

**Reflection of the Greek Labyrinth Myth on the two Post-Apocalyptic Novels *The Hunger Games* and *The Maze Runner*: Freudian and Jungian Psychoanalysis**

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**Abstract:** This research paper aims at tracing Edith Hamilton's Greek Labyrinth myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* (1942) and uncovering its influence on the two post-apocalyptic contemporary novels, Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008) and James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* (2009) from a post-apocalyptic perspective as well as a psychoanalytical approach. All elements are analyzed from the psychoanalytic approach of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung to expose the imbalance in the human psychic nature. From a post-apocalyptic perspective, the study presents the major symbol of the maze that the two novels share with the Greek myth as reflected on the theme of survival. Moreover, the research mirrors how quest for survival leads to the characters' sacrifices and downfalls.

**Keywords:** Greek Labyrinth Myth, Maze, Post-apocalypse, Psychoanalysis.

**المستخلص:**

يهدف البحث إلى كشف مدى تأثير أسطورة المتاهة الإغريقية "ثيسوس ومينوتور" (١٩٤٢) لإديث هاميلتون على الروايتين المعاصرتين: "ألعاب الجوع" (٢٠٠٨) لسوزن كولنز و "عداء المتاهة" (٢٠٠٩) لجيمس داشنر و ذلك من خلال منهج التحليل النفسي و من منظور ما بعد نهاية العالم. تشترك الروايتان في الرمز الرئيسي للمتاهة و ذلك للإشارة الى مدى تضحيات الشخصيات من أجل البقاء. كذلك يقوم البحث بتحليل جميع العناصر من منظور التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد و كارل يونغ للكشف عن مواطن الخلل بالنفس البشرية. يقدم البحث رمز المتاهة من منظور ما بعد نهاية العالم و مدي ارتباطه بالأسطورة الإغريقية مما ينعكس على موضوعات البقاء والقوة والأمل و كذلك فكرة الصراع من أجل البقاء.

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**Post-Apocalyptic Fiction**

The apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fictions are subgenres of science fiction. They deal with imaginative and futuristic concepts used to explore the dark side of a parallel universe or an imaginary world that might seem as violent and as a nightmare to some people. Science fiction began in ancient times, when the line between myth and fact was blurred. Apocalypse is a Greek word which means revelation. According to Paul Corcoran, “The Greek root for apocalypse is a verb meaning to uncover, reveal, lay bare, or disclose” (63). Multiple tales of civilization reaching its end are discussed in major western religions; such as the stories of the Garden of Eden, Noah, and the Book of Revelation, which all contain apocalyptic themes.

The post-apocalyptic fiction involves events in which society and civilization have already collapsed. The reasons behind the collapse might vary, whether from a natural or man-made circumstances, zombie infections, or even alien-invasion. Post-apocalypse shows an exaggerated worst-case scenario to the readers. The setting of post-apocalyptic fiction takes place where the end of the world or a massive destruction has already occurred and the characters are exerting all efforts, get through, survive, and cope with it. They hardly struggle to build and start a new life. Survival is the only key to this new life. Since the post-apocalyptic fiction focuses on the characters and their interactions with others, and discusses, as well, their eagerness to survive; this allows the post-apocalyptic authors to discuss the depth of the characters’ fear and needs, and include the issues of trusting strangers, sharing limited resources, and surviving together. These are similar to the issues presented in the two selected post-apocalyptic novels *The Hunger Games* and *The Maze Runner*. These issues help to psychologically analyze the characters within the two novels. Both novels are taking place after catastrophic events that triggered in the devastation of Earth and the only people left are somehow the last humans on Earth and if they die, the human race

will end, so the only thing that the characters should do is to survive no matter the circumstances.

### **Psychoanalytic Theory of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung**

Since the characters are being analyzed psychologically, it is worth noting to present the theory of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is a theory and a way of thinking about the human behavior and motivation. The psychoanalytic perspective comprises conscious and repressed unconscious desires and motives. According to the psychoanalytic theory, the human mind is structured into two main parts, the conscious and the unconscious mind. The conscious mind embodies all things that a person is aware of, such as feelings, thoughts, wishes, and memories. While the unconscious mind embodies all the things that a person is not aware of, but still are influencing the person's behaviors and actions, such as desires, urges, hopes, wishes, memories, and thoughts. According to Sigmund Freud, the human psyche and personality consists of three components; the Id, the Ego, and the Superego. The main idea of the three components is the internal conflict within the person and how the human mind works. The conflict occurs between the basic desires which are derived by the Id, the consciousness which is derived by the Ego, and the morality and the idea of being a perfectly good person which is derived by the Superego. On the other hand, similar to Freud's theory, in Carl Jung's theory of the unconscious, the human psyche and personality consists of three components as well; the Ego, the Personal Unconscious, and the Collective Unconscious. The Ego in Carl Jung's theory represents the conscious mind, it is the person's conception of himself and his sense of identity. The Personal Unconscious, as in Freud's theory of the unconscious, is the person's repressed emotions and memories including those that have been suppressed for any reason. The Collective Unconscious, sometimes called the Objective Psyche, includes the knowledge and experiences that people share together. The Collective Unconscious is responsible for sexual behavior as well as life and death instincts. Jung's life and death instincts are same as Freud's. The life instincts are survival, pleasure, pain avoidance, and reproduction. The death instincts are like aggression and might result in suicide or self-harm. Jung believed that the Collective Unconscious is made up of instincts and archetypes that might be repressed by the conscious mind. The most important archetypes are the Self, the Persona, the Shadow, the Anima and the Animus. According to Jung the archetypes are "complexes of experience that come upon us like fate, and their effects are felt in our most personal life" (*Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* 26).

These archetypes influence a person's behavior and his way of thinking or acting. Choosing Freud's three components of the human psyche: the Id, the Ego, the Superego as well as Jung's components of the human psyche: the Ego, the Personal Unconscious, and the Collective Unconscious along with the archetypes is to decode the cipher of the myth and symbolism thus representing the three phases of the human psychological development.

The study focuses on tracing the impact of the Greek Labyrinth Myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* on the two post-apocalyptic novels by tracing the impact of the Labyrinth, as a Greek phenomenon, on the symbol of maze in the two novels and the reasons behind its creation. Since the maze symbol influences the character presentation, characters are presented through two scopes: the maze symbol and the psychoanalytical approach of both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung in order to expose the imbalance in the human psychic nature and to unveil the ambiguity of each character from a Freudian and Jungian analysis of the characters and their actions.

The Greek myth, reflected on the two novels, is based on taking the young adults from their homes and imprisoning them in a maze the only thing that the young adults can hold onto is the glimpse of hope that they could survive this harsh reality and get back home safely one day. The creation of the maze is the main common factor between the myth and the two novels; it is a man-made symbol with malicious motives behind it that reveals the extent of how far a human can go to achieve one's despicable agenda. In Harrison's words, "The maze is the very symbol of confusion and disorientation, the trap that confounds efforts to escape. At times life itself seems to be a maze, as our journey along its tortuous pathways lead to wrong turns, dead ends and unknown destinations" (27).

There are some commonalities between the Greek Myth and the two post-apocalyptic novels; the most important similarity is the symbol of the maze. The characters are sent to be trapped in an unknown place, surrounded by unknown people, and are being attacked by a monster whose only aim is to slaughter them to death. In the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* the tributes are trapped in a labyrinth, similarly, in *The Hunger Games* the twenty-four tributes are trapped in an arena, while in *The Maze Runner* the tributes are trapped in a Glade that is in the center of a giant maze. There are many common aspects between the settings: the labyrinth in the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, the arena in *The Hunger Games*, and the maze in *The Maze Runner*. The three are enormous, originally man-made, dangerous and full of obstacles to hinder the trapped tributes. According to Hamilton,

“There was no possible way to escape. In whatever direction they ran they might be running straight to the monster; if they stood still he might at any moment emerge from the maze” (*Mythology* 212). Minos made sure that there is no way these children would find their way out on their own.

Since being trapped in a maze changed a lot in the protagonists’ psychological minds, the study tackles the physical and psychological journey of the protagonists in the Greek Labyrinth myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* and how this is mirrored in the two post-apocalyptic novels, *The Hunger Games* and *The Maze Runner*. In addition, by psychoanalyzing the protagonists’ actions and reactions; the impacts and the effects of the mazes on their lives and their minds will be highlighted. The psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung is specifically selected to reveal the ambiguity of post-apocalyptic fiction. The study psychoanalyzes the actions and the major changes in the lives of the main characters after being trapped in an unknown place with no escape, while linking the protagonists of the Greek myth and the two novels together (Thomas, Katniss, and Thomas), as well as the protagonists’ companions together (Ariadne, Peeta, and Teresa), and illustrating the similarities and the differences of each.

### **The Greek Labyrinth myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur***

In the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, Minos who is the King of Crete asked his architect, Daedalus, to build a labyrinth to hide the Minotaur in. He created the labyrinth to take revenge for his son, Androgeus’ death which occurred during his visit to Athens. For revenge, Minos kept on taking fourteen young adults, seven boys and seven girls, from Athens and put them in the labyrinth to be slaughtered by the Minotaur. The Minotaur is a monster, half human half bull. Its existence occurred also as a kind of revenge from Poseidon, God of Sea, when he gave Minos a bull to be sacrificed to him, but Minos could not do it and kept the bull to himself. So as a revenge, Poseidon made Pasiphaë, Minos’ wife, fall madly in love with the bull and she gave birth to the Minotaur.

The labyrinth symbol evoked Carl Jung’s interest in his psychoanalysis and he was trying to understand the true meaning behind it. This was obvious in the letter that Jung sent to his friend, Karl Kerényi: “The labyrinth is indeed a primordial image which one can

encounters in psychology mostly in the form of the fantasy of a descent to the underworld” (*C.G. Jung Letters* 295). The labyrinth is a complicated structure that can be depicted as the biological structure of the human brain and the psychological aspect of the human psyche. It can also symbolize the mental and the physical map of the human mind and how being trapped in a labyrinth can evoke Jung’s Archetype of the Collective Unconscious. According to Jung, “In all cultures, the labyrinth has the meaning of an entangling and confusing representation of the world of matriarchal consciousness; it can be traversed only by those who are ready for a special initiation into the mysterious world of the collective unconscious” (*Man and his Symbols* 125). Since a labyrinth is an unknown dangerous dark place where it can be easy to get lost, sometimes, trapped people do not always lose themselves, they might eventually find themselves in this dark place. In Stephen Diamond’s words:

The labyrinth can be seen as an archetypal symbol of the psyche... The goal is to reach the center, the Self, the core of our being. But this is only half the journey. One must find a way out of the labyrinth and back to the outer world—forever transformed by this experience. But there are real dangers lying in the labyrinth that can block the way—or worse. (2)

Similar to Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis of the human psyche represents the labyrinth as the darkness of the unconscious mind, which reflects the fear of the unconscious, and the fear of the unknown. It is dark, unpredictable, and hard to find a way out of it. The person should face his fears and face the darkness within by going through the labyrinth in order to be able to search for a way out. As Robert Lamb stated, “Sigmund Freud equated the labyrinth of the Minotaur with the darkness of the unconscious mind. For Theseus, it is the monster hidden and pursued. For Minos, it is shame secreted away. And for the Minotaur himself, it is an exercise in cruel and inescapable circumstance” (Lamb). The labyrinth can be seen and comprehended differently from each person’s perspective.

### **The Minotaur**

The Greek myth and the two novels share a crucial common symbol which is the monster. The monster in the Greek myth was the Minotaur. Reflecting Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis, the Minotaur represents the Id, since it is the animalistic urges within the human. The

Id is unethical, irrational, chaotic, and selfish. It gets whatever it wants, regardless the circumstances and the consequences, especially since the Minotaur is a metaphor for desire and lust, as it was originally born because of Pasiphaë's lust. According to Hamilton, "The Minotaur was a monster, half bull, half human, the offspring of Mino's wife *Pasiphaë* and a wonderfully beautiful bull" (*Mythology* 211). On the other hand, reflecting Carl Jung's psychoanalysis, the Minotaur represents the Shadow archetype in the Collective Unconscious in the human psyche. According to Pino Blasone, "In the Greek myth, nobody as a hybrid Minotaur appears so suited to play the part of the Shadow, which the subject has to challenge, if he or she wishes to grow an autonomous person and even cast off the more or less heroic mask" (Blasone). It's only aim is to be hidden and neglected, yet it still seems so evil and monstrous just like the dark unknown side of a person's hidden personality; the dark side that the person refuses to acknowledge about his true self. The Minotaur represents the inner struggles a person hides within his subconscious.

### **King Minos and Poseidon**

Minos' creation of the labyrinth and hiding the Minotaur in it can be seen as a representation of Jung's Persona archetype in the Collective Unconscious; wearing a mask and aiming to hide the Shadow and the dark side of the self underneath it as if being trapped in one self's hidden prison. By Minos creating the Labyrinth for the Minotaur and taking fourteen Athenian children from their homes and families to be given to the Minotaur as food shows how Minos is driven by his Id, because his action shows how selfish and unethical he can be. Hamilton states: "A horrible fate awaited these young creatures. When they reached Crete they were given to the Minotaur to devour" (*Mythology* 211). On the other hand, Poseidon's reaction and his punishment to Minos can be interpreted as Id according to Freud, because it was selfish and twisted. According to Jung, Poseidon is driven by his Persona in the Collective Unconscious because his sense of 'I' controls him. As Hamilton described that Poseidon gave this bull to Minos so he could sacrifice it to him. But Minos on the other hand, could not bear to slay it and instead of sacrificing it, he kept it to himself. So in order to punish Minos, Poseidon made Minos' wife, Pasiphaë, fall in love with the bull and give birth to the Minotaur (*Mythology* 211). The mask Poseidon has is reflecting the power he has; making Mino's wife fall in love with the bull and giving birth to the Minotaur is just Poseidon's revenge to Minos. As Jean Bakula described, "His temper is his most characteristic feature. Poseidon is bad

tempered, violent, vindictive, destructive and dangerous. His presence is usually accompanied by turbulence and tempest, a raging sea” (2). All what Poseidon wants and seeks in this situation is power, and when Minos did not give him the importance he deserves, he reacted selfishly.

### *The Hunger Games*

In the same manner of the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, in *The Hunger Games*, the capitol created a game to be watched as a reality television show, called The Hunger Games, it is created as a punishment for the failed rebellion occurred in District Thirteen. Every year, the capitol randomly selects two tributes, a boy and a girl, from each district and traps them in a place with no escape, and they call it a game because they watch it as an entertaining reality show on television. The twenty-four children have to fight each other till death, and may the odds be ever in their favor; as the capitol has to have only one winner in this game, one survivor. Courage is their only way of life. As Katniss referred to the real message behind the Hunger Games; the Capitol’s message to the district’s people, “Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there’s nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you” (HG 19).

#### **President Snow and Katniss Everdeen**

By President Snow creating this heartless games for innocent children to be trapped inside a maze aiming at killing each other, he is driven by his Id because his only intentions is to satisfy his own urge and desire which to prove that the Capitol has the upper-hand of everything and anything, even the people’s lives. With reference to Jung’s psychoanalysis, President Snow is driven by his Shadow in his Collective Unconscious, as he is not acknowledging that he is selfish, but he sees that in others. This was shown when Katniss stood up and was ruining the Games by sacrificing her life and Peeta’s life when she came up with the idea of them both eating the poisoned berries and committing suicide. Katniss’ move forced the Capitol to change the Games rules instead of only having one winner, they now have to have two winners, Katniss and Peeta, together. By Katniss doing so, President Snow sees how selfish and twisted she is. Katniss mentor Haymitch even told Katniss, after the Games, that she might be in trouble exposing the Capitol as she did. Haymitch told Katniss, “Word is the Capitol’s furious about you showing them up in the arena. The one thing they can’t stand is being laughed at and they’re the joke of Panem” (HG 356).

In the light of Freud's psychoanalysis, Katniss fearlessly exposing the Capitol and ignoring their rules as she did, she is driven by her Id. She acted so recklessly without caring about anything or anyone, all she cared about at that moment is to show the Capitol how weak they can be if they will not end up having a winner in the Hunger Games. She is rebelling against the Capitol. Same as Katniss thought, "They have to have a victor. Without a victor, the whole thing would blow up in the Gamemakers' faces. They'd have failed the Capitol. Might possibly even be executed, slowly and painfully while the cameras broadcast it to every screen in the country" (*HG* 344). In the light of Jung's psychoanalysis, Katniss is driven by her Self in her collective unconscious, as the self unifies conscious and unconscious together within a person and represents the psyche as a whole. She is aware of what she is doing, yet she has many repressed emotions and feeling, as if putting them all on hold.

Katniss is sacrificing her life and Peeta's life and committing suicide only to prove a point. Her death instincts are taking over. Katniss has the power now over the Capitol and the Gamemakers, she seeks the power, but the power she is seeking is the power of rebel. Katniss thought to herself, "If Peeta and I were both to die, or they thought we were ..." (*HG* 344). Yet, her life instincts were also shown at the same time, when she confessed to herself that this is only a game she is playing with the Capitol, she is not willing to kill herself, she is just showing them that she can be stronger than them, she is still only seeking and hoping for survival.

### **The Gamemakers and Katniss Everdeen**

Meanwhile, the ones who created and designed everything for the Hunger Games are called the Gamemakers; they keep on manipulating the surroundings with the use of their superior technology, in order to make it harder for the tributes to survive and to make sure that their struggle is real, and for sure to keep the game entertaining for the audience. In the Games, once the tributes are in the arena, they forget everything outside and only focus on their survival. Their life instinct is their best friend, they need to survive and avoid pain as much as they can. Everything in the arena is artificial but still looks and feels so real. According to the protagonist, Katniss Everdeen, "Somewhere, in a cool and spotless room, a Gamemaker sits at a set of controls, fingers on the triggers that could end my life in a second" (*HG* 175). In the light of

Freud's psychoanalysis, the Gamemakers are driven with their Id because their aim is only to please the Capitol and to satisfy the Games' audience. Their actions are unethical and twisted, they harm the tributes only to spice things up with the Games and get more viewers. According to Jung, the Gamemakers are driven with their Ego because they are conscious with their actions, they know that they are harming these children, and still doing it. Katniss thought to herself, "No viewers could turn away from the show now. From the Gamemakers' point of view, this is the final word in entertainment" (*HG* 339).

There is an assigned day for private sessions with the Gamemakers; where the Gamemakers check out each tribute's talent and score it out of 12. Katniss is driven by her Id. When it was Katniss' turn, the judges started to get bored, they weren't paying attention to her, yet all their attention was to the roasted pig on the table that is filled with food. Katniss was very furious about this; she lost her temper, and threw her arrow right away. Her arrow hit the apple out of the pig's mouth. Then she gave them a slight bow and walked straight out without getting dismissed. The last sentence she said to them before leaving was: "Thank you for your consideration" (*HG* 102). Her rebellious self could not handle being treated in that manner so she uncontrollably unleashed her rebellious self who she has been hiding all along. She did not give up when people were not giving her attention; she sought attention in her own irrational way. Katniss was driven by her Id, her action is irrational and chaotic. As Katniss described her action after thanking the Gamemakers for their consideration, "Then I give a slight bow and walk straight toward the exit without being dismissed" (*HG* 102). She did not care about anything or anyone in that specific moment, all she cared about is to satisfy her anger because she felt unappreciated and unwelcomed. Such act would be considered controversial and might cause her to be contended because the Gamemakers are the controllers of everything in the game, and her action might affect her score, which will trouble her getting sponsors and will definitely affect her odds of surviving the game. Katniss does not care about any of this; all she cares about that her actions in the Capitol do not affect her family, what she fears the most is that they might hurt her family back home. By her thanking them for their consideration; that is her Ego taking over and talking as she is trying to handle her Id and her Superego all together. She is furious with them but she cannot be disrespectful. When her ego fails, guilt takes over. As Katniss thought to herself after leaving, "What was I thinking, shooting at the Gamemakers? Of course, I wasn't, I was

shooting at the apple because I was so angry at being ignored, I wasn't trying to kill one of them. If I were, they'd be dead!" (HG 103). When Katniss realized what she has done, shooting her arrow at the Gamemakers, she kept blaming herself not because such action might harm her, but the moment she came to realization that such action might hurtfully affect her family and put them in danger, her guilt took over. On the other hand, in the light of Jung's psychoanalysis, Katniss is driven by her death instinct and her collective unconscious as she is responding aggressively which might harm her. The self in her collective unconscious drives her, because she responds unconsciously, yet her unconscious mind tries to arise, so she thanks them for their consideration.

### **The Muttations or the Mutts**

Similar to the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* as well as *The Maze Runner*, in *The Hunger Games* when there were only three tributes left in the arena, Katniss Everdeen, Peeta Mallark, and Cato, the Gamemakers sent them monsters, called the Muttations or the Mutts, to chase them. Muttations are creatures created by the Gamemakers, they are huge dogs that look like wolves, that could jump and also could balance on their hind legs, but their DNA is mixed with the DNA of all the fallen tributes of 74<sup>th</sup> Hunger Games. They are chasing them with hunger for blood same as the Minotaur in the Greek myth. Each mutt resembles one of the dead tributes. Katniss recognizes that by the look on the muttations eyes, they have eyes of a human. Same as the Minotaur, the muttations represent the Id, they are irrational, selfish, unethical, and chaotic.

### **Katniss Everdeen**

Since life instincts is the major factor in the characters, survival is the only thing they think of, it is important to psychoanalyze the characters and their keys to survive through Freud and Jung. For example, since the Id is the desire of pleasure, in Katniss' case the Id is the desire of pleasure for safety in order to survive. When the players teamed up to set a trap for Katniss, she climbed the trees to hide so other players could not find or see her. Her desire to escape took over because she did not want to get any harm, so she decides to climb the trees and hide, instead of facing them. As Katniss described her feelings, "My instinct has been to flee, not to fight" (HG 159). In the light of Jung's psychoanalysis,

Katniss reaction's considered a life instinct, the pleasure for survival and pain avoidance.

### ***The Maze Runner***

#### **The Creators**

Equivalent to *The Hunger Games*, in *The Maze Runner*, everything in the maze and the Glade are controlled by the creators. The creators are group of members in an organization called WICKED. Same as the Greek myth and *The Hunger Games*, according to Freud, the Creators are driven by their Id because they act impulsively and selfishly; they only care for themselves. According to Jung, the Creators are driven with their Ego because they are aware of what they are doing. They think what they are doing is the right thing to do, hiding behind the curtains of finding a cure for the Flare; yet they are acting so selfish to take these children from their families just to brain test them as if they are lab rats. Once the children are in the Box that leads them to the Glade, they don't remember anything about their previous lives. All their memories are erased by the controllers; the only thing they can remember is their first names. Whenever one of the Gladers does something rebellious or something the Creators do not like, they harshly punish them; similar to what the Gamemakers in *The Hunger Games* do whenever one of the tributes does something they disapprove of.

#### **The Grievors**

In *The Maze Runner* the teenage boys are living in the harsh conditions of the maze every day with only one hope; to find a way out. In order for them to break out, they would have to face the Grievors, which are half animals half machines made by the Creators of the maze. Same as Minos thought in the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* that if any of the trapped children found a way out from the labyrinth, they would never beat the Minotaur, the Creators in *The Maze Runner* thought the same, they know quite well that if these children went through the maze to find their way out, they would not succeed to fight the Grievors and take them down. The Grievors are half-animal half-machine made by the Creators. The term griever means a person who experiences grief and great sorrow; which happens to whoever gets stung by the Griever in *The Maze Runner*. Once one of the Gladers is stung by a Griever, they go through the Changing which sometimes dehumanizes them and makes them act excessively violent. Through the Changing, the Gladers can sometimes remember things vividly from their erased memories. As if during the Change, the Gladers are watching over themselves but from another world. According to the youngest Glader,

Chuck, “The Grievors do bad things to you, make your whole body go through something awful. When it’s over, you’re different” (*MR* 52). Same as in the Greek myth and in *The Hunger Games*, the Grievors represent the Id, Thomas represents the Superego and Teresa represents the Ego.

### Companionship in the Greek myth and the two novels

A major common aspect presented in the Greek myth as well as the two post-apocalyptic novels is the idea of companionship. In the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* Theseus had Ariadne, in *The Hunger Games*, Katniss had Peeta, while in *The Maze Runner* Thomas had Teresa. Companionship made it easier for them; it also made them stronger, as if they had a real reason to push forward. Having someone with them was another major reason after surviving to get back safe to their families; they wished to survive along with their companion. Having a companion along with the obstacles of the maze makes it easier as they divide their fear, their energy, and even their supplies. It makes them psychologically feel safer when having another person to share their struggles and fears with; which makes it easier for them to survive not on their own, but together.

In the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, Minos, king of Crete, knew that if Theseus succeeded to figure a way out of the maze, he would never be able to kill the Minotaur, and vice versa. When the young adults arrived in Crete, Theseus met Minos’s daughter Ariadne, and she fell in love with him at first sight and decided to help him. She asked him if he would take her back with him to Athens and marry her, and in return she would help him figure out the way out of the maze. She went to Daedalus, the architect of the maze, and asked him to show her the way out of the maze. When she knew the only way out of the maze, she ran straight to Theseus to give him the clue before entering the maze. According to Carl Jung’s archetypes of the human psyche, the Anima and the Animus, as well as the Persona and its Shadow, the Greek myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur* can be highly reflecting to Jung’s archetypes. Ariadne is representing Jungian Anima, as she is the feminine side of Theseus. Because without Ariadne’s love, Theseus would not have found his way out, her love helped him out and made it easier for him because she got him the clue to how to kill the Minotaur and escape the maze.

In *The Hunger Games*, unlike the love story in the Greek myth, the two love birds of the screen are Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mallark. Peeta is the one who has been in love with Katniss since forever, but she has not had feelings for him at all and she was too scared to fall for him, because by the end of the game one of them has to die. In the light of Freud's psychoanalysis, Katniss is driven by her Superego, as she knows what is right and what is wrong, and she chooses the right path, or at least what she thinks is right. She is embracing her morals and high manners. She does not want any of them to get hurt at the end. According to Jung, she is driven by her Personal Unconscious; as she is repressing her emotions and feelings towards him to do what she thinks is the right thing to do.

Following the pattern of the Greek myth and *The Hunger Games*, the love story of Thomas and Teresa in *The Maze Runner* is what helped the Gladers to find a way out of the maze. In *The Maze Runner*, Teresa was the only girl as well as the last one to be sent to the Glade. She was found unconscious, but she kept calling Thomas' name. Of course Thomas could not remember if he has ever knew that girl before, but he still feels something for her, he kept missing her and dreaming of her, which was very much surprising to him because he did not even know her name by that time. As time passed, Thomas and Teresa figure out that they can communicate telepathically through their minds, which got them closer and closer together. As Thomas confessed out loud to the Gladers, which stunned them, "We're telepathic! We can talk to each other in our freaking heads!" (MR 308). Talking telepathically, this shows how close they are, and it was a proof for them to trust each other and made it easier for them to become allies. Thomas and Teresa fall in love, and she helps him remember some of his erased memories, unraveling his true identity and true self. She becomes an ally as well as a close friend to Thomas. They help each other in figuring out a way out of the maze and help the rest of the group all along.

### **The Three Protagonists (Theseus, Katniss Everdeen, Thomas)**

#### **Theseus in the Greek Myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur*:**

The three protagonists Theseus, Katniss Everdeen and Thomas share a very similar action that can be psychoanalyzed similarly. In the Greek myth, Theseus sacrificed himself voluntarily to save his people. He volunteered to join the next tributes. According to Freud, Theseus is driven by his Superego as he is being selfless and loyal to Athens and its

people. He knows what is right and what is wrong, he is embracing the ideals and following his morals and values. As Hamilton described, “At once Theseus came forward and offered to be one of the victims. All loved him for his goodness and admired him for his nobility, but they had no idea that he intended to try to kill the Minotaur” (*Mythology* 212). While according to Jung, Theseus is driven by his Ego, because he is aware of his doings. He knows that he is going to a labyrinth, he might not find his way out, he also knows that he is going to face the Minotaur and might be slaughtered by him. Yet, Theseus is aware of his strength, and believes in himself.

### **Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games***

Similar to Theseus’ reaction, Katniss, in *The Hunger Games*, volunteers as tribute, her mind is derived by her Superego. As soon as she heard her little sister’s name during the reaping in the 74<sup>th</sup> Hunger Games, she unconsciously and instantly shouted and sacrificed her life hoping to save her sister’s. “I volunteer! I volunteer as tribute!” (*HG* 22). Katniss’ love for her sister is endless; she is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for her little sister, no matter the consequences. As Katniss thought, “I reach her just as she is about to mount the steps. With one sweep of my arm, I push her behind me” (*HG* 22). According to Freud’s psychoanalysis, since the Superego is responsible for the goodwill and the morals of a person; Katniss is driven by her Superego because all she is aiming for is to save her sister’s life which she believes is the right thing to do regardless the fact that she is harming herself in return. According to Jung’s psychoanalysis, Katniss is driven by her Ego, as she is aware of what she is doing and knows the consequences of her action.

### **Thomas in *The Maze Runner***

On the other hand, Thomas in *The Maze Runner*, acted like Theseus and Katniss. Thomas sacrifices himself to save the others. Thomas sacrifices himself to go to the labyrinth and face the Minotaur, Katniss on the other hand sacrifices herself to save her sister and enter the Games and face all the obstacles, also Thomas sacrifices himself and enters the hole and faces the Grievers so his friends would have more time to escape. He volunteers to be the one even though he knows that he might not get out of it alive same to Theseus and Katniss. According to Freud, Thomas is driven by his Superego, as he knows what the right thing to do is and does it anyway regardless the consequences. On the other hand, according to Jung, Thomas is driven by his Ego, as he is aware of the consequences and the danger he is putting himself into.

Comparably to Theseus and Katniss, Thomas has always believed that he knows something about the reason why these Gladers are here in the maze, he believes that he knows something very crucial, yet because of all his memories are erased, he does not remember anything. According to Thomas, “Something out there – it feels familiar...I think I’ve been here before” (MR 35). Thomas always felt that he has been in this place before because the place looks very familiar to him, but he could not share this feeling with anyone at the beginning because this might negatively affect him and his relationship with the Gladers. Yet, he was correct, he knows the place quite well, because he is one of the Creators after all, along with Teresa, but they discover this very late. As Thomas tells the Gladers after confessing his conclusions about him and Teresa as two of the Creators, “It’s true and I’m sorry, but I can tell you this – I’m in the same boat with you now. Teresa and I were sent here just like anyone else, and we can die just as easily” (MR 308). In the light of Freud and Jung’s psychoanalysis, Thomas is driven by his conscious mind; because he is consciously aware of his thoughts and emotions toward the maze, yet he does not hold his memories in hand as they were intentionally erased. As Thomas declared, “I just ... feel like I need to save everyone. To redeem myself” (MR 316). Thomas always believed that he needs to help his friends before helping himself; this is a kind of redemption because he always felt guilty but he does not understand why because he cannot remember and also as redemption in something he has no hand in, of him being one of the Creators. Theseus has always believed that he should sacrifice himself to save his friends, same as what Theseus and Katniss believed. None of them cared about himself as much as they cared about their families and friends.

Since the common aim of the three protagonists is to survive, they all needed a sense of hope that will help them to succeed and overcome the obstacles that face them. The sense of hope is common in the Greek myth and the two novels; it is plotted in a form of a character. Theseus’ hope is Ariadne, Katniss’ hope is in Peeta, and Thomas’ hope is in Teresa. It is noteworthy to psychoanalyze each of them through Freud and Jung according to their most significant action.

### **The Protagonists’ Companions (Ariadne, Peeta Mallark, Teresa)**

#### **Ariadne in the Greek Myth of *Theseus and the Minotaur***

Ariadne represents the Ego, as she is the reality principle. The Ego tries to balance between the Id and the Superego; it meets the desire of the Id and at the same time keeps it morally accepted by the Superego.

Ariadne represents the self-control and the self-care, as she is the one who took care of Theseus and helped him to escape the labyrinth and beat the Minotaur. According to Hamilton, “When Theseus lifted himself up from that terrific struggle, the ball of thread lay where he had dropped it. With it in his hands, the way out was clear” (*Mythology* 213). When the Ego fails, anxiety takes over, and the person unconsciously tries to escape reality, which happened when Theseus decided to abandon Ariadne in the island and escape to Athens. Theseus, on the other hand, represents the Superego, the conscience, the part of the human psyche which embraces the morals, ideals, values, and high-manners. The Superego knows the right from wrong. Theseus knew that the right thing to do is to help Athens people, and end the bloodshed of its young children. So he decides, as soon as he reaches Athens, to sacrifice himself and volunteers to go and be trapped in Minos’ labyrinth hoping to be able to kill the Minotaur and save his people. Superego is the ideal self which is always fighting the desires of the Id; for good measure, that was what Theseus was doing with Minotaur.

By Ariadne assisting in killing the Minotaur (her monstrous half-brother), according to Freud, she can be driven by her Id, because she is blind by her love to Theseus. All she cares about is him and nothing else, even if it costs her half-brother’s life which shows how dehumanized she can be only to win Theseus’ love. In the light of Jung’s psychoanalysis, Ariadne is driven by her Shadow in her Collective Unconscious. Since the shadow is the hidden or unconscious aspect of one self, she acknowledges how the Minotaur can be the monster he is while she can actually be as monstrous as he is. She is denying this fact, yet she is clearly seeing it in the Minotaur.

### **Peeta Mallark in *The Hunger Games***

In contrast, in *The Hunger Games*, Peeta has been fully aware of his feelings and thoughts; he is driven by his conscious mind, according to both Freud and Jung’s psychoanalysis, he is being driven by both his Ego and his conscious mind. Before the Game starts, Peeta and Katniss had a talk and Peeta confessed to Katniss that he wants to die because he is scared of turning into a monster by this harsh game. As Peeta expressed, “I want to die as myself... I don’t want them to change me in there. Turn me into some kind of monster that I’m not” (*HG* 141). Peeta has been struggling with how to maintain his identity and his purity of

self and when Katniss asked him if he will not kill anyone, he told her that when the time comes and someone puts him in danger, he would kill just like everyone else. Peeta also declared, “Only I keep wishing I could think of a way to...to show the Capitol they don’t own me. That I’m more than just a piece in their Games” (*HG* 142). According to Freud’s psychoanalysis, Peeta is driven by his conscience and his Superego, as he wants to refrain himself from committing any mistakes or wrongdoings, he does not want to kill anyone which he succeeded in doing by hiding in the Games, camouflaged by the lake in order not to face any danger and to be forced to kill. According to Jung’s psychoanalysis, Peeta is driven by the Self in the Collective Unconscious, as the self unifies the conscious and the unconscious together within a person and represents the psyche as a whole.

### **Teresa in *The Maze Runner***

While in *The Maze Runner*, Teresa is the first and the only girl to be sent to the Glade. Though she was unconscious, Thomas had a feeling that he knew her. Until she wakes up and they discover that they could telepathically communicate. Similar to Katniss’ relationship and alliance with the youngest tribute, Rue; Thomas’ first friend in the glade is Chuck, the youngest Glader. When Thomas, Teresa, and Chuck enter the Grievers’ Hole, Teresa is the one who should enter the code and the boys should prevent the Grievers from entering the Hole. When Thomas asks Teresa a question she does not like, she gets furious. Her temper made her lose it and forgets that he’s talking in her mind telepathically and she responds to him out loud, which makes the Grievers hear them and acknowledge their place. According to Freud’s psychoanalysis, Teresa is controlled by her Id, because she’s acting in a chaotic and reckless manner. According to Jung, she’s controlled with her Personal Unconscious, as she is repressing her emotions and responding impulsively. On the other hand, when the Grievers try to enter the Hole, Thomas jumps right in front of the Grievers facing them and preventing them from passing him and hurting Teresa or Chuck. Thomas is driven by his Superego, as his conscience is the one leading him. His life instincts are what leading him to do his best to survive and save his friends.

Persistence is the main key for survival as the main characters have broken rules, and they have acted upon their goodness of their hearts to change regulations and to survive together and their beliefs influenced their rebellious actions to change reality. The major commonality

between the novels and the myth is survival, as the characters' only aim is to survive the unknown place they found themselves trapped in, they do their best to survive and get back safe to their homes and families.

Throughout the characters' lives, there were difficulties. There were times when they had to face the monsters running after them only aiming to slaughter them, and other time when they had to face their inner demons. Being trapped in an unknown place with unknown people changed a lot in their personalities and of course in their lives. They are never the same people before entering the maze. Some of them get shattered, others stand up for themselves and unseize their rebellious parts of them. But whoever survives the maze, regardless how shattered they can be, they would come out stronger than before; which was shown throughout the psychoanalysis of our characters.

In conclusion, since being trapped in a maze changed a lot in the protagonists' psychological minds, the paper highlights the impact and the effects on their lives and their minds. The usage of mind tricks is clarified and illustrated through analyzing the behaviors and attitudes of the characters in the two post-apocalyptic novels as well as the Greek myth.

From a Freudian and Jungian analysis of the characters and their actions, this research paper psychoanalyzes the actions and the major changes in the lives of the main characters after being sent to the mazes. Moreover, the paper links the protagonists of the three works together (Theseus, Katniss, and Thomas), as well as the protagonists' companions together (Ariadne, Peeta, and Teresa) illustrating the similarities and the differences between them.

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