

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
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**Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English  
Section of English**

**Aspects of Greek Mythology in Francis  
Lawrence's *Constantine* (2005)**

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**Presented by**

Miss. Hocine AMINA

**Supervised by**

Dr. Daoudi FRID

**Co-Supervisor**

Miss. Bendahmane Ilhem

**Board of Examiners**

**Prof. Mouro Wassila**

**Professor**

**President**

**Dr. Daoudi Frid**

**MCA**

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Rahmoun Omar**

**MCA**

**Examiner**

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## *Dedications*

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my lovely parents, my father who was always my source of strength when I thought of giving up, and for my mother who was my support in all the days that despair was about to destroy me.

To my Grandmother and Grandfather who were always my second parents, to my brother and sister, and to all my aunts and uncles, my family, and all my friends who shared their words of advice and encouragement in my life, and to finish my study.

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## Abstract

Since the ancient times, humans have woven mythological tales that explain cosmic phenomena according to their religious beliefs. Besides, it is considered among the most prominent criteria that characterized ancient civilization, and the most notably was Greek mythology. It is one of the highly renowned legends, and it has had a tremendous impact on various civilizations throughout the world in different fields, as seen by the numerous novels and stories that have been inspired by it, as well as the original stories, which varies from one novelist to another. Besides, with the development of technology and the production of films, scenarios became inspired by it, and it became widely circulated, and were depicted with an approximation of reality which attracted great audiences. Thus, this work sheds light on one of the most arresting films *Constantine* (2005), which depicted the two metaphysical worlds (Heaven and Hell) in a distinctive way, and which its outstanding scenes were influenced by Greek mythology.

**Key words:** Greek Mythology, religion, *Constantine*, Heaven, Hell.

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# **General Introduction**

## General Introduction

Ancient Greece has always been considered the cradle of western civilization, as it reached the pinnacle of all aspect of human learning and abilities. Greek mythology is considered the basis of its civilization and its religion too. The environment in which people lived, the natural occurrences they experienced, and the passing of time through the days, months, and seasons were all explained using Greek mythology. Almost everything that the Greeks did or created was somehow affected by their religion, a polytheistic one led by the twelve main Olympian Gods.

The Greek religion was known for its complex mythologies and lengthy epics portraying the gods, who were known for behaving like spoiled children and causing chaos in the different worlds; heaven, hell or the human world. Greek myths were closely intertwined with religion, explaining the gods' origins and life, as well as where humankind came from and where it heads after death.

In terms of an afterlife, the Greeks believed in Hades and an underworld governed by him, which was described as an area of eternal pain. Additionally, Elysium as an area of perpetual pleasure for the people who have spent their lives in good deeds. The plethora of ways that the Greek religion and mythology interacted with their society created a unique culture that has never quite been replicated. Nowadays, these myths are still embodied in various cultures and civilizations, especially in the religious aspect where many points of similarity lie. Hence, this research work shows the impact of Greek mythology on its religious beliefs, and

especially its impact on Christianity by answering some of the most important sub questions:

1\_ How does the depiction of Greek mythology appear in the movie “*Constantine*”?

2\_ what are the main aspects of Greek Mythology in “*Constantine*” the Movie?

3\_ What is the relationship between the concept of Heaven and Hell between Greek mythology and “*Constantine*”?

The study aims to shed light on the influence of Greek mythology on religious beliefs, based on the events of the movie “*Constantine*” which is directed by “Francis Lawrence” 2005.

Thus, this research work is divided into two chapters; the first one highlight the history of etymology, the origin and development of Greek mythology, some famous Greek mythologies, and the impact of its on people’s beliefs. Additionally, this chapter based on the explanations of the concept of Heaven and Hell in the Greek mythology. While the second chapter, discusses the movie “*Constantine*” from several aspects, and links its events with the Greek mythology. It focuses on the idea of Hell and Heaven in particular, and reveals specific details between different shots, to investigate the relationship between Greek mythology and Christianity.

# Chapter One

# **CHAPTER ONE: Etymology and Aspects of The Greek Mythology**

1\_ Introduction

2\_ The Concept of Mythology

3\_ A General Overview of the Greek Mythology

3\_1 Origins and Development

3\_2 Most Famous Mythologies

3\_2\_1 the Origin of the World

3\_2\_2 Division of the World

4\_ The Major Gods and Goddesses of Greek Mythology

4\_1 Zeus and Hera

4\_2 Hades and Persephone

5\_ The Impact of These Mythologies on People's Beliefs

6\_ The Existence of the Idea of Heaven and Hell

6\_1 The Way to Heaven

6\_2 The Way to Underworld

7\_ Conclusion

## **1\_ Introduction**

Human thought has evolved through a number of stages, ranging from myths moving through religion beliefs. Greek myths, stories and legends were created to teach lessons and affect meaningful insight into the Greek culture. They weave intricate tales about the gods, goddesses and heroes that filled the days of Ancient Greece. Therefore, the ancient Greek religion was considered polytheistic, which means that they believed in multiple gods.

This chapter sheds light on the etymology, origin and development in addition to the most famous mythologies in Greece. Then, it highlights the major gods, goddesses, and the impacts of the Greek mythologies on people beliefs. In addition to the explanation of the concept of heaven and hell for the Greeks.

## **2\_ The Concept of Mythology**

Myths have a special place in the history of every civilization, since they symbolize ancient stories with their details and fertile imagination, which most people associate with religion. In fact, the Greek Civilization is associated with myths to a large extent, due to the meaning of the origin word “mythos” which define “speech, thought, story and myth” that means “myths” in the Greek language, as most of the terms in this field are usually in Greek words and it dates back to the 4th century BC. For both ancient and modern people, myths are regarded as a valuable source of

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information, addressing a variety of interests and serving as a resource for solving tough problems or simply for pleasure (Lugli, 38).

Moreover, a myth is defined as an ancient traditional story about gods , heroes , and magic , that it is a symbolic narrative , usually of unknown origin , and to some extent partly traditional , apparently related to actual events , and specifically linked to a religion belief (Buxton, 2020). Just as its accurate narration explain its credibility, that it can happen again in all times and it nourishes every metaphysical thought, in addition to that it is sometimes sufficient to satisfy the desire for knowledge.

Despite the differences in the definition of myths, they remain like all other religious symbols, as there is no attempt to justify them or even make them reasonable, because at some point they were only an explanations for human questions, due to the lack of the means of knowledge necessary at that period. Myths can be considered as distinct cultural reference, from which many social, intellectual and historical studies can derive numerous ideas from them. Otherwise, the desire of the human to discover everything around is the push for looking for logical answers. Furthermore, people of the modern ages depend on the logical explanation, while the myths provide reasons for the basic phenomena of the world like seasons, earthquakes, volcanos... (Bhanegaonkar, 05). As well as in the issue of existence and the first creation, this what was the ancient adopted from legends to satisfy their desire for knowledge.

‘For instance , when they heard the awful roar of thunder , and saw vivid flashes of lightning , accompanied by black clouds and

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torrents of rain , they believed that the great god of heaven angry , and they trembled at his wrath... .' (Berens, 03)

Besides, one of the characteristics which discriminates humans is their range of emotion ; love , sadness , jealousy. Myths have been designed only to help human kind to discover more about their nature, what makes it more immortal and unforgettable, apparently because it gives people a feeling that the characters of these myths are within reach, because by describing the gods with more details, makes them imaginable and predictable (Manuel and Lipscomb, 2017).

Actually, myths differ across the world from one place to another. As every civilization has events and facts which attributed to it, it simply shows in most of the accounts that its beginning was from chaos and emptiness, and from there each tribe or people had their own stories, which has always been the first interpretation source for them (Bhanegaonkar, 04). These tales were the main separator between different civilizations, or can be argued that they explain the distinctions between people, from China to Africa to Greece and many cultures of the world. These stories and novels influenced not only their beliefs, but also their literary culture, as well as the diversity of their art, music, dance, and performances, which depends hugely on the occasion and area.

Furthermore, the reader cannot deduce the message directly, so he must delve into the secrets of the myth to conclude their meaning of the story. Certainly, this matter can only be achieved if he is familiar with their history and civilization, as they are a very poetic people, who were affected by all the details of life and despite the



circumstances, but they sought to provide interpretation to quench the fire of their curiosity.

### **3\_ A General Overview of Greek Mythology**

In ancient Greece, stories about god and goddesses and heroes and monsters were an important part of everyday life. Furthermore, they employed mythology to repeat historical events in order to make people more affected and linked to their cultures and strength, with natural circumstances and invasions being among the most important reasons for the spread of these mythologies throughout various tribes and peoples.

According to Schlueter, myths usually combine virtues and values that are important in Greek culture, enabling these stories to be associated with religion, government, and war or being the distinctive aspect of Greek civilization. Although most legends transcend rationality, they nonetheless develop a sense of idealism compared to their counterparts from other civilization (02). This was achieved through the use of myths to teach people how to follow the right path and how to be a good citizens, by clarifying the punishment that the characters of these myths receive for breaking some known rules, and that customs and traditions must be preserved as the basis of their civilization and its prosperity (03).

Additionally, Létoublon said that the literary aspect of the Greek civilization, recognize as the basis of this mythology. Homer's epics considered among the oldest found in the Greek poetry, represented by the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that focus on the siege of Troy. Most of their works focused on the emotional aspect of humans, as it seemed

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clear that it was the center of their attention, as most of their fantasies and imaginations linked human with gods to the point of depicting the gods in the same form as human (27).

### **3\_1 Origins and Development**

The Greeks were among the first people to give interpretations and tales about the creation of the universe and human, but it cannot be associated with a specific date. However, the study of the Greek mythology has a long history of about 2500 years, and the first mythological “handbooks” were already written around 500 BC. Naturally, it is impossible to treat every period in detail, because the area of Greece at that time was not stable, due to natural and social conditions. Thanks to the preserved collection of literary and poetic books (Bremmer, 01).

The historians Herodotus and Diodorus and others who travelled to Greece, published stories and legends that told them by some indigenous people in the region. These researchers presented the roots of mythology in the conflict between Greece and the East, and then tried to reconcile the origins of the different mythologies and to mix different cultural values (Adkins, 2021).

Additionally, the inhabitants of the Balkan island were known by their association with the agriculture. Moreover, they began using spirituality, which mean giving soul to every creature in nature. Eventually, these mysterious spirits took on human forms and entered local mythology as deities. Later, some of this area was invaded; new gods emerged, based on strength, prowess, and violence in battles.

Furthermore, the ancient gods of the agricultural world merged with the gods of the mighty invaders, and then later faded into frivolousness (Adkins, 2021).

Moreover, Greek mythology has evolved over time to reflect the development of their civilization. Besides, as they integrated into many various cultures, especially the Romans, the detail of the people and events varied with different novelists in their region. Greek civilization is a blend of Indo-European, Anatolian, Roman, and Egyptian civilizations, as well as other peoples with whom the Greeks interacted. Creativity was not only the basis of their unique stories, but also the spirit of competition among cultures at the time, as the Greeks had long prided themselves on being the first to produce more in a variety of sectors, from art to literature to sports.

Raaflaub proclaim that with the end of the Archaic Period during 750 BC, Greek mythology had to set certain limits. As well as, myths begin with the creation of the universe and its end with the end of the era of heroes, and as it is said the era of heroes ends with the end of the Trojan War. Although, this did not prevent the emergence of new myths, but it was only a small details so that there were no strange and new additions to the old one. These accessions resulted from their constant acquaintance to the other cultures around the world, in order to support the local identity (131).

### **3\_2 The Origin of the World**

The Greek civilisation deals with the collection of myths and superstitions that the ancient Greek believed in, concerned with their gods and some mythical characters .Actually it was the basis of their ritual practices and religion. These myths generally

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were to explain the natural phenomena, friendships and enmities, and also as a source of pride for the dynasty descended from great accidents, legendary heroes, or even gods. According to the ancient Greeks regarding existence and the universe, Graves claimed that the world in its beginning and origin was a chaotic and shapeless mass, in short it was chaos. By the intervention of unknown transformations or phenomena, these materials became divided into two different types: light elements float and rise to the top, forming what is known as sky, while the heavy ones remain at the bottom to form a solid mass, or rather earthly, so they remain protected by the lighter elements as they constitute a wider protection. Thus into being the two first great primeval deities of the Greeks, Uranus and Gaea (26).

Berens declared that Uranus is considered the god of the heaven, his name means “the sky” with all its features of light and purity, while Gaea was the god of earth, which is the center of life. It is believed that Uranus united with Gaea, where this was so evident through the smiles of the sky that create the flowers in the earth, while his prolonged frown exerted a very depressing effect. The first-born child Oceanus was the first fruit of their union, which represents the ocean current, which surrounds the land on all sides and flows constantly (05).

Later, the two gods, Uranus and Gaea had many sons ( Ether, Air, Nephalelae, Pontus and more ....) , as well as two different types of giant and titans . There were three giant (Briareus, Cottos and Gyges) known by the name Hekantonshire. As for the titans , they numbered twelve : Oceanus, Ceos, Crios ,Hyperion , Lapetus , Cronus , Theia, Rhea, Themis and Mnemosyne, Phœbe and Tethys. Scientifically its result is

the combined effect of both the earth and the sky, but their poetic view of life summarizes their association of scientific phenomena with imagination (Berens, 06-07).

Cronos was known as the god of time or eternity. The latter married Rhea, the daughter of Uranus and Gaea; so they had three sons: Hadis, Poseidon and Zeus, and three daughters: Hestia, Demeter and Hera. Consequentially, Cronus feared that one day his children would rebel against his authority, so he swallowed up his own, making his wife Rhea indignant at his decision, so she asked her parents for help, and they put a stone in children's clothing, so this plan preserved the life of the last son Zeus.

After Gaea takes care of her son away from his father, Zeus becomes strong and has extraordinary abilities. His only goal was to force his father for bringing his brothers and sisters to life again. He waged war on Cronus, who was abandoned by everyone because of his tyranny. Once again, they turned against him and gathered at Olympus's mountain. During the war Zeus went to a camp where Cronus was holding Zeus's allies in Tartarus, so he killed the old Tartarus's guard, then he took the keys and released the Cyclopes and the Hundred-handed ones. The Cyclopes thereupon gave Zeus thunderbolt as a weapon of offence, and Hades a helmet of darkness as well Poseidon a trident; these were the powers for each one of them. Therefore, it was a great war punctuated by earthquakes and disasters, until Zeus and his army crowned with victory, this war called the Titanomachia, which lasted for ten years (Graves, 39).

### **3\_3 Division of the World**

After the victory, the conquering brothers Zeus, Hades and Poseidon decided to divide the world among themselves. They drew lots to see who would control what, and they had to share the rule according to their power, so each one of them was responsible for a specific area. Consequently, Hades got the underworld and all the dead folk, Poseidon got the sea and oceans, and Zeus was the god of skies, high above any other gods. Although, Zeus became the lord of the universe (Graves, 40)

### **4\_ The Major God and Goddess of Greek Mythologies**

The Greek were polytheistic in their religious beliefs, Which means they believed in and worshiped many different gods (Sailors, 26). Their religion or myths had no official structure, except the various festivals held in honour of gods. However, there was no sacred book or code of conduct to live by (Sailors, 39).

Most Greek gods had similar characteristics, both good and bad to human beings. They were portrayed as men and women, but they were thought to be immortal and hold special powers. Therefore, the gods could exercise their powers on one another and on human beings as they wished, whether for their own vengeance or pleasure.

#### **4\_1 Zeus and Hera**

After the great adventure of Zeus in defying his father Cronus, and his position in the Olympian mount as the father of gods. Zeus ascertained that each deity perform their individual duty, punished their misdeeds, settled their disputes, and acted towards

them on all occasions as their all-knowing counsellor and as a mighty friend (Berens, 18). Additionally, Berens described that as he was the personification of the operations of nature, he represented the grand laws of unchanging and harmonious order, by which both the natural and the spiritual world were governed. Besides, he was the god of regulated time as marked by the changing seasons and the regular succession of day and night, in contrast to what his father Cronos represented before him, absolute time i.e. eternity (17).

Moreover, Zeus could also generate natural events relating to the air and sky, like as storms, tempests, and severe darkness, by his shield “the Aegis”. As the father of men, he took a parental interest in the deeds and well-being of humans; great thunder would flash and lightning would roll, unleashing havoc at his command. He tended after them with significant concern, rewarding truth, kindness, and justice while punishing deception and cruelty severely. Even the poorest citizens may find a powerful ally in Zeus, who as a knowledgeable and benevolent sympathetic father figure, insisted that the world richest citizens pay attention to the concerns of their less fortunate neighbours.

As for the private aspect of Zeus’ life, there was many tales and offshoots, but his relationship with Hera was special. Hera was Zeus’ wife and sister too (Bryant, 68). She raised by the Titans Oceanus and Tethy, in addition that she was the supreme goddess, patron of marriage and childbirth (Cartwright, 2012). Zeus initially courted Hera, but after many unsuccessful attempts, he resorted to trickery. Therefore, he assumed the form of a dishevelled cuckoo, which Hera felt sorry for and clutched to

her breast to keep warm. Zeus then reverted to his original form and raped Hera, taking advantage of her shock. To hide her embarrassment, Hera married him (Bryant, 76).

Occasionally, Zeus was particularly harsh with the other gods. This was exploited by Hera, who invited them to join her in a revolt. Therefore, they all agreed and put a plan into motion with Hera, drugging Zeus and tying him to a coach. Unfortunately, Briareus the Hundred-Hander overheard the story, and because he still grateful to Zeus for saving him and his brothers from a dragon, Briareus crept in and easily undid the knot that kept Zeus bound. Zeus leapt from his carriage and drew his thunderbolt (Cassello and Martino, 2015).

The gods fell their knees begging and pleading for mercy. Therefore, he grabbed Hera and hung her in the sky with gilded chains, and she cried out in pain all night, but no other gods dared to intervene. Fortunately, her sobbing kept Zeus awake the next morning, and he consented to let her go if she pledged she would never rebel again. Later on, she often thwarted Zeus' plans and was frequently able to outwit him. Anyway, their marriage was tumultuous, and they constantly clashed, and the majority of Hera's myths revolve around her jealousy and plans of vengeance for Zeus's infidelities (Bryant, 77).

## **4\_2 Hades and Persephone**

Bryant clarified that Hades although considered as an Olympian god, but he preferred the Underworld and rarely left his kingdom. He was a hard, middle aged



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man, living in the dark, among the shadows of the dead. He drew poorly, which resulted in becoming lord of the underworld with all its creations. Nevertheless, he was not considered to be death itself, as this was a different god, called Thanatos. His weapon was a pitchfork, which he used to create earthquakes, similar to the way Poseidon used his trident. He also had a helmet of invisibility, which he had received as a gift from the Cyclopes, in order to use it during the clash of Titans. Like his brother Poseidon, he was known to be greedy, additionally he was interested in increasing his subjects, and he favoured anyone whose deeds resulted in people dying (43).

However, The Greeks were not keen on uttering his name, afraid of causing some kind of reaction that would end up with them dead sooner. Instead, they decided to give him another name “Plouton” deriving from Greek word for wealth, due to the precious metals mined from earth. Thus, Hades also became the god of wealth, he fiercely prevented his inhabitants from leaving his dominion, and would become infuriated if someone attempted to flee or steal souls from his territory. Anyone who tried to avoid death or otherwise disobeyed him was exposed to his wrath. Additionally, Hades was frequently depicted as passive rather than malicious, and his duty was usually characterize as keeping a relative equilibrium between the worlds, as he was as plain harsh and austere, so all his subjects were held equally liable to his laws (Claus, 2022).

As for the emotional side of his personality, he was captivated by Persephone, the daughter of Demeter (the goddess of harvest and fertility) and Zeus. Persephone

also called Kore, which means “maiden” and grew up to be a lovely girl attracting the attention of many gods. On the other hand, Hades was the most persisting suitor. Her youth, beauty and freshness amazed him. When he asked Demeter to marry her daughter, she got furious and refused directly. Therefore, Hades decided to marry Persephone no matter what (Strong, 2014).

One day, when Persephone was playing with her friends, the earth beneath her feet suddenly cleaved open and through the gap, Hades himself came out on his chariot with black horses and he descended into his underworld kingdom. This incident led to great sadness for her mother, which resulted in an agricultural crisis in the human world. but after they reached an agreement that satisfies both of them, Persephone must remain with Hades as the queen of the underworld for a specific period, and then she return to her mother and her world for another period. This story was explained to the Greeks by the fluctuation of the seasons between drought and greenness (Strong, 2014).

## **5\_ Constantine the Roman Emperor**

The Romans adopted numerous Greek Gods as their own because of the existence of Greek colonies on the Lower Peninsula. Additionally, religion and myths merged to form one. Moreover, the Roman Gods grew more anthropomorphic because of Greek influence.

In either Catholic or Protestant Christianity, the name “Constantine” is not well-known (Ross, 2020). Diocletian’s successor Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of

Milan, which recognized Christianity. Constantine's Christian kindness can be traced back to the Battle of Milvan Bridge in 312 CE, when he saw a vision (a cross in the sky) that helped him win the battle and become the Emperor of a united Roman Empire (Wasson, 2013).

Later, in 325 CE, he convened the Council of Nicaea, which aimed to reconcile the numerous Christian groups. He repaired the churches that the Diocletian had destroyed, and other historians claim that he converted to Christianity in his deathbed. Following his death, Christianity would continue to spread, eventually eclipsing and displacing traditional Roman religion (Wasson, 2013). The Roman Emperor Constantine legalized and eventually adopted Christianity, forever changing Roman history (Ross, 2020).

## **6\_ The Impact of these Mythologies on People's Beliefs**

Human thought has evolved through a number of stages, from myths moving to through religion. To understand the functions of myths and religion for the Greeks and their influence on people's thoughts in any given culture, it must be taken into account that there is a close link between the two for them (Sailors, 04), in addition to the separation when studying each aspect of them. However, to the Greeks, mythology and religion were inseparable from the mythos of the society.

Whenever one speaks of mythology, the visions of battles of heroes and gods in a time where the monsters move freely, terrorizing the humankind, is the first idea that spring to mind. Moreover, myths differs from fantasy in many ways. A myth is much

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more than just a tale or a story, because myths can be told with the intent of being symbolic, allegorical, rational, romantic, theoretical or analytical. Therefore, it is necessary to set the myths apart from the writing that were meant to be factual records such as Herodotus' writings and Thucydides or the writings of Homer which were clearly different (Sailors, 08).

Additionally, one of the things that set myths differs from the other types of folk tales is the auditory element. Also, myths are tied to a specific place and time and for an exact sample of people. Anyhow, for the Greeks each myth evokes further myths, because it is ultimately connected in a chain of association with every other Greek myth. Besides, entertainment is a basic part for the fairytales while for myths is also an essential function. That's what Sailors argues in her research

'The poets who wrote each myth were also considered to be divinely inspired by the Muses. The Muses "Zeus" nine daughters by the goddess of memory, were the goddesses of artistic inspiration. These Muses were thought to whisper to the Poet of the adventures of the gods. Thus, myths held a revered place in ancient Greece as they were seen to be divinely inspired and were meant to convey some important message about life or the gods to the people. Simply put myths can be seen as "traditional tales relevant to society' (09).

When starting to review the ancient Greek religion, one must take into consideration the fundamental difference from the common perception of religion today. This difference is due to the existence of the idea of polytheism, which means

that every event, phenomena or a precise characteristic return to specific god. Nonetheless, the dominant world religions today unifying and exclusive; the three major religions in the world today are Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All the three are hold that their god is the only god; and all others are false. Conversely, Greek religion excluded no gods, even when the gods seemed to overlap or contradict each other, which means all gods taken together ruled, but no god ruled everything (Sailors, 25).

Moreover, the social nexus and the meaning of ritual actions in the Greek religion were more important, because they consider as the face of religion. However, the word religion admittedly it is a much broader term, it enveloping not only ritual and nexus but also belief, values individual and group psychology and sociology. Contrary to the beliefs of today's dominant religion, Greek religion was based on traditions rather than on revelation and faith, in addition to anthropomorphic and symbolic of gods. Sailors claimed that

‘... unlike the popular monotheistic religions of today, those prayers had nothing to do with the confession of sins. They were instead petitions for desires, both private and social. For example, seafarers would pray to Poseidon for a safe voyage, and women would pray either Artemis or Hera for marriage and Childbirth’ (38).

Furthermore, in Greek myths, the gods appear to be superhuman playing like human roles. In addition, the pantheon of gods is also a system that must be studied, because the rule of the Greek gods was based on the imposition of order and the

guarantee of the powers for each god separately. So that achieving stability depends on submitting of laws and rules that are imposed, as well as the penalties that came from violating the limits.

Additionally, stories with moral or figurative meaning can be very effective tools for persuasion, as much as reasoning. Although, all the great stories and tales propagated by poets, doesn't require a legend to be in the sense of "holy tales" because they authorized the individual interpretations and rewrites these stories according to a specific purpose for which they set. Therefore, imagination and fiction were the basis of these tales that change according to the writer and his view in the narration of the events, and the goal of the change. According to Fowler:

'These two passage of Herodotos are suggestive, to say the least. On the other hand these are the only two times that he uses the word mythos. In other passages he discusses what later writers would call "myth" without any embarrassment. In truth, Herodotos, and other writers of this period, are a half-way post in the transition from "authoritative speech" to "imaginative tales", which did not happen over night' (26).

Also Robert explain that myths are a line parallel to rituals, but it remain distinct without being affected. It is true that the great poets elaborated a powerful and distinctive world view of gods and heroes, but all this had nothing to do with rituals

‘Myths constitute a parallel discourse to that of ritual operating according to its own rules; it touches on ritual often, but leaves its essence unaffected. One is almost tempted to argue, in this perspective, that Greek myths had nothing to do with Greek religion! In a different sense, it had everything to do with Greek religion: it is through Greek mythology that the great poets elaborated a powerful and distinctive world-view with the gods and heroes at the center’ (34).

In any case, the thirst of the masses to hear wise poets and sages was the main impetus for embellishing the old tales, adding to them and modifying them to suit the new context, even though most of the stories had no ritual necessity. From this standpoint, it was found that Greek myths flourished and multiplied over time to become unique, and every storyteller continued to work on it as a necessity to the complement of the Greek religion (Adkins, 2021).

## **7\_ The Existence of The Idea of Heaven and Hell**

The concept of the afterlife is not just novel; many western areas, as well as south Asian and Africans ones, believe in some form of life after death. Its origins span from the ancient world and classical world antiquity until today. Most often, the world of the afterlife is associated with Greek mythology, where it is called the underworld (Margaret, 2020).

The Greek myths included specific concepts of afterlife; they were all pouring into one stream, which is the way to the underworld with the god Hades. Later on all these concepts began to change because of the misery that makes man get tired of thinking about the idea that whatever a person has done in life, they will be in the same place as everyone else (Garland, 2020).

Wherefore, they found new ways to make it more cheerful and interesting. For them the way to Hades started by the river Styx. They believed that when a person was dead, they just need Charon [the son of Erebus and Nyx (Night), whose duty it was to ferry over the Rivers Styx, and Acheron those souls of the deceased, who had received the rites of burial] to ferry them across the river, and they had to pay him for it through. This is mean that the person had to hope that someone put an obol in his mouth; that is a Greek coin worth 1/6 a drachma, just enough for a one-way ticket across the river Styx (Garland, 2020).

Moreover, there was no post-mortem judgment like the Egyptians because the Greeks did not have the concept of heaven and hell. For them, people's crimes were much too petty to warrant the attention of the gods and merit that kind of punishment. Over time, Greeks became dissatisfied with the equal misery for all. So from the 6th century BC, they came to believe that people who do a certain secret rituals could expect more blessed in the afterlife unlike those who never started, even the word "blessing" was new state of being for them (Garland, 2020).

Furthermore, Eleusinian were the most notable Mysteries, where all the Greek speakers were eligible to participate even women and slaves (Garland, 2020).



Actually, the rites were very secret where they imposed the death penalty on any one who divulged them. However, the inclusion of slaves was unusual in the Greek world, because Greek religion in general forced the social distinctions by making it clear that if someone had money to throw around, he will be more likely to get the attention of gods. Besides, the only class of people who were excluded with the exception of the Greek-speaking were the murderers.

Anyhow, the Greeks maintained their emotional relations with the dead, relying on their successive visits to their tombs and providing food to them just as the Egyptians did, so their well-being after death depended on the efforts of the living people. As they certainly did nothing to preserve the bodies of their dead (Garland, 2020).

## **7\_1 The Way to Heaven**

Rituals were much different in the Greek religion, especially when giving a description about heaven or hell and their location. The closest thing that Greek mythology had to refer to the concept of heaven was “Elysium”, also known as Elysian Fields. This idyllic place was not for everyone, it has exclusivity reserved only for gods, their mortal family and heroes (Claus, 2022).

Likewise, Hesiod describes it as a place untouched by sorrow, in addition to Homer and other poets related Elysian fields as a beautiful place of luscious meadows, flowing streams, and abundant vegetation. Meanwhile, wine was readily available, and the residents of Elysium spent their time making music, singing and participating in

sports. Additionally, there were a lot of artwork exists showing Elysium in all its glory. These artworks depicts vast plains of flowers, vibrant sunshine, and pure joy, which means the epitome of peace where no worries and sorrows can exist (Gill, 2019).

Actually, the location of heaven has undergone a little change throughout Greek mythology as well. Mostly, earlier Homer in his epic poems written around the 8th century BCE, indicate that it is located on the western edge of the Earth where the paradise island were near ocean currents. Thus, the primordial deity resided over a huge river that circled the entire world, and Elysium received its waves on its shores (Gill, 2019).

Furthermore, Berens explain that there was another possible location in the underworld, but it considered as a secondary realm. Elysium painted it as a multi-layered paradise, although his location did not seem ideal, it was separated from the agony and gloom of the underworld. According to most writers, the Lethe River separated its wonderful fields from the grief of the underworld realm (112).

Later, the site of Elysium according to Homer was in the west, at the end of the earth. It was on the borders of the Oceanus; a river that followed around earth. The Elysian Fields were known to Hesiod as “The Isle of Blessed”, and they were thought to be in the same place (Geller, 2017).

Initially, only gods and those favoured by them were allowed to enter, included mortal family members and heroes. Once they gained entry to Elysium, they could

enjoy the same things as in life, but there they could live freely without worry or sorrow, and live the rest of eternity in pure bliss. Consequentially, gods could choose who would go into Elysium after death, so the admittance into this paradise expanded and many vital figures in Greek mythology enjoy eternity in peace (Geller, 2017).

Besides, the second Elysium realm in the underworld, admittance was a little different, the Lethe River divided this lands from the underworld. The initiates of mystery cults of Demeter, Persephone, and Hekate and others were promised paradise. They were taught if they led virtuous lives, they would be raised to godliness and become immortal after death. Additionally, they would be able to obtain entrance to their promised paradise and live in endless joy (Geller, 2017).

Afterward, Greig claimed that the two realms became part of a multi-layered afterlife; which means that the virtuous souls would gain entry into the lower level, but if they regained entry into this netherworld Elysium realm after three reincarnations, they could finally rest in the islands of the Blessed. Therefore, the purpose of Elysium changed because of concept of reincarnation that make the fourth death the only way to grant the entry to paradise to dwell with heroes of myths for all eternity (13).

## **7\_2 The Way to Hell**

Hell is a place of punishment after death, or in more abstract term it is state of a spiritual curse. According the beliefs of different religions, person's life determines whether he goes to heaven or hell after his death. The underworld related to the

concept of hell, in the myths of many cultures, this place was the mysterious and often gloomy realm of the dead. Although usually imagined as a dark kingdom associated with caves and holes in the earth, where the wicked receive punishment in hell (Manfrè, 68-73).

Moreover, the word hell comes from Hel, the Norse goddess of death. This word appear in many mythologies for different cultures. The common features of hell include burning heat or freezing cold, darkness, physical agony that represents spiritual suffering, and devils or demons who torment the damned. Additionally, the word “Tartarus” referres to the infernal regions of ancient Greek mythology. This name used for the deepest region of the world “the underworld”, where the gods locked up their enemies; it gradually came to mean the entire underworld. Tartarus was one of the personified elements of the world, along with Gaea (Earth) and others. According to those accounts, Tartarus and Gaea produced the monster Typhon in compare to Hades (Myths Encyclopedia).

Furthermore, according to Homer, the underworld was located beyond the earth-encircling river of Ocean, at the far western end of the world separated from the world of living by five rivers: Acheron (woe), Sytx (hate), Lethe (forgetfulness), Cocytus (wailing), Phlegethon. However, some other authors inform us that there were quite a few places within the known world one could use it as portals to enter the kingdom of the dead ( a cavern near the ancient town of Tenarus, the bottomless Alcyonian Lake at Lerna, the volcanic Lake Avernus), (“The Underworld”).

Likewise, the underworld could not have been a particularly pleasant place. It was like living through the same dismal nightmare repeatedly, in a world inhabited by shadows, desolate and barren of hope, this how sometimes the ancient authors described the underworld. Anyhow, the underworld was divided into at least four different regions, which is Tartarus, the Fields of Mourning, the Asphodel Meadows and the Elysian Fields (“The Underworld”).

Additionally, the Greeks believed that Tartarus existed as an inverted dome beneath the earth, just as the heaven formed a dome above the earth (Greenberg, 2020). Besides, Hades the god of the lower world with his queen Persephone, were the rulers of the underworld, guarding it by the three-headed dog named Cerberus, where one head faces Tartarus, the other inside the underworld, and the third in the entrance of the underworld to keep in any escapees or keep out any living souls (Hill, 2019). Also, in the center of the underworld, lies the main building “The Underworld Palace”, this is where Hades and Persephone reside (Spadez, 2013).

Anyway, the underworld is considered to be a dark and gloomy place, and the realm of dead, which characterized primarily by the absence of life’s pleasures, and perpetual torment that awaited only the most exceptional sinners; unlike to the bright and happy Mount Olympus where all the gods and goddesses stay.

## **8\_ Conclusion**

Greek mythology is mostly concerned with folktales. Although its origins may be traced to the remotest eras, while Greek religion in its development lasted more than a

thousand years, from the time of Homer in 6th century BCE to the 4th century CE. During that period, its influence spread very fast, and its effect was most marked on Romans, who identified their deities with those of the Greeks.

The sole requirements for the Greeks were to believe that the gods existed and to perform ritual and sacrifice, through which the gods received their due. It should be noted that the myths changed over time, where the author could change the role played by gods or heroes, and also evaluating the god's actions. Greek religion as it is currently understood resulted from mingling of religious beliefs and practices between incoming Greek-speaking peoples and the indigenous inhabitants whom they called Pelasgians, where did the ideas and tales about gods and heroes overlap, and about their locations whether in heaven or hell.

# Chapter Two

## **CHAPTER TWO: Aspects of Greek Mythology in *Constantine***

1\_ Introduction

2\_ “*Constantine*” the Movie

2\_1 Summary of the Script

2\_2 Plot

2\_3 Characterization

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3\_ Depiction of Greek Mythology in “*Constantine*”

3\_1 The “Half-Breeds” and “Demigods”

3\_2 *Constantine* the Roman Emperor

4\_ The Concept of Heaven

5\_ The Concept of Hell

6\_ Conclusion



## 1\_ Introduction

Films featuring supernatural themes have been profitable since the late 1990s. “*Constantine*” is a polished, tightly crafted horror film that is hideous and deceiving. It builds its supernatural universe from conventional Protestant and Catholic ideas of God, angels, devils, Satan, heaven, and especially hell. The plot waves together renegade exorcist John Constantine’s “law enforcement” careers, and Angela Dodson who work together to solve a metaphysical crime. In addition, members of the audience with any theological or biblical background will be able to participate, because the story is heavily reliant on a caricature of Roman Catholic theology, where one is either doomed or redeemed based on a technicality by exploiting a flaw all of this happens without *Dogma*’s satire.

## 2\_ “*Constantine*” the Movie

The movie is a 2005 American superhero horror film, directed by ‘Francis Lawrence’ in his feature film directorial debut, produced by ‘Lauren Shuler Donner’, ‘Benjamin Melniker’, ‘Michael E. Uslan’, ‘Erwin Stoff’, ‘Lorenzo di Bonaventura’ and ‘Akiva Goldsman’. Written by ‘Kevin Brodbin’ and ‘Frank Cappello’, it is based on DC Comics “*Hellblazer*”, which is an American contemporary horror comic book series published by DC Comics since January 1988 and subsequently by its Vertigo imprint since March 1993, when the imprint was introduced. Moreover, the film stars ‘Keanu Reeves’ as ‘John Constantine’, who is a cynical exorcist with the ability to perceive and communicate with half-angels and half-demons in their true forms, and

the qualification to travel between earth and hell. In addition, to the other actors such as 'Rachel Weisz', 'Shia Labeouf', 'Tilda Swinton', 'Pruitt Taylor Vince', 'Djimon Hounsou', 'Gavin Rossdale' and 'Peter Stormare' (*Constantine*, 2005).

## **2\_1 Summary of the Script**

John Constantine born with a gift, which he did not want at all, because it has been always as a big concern. It was the ability to recognize the half-breed angels and demons, who walk in the earth disguising in the form of humans. Constantine (Keanu Reeves) was driven to take his own life to escape from his vision by suicide, but he failed so he found himself cast back into the land of living again. However, he marked as an attempted suicide with a temporary lease on life, and he patrols the earth border between heaven and hell, hoping in vain to find his way to redemption by waging war on evil henchmen (Ebert, 2005).

Besides, Constantine is not a saint, and the strife in his immediate surroundings depressed him throughout his life. His health deteriorated because of his alcoholism and persistent smoking. Nevertheless, because he already detested the idea of heroism and his objective was to protect innocent souls from the intrusion of demons, he was trying to do that just in order to discover the path to heaven and not out of appreciation or sympathy.

Therefore, his real adventure begins when a desperate police detective (Rachel Weisz as Angela Dodson) enlists his help in solving the mysterious death of her twin sister. So that, their investigation takes them through the realm of demons and angels

beneath the contemporary landscape of Los Angeles, where the two are caught up in a disastrous chain of otherworldly events, and they strive to find peace (*Constantine*).

## 2\_2 Plot

Keanu Reeves plays Constantine as a chain-smoking, depressed demon-hunter who lives above a bowling alley in Los Angeles, whereas his lonely mission to track down half-demons and cast them back to the fires below. Therefore, he was a man suffering from lung cancer, due to his smoking about 30 cigarettes a day since he was thirteen and he recently discovered that this disease started when he spent some time in hell; which looks like a post nuclear of Los Angeles where no doubt it is filled with carcinogens. Despite the angel Gabriel's blunt confirmation of his ultimate damnation, he is on a quest to earn paradise through spiritual warfare.

Likewise, Angela Dodson an L.A police detective whose twin sister Isabel, has apparently committed suicide. Isabel reported seeing demons, so Angela consults Constantine, who nods wisely and wonders if Isabel jumped, or was metaphysically pushed. Additionally, the story involves the Spear of Destiny, which is the spear that killed Christ, and which has been missing since the Second World War. As he looks into Isabel's death, he realizes demons are trying to break through to the human world.

At one point, Constantine needs to consult Midnite (Djimon Hounsou), a former witch doctor witch doctor who runs a private nightclub where half-angels and half-demons can get half-loaded and talk shop. To them, it seemed strange, as no demon had previously dared to cross into the human world, so he did not believe Constantine.

Later on, to show Angela that she also has the same gift of seeing the creations behind the world, Constantine holds her underwater in bathtub until she passes out and sees the torments of hell. It turns out that Lucifer's son is trying to usurp him. Mammon (son of Lucifer) requires the body of a powerful psychic to cross over, but John suspects that someone on Earth is working on Mammon's behalf.

In the climax, after Mammon tries to cross through Angela, Constantine sacrifice himself to expose the little demon and save Angela by summoning Lucifer. Thereafter, Lucifer returns his son to the underworld, and Gabriel de-winged as punishment for plotting to unleash Mammon upon the living world, where Constantine introduces them for the first time pain with a punch to the mouth.

## **2\_3 Characterization**

John Constantine is the protagonist and an accomplished exorcist. He learns that he has a fatal case of lung cancer and he work hard to keep away from hell, because he knows exactly what he will encounter there, so he seeks to maintain the balance between the two world (living and dead). Eventually, he meets and agrees to help the detective Angela Dodson, who finally becomes the key to his survival (Ebert, 2005).

Angela Dodson is the first to question the supernatural in general and even suppress her talent, but after spending time with Constantine, her suspicions were confirmed. Angela feels guilty that she was not there for Isabel and did not support her, because she knew that everything Isabel saw and heard, she also did because they were identical twins. This guilt helps Angela discover what her sister was going

through when she died. Additionally, since she is Catholic, and Isabel's twin, Mammon has identified as the target way to cross the living world.

Gabriel is a mysterious gender character from another world with a supernatural golden eyes and looks like a winged human (half-angel). Since Gabriel never wears very revealing clothes; it is unclear gender but usually describes as male. However, he created as a complete angel long ago; Lucifer's dialogue indicates that they knew each other before. Actually, he well-meaning extremist because he loves God and wants to make humans worthy of God's love, so he decides to unleash hell on earth, as a virtue that only during true suffering, humanity's most noble qualities will appear. Anyhow, Gabriel described as strong enough, since Constantine has to cut a deal with Lucifer to stop him, when he helps Mammon to enter the world and create hell on earth.

Mammon is the prince of hell, all his ambitions are evil based on his plots along with Gabriel to unleash himself on earth. He is a very backward character compared to other villains like Lucifer and Gabriel. Besides, all he wants is world domination, so that his ultimate goal is to across over to earth and turn it into his personal kingdom.

Lucifer is the ruler of the hell, and the sworn enemy of God by default. He appears barefoot in front of Constantine and covers his feet with hot tar. He is so eager to possess Constantine's soul to torment that he has deceived him several times, while Lucifer does not care about the accumulation of souls, but he forced to revive John and cure him of cancer. In addition, John has been terrified of him the whole time even though he was the one who summoned him, and Lucifer does not hide his intention to torture him forever if he had the chance.

## 2\_4 Settings

The story of the movie “*Constantine*” set in Los Angeles, California. The events took place in Mexico first, where the lost Spear of Destiny found, along to Los Angeles the point where the hero Constantine follows the traces of intrusion of a demon on a young girl. There, he discovered the first attempt of evil to enter the human world. In addition to the residence of John in an apartment above the bowling alley, the church, and Angela’s apartment where did John take the short trip to hell, and the Psychiatric ward where did Isabel commit suicide, followed by the final events of the movie where Mammon tried to get out. Without forget the private nightclub of Midnight where Constantine used a chair that enabled him to know the source of the demons that followed him.

## 3\_ Aspects of Greek Mythology in “*Constantine*”

The film “*Constantine*”, which was a box office success and was reportedly more popular with audiences than critics, is notable for its religious and theological (or perhaps soteriological) themes, principles, and claims, not just for whatever virtues it may have as a story, acting, entertainment, or visually (Ross, 2020).

Moreover, a key point in the movie “*Constantine*” is that the main character, John Constantine, succeeded in committing suicide as a child. He was dead, and in hell. This lasted only briefly in the visible world, but his time there seemed substantial. Additionally, since he has been exorcising demons, this annoys Satan enough that he intends to collect Constantine’s soul at his death (Ross, 2020).

Besides, even if the person died, returning to life resets the salvation clock, this is not true, and it cannot be achieved only for one person. John in the story does not need a dialogue with the angel Gabriel, because in the Catholic Church, he just need to confess to be absolved, and he will set for eternity, where the priest will take care of that (Ross, 2020).

Nonetheless, John's argument to Tilda Swinton (as Gabriel) is that he must be allowed into heaven only because of his good works, which is fighting the agent of devil. Therefore, Gabriel rejects his argument because it deals only with his own self-interest (*Constantine*). The man must not be good only just for the purpose of being in heaven and avoiding hell; this is not morally laudable. Actually, this was the basic solution or principle in the film, which requires moral selflessness to get the salvation; this is what was clear in the end of the film, where the selfless act of saving Isabel from being in hell, earned Constantine salvation (Ross, 2020).

Yet, most Christians embrace Catholic doctrine in this regard, which state that salvation requires two things: faith and repentance, because sin results in damnation, repentance is required, but it is not sufficient. Although, remorse or penitence may be a mitigating factor in the sentencing, but the court does not excuse the sinner. Unlike the Protestants who believe that regret over sins and trying to avoid them with good deeds, will make the way to heaven (Ross, 2020). Thus, there is a location in Dante's hell (an epic poem "Divine Comedy" by Dante Alighieri), which is not a place of punishment, but rather closer to the Greek concept of the Elysian Fields (Ross, 2020).

However, it is intriguing to see angels and devils portrayed as “half-breeds” that can walk and communicate with people, while there are various tales of such beings in the Judeo-Christian scriptures; they are commonly referred to as “Elohim” which means gods or deities. This idea, conjures up the images of the Greek Olympian Pantheon and their interaction with humans, often to tragic rules. One could argue that ancient Greek stories are the stuff of comic books, and that idea may have influenced the creation of these half-breeds subconsciously.

As a result, appreciation of biblical apocalyptic literature and its use of symbol, myth, and metaphor can be found only within the context of eschatology. Such instruments serve as eschatology’s principal language. Its themes of devastation, judgment, and rebirth, were and still continue to be popular. As a result, “*Constantine*” is a film about religion without faith. It is not even about a religion of good actions, because the most important thing is the moral attitude with which the works are carried out (Ibraa, 2020).

### **3\_1 The “Half-Breeds” and “Demigods”**

The movie provides a clear vision about the “half-breeds”, who are the offspring of a human and an Angel or a demon. The half of these breeds are found in the human world, because the full-fledged demons and angels cannot pass over the real world, and the existence of half-breeds is to keep equilibrium on earth.

However, throughout history the term “demigod” and its counterparts have had various connotations. Simply described, a demigod is a creature who is partly divine



because of his or her heroic or exceptional nature. Additionally, among the most famous stories in Greek mythology regarding demigods, the character of Hercules, son of Zeus (Geller, 2016).

Likewise, it was common for Greek heroes to achieve immortality as a reward for their great deeds, but Hercules stands out because he was raised among the Gods on mount Olympus after his death (Gill, 2019).

Actually, the movie *Constantine* (2005) embodies this similarity through Gabriel's character as a "half-breed". The presence of such creatures in the human world is the same as the depiction of "demigods" in Greek mythology, as they are divine origin, but they exist on earth.

### **3\_2 The Depiction of the Roman Emperor in "*Constantine*"**

According to the film, giving the name "Constantine" to the protagonist, is an indirect association with the Roman Emperor, because it symbolizes the saviour of the Christian religion, as he was the reason for its wide spread. "John Constantine" plays the same role in the film because he maintains a balance between the two world (human world and metaphysical one), since he is the most faithful person in life after death, due to his experience in hell because of his suicide experience.

### **4\_ The Concept of Heaven**

The existence of a road that genuinely leads to heaven is a basic topic that raised by this film. Constantin's responses are ambiguous and deceptive. The angel Gabriel

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warns that those who commit suicide will go to hell, but he also mentions God's mercy for those who put their faith in him. Although, John cannot buy his way into heaven by performing good deeds; instead, he must believe in God only, ask for forgiveness, and commit at least one completely selfless act, which sounds a lot like doing a nice deed.

The most astounding message in this film is that a soul can be bargained into heaven from hell. As did John Constantine with a suicide victim, and his selfless gesture prevented the devil from stealing his soul, allowing him to enter heaven.

In this part from the movie, the sky appears with a very bright light in addition to the skyscrapers, at this moment John realize that he has got his ticket to cross the heaven, which have been always his goal. The incarnation of the same image can be seen when Mount Olympus (the seat of the Greek Gods) is united with clouds (Berens, 03). Therefore, the location of heaven is a metaphysical place behind clouds, where material and immaterial mass collide (1:47:23).



Fig. 1. [01:47:23] Screenshot of the moment when John realizes that he got his ticket to Heaven (*Constantine*).

## 5\_ The Concept of Hell

The focus on the notion of hell in “*Constantine*” is high, as most of the scenes and dialogues include the idea of the underworld. Since John’s abilities included seeing half-loaded and half-demons, he had the ability to control them and learn their strengths and weaknesses. His first scene begins when freeing the girl who was initially from the intrusion of the demon, down to the method that Constantine used to enter hell, which said to be a familiar file that is generally a possessed animal and severs as a spiritual companion.

However, when John agrees to help Angela, he asked her to pours water into a pot in the sink, and John picks up the cat. Later, he sits down on a chair and puts his feet in the pot of water and hold the cat on his lap, and then asks Angela to leave the apartment. Constantine grab the cat’s head in his hands and start looking in her eyes. The lights eventually flicker, and the cat’s eyes narrow. Moreover, the water in John’s feet seemed to boil, and it was as if time had stopped, and then his journey to hell began. Proximately, Angela unlocks the door when Constantine returns from his trip to hell, and the cat bolts, never to be seen again.

Additionally, Angela explain that she had the same gift as John; she had suppressed it to the point that it was no longer active. Hence, Constantine drenched her

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in a bathtub; it was a near death experience in order to restore her abilities. This experiment yielded the necessary results, as Angela was able to see half-breeds.

Although demons and Satan usually cannot affect a person directly by touching him, they just drag him towards certain actions by whispering unobtrusively, but this part from the movie shows Lucifer's control over John by deterring him from his way to heaven, which must have been a divine decision that happened because John sacrificed himself in order to save Angela. This is what was clearly described in (1:47:45) from the movie, the moment where Lucifer deterred John to go to heaven. Likewise, as in Greek mythology, the only one who was able to confront the chief Gods (Zeus) is Hades, the ruler of the underworld. Therefore, this moment is the embodiment of Hades as Lucifer, where their powers are described very similarly.



Fig. 2. [1:47:45] Screenshot of the moment when Lucifer deterred John to go to Heaven (*Constantine*).

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However, it can simply be discerned that hell is not very different from the real world in its design, because it looks like the inflamed and devastated city of Los Angeles in a nuclear accident. This description of hell appears in many shots from the film, the most obvious moment was in (44:39).



Fig. 3. [44:39] Screenshot shows Hell (*Constantine*).

Additionally, the film once again proves the place of hell, which located in the underworld, as the shot (1:44:46) shows it when Lucifer returns his son to hell, when he opened a portal to hell.



Fig. 4. [1:44:46] Screenshot of the moment when the floor turned into inferno gate (*Constantine*).

At (1:46:28) the moment of the movie, when Lucifer decided to take Constantine to hell, he grabbed his hand and dragged him, as the picture shows that the way to hell requires taking the whole body, not just his soul (*Constantine*). This image is a clear embodiment in Greek mythology, whereby the fate of Hercules after his death was by his presence on mount Olympus with the rest of Gods (Gill, 2019).



Fig. 5. [01:46:28] Screenshot of the moment when Lucifer dragged John (*Constantine*).

## 6\_ Conclusion

The movie “*Constantine*” is one of the most prominent films that deals with drawing the relationship between man and religion, as most of his scenes focused on the concept of heaven and hell as an inevitable fate after death. However, the link between Greek mythology and the depiction of Christianity in the film lies in the presence of the phenomenon of polytheism and semi-dynasties as prominent similarities. Additionally, to sharing most of the beliefs about the afterlife, so that good deeds have a place in heaven, while bad ones are in hell for sure.

# **General Conclusion**



## General Conclusion

Traditional stories were the basis of Greek mythology. Although its origin can be traced back to ancient times, it provides an in-depth analysis of each story told as it unravels the greater themes and valuable lessons hidden within each tale. Additionally, the Greek religion is closely related to the Gods mentioned in the ancient stories and legends. The development of Greek religion lasted over a thousand years, beginning with Homer's time. Actually, its influence expanded quickly throughout that period, and it had the greatest impact on Romans, who identified with the Greeks.

However, the only needs for Greeks were to believe in the Gods and to undertake rituals and sacrifices in order for Gods to receive their due. It is worth noting that myths evolved with time, with the authors changing the role of gods or heroes, as well as analysing the God's acts. The mingling of religious beliefs and practices between incoming Greek-speaking peoples and the indigenous inhabitants, whom they called Pelasgians, resulted in Greek religion as we know it today, where ideas and tales about the famous personalities overlapped, and about their locations, whether in heaven or hell.

Furthermore, Greek mythology continues to appear in popular movies and books today. "*Constantine*" considers one of the most important films that combined mythology and reality, as its script was filmed in an exciting way, which made it a success at the box office. Thus, the role of myths is big source of great inspiration for "Kevin Brodwin" and "Frank Cappello", in addition for the audience because of its

distinctive style from the rest tales. Yet, the role of technology in providing the necessary depiction of events, increase its popularity across the world.

Likewise, the film "*Constantine*" revolves around fictional events related to the Christian religion, such as the name "Constantine". Additionally, the hero "John Constantine" tries to change his destiny by not entering hell again, because of his suicide experience. Anyhow, the analysis of some scenes are indirectly related to Greek mythology. For example, this representation of the ruler of hell "Lucifer", appears on "Hades" the God of the underworld, in addition to portraying heaven as a place that combines materialistic image (skyscrapers) and immaterial masses (sky), besides the depiction of hell as a place similar to the human world, but it is inflamed as always. The depiction of demigods as the character Gabriel shows the similarity between the film and the character of the Greek tales, which tell the stories of demigods such as Hercules.

To conclude, the influence of Greek mythology in "*Constantine*" was evident in most of the basic scenes. Greek legends play an important role in their beliefs and religion, and since they are the most popular, there is no wonder that they are a great source of inspiration for most novelists and writers.

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# Appendix

## Table of Greek and Roman Gods

Greek Name	Roman Name	Province	Attributes
Zeus	Jupiter Jove Juppiter	-king of Gods and men -father of younger Olympians	-Lightning bolt -Eagle
Poseidon	Neptune Neptunus	-Sea	-Trident -Horses
Hades Pluto Plouton	Pluto Dis	-Underworld	
Hera Here	Juno Luno	-Consort of Zeus -Marriage	-Peacock
Hestia	Vesta	-Hearth	-Hearth
Demeter	Ceres Ceres	-Grain	-Cornucopia

Athena	Minerva	-Wisdom	-Battle armor
Pallas		-Crafts -Warfare	-Owl
Aphrodite	Venus	-Love	-Mirror  -Dove or swan
Hermes	Mercury  Mercurius	-Messenger  -Lying  -Thievery  -Trade  -Psychopomp	-Broad-brimmed hat (petasos)  -Caduceus

Apollo	Apollo	-Sun	-Beardless youth
Phoebus	Phoebus	-Archery	-Long hair
Phoibos		-Medicine	-Bow and arrows
		-Music	-Lyre
Artemis	Diana	-Moon	-Bow and arrows
		-Hunting	-Hunting Dress
			-Stag
Hephaestus	Vulcan	-Fire	-Lame
Hephaistos	Vulcanus	-Forge	-Smith's tools
Ares	Mars	-War	-Battle armor
	Mavors		

Source: University of Pennsylvania, Classical studies, Penn. "Greek and Roman Divinities" (Farrell, 2020).

## summary

Greek mythology is one of the most highly renowned legends, and it has had a tremendous impact on various civilizations throughout the world in different fields, as seen by numerous novels and stories that have been inspired by it, as well as the original stories. Besides, with the development of technology and the production of films, scenarios became inspired by it. The movie "Constantine" (2005) is one of the most important films that combines mythology and reality. This work depicted the two metaphysical worlds (Heaven and Hell) in a distinctive way, and which outstanding scenes that were influenced by Greek mythology.

## المخلص

الميثولوجيا الاغريقية هي واحدة من أكثر الاساطير المشهورة حول العالم. حيث كان لها تأثير هائل على مختلف الحضارات في جميع انحاء العالم، وفي مختلف المجالات، اين يتضح ذلك في العديد من الروايات والقصص المستوحاة منها. الى جانب هذا، فمع تطور التكنولوجيا ونتاج الأفلام، أصبحت العديد من السيناريوهات مستوحاة منها. يعتبر فيلم "قسطنطين" (2005) من اهم الأفلام التي جمعت بين الواقع والاساطير. يصور هذا العمل، العالمين الميتافيزيقيين (الجنة والنار) بطريقة مميزة، بالإضافة الى اهم المشاهد البارزة التي تأثرت بالأساطير الاغريقية.

## Résumé

La mythologie grecque est l'une des légendes les plus renommées. Elle avait un impact énorme sur diverses civilisations à travers le monde dans différents domaines. Comme en témoignent les nombreux romans et œuvres qui ont été inspirés, ainsi que les histoires originales. Avec le développement de la technologie et production de films, des scénarios s'en sont inspirés. Le film « Constantine » (2005) est l'un des films qui combine mythologie et réalité. Cet œuvre assemble les deux mondes métaphysiques (Ciel et Enfer) d'une manière distincte, et dont les scènes remarquables qui ont été influencées par la mythologie grecque.