time-tables) in combination with natural inclinations.

To create maximum energy the real bodies located in the pods are contained in the most natural environment possible. The pods simulate a mother's womb where the individual is protected from external sources and has everything that it needs for survival. Training and exercise are not only unnecessary, but they would be a counter-productive enterprise for energy preservation. This focus on energy generation/consumption makes energy both a coveted source and a "regime" [8, p.413]. Simultaneously the avatars of those bodies are freely released into the matrix where they can roam willingly. This simulated freedom eliminates rebellion tendencies and ensures the docility of the real body and the proper functioning of the system. However, the implementation of exhaustive use can be seen in other aspects in the movies and specifically in the fast appearance of the agents. Agent Smith and his two colleagues arrive as fast as they can at the locations where Neo and his friends emerge. The agents try to track and kill the rebels efficiently, because their presence not only threatens the balance of the matrix but also consumes energy. The quick

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elimination of the freed humans mitigates wasted energy consumption. This statement is further supported by the observation that only humans initiate explosions inside the matrix. Neo and the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar do not hesitate to dispose of grenades, blow up helicopters and in general cause havoc everywhere they go. On the other side agents only use guns, their martial arts skills, do not cause explosions and try to contain energy waste. A machine can be seen to deploy bombs in the real world (outside of the matrix) because here energy is not essential for the functioning of the simulated reality. Another way the machines are applying exhaustive use and tracking the unnecessary use of energy is by pursuing programs that fall in love between themselves. Falling in love and creating offspring is not useful for the existence of the matrix and these rogue programs consume additional energy. As such, these programs do not have purpose and are chased and deleted as seen in the third episode of the trilogy. Falzon argues that training in disciplinary societies has a positive connotation. To Falzon, training turns the individual into a better version of themselves by improving their skills [15]. In that sense the womb-pods are the perfect "training" ground for the bodies, because it turns them into a more efficient energy source by enforced enclosure.

C. Organization of Genesis

The last discipline that Foucault formulates is the system organization that supervises the processes and guarantees its continuity. To do so, disciplinary societies manage time by turning it into capital. The organization of time is done in four ways – segmentation, seriation, synthesis and totalization. Central to the capitalization of time is the body exercise, which forces activities that are various but at the same time repetitive. The exercises share one common trait – they are graduated [10, p.161].

Segmentation refers to the division of time into segments which begin and end at a specific time. As such, segmentation of time introduces instruction methods and reinforces disciplinary time. Seriation ensures the consecutive order of exercises that allow a detailed body surveillance. Also, seriation allows for routine interference and control over the body to either correct it, improve it or punish it. Seriation creates different levels of expertise and as a disciplinary method, guarantees progress and the birth of a new obedient individual. The final stage of the exercises culminates in an examination (synthesis). The examination displays each individual level of mastery of the particular task. Every individual is subjected to the same system – totalization. The system shows the level of each individual and the corresponding training needed for their improvement. As such, every individual is entrapped in a series of exercises that ensures their disciplinary behavior and the creation of a new person.

Since humans are cultivated, segmentation is entirely in the hands of the machines. They decide when an infant is ready to be harvested and implanted into a womb-pod (it is not clear from the movies if the five previous versions of the matrix are time dependent). The machines also decide when an individual needs to be liquified and turned into food for the next body in the womb-pods.

The idea of exercise is largely missing in the womb-pods and the growing fields, because new human beings are not trained to become better energy producers – they are at their maximum capacity. Reversely, we can notice the idea of training and exercises to be evident in the Resistance and the Agents. Training in the world of the movie is fast – all you need is a program to be downloaded into your brain. That is very much the case in the famous training/fighting sequences between Morpheus and Neo in the first movie. Those two sequences also show that Neo needs further training to learn how to become The One. Fighting Agent Smith is nurturing Neo's development and by the end of the first installment he destroys him. Arguably, a similar training method applies to the agents as well. One sentence uttered by Neo in the second movie supports this statement. Three agents enter the building where various resistance fighters are meeting and discussing future actions. Neo meets the agents by the building's entrance in a very nonchalant manner. He begins to fight them but when he sees that his fist does not produce the desired effect Neo refers to them as upgrades. This word confirms that the machines have updated features where their fighting technique can improve.

The examination takes the form of a binary decision – live or die. If a body is determined to be fit to generate energy (plugged in) then no further action is taken. If an individual is awake in the womb-pod and as such not producing energy, then they are liquefied and fed to a newborn "baby-battery" [8, p.410]. Herbrechter finds this binary notion applicable to all aspects of technology in the trilogy and labels it Deus ex machina [7, p.260]. Further, this simplistic dual system of synthesis does not diminish the surveillance over the bodies. To Khalifa, the total surveillance exhibited in the matrix leads to one outcome only – complete assimilation [6, p.232].

D. System of Command

To Foucault, the disciplines need a "precise system of command" [10, p.166]. This system of order is present in the matrix too. The Resistance needs the help and the advice of the Oracle to understand the system and to continue fighting. She is the force that enables the success of the Resistance to a large extent. Not understanding the system prevents them from knowing that there were five previous versions of the matrix. Since this fact is not a secret to the machines then the Resistance is re-acting to the established order mapped out earlier by the machines. As we know from the second movie, the Oracle is a program. The third movie reveals another detail – the Oracle is fighting the Architect. So, the whole premise of the matrix is a program fighting another program, using the humans as a force to gain advantage. As such, the system of command renders the Oracle and the Architect as the two main entities on top. The Resistance and the sentient programs are acting as soldiers in their hands.

Translating Foucault's statement "war as a strategy is a continuation of politics" [10, p.168] to the matrix yields that the system of command operates as designed. Emig reaches the same conclusion using another Foucault quote linking the inner-dependency between power and opposition [14, p.203].

So, the war is part of the design because it ensures the betterment of the machines through machine learning and ergo enhances the civil obedience of the masses.

V. Outcome

According to Foucault, the discipline society in its final formation not only commands bodies but also organizes them in a methodological and effective apparatus. Three disciplines aid that process and produce docile bodies. The first one is the manipulation of individual bodies and ensuring that each body is replaceable by another. Second is the elimination of unnecessary movements and management of time. And the last discipline is organization of a command system that guarantees constant supervision and protects the continuity of the process. Working together, these three disciplines have two opposing effects – they increase the purpose of the body and simultaneously decrease its resistant forces.

These three discipline processes can be found in the womb-pods and growing fields as we saw. Every single body occupies a single pod. The movement of the bodies in the pods is reduced to the possible minimum. As such the body is transformed to the ultimate object of control – minimum movement correlated with maximum energy generation. Supervision is exercised through wiring the body with many different cables. This mode of ultimate supervision of bodily activity also reduces the purpose of the body to mere functioning. If a body does not function as an energy source, then is unplugged, ejected and liquefied. The command system secures the constant supervision of the process and its continuous function.

Even though the three disciplines offer a blueprint for control, to Foucault, the disciplines are different from slavery because they are not based on the total takeover of bodies. This is a clear difference from the slave system implemented in womb-pods and the growing fields. Foucault calls the discipline system "elegant" [10, p.137] and recognizes its power minimize costs usually associated with enslavement. He recognizes two methods in play. The first one is the recognition of the human body as a power mechanism. The second process converts the body to a docile mechanism through subjectification, transformation, improvement and use [10, p.136]. These two mechanisms are taken literally by the machines. Even though their system might lack sophistication (in Foucauldian terms), it makes up in the elevation of functionality. The most cost-consuming enterprise of feeding is reversed by liquefying unneeded bodies and feeding them to the baby-batteries. The efficiency of the cannibalistic scheme is enhanced by the diminishment of body movements. These two processes, combined with the elimination of free will, minimize expenditure to such an extent that elegance is dispensable (an observation that further applies to the design of the Machine city, which is highly anticlimactic and formulaic). A question arises: how the system of subjectification and imprisonment maintains its supremacy?

VI. Visibility and Control

The visibility of the womb-pods and the growing fields and the connection of control over the individuals will be examined in three sections – comprehension, visibility and power.

A. Comprehension

To answer the question, we need to go back to the womb-pods and the growing fields. The womb-pods are visible for a very short time to the person that has taken the red pill. After Neo tears the membrane covering the womb-pod he stares at his surroundings in dismay. After he is ejected from the womb-pod, he is taken by Nebuchadnezzar's spider-crane. While the crew is rebuilding his muscles, Neo comments that his eyes hurt. Morpheus explains that he has not used them before, and the pain is a normal reaction. Since, this episode occurs after Neo's rescue, we would argue that Neo's eyesight is in worse shape in the immediate aftermath of his awakening from the womb-pod. Even if we assume that Neo can see everything around him, we will debate that he cannot fully comprehend it. Preparation explaining what he would encounter after his awakening is not offered by anyone from the Resistance. Consequently, Neo is fully unaware of what he is going through, where he is or what he is seeing. Mitchell states that the images are "symbolic constructions, like a language to be learned" [16]. In the same vein, Neo does not have the basic knowledge (the alphabet) needed to comprehend his surroundings. This statement is further supported by Butler who states that narrative coherence is needed for understanding images [17]. Even an awake individual exposed to the womb-pods for such a brief period of time cannot comprehend their significance, because an individual lacks the narrative to do so. As such, the womb-pods are not only well hidden from the eyes of the humans but also their comprehension is veiled in secrecy.

Let us consider the opposite – Neo is aware of his surroundings. Two aspects, distance and duration, mitigate the possibility of putting the fields and the womb-pods into perspective. First, the womb-pods and the growing fields are separated to such extent that a person in a pod cannot see the growing fields. Reversely, an infant in the growing fields cannot see the womb-pods. Even when Neo and Trinity see the growing fields, in their journey to the machine city, the womb-pods are so far in the distance that they look like structures. A clear distinction of their purpose, structure and functionality is not possible. This dual separation masks the connection between them and the fact that they are both cogs in the same apparatus. This way the system of operation and command is better hidden.

Second, we should consider the short period of time a person is exposed to the womb-pods and the growing fields. Even if a person can distinguish their surroundings, the brief period of exposure shows that the machines are treating an awakened individuals "as part of traffic, which must move on" [18]. Mirzoeff investigates how the police are dispersing traffic away by saying that there is nothing to be seen, so observers should move on [18]. To him, this is clearly a situation when individuals should not believe them, because there is something important to see. In that sense, the machines are treating any potential member of the Resistance as a part of traffic. This observation is further supported by the above stated fact that the

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Open Science Index, Humanities and Social Sciences Vol:17, No:10, 2023 publications.waset.org/10013313.pdf

Resistance is part of the matrix equation and as such is foreseen and manageable.

B. Visibility

The visual presence of the growing fields is exponentially smaller that the womb-pods. They are seen only to the individuals that attempt to go to the machine city. Neo and Trinity encounter them on their journey to the Source and the only other person that talks about seeing them is Morpheus. According to Vagnes, invisibility of the image is usually associated with negativity [19]. To him if something is at the forefront and visible then something else reseeds in the back and becomes invisible [19, p.534]. So, the act of seeing is connected with knowledge and is associated with empowerment [19, p.534, 538]. This observation is second by Mitchell who relates visibility with power [16, p.172]. So, the invisibility of the growing fields is a strategic move designed to deprive humans of agency. The manipulation of babies in the growing fields is more upsetting and antagonizing than the womb-pods and as such they are more obscured. So, the visible image that seduces individuals is the image of the matrix itself. In that sense the image of the womb-pods and the growing fields would become what Mitchell calls an eidolon – an image that talks back to humans and demands their sacrifice [16, p.176]. As such, the images of the womb-pods and the growing fields, if visible by the humans, would generate revolt and disturb the status quo. That is why they are the invisible part of the equation.

C. Power

The images of the real world – womb-pods, growing fields, sunless sky and desert landscape are hidden from the view. Reversely, the images that are visible are the machine created images present in the actual matrix. These images are in stark contrast with the "desert of the real" [20] and are widely available for comprehension. Paglen observes that the result of this automation of images on a grand scale is the generation of more power [21]. This reversal of visibility is reminiscent of Martin's paradoxical model, where the visible world (the matrix) is not related to representation but rather represents an absence [22]. The absence of free will and agency. This absence and related subordination, on the other hand, implies the existence of hidden authority. Khalifa observes that the mode of the hidden power is further enhanced by the absence of a "traditional model of centralized totalitarian power – power with a human face" [6, p.240].

The machines have organized a system incorporating the matrix and the control of the real world that resembles what Hardt and Negri call empire [23]: An empire that hunts to control all aspects of the visible (matrix) and the invisible world (womb-pods and growing fields) to sustain total dominance; an empire that is global and lacks borders or headquarters [6, p.241]; an empire that relies on constant war for complete control; an empire based on the Rene Descartes' design of separation between the mind and the body [24]. In this system the mind rectifies what the senses feel and establishes a correct behavior. In our case the machines are the mind, and the humans are the body. As such the mind has a superior position that relies on the invisibility of the womb-pods and the growing fields because they represent the inner-workings of an oppressive system imposed on the humans. At the same time, humans are incapable of voluntary and spontaneous severance of their connection with the matrix. Zuboff calls this business model of individuals unable to disconnect from an exploitive environment, "Faustian" [25]. Of course, Zuboff does not refer to the movies, but rather to the contemporary society with its utilization of ubiquitous surveillance practices. She points out that the business practices of the large technological companies are hidden from public view and their utilization of the personal data of users are largely unknown. This brings us back to Foucault who elaborates that information and knowledge are intertwined in a power-knowledge system that needs each other to survive. The more knowledge a person has the more power they hold, so lack of knowledge is equated with less agency [26]. That is the reason why the growing fields are largely invisible and why the womb-pods are briefly apparent to the person that takes the red pill. But the division between fact and fiction is not concrete, as Haraway states – "the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion" [27]. Which begs the question: Have we swallowed the blue pill?

VII. Conclusion

This research examined *The Matrix* trilogy through Michel Foucault's concept of docile bodies. We have found that the system designed by the machines in the movies to a great extent utilizes Foucault's concept. Many techniques necessitating the conversion of a human into a docile body are employed by the machines to convert it to a productive source of energy. The system implemented is based on slavery and as such lacks the sophistication that Foucault observes in the docile bodies network. Further, the design of the matrix network eliminates the need for elegance, because it solves the problem of expenditure. This paradigm is made possible by the utilization of near complete invisibility of the human growing fields. The paradigm is also aided by the employment of opaque practices veiling the womb-pods. Even though they are visible to an awakened person for a brief period of time, they remain incomprehensible to the individual. Last but not least, both apparatuses of the growing fields and the womb-pods are separated which hides the inner-workings of the system of control. The opaqueness ensures the elimination of possible interruptions and the continuity of the process.

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