



**MONASH** University

***AN EXPLORATION OF THE ARCHETYPAL EVIL IN THE ACTION,  
HISTORICAL, DRAMA SERIES VIKINGS.***

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*BA Honours in Communication and Media Studies*

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## **Abstract**

Carl Gustav Jung emphasised the importance of understanding evil and indicated that it is defined by, and varies, according to society and culture which in turn can affect how people view their shadow. The shadow is an archetypal evil that emerges from the unconscious psyche and is both clothed and obscured in myth.

The purpose of this study was to explore the representation of the archetypal evil in a contemporary series specifically the action, historical, drama series *Vikings*. Using an interpretivist approach, the representation of archetypal evil was explored in the series by conducting a qualitative content analysis and audience interpretation by means of qualitative interviews. A qualitative content analysis and interpretation were conducted using *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* as a conceptual framework.

Themes that were derived through conducting both inductive and deductive coding included 'the fall of the hero', 'evil is found in those who have power', 'the echo of revenge', 'the ugly side of humanity', 'Cain and Abel', and 'for there to be good, there must be evil'. Themes found when conducting the qualitative content analysis are 'the ambiguity of evil', 'Cain's sentence is a catalyst of individuation', 'power gained as a means of becoming myth', 'trickster gains power using the hero myth', and 'an enemy's reflection'.

It was found that there is a core representation of evil, however, the meaning depends on the context within which it is represented, thus evil is ambiguous. Moreover, it was found that there may be a universal understanding of evil as the shadow was reflected between two different cultures in the series and participants could relate to representations of evil. Finally, the series also portrayed a symbolic representation of accepting the shadow to develop the Self.

For future study, it is recommended that purposive sampling methods be used, it would be beneficial to look for participants of varying age groups enabling more complex interpretations of the series. Using a mixed methods approach, of quantitative and qualitative, other series, such as *The Originals* (2013-2018) or *Supernatural* (2005-current), could be explored.

## **Declaration**

This thesis is an original work of my research and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature: .....

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Date: 17 April 2020

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# **CHAPTER 1: INCEPTION**

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding signs and symbols has become an important part of communication as the media uses language and symbols to communicate meaning (Berger, 2012:35; Leeds-Hutwaitz, 2009:874). Jung sought to understand symbols as he believed that a deeper understanding could be gained about an individual or society as people are drawn to symbols that manifest content from the unconscious psyche (Chang, Ivonin, Diaz, Catala, Chen & Rauterberg, 2015:157-158; van den Berk, 2012:50). He was especially interested in how people project their shadow onto symbols (Jung, 2006:68; McGlashan, 2010:256), thus the symbolic interpretation and distortion of evil can affect how people understand evil and the shadow.

Carl Gustav Jung (1995c:177) stated that “the first world war released the hidden power of evil, just as the war itself was released by the accumulation of unconscious masses and their blind desires”. Jung, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst (Tacey, 2012:3-6), believed that it was of the utmost importance to understand evil as he alleged that it was due to the ignorance of evil that World War II was declared (Jung, 1995a:181-182). Jung (1995c:175) encountered some of the German soldiers as patients undergoing psychoanalysis and found that there was a collective inner “blond beast stirring in the uneasy slumber and outburst was not possible”. As a culture, the Germans were psychologically disturbed by the fact that they had lost the first World War, and that their country was in a state of loss and turmoil. Jung (1995c:175) knew this based on their dreams consisting of symbols representing violence, cruelty and “all the powers of darkness”. Jung (2006:71-73) referred to the shadow as the unconscious and dark aspects of the personality usually projected onto others and often deemed as immoral.

Jung (1995c:175) explained that the shadow, if not understood, can draw people together collectively as mobs, and it takes one leader to manipulate their ignorance of evil and lead followers to certain destruction. The media, being a type of leader, motivated the Germans to go to war by displaying propaganda posters consisting of imagery of the superior race and others as enemies and ‘evil’ (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1995a:181-182).

Notions of evil were first relayed through myth or stories that have been passed down from generation to generation. However, there is no conception of absolute evil, only the relative evil that varies depending on cultural rendition (Bacon, 2015:78-79; Harold, 2011:4, 219; Jung,

2009:120, 134; Jung, 1960b:91-92; Stein, 1995:14-15). Moreover, it is alleged that myth has been represented in the media, thus modifying the interpretation of evil.

This chapter presents the essence of the research topic in terms of its context including the purpose, background and rationale, relevance, relationship of the topic to communication and conceptualisation of key terms. Finally, the type of study, the research problem, research questions, aims, and methodology are presented. The methodology is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

## **1.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

The context of a study creates the foundation of a research topic, allowing it to progress with the purpose in mind (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:286; Kothari, 2004:8; Lyons & Doueck, 2010:54).

### **1.2.1 Purpose of the study**

It is important that the purpose of a study is established as it is considered as the golden thread that links the different aspects presented (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:286; Kothari, 2004:2; Lyons & Doueck, 2010:66-68; Wakeling, Pinfield, Bawden & Robinson, 2019:789).

The purpose of this study is to explore the representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical, drama series *Vikings*.

### **1.2.2 Background and rationale of the study**

The background and rationale provide an overview of the research topic, allowing the identification of research gaps and the contribution that the study could make to a particular discipline (du Plooy Cilliers, 2014b:287; Kothari, 2004:349; Lyons & Doueck, 2010:35).

In contemporary society, the content and themes of television series have presumably changed from the conservative *Golden Girls* and *The Cosby Show* in 1985, to explicit violence and sex in television series such as *Game of Thrones* and *Hannibal*. The *Home Box Office* (HBO) company broadcasts internationally popular shows including *Game of Thrones*, *True Blood* and *Rome*, which contain scenes of violence such as rape, murder and abuse (Miller, 2008:ix; Santo, 2008:19). *Showtime* has also broadcasted internationally popular shows such as *Californication*, *Dexter* and

*Shameless* which also show scenes of violence (Leverett, Ott & Buckley, 2008:1). Representations of murder, rape and abuse are seemingly becoming more prominent in contemporary media culture (Hummer, Kronenberger, Wang, Anderson & Mathews, 2014: 26-27; Nussbaum, 2013:108; Shepherd, 2013:4-6). These scenes of violence are possible representations of evil (Harold, 2011:4).

It is possible that these television shows are popularised because people can relate to them on an unconscious level. According to Jung (2006:68) and McGlashan (2010:256-257), within every individual there are unconscious evil desires, known as the shadow, which are feared as it has been interpreted as immoral by society. As a result, people project their shadow onto others so that they do not associate or identify with them on a conscious level (Jung, 2006:68; McGlashan, 2010:256). The issue here is that they label others as evil without fully understanding what evil is and are misguided by media representations, thus a deeper understanding of evil is needed.

However, understanding evil is complicated and overwhelming as there are many different variations or representations of evil that are communicated by the media. Moreover, it is through these representations that people are manipulated or misguided about the nature of evil which can affect them unconsciously (Asia News Monitor, 2016:1; Balnaves, Donald & Shoesmith, 2009:58, 307; Jung, 2006:68). Thus, it is important to understand the notion of evil and how it may be endorsed in the media. Consequently, an understanding of the shadow within the unconscious psyche of a person is needed to comprehend evil (Jung, 2006:68; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:7; Zhu & Han, 2013:325).

Jung (1960a:29) divided the psyche into three main components: the conscious, the unconscious and the collective unconscious. The conscious is part of the human psyche that humans are aware of and the unconscious is part of the psyche that people are unaware of and is divided into two dimensions: the personal and collective unconscious (Jung, 2012:110b; Jung, 1960a:29; Tacey, 2012:155-157). The personal unconscious is composed of individual memories, thoughts and experiences (Jung, 2012b:110; Jung, 1960a:29). The collective unconscious consists of a collection of inherited mental structures which serve as a foundation of human thought referred to as primordial images (Jung, 2012a:13-14). These primordial images become conscious once an individual has associated it with a symbol or image through creative fantasy, literature, religion,

culture and mythology (Jung, 2012a:15). When the primordial image becomes conscious, it is referred to as an archetype which is a cognitive category manifested through images and symbols (Jung, 2012a:15). Considering that archetypes are part of the collective unconscious, people share a collective and universal understanding of them (Jung, 2012a:14). Archetypes are manifested through images of good and evil (Robinson, 2003:31; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2).

The shadow is an unconscious aspect of the personality and is one of the archetypes (Jung, 2006; McGlashan, 2010:256-257). The shadow refers to the 'dark' aspects of the personality or immoral behaviour, weaknesses and fears which the conscious tries to suppress as these behaviours may result in negative feedback from society and considered as evil (Jung, 2006:71-73; McGlashan, 2010:256-257). Jung (2006:68) and McGlashan, (2010:256-257) propose that individuals need to accept and become conscious of their shadow in order to eliminate undesirable characteristics from their personalities. However, confronting these dark characteristics is resisted because individuals find it difficult to accept their imperfections (Jung, 2006:68; McGlashan, 2010:256-257). Resistance takes place when people project their negative characteristics onto someone else, thus relieving themselves consciously of these attributes (Jung, 2006:68; McGlashan, 2010:256-257). These projections can take place through other people (McGlashan, 2010:256-257; Tacey, 2012:159) and the media (Chang, et al., 2015:157; Faber & Mayer, 2009:307; Smith, 2011:391). Hence, people may project their shadow archetypes onto images and symbols that represent the archetypal evil in media such as television and film (Faber & Mayer, 2009:312-313, 320).

Several studies have explored the archetypal evil and particularly the shadow within films such as *Black Swan* (2010) (Marson, 2015:703), the 1971 *Walkabout* (Larkin, 2014:30) and the *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983) (Bancks, 2003:32). According to Nussbaum (2013:108), representations of rape, violence and child molestation have been glamorised on television and are very popular among audiences. In addition, Moss (2002:3) analysed the increase in violence, blood and gore in television programs such as the *Hannibal* (2013-2015), the *Walking Dead* (2012-current) and *Dexter* (2006-2013).

Bacon (2015:54-55) stipulates that there are different interpretations of what is absolute evil in film. For instance, even though absolute evil is defined as the motivation to cause human suffering, this is not necessarily the case (Bacon, 2015:54-55; Dillon, 2016:20; Wynter, 2016:43). Soldiers



who go to war and kill the opposite party cannot be described as evil as the enemy is dehumanised, thus soldiers kill for the greater good (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1995a:181-182). Therefore, it is important to question the way the media presumably represents evil because it has an influence on how society interprets ideologies such as good and evil (Asia News Monitor, 2016:1; Balnaves, Donald & Shoesmith, 2009:58,307; Stein, 1995:1, 9, 12).

Particularly, this study will focus on archetypes representing evil and specifically the shadow archetype. The study aims to explore the representation of archetypal evil in the action, historical drama series *Vikings*, a television series set in medieval Scandinavia and inspired by the saga of Ragnar Lothbrok, a Viking leader who led his people to explore, fight and destroy lands from ‘the West’ such as England and Paris, in order to find treasure that will bring them power and wealth (Puchalska, 2015:89-93; Sigurdson, 2014:252). *Vikings* was broadcasted in 2013 and was still screened in 2020. The series is broadcast by the *History* channel and is also aired on *Netflix*, an American company allowing viewers to watch films and television programs online (Netflix, 2017).

### **1.2.3 Relevance of the topic**

According to Nussbaum (2013:108), television has changed in the last 15 years and has been promoting violence such as rape, child molestation and torture depicted in, for example, television shows such as the *Sopranos* (1999-2007), *Mad Men* (2007-2015) and *Sons of Anarchy* (2008-2014).

This endorsement of, for example, violence in the media is problematic since the media has been known to manipulate society by reinforcing ideological views such as good and evil (Asia News Monitor, 2016:1; Balnaves, Donald & Shoesmith, 2009:58,307). The media can sometimes be so powerful that people believe whatever the media, through propaganda, portrays and often do not trust their own understanding (Balnaves, Donald & Shoesmith, 2009:58; Fernback, 2015:1-2). Propaganda has been known to influence people to the extent where they take part in wars, terror and hate speech for the promise of peace, prosperity and liberty which is a contradiction in itself (Jung 1960b:91; Markin, 2003:26; Stein, 1995:14-15). In addition, according to Jung (1960b:92), there needs to be a better understanding of good and evil for the sake of humanity. Therefore, this

study may contribute towards the discipline of media and communication by providing an in-depth understanding of the archetypal evil and the shadow and how they are represented.

#### **1.2.4 Relationship of the topic to the discipline of communication**

Media studies is a subfield of communication and it focuses on the communication and transference of media messages to audiences via texts such as film, television, newspapers and news broadcasts (Fernback, 2015:1-2; Turow, 2011:5-6). According to Berger (2012:5-6), media texts can be considered as a language of communication and, in particular, symbols within texts play a central role as they convey meaning and are expressions of archetypal imagery (Eisenberg, 2009:703; Giri, 2009:690; Jung, 1960b:3; Mackey-Kaills, 2009:669).

Specifically, it is proposed that imagery or symbols of evil archetypes are being communicated within the media. Violent imagery includes blood, gore, physical contact and stabbing (Fernandes, Revilla, Gonzales & Lozano, 2013:583; Gabrielli, Traore, Stoolmiller, Bergamini & Sargent, 2016:1-10), and these images have become more prominent in contemporary media as compared to 20 years ago (Nussbaum, 2013:108). For instance, according to Fernandes et al (2013:583), there are 20 scenes of violence shown on Spanish television every hour. Gabrielli et al (2016:1-10) analysed 17 television shows (323 episodes), such as *True Blood*, *Mad Men* and *Californication*, and found that 70% of the content aired included violent imagery. Seen against these statistics, an exploration of the nature of the representation of evil in a modern television series will contribute to the body of knowledge in media and communication studies.

Additionally, Hauke and Alister (2001:2) indicate that:

Cinema [and theoretically television series as well] has the possibility of becoming an imaginal space - a *temenos* - and by engaging with films a version of active imagination is stimulated which can then engage the unconscious – potentially in as successful a fashion as our conscious attention to dream imagery and other fantasies.

More recently, Krüger and Johanssen (2016:29-30) emphasise the importance of “more hands-on, empirical research from a psychoanalytic and/or psychosocial perspective”, in communication and media studies, and argue that psychoanalytic theories “can offer profound insights into media-

cultural processes from the micro to the macro level” as researchers “bring these theories and their insights to the reality we seek to understand”.

### **1.2.5 Conceptualisation of key terms**

Words and phrases can consist of various meanings depending on the context in which they are used (Louw & du Plooy-Cilliers, 2003:70-71). A selection of key terms that have been defined specifically for the context of this study is discussed below. The key terms include archetypes, evil and the shadow archetype.

#### ***1.2.5.1 Archetypes***

An archetype is a cognitive category manifested through representations found in social artefacts such as television, film and books (Jung, 2012a:15; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699). The representations can be in the form of words and images that give meaning to the archetype (Tacey, 2012:148). Since archetypes originate from the collective unconscious, they are universally understood (Chang et al, 2015:157; Jung, 2012a:14).

#### ***1.2.5.2 Symbols***

A symbol is a sign consisting of meaning that must be learnt as there is no correspondence between the sign and what it is referring to (Chandler, 2007:17; Zauderer, 2015:199). The meaning of symbols is taught through culture or by society, however, individuals can interpret the meaning of a symbol differently depending on personal experiences and interpretations (Chandler, 2007:39). In this study, a symbol is defined as an abstract concept that varies according to contexts.

#### ***1.2.5.3 Symbolic representation***

How a symbol is constructed or used with other symbols can represent or communicate meaning such as concepts, ideas or beliefs (Hall, 2013:173). In addition, meaning can vary depending on how symbols are represented within a context (Chandler, 2007:39; Jung, 1988:55-56; Zauderer, 2015:199). Symbolic representation is, thus defined as meaning depicted through the relationship between symbols within a specific context.

#### **1.2.5.4 Evil**

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) was an Italian poet who wrote *Inferno* as a fictional journey through hell and *Purgatory* as the journey towards heaven. Hell is described as an inverted pyramid with levels consisting of souls being punished for a sin, and the deeper and narrower the level, the more severe the sin and the harsher the punishment (Alighieri, 2008a; Jeukes, 2014). In contrast, *Purgatory* is described as a pyramid with each level consisting of ways in which the souls are punished, but also how they can be rehabilitated; the further up the pyramid, the less severe the sin (Alighieri, 2008b; Hawkins, 2012:232). The Seven Deadly Sins – famously known as Dante's Seven Deadly Sins (Jeukes, 2014) - according to Alighieri's interpretation in *Inferno* and *Purgatory*, will be used to identify and analyse evil as they consist of well-known representations of archetypal evil (Hawkins, 2012:223; Jeukes, 2014:44-45). Dante's Seven Deadly Sins include - in order of Alighieri's pyramid in *Purgatory* - lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride. These sins are described in more detail in Chapter Three.

#### **1.2.5.5 The shadow archetype**

Jung (1960b) postulates that the shadow is the most significant archetype in individuals' everyday experiences and its contents relate to the first contact with the unconscious, specifically, the personal unconscious (Carvalho & Freire, 2019:4). The shadow, consisting of the unknown dark side of the personality, is both instinctive and irrational, and is prone to psychological projection (Jung, 1995d:95; Walker, 2013:32-33). The shadow is defined by society's standards and what is interpreted as immoral in one culture is not necessarily so in another (Harold, 2011:4, 219; Jung, 1960b:92; Stein, 1995:14-15; Walker, 2013:32-33).

### **1.3 TYPE OF STUDY**

The research approach used within this study is discussed since phenomena can be investigated differently depending on the research paradigm that is preferred or used by a researcher (Cowling, 2016:45-46, 52; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:18-19; Pace, 2016:196; Schaffer, 2016:1; Schweber, 2015:841, 843, 848-849). A research paradigm is a set of beliefs in terms of what phenomena is important to research and how to generate knowledge (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:19; Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:3). There are three major research paradigms including positivism, interpretivism and critical realism.

Positivists assume that knowledge about a phenomenon can only be generated using empirical evidence such as observations and experiments with the aim of determining the causes and effects of a phenomenon (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:21; Schaffer, 2016:2). The causes and effects are then predicted resulting in universal objective truths (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:21; Schaffer, 2016:2). Unlike positivists, interpretivists argue that there are no universal truths (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:21; Schaffer, 2016:2), thus people experience reality differently depending on their social and cultural contexts (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:21-22; Pace, 2016:196; Schaffer, 2016:21;24). Specifically, within this study the interpretivist paradigm will be utilised.

### **1.3.1 Interpretivism**

Interpretivism is used mostly within the social sciences and focuses on exploring and understanding individual human experiences and interpretations (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17-17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7). Interpretivists argue that all experiences cannot be generalised as reality is experienced differently depending on demographics, culture, and gender (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17-17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7).

Interpretivists focus on collecting rich, detailed quality data within a very specific context (Cowling, 2016:49; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28; Henning et al, 2004:19; Krysik, 2013:16-17). They may conduct interviews or focus groups to gain an in-depth understanding of the interpretations and experiences of participants (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:186). Moreover, interpretivism promotes cognitive interests, or ways of knowing phenomena within the hermeneutic-phenomenological sciences (Cowling, 2016:48; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:21; Henning et al, 2004:16). The hermeneutic-phenomenological sciences encompass the understanding of individuals who assign meaning to their environment through signs, words, phrases, artefacts and events. Thus, knowledge and reality depend on how individuals interpret language (Bennet, Slater & Wall, 2006:74; Berger, 2012:32; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:22; Hall, 2013:183). Interpretivism has been influenced by three intellectual traditions that form a specific part of the hermeneutic-phenomenological sciences, including hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Cowling, 2016:48; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28).

Hermeneutics involve the study of how individuals, for example, use their body language to express feelings and emotions and phenomenology is the process of understanding how people interpret human action or how they make sense of the world around them (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28; Henning et al, 2004:16; Krysik, 2013:16-17). Symbolic interactionism focuses on how language is generated and understood using words, phrases and symbols to create meaning (Cowling, 2016:48; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28; Henning et al, 2004:16). This is described as exploring how meaning is constructed and shared within a society, for instance, through media representations that allow the construction of meaning (Bennet et al, 2006:74; Berger, 2012:32; Hall, 2013:183). Three philosophical pillars, including epistemology, ontology and axiology are considered to determine how interpretivists understand a phenomenon (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:34-35; Henning et al, 2004:15).

#### ***1.3.1.1 Epistemological assumptions***

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and comes from the Greek word ‘episteme’ which means knowledge and ‘logos’ which means ‘the study of’ (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:23; Henning et al, 2004:15). Epistemology focuses on the type or nature of knowledge and how different research traditions interpret it differently (Drapper, Olsen, McGraw & Sturtevant, 2015:43; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:23). Considering that the aim of interpretivists is to understand and to explore phenomena, knowledge is studied by acknowledging individual interpretations, opinions and common sense (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:29; Pace, 2016:196). In addition, interpretivists propose that knowledge changes over time because culture and society change (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:29).

From a symbolic interactionist interpretivist perspective, the focus is on how language is used to communicate ideologies and their interpretation (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:232; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:28; Klinkenberg, 2015:45). Moreover, language is fluid because it changes over time depending on cultural and social contexts which diversify knowledge (Davis, 2014a:111-112; Klinkenberg, 2015:49). In addition, the media forms part of language because it represents and transfers meaning through symbols and imagery (Bennet et al, 2006:74, Fradley, 2013:15; Zauderer, 2015:198).

In this study, the verbal and non-verbal representation of evil in *Vikings* will be subjectively interpreted by the researcher, and participants will be asked to relay their subjective thoughts, feelings and interpretations of representations of evil in *Vikings*, hence gaining an in-depth understanding of evil.

### ***1.3.1.2 Ontological assumptions***

Ontology is the study of reality, derived from the Greek term ‘ontos’ meaning ‘being’ or ‘what is’, and ‘logos’ meaning ‘the study of’ (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:23; Schaffer, 2016:1). Ontology questions the nature of reality, whether there is objective truth, and how reality can be understood or interpreted (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:29; Martin & Gordon, 2012:91-92). Moreover, by understanding reality in terms of concepts and constructs, it can contribute to understanding phenomena, thus ontology works in conjunction with epistemology (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:29; Lohse, 2017:4; Martin & Gordon, 2012:91). In addition, questions about reality are answered differently depending on the research paradigm used (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:25;29;32; Henning et al, 2004:17;19;22; Schaffer, 2016:1-2).

Thus, reality is fluid and the concept of evil will vary between participants, therefore how they interpret archetypal evil and the shadow in *Vikings* will differ. Collectively, these varying interpretations of archetypal evil and the shadow will contribute to a deeper understanding of the representation and interpretation of evil.

### ***1.3.1.3 Axiological assumptions***

Axiology is derived from a Greek word which is ‘axios’ meaning ‘significance’ and ‘logos’, ‘the study of’, thus axiology is the study of values (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014b:69; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:24; Humphrey, 2013:4). Axiology generally refers to what is considered as valuable research that will help to comprehend, understand or solve a phenomenon (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:24; Humphrey, 2013:4). In addition, the concept of what is considered valuable research depends on the research paradigm (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:24; Humphrey, 2013:4).

Interpretivists value uniqueness in that there are varying interpretations of reality and knowledge depending on social and cultural contexts (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17-17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7). Therefore, interpretivists try to gain an in-depth

understanding of a phenomenon by taking into account a variety of perspectives from participants as well as that of their own (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:31; Fraser, 2014:42; Holt & Goulding, 2016:246-247; Humphrey, 2013:8). In this study, the unique lived experiences of participants are valued as sources of information as these interpretations give a different elucidation of evil and how it is represented in *Vikings*, thus contributing to a richer understanding of evil.

#### ***1.3.1.4 Basic research***

Basic or pure research aims to add to the existing body of knowledge of a particular discipline in order to improve the understanding of phenomena (Davis, 2014b:73-74; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:289). The purpose of basic research is purely to investigate or explore a phenomenon which helps scholars to think about it in varying and complex ways (Bentley, Gulbrandsen & Skyvik, 2015:690; Cornoldi, 2013:138). Basic research can refine existing knowledge such as theories or methodologies that have already been used for particular fields of study (Davis, 2014b:73; Vollmer & Hackenberg, 2001:241). As a result, basic research can establish the foundation for applied research, which is research used to apply theories or methodologies in order to solve a problem regarding a phenomenon (Bentley et al, 2015:690).

This study is a basic study that will contribute towards a deeper understanding of evil and add to existing knowledge by analysing the subjective interpretations of the researcher and participants regarding the representation of evil and the shadow in *Vikings*.

#### ***1.3.1.5 Exploratory research***

The aim of exploratory research is to explore concepts or constructs of a little-known phenomenon by analysing and interpreting data in detail, typically using qualitative research methods (Davis, 2014b:75; Reiter, 2013:1). In-depth quality data is collected from, for instance, interviews or focus groups where a lengthy, detailed conversation takes place between the researcher and participants (Davis, 2014b:75; Denscombe, 2014:41; Hart, 2005:358; Sebbins, 2001:2; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:183). Exploratory research is important because structures in society change, therefore affecting the notions or concepts of knowledge and reality (Davis, 2014b:75; Hart, 2005:321).



Considering that interpretivists maintain that knowledge is fluid and depends on social and cultural contexts, exploratory research is mostly used in interpretivist studies (Davis, 2014b:75; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:29; Henning et al, 2004:17;19;22; Schaffer, 2016:2). Interpretivists are of the opinion that there is no objective truth, thus exploratory researchers utilise flexible ways of collecting and analysing data (Reiter, 2013:1; Sebbins, 2001:2-3).

#### ***1.3.1.6 Research approach: Qualitative Research***

Qualitative research involves the collection and interpretation of quality data that is used purely to explore with the aim of understanding a phenomenon (Roulston & Shelton, 2015:333; Stydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:173-174). Qualitative researchers are interested in participants and their varying experiences and interpretations influenced by social, demographic and cultural contexts (Brennan, 2012:4; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:174).

The *Vikings* series will be analysed using qualitative research methods and a detailed subjective account of the archetypal evil and shadow represented in the series will be provided. Furthermore, qualitative data will be collected through in-depth discussions with participants, thus gaining an assortment of interpretations of archetypal evil and the shadow represented in *Vikings*.

### **1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM, AIMS, QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGY & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In this section, the heart of the research study is addressed including the purpose of the topic, the research problem, aims and questions (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014:64-65; Pace, 2016:196; Schaffer, 2016:1). These mentioned aspects are part of the golden thread that helps to establish how the research will be conducted, its relevance, whether it will be manageable in terms of time, and if it is researchable (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014:64-65; Schweber, 2015:841, 843, 848-849). In addition, the way a topic or phenomenon is researched, depends on the research paradigm (Cowling, 2016:52; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:18-19; 34-35; Pace, 2016:196; Schaffer, 2016:1; Schweber, 2015:841, 843, 848-849). Since this study is interpretivist in nature, the research problem, aims and questions help gain a deeper understanding of the representation of archetypal evil in *Vikings*

### 1.4.1 Research problem

The purpose or aim of the study is usually derived from a research problem that the researcher wants to solve or explore and is associated with a lack of understanding of a phenomenon within a specific context (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014:64; Davis, 2014d:11-12; Dunn, 2016:104; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17-17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7). The problem is phrased into a problem statement which is normally one comprehensive statement (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014:67; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:31).

In contemporary society, television has become more explicit in terms of violence, rape, murder and abuse (Hummer et al, 2014:26-27; Nussbaum, 2013:108; Shepherd, 2013:4-6). For instance, popular television shows such as *True Blood*, *Mad Men* and *Californication* have 70% violent imagery in each episode (Gabrielli et al, 2016:1-10). In addition, violent television and film have become more popular and even demanded by audiences (Weaver, 2011:232). For example, even though *Game of Thrones*, an HBO series, has graphic representations of pornographic violence and gore, it is one of the most watched series in current popular culture (Genz, 2016:243). The popularity of these shows raises the questions of why these television shows are so appealing to audiences and how these acts of violence are represented in television series and films.

The media may have a powerful influence on society and could even manipulate individuals to believe and accept harmful ideologies. Studies have shown that there is a correlation between exposure to media violence, such as X-rated material, and an increase in aggressive behaviour (Bushman & Anderson, 2015:1818; Ybarra, Strasburger & Mithell, 2014:1239) which could even result in attempted rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment (Ybarra et al, 2014:1239). Thus, it is proposed that how the media represents evil, such as violence, can influence how it is interpreted or accepted by audiences. *Vikings* is known for its violence and gruesome depictions of battles, slaughter and murder (Lowry, 2013; Pulchalska, 2015:101; Sigurdson, 2014:252) and had more than three million views by its 3<sup>rd</sup> season in 2015 (Hale, 2015). Thus, by exploring the archetypal evil in *Vikings*, an understanding of evil representations will be provided.

Jung was among the first in the modern era to call for exploration of the human dark side. Jung (1979:253) spoke of a personal “shadow”, a representation of everything flawed, selfish, and base in us, and argued that an intimate knowledge of the shadow is essential for growth. “One does not

become enlightened by imagining figures of light,” he wrote, “but by making the darkness conscious” (Jung, 1979:253).

Since the purpose of this study is to explore the representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical, drama series *Vikings*, the problem statement is:

There is a lack of understanding of the representation of the archetypal evil and the shadow in the media and specifically the popular television series *Vikings*.

#### **1.4.2 Research question(s)**

Taking into account that the aim of this study is to understand how evil is currently represented in the media, the question is meta-analytical, meaning that the question should answer current debates around a subject matter (Bezuidenhout & Davis, 2014:70; Hart, 2005:76; 86).

The main research question of this study is:

*How is archetypal evil represented in the action, historical, drama television series Vikings?*

Considering that the problem is also to explore the archetypal shadow in *Vikings*, the sub-question is:

*How is the shadow represented in the action, historical, drama television series Vikings?*

This study will also include participant perceptions on how archetypal evil is represented, therefore the second sub-question is:

*How do participants perceive evil in the action, historical drama series Vikings?*

#### **1.4.3 Methodology**

The methodology is the process that will be used to collect and analyse the research data and is influenced by the type of study and the research question (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:289; Mackey & Gass, 2016:3; Novikov & Novikov, 2013:7). Since this is an interpretive qualitative study, only qualitative methods will be used to determine how archetypal evil is represented in *Vikings*. The methodology is further explained and discussed in Chapter Four.

#### ***1.4.3.1 Units of analysis***

In this study, two units of analysis have been chosen including social artefacts and individuals. A unit of analysis is the single, smallest entity analysed for the purpose of answering the research question(s) (Chenail, 2012:266; du Plooy, 2014b:289; Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:11; Pascoe, 2014:134).

#### ***1.4.3.2 Population***

The population is the total group of individuals and social artefacts (Davis, 2014c:97; Pascoe, 2014:132-133). All social artefacts include all episodes and seasons of *Vikings*. In this study, the population represented all South Africans who have watched at least three seasons of *Vikings* of their own accord.

#### ***1.4.3.3 Sampling***

Non-probability sampling methods will be used to select the units of analysis, meaning that the total population will not have an equal probable chance of being selected (Kothari, 2004:15; Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:121-122; Pascoe, 2014:137). The population included in the study are individuals that are 18 years or older who have watched at least three seasons of *Vikings* and that live in the Johannesburg area. The sampling methods include convenience sampling, purposive sampling and volunteer sampling.

#### ***1.4.3.4 Data collection methods***

The data collection methods for this study include qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews.

##### ***1.4.3.4.1 Qualitative content analysis***

Qualitative content analysis is an in-depth exploration of texts with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of phenomenon (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Henning et al, 2004:16, 102; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017:2). It involves applying codes to a text that are derived from a conceptual framework. The codes are then re-worked to form categories and then grouped to form themes (Charmaz, 2006:3; Henning et al, 2004:102; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:91).

A conceptual framework will be constructed using theory from the theoretical framework and literature review, specifically, Dante's Seven Deadly Sins and the shadow. The codes from the conceptual framework will be applied to the episodes from the series *Vikings*.

#### ***1.4.3.4.2 Qualitative interviews***

The aim of qualitative interviews is to gain an in-depth understanding of the views of participants regarding a specific phenomenon (Blanford, Furniss & Makri, 2016:40; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:180). The participants must be allowed to express their views, thus open-ended questions will be asked during the interview process (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:19; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:183).

#### ***1.4.3.5 Data analysis and interpretation***

Data collected from the qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews will be analysed using the eight-step process (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:235). This includes preparing the data, defining the codes, developing a conceptual framework, testing the coding scheme, coding all text, assessing coding consistency, interpreting the data and preparing methods and findings (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:235).

#### ***1.4.3.6 Ethical considerations***

Considering that human participants will be involved in this study, it is important to have ethical clearance so as to avoid any potential harmful effects the partakers may experience (du Plooy, 2005:90-91; Hart, 2005:282; Louw, 2014:264). Participants for this study must be 18 years or older so that they can decide for themselves if they want to take part in the study (Louw, 2014:264; Oliver, 2003:30). Furthermore, participants will be briefed on the type of study and consent must be given before an interview takes place.

### **1.5 CONCLUSION**

Jung (1995c:177) proposed that the ignorance of evil lead the Germans to take part in violence and mass destruction and expressed the need to understand evil and the shadow. People are easily misled by the interpretations of evil which varies according to culture and the media. In contemporary society, it is proposed that archetypal evil, such as violence, murder and rape, has

become more prominent in television and film as opposed to 20 years ago. These representations of evil have possibly shaped societies' understanding of evil and the shadow seated in the human psyche. Thus, the aim of this research is to explore and gain a deeper understanding of evil and the shadow represented by the contemporary media specifically in the action, historical, drama series *Vikings*.

The topic is relative to communications as media is a sub-field of communication. It is proposed that the *Vikings* series communicates notions of archetypal evil and the shadow through the representation of symbols and imagery. The type of study is interpretivist as the aim is to explore and, therefore gain a deeper understanding of evil within a specific context, hence *Vikings*. The epistemological, ontological, axiological discussed are in relation to the interpretivist approach as well as basic, applied and descriptive research. The type of research to be collected is qualitative to gain and explore a deeper understanding of archetypal evil and the Shadow. The research problem, aims and questions outlined were relative to the purpose of study. The methodology will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

The following chapter, Chapter Two, discusses the theory that will be used to analyse the *Vikings* series for the intention of exploring archetypal evil and the shadow.

## **1.6 EXPOSITION OF THE STUDY**

Chapter Two addresses the theories that will be used to analyse the *Vikings* series with the intention of exploring archetypal evil and the shadow.

Chapter Three constitutes the literature review, consisting of previous studies relating to the research topic.

Chapter Four details the methodology including a more detail discussion of the units of analysis, the population, sampling, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter Five includes details and descriptions of the data analysis and interpretation. It also explains measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter Six consists of the findings, limitations and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BEDROCK**

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the context of the study was discussed and the research problem, aims, research questions and a brief description of the methodology were presented. The aim of the study is to explore archetypal evil and the shadow in the series *Vikings*. In order to do this, underpinning theoretical constructs are discussed in this chapter.

Jung (1995a:181-182) emphasis on the importance of understanding evil, the shadow and how these archetypes are represented, which is similar to the purpose of this study. Moreover, it is argued that Jung's theories are rooted in the theories discussed in this chapter that have been used to create a conceptual framework thus, the theoretical foundation is predominately Jungian based.

In this chapter, the theory of the collective unconscious and media representation theory have been discussed. In each theory the concepts and constructs are first defined and described following a critique, contemporary application, and relevance of the theory to the study. The theory of the collective unconscious is firstly discussed as the concepts of the theories are seemingly embedded in media representation theory.

## **2.2 THEORY OF THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS**

The notion of the collective unconscious is quite complex (Jung, 1947, 1960:29; Tacey, 2012:3-6; Walker, 2013:109), therefore a comprehensive description of the human psyche and its workings is needed.

### **2.2.1 Theory, concepts and constructs**

The human psyche consists of the conscious and the unconscious with the conscious being what an individual is aware of, and the unconscious is unknown to the individual (Chang et al, 2015:158; Jung, 1960a:29). The collective unconscious consists of the unconscious contents of the human psyche (Chang et al, 2015:157; Jung, 1960a:29). Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian psychoanalyst and psychiatrist, was particularly interested in the unconscious as he held that, by analysing the unconscious, human behaviour is understood (Chang et al, 2015:158; Wood, 2007:159). Carl Gustav Jung, also a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, was influenced by Freud's work and took the idea of the unconscious further and developed theories on the personal and



collective unconscious, the Self, individuation myths and archetypes (Chang et al, 2015:157; McGlashan, 2010:270; Tacey, 2012:3-6).

### ***2.2.1.1 Personal and collective unconscious***

The personal unconscious is a collection of personal attributes and is not influenced by any external influences; it consists of personal experiences and forgotten memories (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331, Jung, 1960a:110). The collective unconscious consists of a collection of inherited mental structures that is shared among members of a particular species and can be associated with symbols or archetypes shown in religion, culture and history (Chang et al, 2015:157; Jung, 2012a:15).

According to Abu-Raiya (2014:332) and Jung (2012b:110), there needs to be a division between the collective and the personal unconscious in order for people to develop their own identities. This can prove to be difficult because the personal unconscious is born from the collective containing inherited knowledge that is universal, thus it is difficult to step out of the collective to develop a personal identity (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Iurato, 2015:6; Jung, 2012b:111). Moreover, people unconsciously develop a persona, a 'mask' that covers the true identity of the individual so that they can 'fit in' with the society norms and regulations that are influenced by the collective unconscious (Jung, 2012b:122; Tacey, 2012:44).

However, an individual cannot develop a personal identity using a persona and if the individual does not gain recognition from society, it may result in personal failure or regression (Jung, 2012b:109-111; Tacey, 2012:44). Another problem with the persona is that people can be easily manipulated by the masses which can result in, for example, immoral ways of thinking and acting (Jung, 2012b:109-111). For instance, people can easily be swayed by the media to think that something is good, but could on the whole be evil, resulting in them taking part in, for example, criminal gangs, terrorists and immoral political parties due to being ignorant of evil (Jung 1960b:91; Markin, 2003:26; Stein, 1995:14-15). Hence, the exploration and understanding of evil may lead to the development of the persona and ultimately to developing the Self.

### ***2.2.1.2 The Self***

The Self is the wholeness of being and incorporates both the conscious and unconscious; it is the centre of the total personality including aspects of awareness and unconscious content

(McGlashan, 2010:270; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2). Every individual has a total sense of Self when he or she is born, however, he or she is taught to accept societal norms and values, and learn to incorporate language and meaning in a way that is universally accepted (Jung, 1960a:109; Zhu and Han, 2013:326). When this happens, the ego, part of the human psyche that communicates a sense of identity to the outside world, moves away from the original Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331; McGlashan, 2010:270). Furthermore, once the ego has successfully become part of the external world, a new task would be for the individual to unify the Self again (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331; Jung, 1960a:109; McGlashan, 2010:270) which forms part of what Jung (1960a:109) termed the process of individuation.

### ***2.2.1.3 Individuation***

Individuation, viewed as a form of self-actualisation, is when an individual becomes consciously aware of his or her inner Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109; McGlashan, 2010:270). However, individuation can only occur through the unification of the unconscious and conscious, which can be difficult (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109). The modern human in most westernised societies has lost his or her connection with the unconscious because individuals only believe in logic and common sense, and to understand the unconscious, it is important to be more open to what may be interpreted as illogical (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331-332; Jung, 1988:81). What can be considered illogical is the idea of the unconscious communicating with the conscious through archetypes.

The unconscious consists of collective inherited mental structures that manifest as imagery that then become archetypes (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331-332; Jung, 2012a:13-14). The problem with the loss of the connection between the conscious and the unconscious is that humanity does not understand the meaning of archetypes. People may come across archetypes in dreams, literature, religion and culture that they may feel that is of importance to them, but do not have an understanding as to why (Chang et al, 2015:158; Sumit, 2016:812). By understanding the meaning and importance of an archetype, an individual will establish the foundation from which to launch the individuation process and the rediscovery of the Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1988:96-98; Walker, 2013:92).

#### **2.2.1.4 Archetypes**

Archetypes are inherited primordial images, or mental structures within the unconscious psyche that manifest in symbols or images and become conscious representations (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1956:408; Walker, 2013:3). Archetypes are represented in cultural artefacts such as books, television, film, drama and art (Chang et al, 2015:158; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699). Jung (1965:235) explained various types of archetypes that can be grouped into categories such as, but not limited to, archetypal events such as birth, rebirth and death (Jung, 1965:235, 248; Tacey, 2012:147-150, 196), and archetypal figures such as the child, mother and devil (Jung, 1965:353, 337, 236; Tacey, 2012:128, 137, 147, 160). Archetypes are embedded in myth or stories that reinforce the foundation and structure of society (Kelsey, 2017:62; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699)

#### **2.2.1.5 Myths**

Myths are fictional or historical traditional stories that have been passed down from generation to generation often involving supernatural beings or events (Kelsey, 2017:62; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699). Moreover, myths reinforce ideologies within societies such as notions of morality, political structures and understanding how to behave within a particular social setting (Kelsey, 2017:158; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699). Mackey-Kallis (2009:699) describes two types of myths including cultural and universal, with the universal implying that people, no matter where they come from, have an innate understanding or knowledge of myths. Cultural myths suit a specific culture and relays content specific to a culture (Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699).

#### **2.2.1.6 Mythologems**

Jung (1965:313) refers to mythologems as the structural components or themes that make up the essence of myths and that have been repeated in various myths (Zadorina, 2014:779). The mythologem of the rising and falling hero has been recurring in Joseph in the book of *Genesis* (Bishop, 1996:152), Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars* (Ellerhoff, 2015:46) and Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit* (Liang, 2016a:324). According to Jung (1965:313), different societies and cultures share a universal understanding for mythologems due to the pre-existing patterns that exist within the human psyche. However, the way that a myth is told depends on the culture and, hence the difference between a universal and a cultural myth (Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699).

### ***2.2.1.7 Mythologies***

Mythology can be defined as the study of myths by looking at how myths form patterns of repeated themes or mythologems (Rollins, 2011:305-306; Wright, 1957:2). The aim of studying myths is to understand how stories can reinforce structures within a society such as the archetype of good and evil (Rollins, 2011:305-306; Wright, 1957:2). The story of Cain and Abel is a case in point. Cain represents what is ideologically evil and Abel as good because he was favoured by God who is all good (van Wolde, 1991:36). Mythologies are also a collection of myths used in cultural artefacts such as books, film and television and how these mythologies represent myths can vary depending on the culture (Chang et al, 2015:158; Kelsey, 2017:1, 110; Willis, 2017:107-108). Moreover, the media and popular culture can manipulate mythologies that consist of myths that reinforce ideologies that suite a particular society or culture (Kelsey, 2017:1, 110, 108). As a result, the media can reinforce notions of what is good and evil, thus influencing how people may interpret their shadow.

### ***2.2.1.8 The shadow archetype***

The shadow is defined as evil manifested through archetypes within mythologies that represent evil such as violence and cruelty (Jung 1995c:175; Rollins, 2011:306-307). The shadow challenges the ego personality as it consists of moral behaviours and the shadow consists of immoral tendencies or behaviours (Jung, 1995d:95; McGlash, 2010:256; Walker, 2013:32-33). It is important to become conscious of the shadow, as it forms part of the individuation process to develop the Self (McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33).

Individuals need to confront and accept the immoral aspect of their personalities consciously which can prove to be very difficult due to individuals unconsciously projecting their immoral behaviour onto others (Jung, 1995d:95-96; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33). The result is that they become isolated from their shadow, thus do not have to feel guilty or responsible for their behaviour (Jung, 1995d:95-96; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33). Neumann (1990:20) emphasised that the shadow is part of the personality that is corrupt and unaccepted in society resulting in its repression and projection onto others to avoid judgement or be labelled negatively (Iurato, 2015:7-8; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Neumann, 1990:3; Walker, 2013:41; 107).

Participation mystique is the projection of unconscious material of an individual onto an object, person or thing outside of themselves, including artefacts, images and symbols. Jung adopted the term from anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (Winborn, 2014:2) and “indicates that projection and identification are the two primary psychological processes by which participation mystique is activated” (Winborn, 2014:4). It is no longer unconscious as it resides elsewhere, yet it is not ‘other’, as it originates from the self (Jung, 1965).

Considering that myths reinforce ideologies and structures in society (Bacon, 2015:78-79; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699; Rollins, 2011:306-307), they may reinforce notions of evil and what behaviours are unacceptable. However, the shadow cannot be defined as absolute evil as there are different interpretations of evil and its representation and interpretation can vary among cultures and societies (Bacon, 2015:78-79; Jung, 1960b:92).

#### ***2.2.1.9 Archetypal evil***

Archetypal images that represent evil and the shadow can affect or disturb the conscious aspect of an individual’s being when it relates to the primordial image in the unconscious (Chang et al, 2015:161; Faber & Mayer, 2009: 308-309; Stein, 1995:15). In addition, this can lead to mental illness, discomfort or humiliation because any archetype that relates to the shadow is considered evil and consequently, people project their shadow away from their conscious identity (Chang et al, 2015:161; Harold, 2011:225, 259; Stein, 1995:3-4). Evil archetypes can be represented as dragons, serpents, monsters and demons (Jung, 1995d:95-96; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33) and people worshiping an evil figure through dance, music and songs (Abu-Raiya, 2014:329; Jung, 1988:79). Evil images can also represent that which are secret, hidden, dark, the abyss, and anything that is inescapable or that leads to human suffering (Bacon, 2015:52; Jung, 2012a:16). However, due to there being so many variations of evil, it is difficult to define the shadow as absolute evil as archetypes that represent absolute evil can vary in mythologies and cultural artefacts such as symbols (Jung, 1995d:95-97; Rollins, 2011:310).

#### ***2.2.1.10 Jung on symbols***

Symbols manifest the deep unconscious contents in the collective unconscious (Chang et al, 2015:157-158; van den Berk, 2012:50), in other words, primordial images manifest from the unconscious into the conscious through symbols and become archetypes (Chang et al, 2015:157-

158; Jung, 1956:50). Additionally, to comprehend Jung's interpretation on symbols, there needs to be an understanding of the relationship between nature and culture which form the contents in the collective unconscious (van den Berk, 2012:52). Nature includes the instincts of an individual that abides by natural laws, in other words, a human is led by their conscious instincts (Jung, 1956:7; van den Berk, 2012:52) such as survival instincts. Culture consists of content that has been passed down from generation to generation (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1956:408; Walker, 2013:3) such as social behaviour, religion and arts. Moreover, it is nature and cultural contents from the collective unconscious that manifest through symbols and become archetypes.

Specifically, from the cultural standpoint, Jung expresses the need for an individual to unify the unconscious and conscious by understanding symbols that represent culture (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109). For instance, the individuation process is often symbolised as the hero archetype found in cultural mythologies.

#### ***2.2.1.11 The Hero***

The hero is one of the most well-known or universal archetypes, as it is evident in various mythologies shown in cultures including Africa, Greece and North American Indians (Chang et al, 2015:159, Henderson, 1988:110). Repeatedly, the hero is shown as the one who has a supernatural birth, has miraculous superpowers, such as strength or intelligence, and who fights against evil (Chang et al, 2015:159; Henderson, 1988:110). The hero is a representation of the personal identity that the ego lacks, hence individuals almost envy this image because of their need to develop the hero within themselves (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36; Jung, 1960a:173).

Every individual needs to individuate to develop the Self, and the hero, or the hero's journey, is a representation of this process (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). In order to drive the individuation process, there needs to be an analysis and understanding of symbols that are of personal importance in dreams or fantasies (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36; Jung, 1960a:175). In this way, the unconscious will unify with the conscious, thus commencing the individuation process (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1988:96-98; Walker, 2013:92). However, Jung (1988:79) emphasises that images representing the hero archetype in the media can be manipulative and may be represented as something evil with a seductive or manipulative power

(Jung, 1956, 1979:171). Notwithstanding each audience member will interpret that film differently and is individually drawn to symbols that are meaningful on a personal level (Jung, 1956:121).

According to Bassil-Morozow (2016:35-36), an individual can become so drawn to a film text because they are projecting their inner most desires to become the hero. The signs representing the hero becomes personal and develop into symbols and it is by analysing these symbols that the individual viewing the film can understand a deeper notion of themselves, hence forming part of the individuation process (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36).

### **2.2.2 Critique**

Jung was criticised for using the term 'primordial image' in his theory of archetypes in his earlier work *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido* (Jung, 1956:30, 1990: para6; Walker, 2013:3). He explained that the primordial image is inherited, and an image cannot be inherited, it is only learnt through culture, traditions and experiences (Tacey, 2003:139-140; Walker, 2013:3). In addition, La Barre (1948:383) was one of the critics who rejected Jung's theories of archetypes as developing from a hereditary mental structure because he felt that Jung underestimated the influence of culture (Tacey, 2003:139). Jung's theories were also accused of being Lamarckian which is the inheritance of acquired characteristics through experiences over a lifetime (Rensma, 2013:259). As a result, Jung's reputation as a scientist declined and his work was associated instead with literature, religious and cinema studies (Tacey, 2003:141).

Claude Lévi-Strauss also criticised Jung's ideas of structures within the collective unconscious as hereditary in his books *Structural Anthropology* (1963) and *Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1969). However, this is contradictory as Lévi-Strauss's (1969:202) seemingly explains the same idea of the mind governed by unconscious structural laws, which is why people, even from different cultures, can collectively understand basic concepts such as life and death, good and evil and rich and poor (Iurato, 2015:19-20, 21-22; Lévi-Strauss's, 1963:33). In *Structural Anthropology* (1963), Lévi-Strauss (1963:202) even states that, "certain events, appearing within an appropriate psychological, historical, and social context, to induce an emotional crystallization which is moulded by a pre-exciting structure". This 'pre-exciting' structure is similar to Jung's (1960a:29) notion that the collective unconscious consists of inherited mental structures.

Lotman (1990:36) states that individuals form an understanding of signs, words and images, via their collective intellect as well as their own personal perspectives. This is similar to Jung's (1960a:29) notion that people gain knowledge via their personal and collective unconscious. Furthermore, de Saussure (1966:68) and Hall (2013:180) argue that the understanding of language is possible through collective social systems such as culture and society that formed consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, even though Jung was criticised for his theories of the collective unconscious, they were supported by other theorists before and after he developed the theory. In addition, Jung's theory of the collective unconscious is still being used today in the media.

### **2.2.3 Contemporary application of the theory of the collective unconscious**

According to Heath (2012:115), people form groups on *Facebook* based on their collective unconscious. Considering that the collective unconscious consists of inherited primordial images, people are automatically drawn to images, photos and articles that trigger the primordial images. As a result, individuals develop social networks based on their collective unconscious because it is something that they find comfortable and relatable (Heath, 2012:115).

Greer and Jewkes (2005:20) state that the media can create a division between the collective and the 'other'. The media reinforces this split between groups by broadcasting images and stories showing the difference between 'us and them', insiders and outsiders, men and women (Greer & Jewkes, 2005:20). This may result in notions of prejudice and can lead to racism, sexism and hate speech (Greer & Jewkes, 2005:20). Finally, Chang et al (2015, 2012:158) argues that theories on the collective unconscious can be used when analysing narratives such as myths and movies since archetypes can be found within a film text that relate to the collective unconscious.

### **2.2.4 Relevance to the study**

As the aim of this study is to explore and, therefore gain a deeper understanding of archetypal evil and the shadow, the theory of the collective unconscious is crucial in understanding the nature and origin of said archetypes. The archetypes are a result of the manifestation of the primordial images in the collective unconscious (Jung, 2012a:15; Iurato, 2015:4). How these archetypes are interpreted depends on the collective unconscious as, since it influences the personal (Jung, 2012b:122; Tacey, 2012:44), it will also affect the Self and individuation. The collective unconscious seemingly influences the personal in terms of evil and, thus the shadow. This effect



may cause the human psyche to reject the shadow affecting the self and individuation as the shadow is an important aspect in developing the self and initiating the individuation process (Jung, 1995d:95).

Consequently, the collective unconscious may distort the interpretation and understanding of archetypal evil represented in myths, mythologems and mythologies that are characterised by the media. Moreover, it is also argued that, since the collective unconscious forms using cultural artefacts (Chang et al, 2015:157; Jung, 2012a:15), such as the hero myth, the symbolic representation of evil and the shadow in the media can influence the collective unconscious. As a result, the collective unconscious sets the foundation for complex understanding of archetypal evil and the shadow which will be explored in the *Vikings* series. Furthermore, it is postulated that the *Vikings* series consists of myths and mythologems and their analysis will enhance an understanding of how evil and the shadow are represented in media text.

## **2.3 THE MEDIA REPRESENTATION THEORY**

In order to analyse *Vikings*, it is important to use theories that can assist in interpreting a media text. Media analysts use media representation theories to analyse media text to understand its meaning (Bennet et al, 2006:74; Hall, 2013:177).

### **2.3.1 Theory concepts and constructs**

The media representation theory involves the analysis of how the media represent ideas and concepts using symbols and imagery within film, television and advertisements (Bennet et al, 2006:74; Chang, 2015:158). How ideas and concepts are represented can easily be understood because, according to Hall (2013:183), people have similar or shared mental structures that manifest into symbols and imagery (Iurato, 2013:4; Paraschivescu, 2011:218-219). Thus, how freedom, death, life and love are represented in the media is understood by general society; this is similar to Jung's (2012a:15) notion on inherited primordial images and archetypes. However, it has also been argued that representation can form independently from the structures of society (Foucault, 1994:17; Hall, 2013:186), therefore the meanings of certain representations must be learnt. In order to take these ideas further, an understanding of the mental structures that are also known as conceptual maps is needed.

### ***2.3.1.1 Conceptual maps***

Jung's (1956:408) notion of the collective unconscious consisting of inherited mental structures or primordial images, has similarly been utilised by structuralists - theorists who argued that society is governed by a system or structures (Deely, 2015:29; Hall, 2013:179; Iurato, 2013:4, 17-18) - such as Lévi-Strauss (1969:202) and de Saussure (1966:65). Structuralists argue that people have imbedded mental structures that consist of ideas, thoughts, opinions about, for example, the world and reality (Iurato, 2015:17-18; Trifonas, 2015:2) and these mental structures are called conceptual maps (Hall, 2013:173). Conceptual maps need to be communicated so that meaning is shared (Hall, 2013:173; Trifonas, 2015:2).

In addition, conceptual maps are communicated using language such as words, images, symbolic and oral communication (Hall, 2013:173; Trifonas, 2015:2). Moreover, representation is the sum of conceptual maps and language, thus the notions of language and concept are seemingly similar to de Saussure's (1966:65) theory of the signifier and the signified, with the signified as the concept, or mental idea, and the signifier as the language such as a word or image that is representing the signified (Hall, 2013:173). The reason why people can understand each other using language is because they all share similar conceptual maps because they come from the same or similar cultures (Hall, 2013:174; Iurato, 2013:18; Lévi-Strauss, 1969:20).

### ***2.3.1.2 Culture***

A culture consists of shared meanings or shared mental structures that are communicated using language (Hall, 2013:173; Lévi-Strauss, 1969:202). Shared meanings of concepts are almost imprinted as it becomes natural or normal to associate it as general information. This fixed meaning is formed using codes which are unwritten rules that specify the meanings used for concepts that are communicated using language (Berger, 2012:32; Hall, 2013:175). The codes are created through social conventions which are a set of agreed cultural rules to meanings. It is like a cultural covenant which explains why people from various other cultures may not understand each other due to the differences in understandings of religion, language and traditions (Deely, 2015:29; Hall, 2013:175). Meaning can also depend on connotative and denotative understanding.

### ***2.3.1.3 Connotative and denotative meaning***

The denotative meaning is the literal meaning or most descriptive such as an image of a girl means that it is an image of a girl (Hall, 2013:176, 183; Pearson, 2015:140). The connotation is where the meaning must be decoded by the receiver of the sign (Hall, 2013:177, 183; Pearson, 2015:140). For example, the girl can mean a sister, girlfriend or a fictional character. Meaning, whether connotative or denotative, can be represented repeatedly in myths.

### ***2.3.1.4 Representations in myths***

Frye (1957:100) argued that myths form the structure of stories in literature, and without myth there is no story. For example, narratives such as Achilles and Hercules, although different in plot and characters, share the same hero myth with each protagonist being a hero by fighting evil. Frye (1957:99) also argued that myths consist of a collection of archetypes that are represented by symbols that have been repeated throughout various works of art such as literature and paintings. This is similar to Jung's (1956:408) view on archetypes and how they have been repeated in various cultural artefacts. Frye was particularly captivated by how patterns derived from myths and that they can be grouped into specific categories.

In order to group myths and form categories, Frye (1951:18-109) was inspired by Aristotle's notion of the seven worlds of *The Great Chain of Being*, a hierarchical structure for the existence of life (Floyd, 2013:28; Lovejoy, 2010:67). Frye (1951:108-109) postulated that this structure is repeated in myth. The chain has seven levels and are arranged from top to bottom with divine, human, animal, vegetable, mineral, fire and water (Ferrando, 2013:28; Lovejoy, 2010:67). Table 2.1 shows the Great Chain of Being with each category described.

Table 2.1: Great Chain of Being (Norman, 2011:7)

	Category	Description
1	Divine	God or the most powerful being.
2	Human	Man or woman
3	Animal	Creature/ mammal
4	Vegetable	Farmlands, vegetation
5	Mineral	Buildings, stone
6	Fire	Flames of heat
7	Water	Streams, sea and rivers

In addition to the seven categories, Frye (1951:108-109) took five out of the seven categories in his article *The archetypes of literature*, all excluding divine and fire, and grouped them according to two main genres, comedy and tragic (Norman, 2011:6-8).

Table 2.2: Five categories paired with tragic and comic (Frye, 1951:108-109)

	Category	Comic	Tragic
1	Human	Good man, leader, hero, communion, friendship, love	Evil man, oppressor, betrayal, isolation
2	Animal	Lamb, domesticated animals	Wolf, beast monster, dragons, serpents
3	Vegetable	Farmlands, garden of Eden, tree of life	Evil forest, tree of death
4	Mineral	Great Cities, Jerusalem, temple	Ruins, deserts
5	Water	Stream, water of life	Sea, sea monsters, floods

Table 2.2 shows the five categories each paired with tragic and comic. Using the two different genres, Frye (1951:108-109) grouped concepts as comic (good) and tragic (evil) (Ferrando, 2013:28; Lovejoy, 2010:67; Norman, 2011:8-9). Frye used positive and negative connotations to describe the different categories of the genres, for example, human in comic is a "leader", "hero" showing representations of good (Frye, 1951:108-109) whereas, in tragic, man is "evil", "oppressor", "betrayal" which can represent evil (Frye, 1951:108-109).

Frye (1951:104-105) also identified four recurring cycles of myth known as mythoi including comedy, romance, tragedy and satire or irony. These are genres that are predominant in narratives and are generally associated with the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter (Norman, 2011:8-9; Cureton, 2019:239). Table 2.3 below illustrates how these two different clusters, mythoi and seasons, are paired together.

Table 2.3: Seasons paired with myths (Frye, 1951:104-105)

Genre	Season	Description
Comedy	Spring	Light-hearted genre symbolising the defeat of winter or representing hope. It can also symbolise the birth of a hero, revival resurrection.
Romance	Summer	Celebration of life and triumph such as marriage.
Tragedy	Autumn	Symbolising the 'fall' of the hero. Time of trouble and sadness are about to begin.
Satire	Winter	The 'dark' genre where chaos returns, and the hero is defeated. Satire almost 'mocks' the other genre's as all hope and happiness dissolve.

In Table 2.3, the seasons that Frye (1951:104-105) used are grouped according to good and evil and are paired with the specific genres with comedy and romance representing good (Norman, 2011:34), and tragedy and satire representing evil (Normal, 2011:19; Tofler, 2011:19). Moreover, Frye (1951:104) described the seasons as inclinations of good and evil. For instance, spring brings "revival", "birth", "resurrection", "defeat of darkness" (Frye, 1951:104), all positive connotations that can represent good. Winter is "return of chaos, "defeat of the hero", "myths of flood" (Frye, 1951:105) which show negative connotations that can represent evil (Norman, 2011:19; Tofler, 2011:19).

### ***2.3.1.5 Myths, dreams and Hollywood***

Jung (2012a:15) explored myths, but focused on the archetypes such as the hero, devil, spirit, mother and trickster, whereas Frye (1951:108-109) analysed the patterns that can result in the representations of good and evil. It is argued that since both patterns and archetypes have been repeated using symbols in various cultural artefacts including literature, film and paintings, they

may be universally understood. This is seemingly due to the notion that society is connected by inherited mental structures (Chang et al, 2015:157; Hall, 2013:173; Jung, 1970, 2012a:15), and it is because of the mental structures that symbols can represent myth through dreams. The unconscious communicates with the conscious through dreams and by understanding the symbolic representation that is associated with the dreams; it can lead to the individual understanding their unconscious as no two people can share the same understanding for symbols (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Chang et al, 2015:158; Jung, 1988:24).

Considering that Hollywood can drive the audience into a "dream like state" (Chang et al, 2015:158; Sharot 2015:70), symbols collectively representing archetypes and patterns in myths can also be shown through various media texts such as film and television and the way individuals interpret the symbols can vary. This further relates to individuals that are drawn to symbols that represents their shadow.

### **2.3.2 Critique**

The representation theory was not so much criticised as it evolved. It has been used within two eras, the structuralist and the post-structuralist period (Hall, 2013:182). The structuralist period is where theorists such as de Saussure (1966:15, 68) and Levi-Strauss (1969:202), described that people share the same mental structures, or Hall's (2013:173) conceptual maps. As a result, people in a society or culture are connected in a system of structures that forms a cultural covenant (Danesi, 2015:492; Hall, 2013:173; Trifonas, 2015:21). However, the structuralist period is criticised by theorists such as Jacques Derrida and Michael Foucault (Danesi, 2015:494; Hall, 2013:185).

Derrida (1981) and Foucault (1994:208) argue that there are no underlining structures within society because meaning is constantly changing or evolving (Danesi, 2015:494; Hall, 2013:185). For instance, how people view culture and traditions in contemporary society is different from 20 or 50 years ago and structuralism neglects individual thought (Danesi, 2015:494; Hall, 2013:185). Thus, there is no absolute true meaning for certain representations (Danesi, 2015:494; Hall, 2013:185).

According to Drake (1967:321), Jung was rarely mentioned after his fall-out with Freud in 1913 and there are very few of his works that has been recognised. Those works that were mentioned

focused on Jung's definitions of archetypes and primordial images (Chang et al, 2015:158; Tacey, 2003:140). In addition, Jung's theories were criticised and dismissed as 'sheer mysticism' (Drake 1967:321; La Barre, 1948:383; Tacey, 2003:140).

Considering that Jung was working within the structuralist era (D'Aquili, 1975:41), Jung's theory on symbolic representations in dreams is leaning to a far more complex view than society could comprehend at that time. This is especially true when Jung (1988:56) states that dreams cannot be analysed the same way as no two people are the same even if they dream the same dream (Chang et al, 2015:158; Sharot 2015:70). This statement falls within a similar post-structuralist idea that there are no structures, that knowledge is relative and there is no absolute truth (Danesi, 2015:494; Hall, 2013:185).

However, it is argued that Jung's (1956:408) theories also fall within the structuralist era considering that the archetypes have been repeated in various cultural artefacts. Frye (1951:108-109) confirms this notion by analysing the patterns of symbols representing archetypes that have also been constant in culture. Moreover, all the representation theories seem similar to Jung's (2012a:15) inherited primordial images and mental structures.

### **2.3.3 Contemporary application of the theory of representation**

Representation theories have been used to analyse films, advertisements and music videos. Specifically, Botha (2012:2) analysed the film *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* (2001) and a computer animation called *The Greedy Hippo* using Jung's notion of symbols, representation, dreams and the unconscious. For example, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* (2001) is represented as though taking place in a dream because the impossible is made possible with characters flying off treetops and fighting using unconventional martial art moves. The dream shows that a fantasy can provoke the unconscious as it is showing another form of reality (Botha, 2012:4-5).

Frye's theories have been used to analyse representations in films (Tofer, 2011:25; Hamilton, 2006:2). Tofler (2011) analysed the screen play *Yummy Mummy* using Frye's notion of comedy and satire. Norman (2011:1) used Frye's theories of myth and patterns to analyse Japanese video games specifically *Chrono Trigger*.



### **2.3.4 Relevance to the study**

Representation is the sum of conceptual maps and language. Language refer to words, images and symbols and the way that language is constructed can represent meaning which initially originates from imbedded mental structures called conceptual maps (Hall, 2013:173). Thus, people may have a collective understanding of how meaning is communicated using language (Hall, 2013:173). Meaning can be analysed according to denotative and connotative meaning, however, meaning can also vary depending on how it has been represented such as through relative, intended and constructionist representations (Hall, 2013:177, 183).

Frye (1951:104-105) postulated that there are patterns in myth that have been represented and repeated in various cultural artefacts such as literature. These patterns can represent and communicate different meanings in a text (Tofer, 2011:25; Hamilton, 2006:2). The meaning behind symbols or archetypes can vary depending on how they are represented within a dream, Jung's (1988:55-56) theory on dreams relates to film as similar to being in a "dream" like state (Chang et al, 2015:158; Sharot, 2015:70), thus accessing the unconscious contents and defining the shadow (Jung, 1988:96-98; 1995d:95; Rollins, 2011:301).

Considering that the purpose of this study is to explore and, therefore gain a deeper understanding of archetypal evil and the shadow, the representation theories is relevant since representations in the media can be interpreted in varying ways.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

The theories used in this chapter are mostly Jungian or they relay aspects of Jungian theories. The theory of the collective unconscious, and media representation theories were found to be relevant in developing a theoretical framework for this study.

The relevance of the theory of the collective unconscious pertains to the importance of understanding an archetype and where it comes from which is via the primordial images in the collective unconscious that have manifested into imagery. Also, the theory of the collective unconscious forms a strong foundation with media representation theories that will be used to analyse *Vikings*. For instance, it has been argued that society is governed by mental structures or conceptual maps where people within a society are connected, hence people have an inner

understanding for language or signs that represent meaning which could be due to the primordial images in the collective unconscious.

Representation is the sum of language and conceptual maps, people in a culture can collectively understand meaning that is communicated through language whether it be in the form of words, phrases or imagery. Frye (1957:100) argued that archetypes include the patterns and structures in myth that have been repeated in various cultural artefacts. Thus, it is postulated that these patterns are a combination of symbols and imagery that represent good and evil and are repeated in television and film. In addition, how evil is represented in *Vikings* may be collectively understood due to the conceptual maps, although it has been argued that meaning can vary depending on the individual. As explained, the meaning of archetypal imagery can differ depending on how they are represented within a dream even if two people dream the same dream and, considering that viewing a series or film is like being in a "dream like state", meaning may differ. Therefore, the representation theory is relevant when gaining a deeper understanding of evil due to various meanings and interpretations that can occur.

Jung's theories form the heart of this study as his notions of mythologies, archetypes, symbols and representation will enhance the analysis and interpretation of archetypal evil in the series.

Within the next chapter, the focus will specifically be on evil and how previous studies have analysed and interpreted evil in mythologies and cultural artefacts, specifically television and film.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF MYTHOLOGIES AND CULTURAL ARTEFACTS IN THE REPRESENTATION OF ARCHTYPAL EVIL AND THE SHADOW**

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, theories that were discussed were primarily Jungian based due to Jung's emphasis of understanding evil which is similar to the purpose of this study. As a result, Jung's theories will be used as a foundation to analyse archetypal evil and the shadow in the *Vikings* series.

Chapter Three consists of examples of how theories discussed in the theoretical framework have been used in prior studies. Moreover, the review gives guidance on how to collect, analyse and interpret data based on how previous authors have discussed their research using theory (Lyons & Doueck, 2010:57). As described in Chapter Two, there is a lack of understanding of evil since the representation varies depending on culture. Thus, to gain an insight of how evil representations have already been analysed, the literature review applicable to this study focuses on how previous studies have analysed archetypal evil and the shadow in cultural artefacts, specifically television and film (Chang et al, 2015:158; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699).

There is firstly a discussion on how mythologies have been represented in contemporary cultural artefacts followed by an analysis of how evil archetypes have been depicted in the hero confronting evil/ shadow, the devil, and the trickster in television and film. In addition to mythologies, one of the most referenced mythologies in contemporary cultural artefacts that represents evil is that of Alighieri's poems including *Inferno* and *Purgatory*. Each poem is explained followed by how the representations of the seven deadly sins have been popularised in television and film. Finally, each sin is defined and described for this study.

### 3.2 MYTHOLOGIES IN CULTURAL ARTEFACTS

Mythologies consist of various myths, which are stories that have been passed down from generation to generation, and Jung (1965:313) argued that myths are comprised of mythologems, which are themes that have been repeated in various myths (Kelsey, 2017:62; Mackey-Kallis, 2009:699; Zadorina, 2014:779). Archetypal images represent myths and mythologies in cultural artefacts, such as, television and film. They can also take the form of symbols or themes, such as, good and evil, or seasons, including autumn and winter (Jung, 1965:235, 248; Tacey, 2012:147-150, 196). Joseph Campbell (2004) elaborated on Jung's idea of myth and archetypes and focused

on mythological representations in his book *Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Chang et al, 2015:159; Paraschivescu, 2011:217).

*Hero with a Thousand Faces* consists of a description of the journey the hero archetype takes on his quest for glory and individuation (Ellerhoff, 2015:44). According to Campbell (2004:2,96,109), this paradigm of the hero's journey is repeated within mythologies such as Oedipus Rex, Sekhmet the Goddess in Egypt and Inanna's decent to the nether world. Moreover, Campbell (2004:16), like Jung (2012a:13-14), believes that within the collective unconscious, people all share the same understanding of the same archetypes. This may explain why films and series are, more or less, written the same way or that they have similar or the same archetypes. For instance, there is normally a hero of the story, a wise old man (or someone to give advice to the hero), a dangerous quest for the hero to kill or destroy a villain, and a damsel in distress to save (Campbell, 2004:16). According to Radley (2003:20), films that follow similar plot lines can be traced back to *Wizard of Oz* (1939) to *American Graffiti* (1979) to *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* (2001).

George Lucas, the creator of *Star Wars*, was influenced by Jung and Campbell's notions of archetypes and myth (Bancks, 2003:32; Ellerhoff, 2015:44; Vogler, 1985:1). *Star Wars* was an internationally recognised film trilogy from 1977-1983 and is still popular today. The prequel trilogy was made in 1999-2005 and a further trilogy begun in 2016 (Guynes-Vishniac, 2017:161; Montoya, 2015:1). The reason for the success of the franchise is because the story consists of archetypes and myth that are universally well-known (Bancks, 2003:32). Other popular films such as *Spider-Man* (Meyer, 2003:520) and *Batman* (Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:126) represent similar archetypes such as the hero, quest, and good versus evil. In addition to the universality of the mentioned archetypes and mythologies, archetypal evil and the shadow have also been depicted in television and film.

### **3.2.1 The hero and facing the shadow**

As explained in Chapter Two, the hero is usually portrayed conventionally as someone who has superhuman powers and fights against evil (Berger, 2012:99; Campbell, 2004:28). The hero must face a journey which normally involves a series of tests that helps an individual to become stronger and reach full self-actualisation or individuation (Jung, 1988:96-98; Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:2004:124). Moreover, the hero needs to accept his/her shadow in order to develop the Self

(Jung 1995b:29), for instance, Ellerhoff (2015:46) explains that Luke Skywalker is the hero archetype in *Star Wars*. Luke must take on a quest to save a princess and help destroy the Death Star, a planet ruled by the evil Darth Vader (Ellerhoff, 2015:46). In Luke's quest, he discovers more about himself and eventually figures out that his father, Darth Vader, tempts him to come to the dark side of the force or to become evil. Luke refuses the dark side but accepts his father and, therefore develops his Self (Ellerhoff, 2015:46) as his shadow is symbolically represented as his father.

Similarly, in *Urumi* (2011), a film about a historical patriotic warrior, Kelu Nayanar, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, seeks to revenge his father's death by killing Vasco de Gama and freeing the Indians. Vasco de Gama is interpreted as Kelu's shadow because he is the opposition to the hero, thus Kelu needs to face his shadow in order to complete his journey (Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:2-3) and, therefore developing his Self. The temptation to be consumed by the shadow archetype can also be interpreted as the devil archetype (Campbell, 2004:85, Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:2-3).

### **3.2.2 The seductive devil**

The devil or the villain archetype is represented as evil, the dragon or hell (Campbell, 2004:85). The devil is what the hero fights against but may also use a seductive power that can counter the hero and can lure him or her into evil (Campbell, 2004:85). An example of this is where Darth Vader tries to lure Luke Skywalker to the dark side of the force (Ellerhoff, 2015:46). In *Urumi*, Vasco de Gama taunts Kelu as a child by cutting off his ear after witnessing Vasco killing his father which tempts Kelu to become evil (Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:7).

Other 'devil' archetypes that have encouraged the hero(s) to become evil include the Joker in DC comics *Batman*, Green Goblin in Marvel comics *Spiderman* and Ultron in Marvel's *Avengers* (Weiner, 2011:92). The villain/ devil archetype is argued, in popular culture, to be more interesting than the hero as the hero is only called when there is evil (Weiner, 2011:92), thus the hero archetype cannot be a hero without the devil. Another archetype that can perhaps be represented as evil or the devil is the trickster.

### 3.2.3 The Trickster

The trickster is found in figures such as Mercurius or Hermes, the god of communication, trickery and thieves (Jung 1959, 2011:135; LaLlave & Guthel, 2012:457). Mercurius is fond of pranks and jokes and he is also a shape shifter (Jung 1959, 2011:135; LaLlave & Guthel, 2012:457). LaLlave and Gutheil (2012:465) stipulate that the trickster causes chaos and uncertainty for the hero and can assist the devil to lure the hero into evil. An example is Loki the God of Mischief in *Marvel* comics and films where he manipulates the hero Thor (Weiner, 2011:92). Dexter, in *Dexter*, can also be interpreted as a trickster as he covers up his true nature and intentions of killing (Smith, 2011:391).

In brief, the archetypes including the hero, devil and trickster have been widely depicted in television and film. One particular mythology that has been used to represent evil in cultural artefacts, and that intensely influenced Jung's writings on evil (Slattery, 2011:129), includes *Inferno* and *Purgatory* (Annunziato, 2016:8-11; Jeukes, 2014:44-45).

### 3.3 DANTE'S MYTHOLOGIES

Dante Alighieri (C 1265-1321) is an Italian poet who wrote *Comedia* which is a collection of three poems including *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* (Purgatory) and *Paradiso* (Paradise). Collectively, the poems give a descriptive representation of heaven, hell and the in between (Jeukes, 2014:44). Jung was infatuated by Alighieri's *Commedia* and explored some of his archetypal imagery in *The Red Book* which is a personal diary that Jung wrote where he analysed his own unconscious (Slattery, 2011:129). Considering that the theories are Jungian based, as elaborated in Chapter Two, *Inferno* and *Purgatory* is important to analyse the representation of evil in *Vikings*. In addition, Alighieri's *Commedia* is one of the most well-known representations of evil (Jeukes, 2014:44-45; Hawkins, 2012:223) and has influenced television and film (Annunziato, 2016:8-11; Jeukes, 2014:44-45). Below is an explanation of *Inferno* and *Purgatory* which includes a summary of the poems in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2, in addition, there is a description of how *Inferno* and *Purgatory* have been used within television and film.

### 3.3.1 *Inferno*

According to Jeukes (2014:44-45), one of the most well-known mythological representations of evil is shown in *Inferno*. *Inferno* is a poem about Dante Alighieri's tour through Hell with his tour guide Virgil, a Roman poet (70-19 BC). Alighieri was inspired to write *Inferno* based on corruption and war that he witnessed within his own country, Florence (Jeukes, 2014:44-45). *Inferno* can be described a part novel and part journal as Alighieri describes his encounters with sin and punishment and includes aspects of the Christian faith and Greek mythologies (Jeukes, 2014:45). Alighieri begins his poem where he is trapped in a forest and his way is blocked by three beasts including a leopard, a lion and a she-wolf. He is then encountered by Virgil who takes Alighieri (2008a:1-3) on the journey through hell. Hell is described as an inverted pyramid and the deeper the level, the smaller or narrower it becomes and the more severe the punishment and, thus the crime (Jeukes, 2014:44; Alighieri, 2008a:203). The inverted pyramid runs directly through Jerusalem specifically where Jesus Christ, the messiah or saviour in the Christian faith, was crucified and resurrected (Jeukes, 2014:44-45).

As summarised in table 3.1 below, hell consists of 24 divisions with nine levels or circles hosting a specific sin. Levels one to six consist of limbo, lust, gluttony, greed, wrath and heresy, level seven consists of three rings that fall under violence. Alighieri (2008a:2320) describes level eight as an amphitheatre that consists of 10 bolgie (bolgia singular); each bolgia consists of a specific variation of Fraud. Level nine has three rounds of sins each consisting of a specific severity of treachery and, finally there is the centre of hell (Alighieri, 2008a:2320; Brooker, 2014:23-24). In addition, levels one to five are incontinence sins or sins that entail lack of self-restraint such as lust and gluttony. Levels six to nine are situated within a city that Alighieri describes as what looks like Mosques. This city is known as the City of Dis, 'Dis' is one of the names of Pluto who is the king of the underworld (Brooker, 2014:23).

The crimes in *Inferno* are based on the seven deadly sins described in *Purgatory* including lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. However, Alighieri, in *Inferno*, takes the seven deadly sins further by describing different variations of the sins (Brooker, 2014). For example, violence falls under wrath and there are ten variations of the sin and each is punished depending of the severity of the crime (Alighieri, 2008a:77-92). The souls are categorised within each level depending on their sin and their punishment is a symbolic representation for their crime (Jeukes,



2014:44). For instance, the sin lust is punished by restlessly swaying souls in strong stormy winds which symbolizes their lack of self-restraint (Jeukes, 2014:44).

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

Level	Sin	Crime	Punishment	Monster/ Damn soul	Status
<b>Outer gates of Hell</b>	Unclassified beliefs	Souls neither good nor evil. Believed in neither God nor the devil, only believed in human virtue.	Souls are chased by wasps and hornets to symbolise change of beliefs.	Ferry Piloted by Charon, the ferry transports souls between Limbo, Hell and Purgatorio.	Spiritual stagnation
<b>Level 1</b>	Limbo	Limbo is a rebellious form of heaven. Includes souls who did not commit any sin but are punished as they did not accept Christ or they were not baptised by the holy faith.	Punished by living in a deficient heaven, a heaven without hope of salvation.	NA	Incontinence
<b>Level 2</b>	Lust	Lack of self-restraint for adulterous acts.	Souls are blown around by strong winds, symbolising being carried by passions.	Beginning of hell proper. Serpentine minos (a large snake like man).	Incontinence
<b>Level 3</b>	Gluttony	Lack of self-restraint for food, drink and other addictions.	Punished by being forced to swim in foul smelling mud in cold icy rain as a symbol of rotten decay.	Swimming souls guarded by a three headed beast. Souls live alone as a result of their gluttonous behaviour.	Incontinence

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b>Level 4</b>	Greed	Lack of self-restraint for hoarding and spending.	Souls are punished by pushing heavy money bags with their chests. Symbolizes the 'wheel of fortune', a wheel used to gamble luxury goods. What was once good fortune is now a burden.	Pluto/ Plutus, monarch of wealth.	Incontinence
<b>Level 5</b>	Wrath	Lack of self-restraint for anger or hate.	Souls are punished by living in filthy water. Passive wrath lies still underneath the water. Active wrath is on top physically fighting each other.	NA	Incontinence
<b>Level 6</b>	Heresy	The belief in something other than religious doctrine and knowing the future instead of being content with the present.	Trapped in a tomb of flames as a symbol to keep souls from escaping beyond the religious doctrine.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Level 7</b>	Violence	Physical harm or murder of another.	The 7 <sup>th</sup> circle is divided into three rings each with a separate punishment.	Centaur/Harpies.	City of Dis

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b>Ring 1</b>	Violence	Against neighbours: murderers and war makers.	Souls punished in a river of boiling blood and fire. Temperature depends on severity of the sin.	Centaur's guard the river and shoot arrows at a soul that tries to escape.	City of Dis
<b>Ring 2</b>	Violence	Against Self.	Suicides turn into trees that feed the harpies. Those who refused life are lifeless and helpless against the harpies.	Harpies are large birds with the faces of women.	City of Dis
<b>Ring 3</b>	Violence	Against God, Art, and Nature: Blasphemers, sodomites and usurers.	Souls punished on a land of burning sand, flakes of sand fall from the sky. Blasphemers are stretched on the burning sand; sodomites run in circles on the sand; usurers are grouped together on the sand wailing.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Level 8</b>	Fraud	Deceiving others for personal gain.	Level 8 is an amphitheatre called Malebolge or evil ditches. There are 10 ditches collectively called bolge. Each bolgia consists of a level of fraud. The lower the level, the more severe the fraud.	NA	City of Dis

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b><i>Bolgia 1</i></b>	Fraud	Panderers and seducers: Sinners who took advantage of the passions of others.	The souls make two files and march in opposite directions and are forever whipped by horned demons.	Horned demons	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 2</i></b>	Fraud	Flatterers: Deceiving using language to corrupt another's desires.	The souls are trapped in human body waste as a symbol for false flatteries.	NA	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 3</i></b>	Fraud	Simoniacs: The act of selling church material goods and services for personal gain.	Souls are placed in a tube with holes at the bottom for their feet. Their feet are then burned.	NA	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 4</i></b>	Fraud	Sorcerers: Fortune tellers and false prophets.	For not trusting God by seeing into the future, their heads are turned and so they walk backwards for all eternity. A distorted body for distorting God's law.	NA	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 5</i></b>	Fraud	Barraters: Corrupt politicians.	Souls live in a pit of boiling sticky substance. The stickiness symbolizes dark secrets and lies of corruption.	Guarded by demons called Malebranch (evil claws) that claw at the souls if they try to escape.	City of Dis

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b><i>Bolgia 6</i></b>	Fraud	Hypocrites	Souls walk around with heavy glowing light robes symbolizing purity on the outside but hidden corruption on the inside of the robe.	NA	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 7</i></b>	Fraud	Thieves: Stealing of goods.	Souls trapped in a pit of lizards and other reptiles. Reptiles snatch the souls, and “steal” parts of the souls.	Centaur on a fire breathing dragon guards the pit.	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 8</i></b>	Fraud	Councillors of fraud: Using their high status to force people to commit fraud.	Punished in a flame that hides the souls from view symbolizing the stripping of their status.	NA	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 9</i></b>	Fraud	Sowers of discord: take advantages of other’s vulnerabilities.	Mutilated by a demon with a sword symbolizing their vulnerability.	Large demon with a sword.	City of Dis
<b><i>Bolgia 10</i></b>	Fraud	Falsifiers of things: exchange false goods for money. Falsifiers of persons: falsifying identity. Falsifiers of money: exchange false money for goods. Falsifiers of words: manipulation.	Souls punished in a pit in numerous ways including disease, stench, thirst, filth, darkness and screaming.	Gianni Schicchi sinks his teeth into imposters to stop them from escaping the pit.	City of Dis

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b>Level 9</b>	Treachery	Treachery consists of 4 rounds, the deeper the round, the more severe the sin.	Final level is a large frozen lake. Those who commit treachery are trapped in ice depending on their level of treachery.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Round 1: <i>Caina</i></b>	Treachery	Traitors to family: traitors to kindred. Round named after Cain who killed his brother Abel, Gen 4:8.	Souls punished with their bodies stuck in the ice with only their heads sticking out. They can move their heads for some protection from the wind.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Round 2: <i>Antenor</i></b>	Treachery	Traitors to country: Political deception to their country. Round 2 is named after Antenor, a Trojan soldier, who betrayed his city to the Greeks.	Souls have their heads above the ice but cannot move their heads to protect themselves from the icy wind.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Round 3: <i>Ptolamaea</i></b>	Treachery	Traitors to guests: named after Ptolamaea who killed his father-in-law and sons after inviting them to a banquet.	Souls have their head above the ice but their tears dry up as ice to deny them their tears.	NA	City of Dis

Table 3.1: *Inferno* (9 Circles of Hell) (Alighieri, 2008a)

<b>Round 4: Judecca</b>	Treachery	Traitors to their Lords: named after Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus, Luke 22	The souls are completely trapped in ice. The atmosphere is silent.	NA	City of Dis
<b>Centre of Hell</b>	Treachery	Personal Treachery against God.	Lucifer is trapped in ice from his waist. Judas Iscariot is chewed by the middle red head and clawed by Lucifers claws.	Lucifer with three heads. One black (left), one red (middle) and one yellow (right).	Centre of Hell



### 3.3.2 *Purgatory*

Alighieri's *Purgatory* is the second part of *Comedia*. After entering *Inferno*, Alighieri is taken to a mountain called the 'mountain of Purgatory' that is situated above Hell and structured like a pyramid that consists of ten levels. Two levels are devoted to ante-purgatory which is before purgatory proper, seven levels are each associated with the seven deadly sins, and the final level is the earthly paradise (Alighieri, 2008b: 1-3; Hawkins, 2012:232). As shown in table 3.2, the table is organised according to the structure of the mountain of Purgatory with the two levels of Ante-Purgatory at the bottom and seven levels showing the seven deadly sins. The sins are organised from bottom to the top according to the severity of the sin. For instance, pride is closer to the bottom of the table (closer to Hell) than lust as it is considered as more severe (Hawkins, 2012:232).

Within the seven levels that deal with the seven deadly sins, the souls are punished according to their sin and they are given examples of vice and virtue. Thus, unlike Hell, the aim of purgatory is to rehabilitate the sinners so that they can eventually go to paradise; this is because the souls have sinned on motives rather than actions unlike the souls in *Inferno* (Hawkins, 2012:223). *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* include lust, gluttony, greed, wrath, envy, and pride. In addition, the sins are categorised according to love (Hawkins, 2012:232; 234); lust, gluttony, and greed relate to disordered love or an excessive desire for material possession, food or sex (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235). Sloth relates to deficient love or uncaring love (Alighieri, 2008b:120); wrath, envy and pride are based on perverted love or where the sinners tried to harm others (Alighieri, 2008b:63). Before Alighieri goes into purgatory proper, at the gate an angel draws the letter 'p' for peccātum, which is Latin for sin, on his forehead seven times. When Alighieri is finished viewing one level, one letter 'P' disappears symbolising his forgiveness or repentance and he moves closer to paradise or Heaven (Hawkins, 2012:229; 233).

In brief, *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* are depicted as evil in *Inferno* and *Purgatory* considering that souls are punished depending on the severity of the sin committed. The representations of the seven deadly sins, from both *Inferno* and *Purgatory*, have been illustrated in cultural artefacts.

Table 3.2: *Purgatory* (7 Terraces of Purgatory) (Alighieri, 2008b)

Earthly Paradise						
Level	Sin	Crime	Punishment	Examples of purgatory	Example of the sin	Love
<b>Terrace 7</b>	Lust	Disordered sexual desire.	Souls pass through a wall of fire and shout out examples of lust.	The virtue of the Virgin Mary and Diana (Goddess in Greek mythology)	The Kingdoms of Sodom and Gomorrah, in Genesis, represent homosexual acts or acts against nature. Pasiphaë, daughter of Helios, was cursed by Poseiden, god of the sea, to have lust for a white bull.	Disordered Love
<b>Terrace 6</b>	Gluttony	Overindulgence in bodily comforts.	Souls are starved while surrounded by fruit bearing trees.	Virgin Mary shared her gifts at the wedding in Cana.	The Centaurs, who drank too much at a wedding feast, caused a scene that led to a battle with the Lapiths.	Disordered Love

Table 3.2: *Purgatory* (7 Terraces of Purgatory) (Alighieri, 2008b)

<b>Terrace 5</b>	Avarice / Greed	Excessive love of material possessions.	Souls lie flat on the ground. They listen to Psalm 119:25, a prayer about pursuing God's word.	Virgin Mary and the scene where Jesus is born. This shows an anointing of God's glory.	Hugh the great and his greed for possessions, Charles of Naples sells his daughter to an older man.	Disordered Love
<b>Terrace 4</b>	The Slothful	The sin of laziness or negligence.	Souls run around a terrace listening to stories of zeal.	Mary runs in "haste" to visit her cousin Elizabeth.	The souls listen to a short poem, due to them being kept busy, about the consequences of laziness.	Deficient Love
<b>Terrace 3</b>	The Wrathful	Physically harming another.	Souls walk around in thick black smoke symbolising how souls are unable to see the consequences of their anger.	Virgin Mary is patient towards Jesus when he disappears for three days to preach the gospel as a child. Peisistratos' wife wanted to kill a man for showing affection for their daughter but Peisistratos instead showed compassion for the man.	The stoning of Saint Stephan in Acts 7:54-60.	Perverted Love

Table 3.2: *Purgatory* (7 Terraces of Purgatory) (Alighieri, 2008b)

<b>Terrace 2</b>	The Envious	The hatred of those who are happy or have good wealth.	Souls have their eyes sewn shut and wear cloaks. Souls listen to stories of those who were genuinely happy for others.	Mary was happy for the wedding couple at Cana and asked Jesus to perform his first miracle, turn water into wine, for the couple.	Aglauron was turned to stone because she was jealous of Hermes' love for her sister Herse. Cain who was jealous of God's love for Abel.	Perverted Love
<b>Terrace 1</b>	The Proud	No notion of modesty.	Souls carry heavy stones on their backs and view the sculptures of humility.	Sculptures of humility include the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Luke1:38).	Sculptures showing Lucifer, the tower of Babel and King Saul.	Perverted Love
<b>Ante-Purgatory</b>	The Late Repentant	These souls repented before death without receiving rights and neglectful rulers.	Souls stay in purgatory the same times as their life on earth.	NA	NA	NA
<b>Ante-Purgatory</b>	The Excommunicated	Delayed Christians or those who did not live a full Christian life.	Souls are kept in detainment for as long as they lived as a deficient or non-Christian.	NA	NA	NA

### 3.3.3 Inferno and cultural artefacts

Jeukes (2014:44) states that *Inferno* has been used within novels, computer games, art, television and cinema to represent evil. Specifically, studies have shown that television has referred to *Inferno* by analysing signs that represent evil (Annunziato, 2016; Jeukes 2014).

*Sapranos* (1999-2007) is a television series about Tony, an Italian mobster, who commits a series of crimes with his gang including violence and treachery. Tony is portrayed as a character that chooses not to escape the life of crime, therefore his fear of being arrested or killed is continuous which is similar to Alighieri's circles of never-ending violence and punishment (Annunziato, 2016:3-4). *Angel* (1999-2004), a show about a seemingly good vampire, references *Inferno* in the episode 'A New World'. Lilah, a lawyer, threatens Wesley by giving him a copy of *Inferno* after refusing a job at her firm. She then references the final circle of hell which is reserved for acts of treachery, meaning that Wesley should decide carefully where his loyalties lie. *How I met Your Mother* (2005-2014) also references *Inferno* when Ted, the main protagonist, discovers that he is being punished for being proud.

In the *Simpsons* (1989-Current), Homer, an overweight father and husband, is sentenced to hell for making a deal with the devil by selling his soul for a donut. Homer eventually eats the donut and is punished for gluttonous behaviour (Annunziato, 2016:7). *Mad Men* (2007-2015), a series taking place in the late 1950s to the early 1960s, is about Donald Draper who works in an advertising agency and has a wife and two children. As the series progresses, the audience learns that Donald commits many sins such as adultery, fraud and treachery resulting in creating his own circle of hell. For instance, near the end of season six, Donald nearly loses all that he holds dear including his third wife, children and his job due to his sins. Thus, Donald's punishments fit his crimes as per the punishments in *Inferno* (Annunziato, 2016:8-11).

Jeukes (2014) explains that Alighieri's description of hell is similar to the structure of jails shown in films such as *Fortress* (1992), *Shawshank Redemption* (1994) and *Judge Dredd* (1995). In *Fortress*, the prison is a dark pit and criminals are kept in check with pain inducing devices in their stomachs. In *Shawshank Redemption*, the prison on the outside has a Gothic exterior and inside the prison, the prisoners are situated in cells that look like tombs. *Judge Dredd* shows a dark prison

within a prison which is similar to Alighieri's description of Hell having levels within levels (Jeukes, 2014:46). In relation to *Inferno*, *Purgatory* specifies the seven deadly sins.

### **3.3.4 *Purgatory* and cultural artefacts**

Examples of *Purgatory* can be found in television series such as *Lost* (2004-2010) (Sepinwall, 2015:191) and the 1995 film *Seven*. *Lost* is a series about a group of people that are stranded on an island due to a plane crash. The island is represented as *Purgatory* as these people are separated from the 'real world' and it becomes a place for repentance as they learn to sort through their issues and hopefully become better people (Sepinwall, 2015:191). *Seven* is a film about a serial killer who commits crimes based on the seven deadly sins to show the world the wrongs of sin (Hawkins, 2012:225; Tambling, 1999:293).

Brown (2011:117) references *Purgatory* in the television series *Supernatural* (2005-current). This series is about two brothers, Sam and Dean Winchester, who fight against monsters and demons. In episode six of season seven 'Family matters', *Purgatory* is mentioned as the place reserved for monsters that were almost 'forced' to kill. For example, vampires have to kill and drink human blood in order to survive.

### **3.3.5 *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins***

Based on *Inferno* and *Purgatory*, *Dante's Seven Deadly* sins have been defined and described below.

#### **3.3.5.1 *Lust***

Lust has been defined as the need for sexual gratification and is related to promiscuity. In addition, a person will try to seduce another for the goal of sexual gratification (Veselka, Giammarco & Vernon, 2014:76). In relation to *Purgatory*, the souls that are being punished for lust have to run through a wall of fire (Alighieri, 2008b:165). In *Inferno*, souls are punished by being swayed back and forth by a strong wind as a symbol for allowing their temptation for lust to control them emotionally and physically (Alighieri, 2008a:30). Alighieri (2008a:35) in *Inferno* argues that lust is ranked as one of the least severe sins as he speaks about love and how it cannot be controlled. Moreover, lust is located in one of the first levels of hell (Jeukes, 2014:44), and in *Purgatory*, lust

is situated in the level that is closest to paradise (Hawkins, 2012:232), therefore this indicates that lust is not as severe as opposed to the other sins. For this study, lust is defined as the temptation for love and sexual relations with a person that can lead to consequences such as adultery. Lust will also be defined as seducing, as a means of manipulation, to serve personal interests and gain.

#### **3.3.5.2 Gluttony**

Gluttony is over-indulgence in substances such as food and alcohol (Veselka et al, 2015:76). Alighieri (2008b:143) describes gluttony in *Purgatory* as excessive consumption of substances. The way the souls are punished for gluttonous behaviour is by being surrounded by trees overloaded with fruit that they cannot reach. In *Inferno*, souls are punished by lying in wet stench and covered by icy rain (Alighieri, 2008a:38). Thus, gluttony can be described in *Inferno* and *Purgatory* as a repulsive or vile sin. Gluttony, in relation to the study, is defined as an over-consumption of bodily comforts such as food and alcohol.

#### **3.3.5.3 Greed**

Greed can be defined as the overarching need for personal gain by means of manipulation and betrayal (Veselka et al, 2015:76). Greed or avarice are described in *Purgatory* as the distorted love or coveting of things and souls are punished by lying face-down listening to Psalm 119:25 “I lie in the dust; revive me your word.” The psalm is a prayer expressing the desire to follow God’s word (Alighieri, 2008b:123). The souls in *Inferno* are punished for hoarding and having a relentless need for things, by pushing large money bags from one side to another (Alighieri, 2008a:123). In relation to the study, greed is defined as the desire for things such as treasures including gold, women and children.

#### **3.3.5.4 Sloth**

Sloth is the lack of willingness or motivation to utilise talents (Veselka et al, 2014:76). Souls in *Purgatory* are punished by running around a terrace calling out examples that are the opposite of sloth (Alighieri, 2008b:111). Running in the terrace is a symbol for keeping the souls ‘busy’ considering the lack of activity in life. Therefore, sloth is defined as idleness or sluggishness to the extent where personal interests, work and talents are neglected.

### **3.3.5.5 Wrath**

Wrath is uncontrollable anger that is expressed internally through frustration or causing physical or verbal harm (Veselka et al, 2014:75-76). Souls in *Purgatory* walk around in thick black smoke which symbolises how anger can blind people to the consequences of their actions (Alighieri, 2008b:101). In *Inferno*, the souls are punished by living in swampy water that consumes passive and active wrath. Passive wrath lies beneath the lower parts of the water, indicating internal wrath or frustration. Active wrath is situated on the surface of the water where souls fight amongst one another (Alighieri, 2008a:51). It can be argued that wrath is seemingly related to treachery, as the circle in which the sin is located is called *Caina*, the example includes traitors to family where Cain killed his Brother Abel (Genesis 4:10-11), thus betraying his family by causing physical harm to his brother (Alighieri, 2008a:217). Therefore, wrath is defined in this study as the uncontrollable urge to have revenge on someone by performing acts of treachery that lead to physical or verbal harm.

### **3.3.5.6 Envy**

Envy is the resentment towards another person that is more prosperous in terms of family, riches, power and health (Veselka et al, 2014:82). Envy in *Purgatory* is described as a hatred of others who are more successful or well-off than others. The opposite of envy, according to Alighieri (2008b:82-83), is sharing blessings or gifts and gives the example of Jesus, the messiah in the New Testament (John, 3:31-35), performing his first miracle of transforming water into wine for a wedding feast. Envy can result in deceiving and exploiting others for personal gain (Veselka et al, 2014:82). Envy is defined in this study as a longing for another's possessions which can result in resentment and the exploitation of others.

### **3.3.5.7 Pride**

Pride can lead to feelings of superiority and a sense of entitlement compared to others. Pride leads to arrogance, selfishness, vanity and lack of empathy (Fairlie, 2015:37). Alighieri (2008b:63), in *Purgatory*, describes pride as being unable to express humility; souls are punished by being forced to bend over with heavy weights on their backs. In *Inferno*, pride can seemingly be related to acts of fraud which are as a result of pride. Fraud is defined as deceiving others for personal gain



(Alighieri, 2008a:116) such as status or power which relates to pride. Thus, pride is defined as an overarching need for self-importance and superiority.

### 3.4 CONCLUSION

Similarly to Jung (2012a:13-14), Campbell (2004:16) believed that, due to the unconscious, all people share the same understanding for the same archetypes and myths which is why cultural artefacts, such as television and film, may have similar or the same archetypes including the hero, devil, and trickster. In addition, films and television seemingly share the same myths as, according to Radley (2003:20), these all have recurring plot lines.

Studies have shown recurring representations of evil has been illustrated in television and film such as the acclaimed plot line of the hero fighting against the temptation of becoming evil by accepting the shadow and developing the Self (Berger, 2012:99; Campbell, 2004:28; Radley, 2003:20; Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:2004). Other representations of evil that have been reiterated in cultural artefacts include the devil, whom seduces the hero into evil (Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Weiner, 2011:92), and the trickster, who manipulates and lures the hero to evil (LaLlave & Gutheil, 2012:465).

Mythologies that have been widely utilised in television and film to represent evil is *Inferno* and *Purgatory* (Annunziato, 2016; Brown, 2011:117). Overall, the poems indicate the punishment for sins, the more severe the sin the more ruthless the punishment and the closer it is situated to hell (Brooker, 2014:23-24; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234). Alighieri describes the seven deadly sins including lust, gluttony, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride in *Purgatory* (Hawkins, 2012:232; 234) and looks at different variations of the sins in *Inferno* (Brooker, 2014). The seven deadly sins have repeatedly been illustrated in television including the *Sopranos* (1999-2007), *Mad Men* (2007-2015), *Lost* (2004-2010) and *Supernatural* (2005- current).

It is postulated that the seven deadly sins are an important aspect in analysing evil in *Vikings*. For instance, all representations of evil discussed so far, such as the hero's fight against the devil's seduction, the devil and the trickster, seemingly result in sin. The hero needs to fight the temptation of being lured into evil which can be associated with lust and envy for evil, the devil seemingly uses seduction to beckon the hero into evil because of his proud evil status quo. Finally, the

trickster manipulates the hero for personal gain or greed. Thus, the seven deadly sins described in *Purgatory* and *Inferno* may be a key feature in understanding evil as certain concepts from the poems have been widely utilised in mythologies.

Moreover, mythologies and television show repeatedly that evil needs to be overcome whether it be by fighting against the devil, or accepting the shadow to enable the hero to continue with the hero's journey (Berger, 2012:99; Campbell, 2004:28; Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Jung 1995b:29). *Purgatory* illustrates punishing souls who committed the seven deadly sins so that sin can be overcome, thus souls may be forgiven and enter Heaven, a place of good which can arguably be the end destination of the hero's journey. In addition, considering that cultural artefacts, such as television, repeatedly confirm the immorality of a sin based on the punishment given (Annunziato, 2016:7; Brown, 2011:117), *Inferno* illustrates the severity of the sins through the various punishments showing the extent which sin is evil.

In the next chapter, Chapter Four, the methodology for analysing the *Vikings* series using *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* will be explained.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Prior to this chapter, the literature review was discussed specifically focusing on previous studies that analysed archetypal evil and the shadow in television and film. Many studies had referenced similar evil archetypes including the shadow, devil and devouring mother (Berger, 2012:99; Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Radley, 2003:20; Weiner, 2011:92; Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:2004) which reinforce Campbell's (2004:28) notion that mythologies, or television and film, share similar recurring themes, plot lines and archetypes. This is due to the collective unconscious, as it is argued that the human psyche consists of inherited mental structures enabling individuals to share a collective understanding for archetypes that is then communicated through mythologies (Campbell, 2004:16; Jung, 2012a:13-14). As shown in the literature review, the seven deadly sins, represented in *Inferno* and *Purgatory*, is a current popular reference to evil in analysing television and film (Annunziato, 2016; Brown, 2011:117), thus seemingly indicating that people have a collective understanding of the archetypes. Therefore, *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* will be used as a conceptual framework to explore representations of evil in a contemporary series.

As discussed in Chapter One, the type of study is interpretive, thus the methods used to collect and interpret data will consist of qualitative methods. Non-probability sampling methods, qualitative content analysis, qualitative interviews and interpretivist methods of analysing data will be utilised. In addition, *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* shall be used as a conceptual framework when analysing the television series *Vikings*. Therefore, this chapter consists of a detailed explanation of the methodology to be conducted within this study including methods of collection and analysis.

## 4.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology is the process that will be used to collect and analyse the research data and is influenced by the type of study and the research question (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:289; Mackey & Gass, 2016:3; Novikov & Novikov, 2013:7). Since this is an interpretive qualitative study, only qualitative methods will be used to determine how archetypal evil and the shadow are represented in *Vikings*. Below is a detailed explanation of the units of analysis, population, sampling, data collection methods, data analysis methods and feasibility.

#### **4.2.1 Units of analysis**

A unit of analysis is a single entity that is analysed during the research process and is chosen based on whether it will be able to answer the research question (Chenail, 2012:266; du Plooy, 2014b:289; Pascoe, 2014:134; Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:111). The units of analysis in this study will be social artefacts and individuals. A social artefact is any media related material such as books, newspapers, film and television (Pascoe, 2014:131), and in this case the television series *Vikings*. Individuals are human participants (Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:111) who will take part in the research through qualitative research interviews.

#### **4.2.2 Population**

It is important to define the population of a study, hence the total group of individuals and social artefacts that will be included (Davis, 2014c:97; Pascoe, 2014:132-133). The nature and characteristic of the population of the social artefact will be an action, historical, drama television series and the size will include all seasons and episodes of *Vikings*. Specifically, there are currently six released seasons with 79 episodes in total and the last and the final episodes of season six will only be released in 2021 (IMBD, 2020).

With regards to individuals, the nature and characteristic will include all South Africans who have watched at least three seasons of *Vikings* of their own accord.

#### **4.2.3 Sampling**

It is sometimes impossible to use the entire population to answer the research question(s) as it may take too long or the population may not be easily accessible or manageable (Kothari, 2004:55-56; Pascoe, 2014:134). In terms of sampling methods, non-probability sampling methods will be used in this study which is the process whereby not everyone or every object has an equal probability chance of being selected and is used mostly for qualitative studies (Kothari, 2004:15; Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:121-122; Pascoe, 2014:137). The types of non-probability sampling techniques which will be used in this study include convenience, purposive and volunteer sampling (Henning et al, 2004:71; Lyons & Doubeck, 2010:121-122; Pascoe, 2014:142-144).

#### ***4.2.3.1 Convenience sampling***

Convenience sampling is based on what is convenient or easily accessible (Lyons & Doueck, 2010:122; Merrigan & Huston, 2004; Pascoe, 2014:142). For example, the researcher chooses participants that s/he already knows, such as colleagues from work. In addition, this is a useful sampling method especially since it saves time as the sample is quick and easily accessible as long as objects or people are chosen that is relative to the population characteristics (Lyons & Doueck, 2010:122; Merrigan & Huston, 2004; Pascoe, 2014:142). The challenge, however, is that the sampling method can be subjective as individuals are selected based on who the researcher knows which can affect the credibility of the study (Pascoe, 2014:142).

In relation to this study, participants will be limited to suburb, particularly those who live, work or study in Johannesburg/Gauteng area, which is convenient because the researcher lives in Johannesburg. The participants will be selected from two universities including IEMSA and The South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance (AFDA). It will be convenient to advertise for IEMSA students to participate in this study as the researcher studies and works on the campus, however, the AFDA students are only convenient due to geographic location. Therefore, finding students from AFDA will add to the credibility of the study as the researcher is not associated with the institution.

#### ***4.2.3.2 Purposive sampling***

Purposive sampling is based on a distinct purpose (Floyd & Fawler, 2009:18; Lyons & Doueck, 2010:122; Pascoe, 2014:142). Thus, the elements are chosen because the researcher decides to include this sample for the research purpose or aim as well as to answer the research question(s) (Henning et al, 2004:71; Kothari, 2004:39; Pascoe, 2014:142-143). The challenge with this method is that the sampling is solely dependent on what the researcher thinks will answer the research question which can affect credibility (Henning et al, 2004:71; Kothari, 2004:39; Pascoe, 2014:142-143).

With regards to this study, scenes from *Vikings* will be chosen that represent examples of archetypal evil and the shadow. Five to 10 episodes from a total of 79 and the unreleased episodes will be chosen from six seasons from the year 2013 to 2019. Participants will be selected based on a distinct purpose which is that they must have watched at least season one, two and three of *Vikings*.

Furthermore, participants must be 18 years or older, as the series is targeted towards an audience who is 18 (IMBD, 2019) and this makes the sample ethically viable as participants could decide for themselves if they want to take part in the study. Also, participants in varying age groups will be selected to get a sense of how different generations feel about the series. In addition, the credibility of this study will be enhanced as the data collected from the interviews will be compared with the scenes chosen and analysed by the researcher.

#### ***4.2.3.3 Volunteer sampling***

The volunteer sampling method is where individuals volunteer to take part in a study because they feel passionate about a topic to an extent where they feel the need to express their views (Pascoe, 2014:143; Smith, 2002:28-29). Volunteers should not feel pressurised to take part in the study and should do so freely out of their own accord (Pascoe, 2014:143; Smith, 2002:28-29). They should also be aware of the purpose of the study and how data will be collected (Smith, 2002:28-29) such as through in-depth interviews. The advantage of this method is that, due to volunteering, participants may have an interest in the study, therefore may give interesting in-depth answers to the interview questions enabling rich quality data (Pascoe, 2014:144). Notwithstanding, volunteers may be few due to there being no incentive (Pascoe, 2014:144; Smith, 2002:28-29).

The characteristics of the volunteers will be 18 years or older and living within the Johannesburg/ Gauteng area and will have watched at least three seasons of the series *Vikings*. Advertisements for volunteers will be placed at IIEMSA and AFDA, and since these are mostly students and staff in education, they may be interested to be part of the study without an incentive. They will be given an explanatory statement explaining the details pertaining to the interview process and purpose. Participants will sign a consent form indicating that they voluntarily agree to take part in the study.

#### **4.2.4 Data collection methods**

In this section, a detailed description of the research methods that will be used to collect the data is provided. These methods include qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews.

#### 4.2.4.1 Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis involves a subjective interpretation of texts or social artefacts such as television, film, and newspapers (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:191; Kothari, 2004:110) and is also sometimes regarded as thematic analysis (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:4). The aim of this research method is to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon by exploring and analysing a text by identifying unique themes or patterns that have a literal or figurative meaning within a specific context (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Henning et al, 2004:16,102; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017:2). In addition, the texts are analysed using a systematic process where contents are selected and then grouped into categories and/or sub-categories based on related meanings, this is known as coding (Charmaz, 2006:3; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:91; Henning et al, 2004:102). Once the coding has been established the codes can be grouped together to form themes which are then analysed and discussed in the research findings (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Charmaz, 2006:3). Qualitative content analysis can be conducted inductively or deductively (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:9-10).

The deductive approach is when the researcher argues from the general to the specific (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:31-32). The process starts by using a conceptual framework that is constructed using theories and literature which are then used to identify codes, or *priori codes*, and themes in the media text within a specific context (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234-235; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:31). Thus, the *priori codes* will be established before analysing the television series *Vikings* and will be based on the literature review and theoretical framework. Evil in *Vikings* will be analysed using *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* including lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride. According to Belk, Fisher and Kozinets (2013:141), Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014:234-235), codes can be applied several times to the text which can expand on new codes, themes and patterns. Therefore, this process of using the theoretical framework and literature review to extract codes and then use the codes to analyse *Vikings* will be repeated several times. By exposing new themes and patterns, this forms part of an inductive approach where content is argued from the specific to the general (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:9-10; Willig, 2012:85). Hence, new



codes, or *in vivo* codes (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234), are established after using specific codes from the theoretical framework and literature review.

#### **4.2.4.1.1 Critique**

The advantage of this method is that it is flexible, in that it can be used and adapted for a range of studies (Clarke & Braun, 2017:298; Nowell et al, 2017:2). A thematic analysis can provide rich quality data that will contribute to a deeper understanding of a phenomenon which adds to the body of knowledge (Clarke & Braun, 2017:298). The process is easily grasped and there are programs such as *Nvivo* that can assist in organising and structuring the data making it easier to analyse (Nowell et al, 2017:2, 5).

The challenge for this method, however, is that data collection and analysis is normally done by one researcher, thus is solely dependent on one person's understanding and interpretation of codes and themes (Chandler, 2002:213; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:6; Nowell et al, 2017:2). The researcher may be influenced by her understanding of the content and personal experiences leading to a subjective view of interpretation of data (Drisko & Maschi, 2015:6; Nowell et al, 2017:2). This is especially problematic when analysing unique themes or patterns that have a figurative meaning (Drisko & Maschi, 2015:6). Also, there is no consistent structure of data collection and analysis, as it depends on the context of study which could affect the trustworthiness (Cho, 2017:3,7; Nowell et al, 2017:2). However, data collection and interpretation can be confirmed by other experts in the field of context (Marshall & Rossman, 2006:40) and the researcher can also disclose detailed/exhaustive information to the reader regarding how the analysis was done and how conclusions were met (Cho, 2017:7; Nowell et al, 2017:2). This is so that the reader has a deep understanding of the collection and analysis process and can logically verify conclusions based on detailed justifications (Cho, 2017:8; Nowell et al, 2017:2). A reflexive journal or diary can also be kept recording the researcher's thoughts and interpretations that occurred during the data analysis process, this will provide a further detailed explanation of how findings were established (Cho, 2017:8; Nowell et al, 2017:2).

To ensure consistency and trustworthiness, there will be a detailed description of the method of how data is to be collected and interpreted with relevant justifications of findings, thus allowing the reader to decipher how conclusions are made. If another researcher were to conduct a study on

*Vikings*, the interpretations may differ which arguably results in inconsistency (Cho, 2017:8). However, consistency is reached when a standard methodology can be applied to varying contexts (Czinkota & Ronkainen 2007:190; Koonin, 2014:258; Merrigan & Huston, 2004:72). For example, the method of data collection and interpretation can still be applied to other media texts that contain evil. To further the trustworthiness of the study, triangulation can promote credibility (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2009:152; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:24,27; Koonin, 2014:258; Nowell et al, 2017:2), thus qualitative interviews will confirm or disconfirm the findings derived from the qualitative content analysis.

#### ***4.2.4.2 Qualitative interviews***

Qualitative research interviews involve the process of interviewing participants with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of their interpretation of a phenomenon (Blanford, Furniss & Makri, 2016:40; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:180). The aim is not to limit the responses from the participants, but instead encourage them to explain and give detailed responses according to their own views and interpretations on the subject discussed (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:180,183; Kathari, 2004:5;7; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:34). Thus, open-ended questions - questions that do not limit the participant's responses - are used during the interview process and are semi-structured to allow room for open discussions (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:183; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:19). In addition, a qualitative interview can be conducted after research has been completed to validate or contribute to the research project (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2009:152; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:24,27; Koonin, 2014:258; Nowell et al, 2017:2).

For this study, the questions will be semi-structured allowing for in-depth discussions gaining rich quality data. The interviews will be cross-sectional, meaning that the participants will be interviewed only once and data captured within a specific point in time (du Plooy-Cilliers & Cronje, 2014:149; Floyd & Fowler, 2009:18; Hart, 2005:319).

##### ***4.2.4.2.1 Critique***

The advantages of using qualitative research interviews are that the participants are more likely to answer earnestly and honestly during a one on one interview (Rossetto, 2014:483). Within a group interview, for example, respondents may feel self-conscious about their answers and may agree on

answers based on the majority. Also, the identity of the participants is concealed more than within a group interview (du Plooy, 2001:181). The semi-structured questions allow the respondents to answer freely, thus gaining detailed responses to the questions (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:180; Blandford, Furniss & Makri, 2016:40). The interviewer can ask the participants to clarify questions to make sure that there is a clear understanding of the responses given to questions which enhances confirmability (Blandford et al, 2016:40). Finally, qualitative interviews can ensure rich quality responses regarding a phenomenon, therefore adding to a deeper understanding of the topic (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:180). However, there are some disadvantages to qualitative interviews that needs to be considered.

The qualitative interviews can be time consuming due to the interview process taking the form of a conversation between participant and interviewer (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:188; du Plooy, 2001:178; Liamputtong, 2012:3). However, the conversation may help the participant to feel at ease with the researcher as the conversation will remain private and intimate. This encourages participants to talk about their feelings and opinions on a topic ensuring rich quality data (du Plooy, 2001:178; Rossette, 2014:483). One key point to consider is that there needs to be a clear distinction of boundaries between the participant and researcher (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:190; Rosette, 2014:483). The researcher must direct the conversation away from leading to any personal issues or memories that will make the situation uncomfortable for the participant (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:190; Rossette, 2014:483). The participants should be briefed about what types of questions will be asked and consent should be given (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:190; Blandford et al, 2016:41).

Different participants may respond differently making the data collection and findings unpredictable (du Plooy, 2001:183) which can affect the credibility of the study (Cho, 2017:7). Notwithstanding, the unpredictability of responses may provide a deeper understanding of a phenomenon considering that the aim is not to generalise findings but to add to the body of knowledge (Bezuidenhout & Strydom, 2014:180).

In the case of this study, the findings of qualitative interviews will be compared to findings from the qualitative content analysis adding to the credibility of the study by justifying and confirming what the researcher found during the qualitative content analysis (Liamputtong, 2012:31; Nowell

et al, 2017:2). Participants will be briefed regarding the interview process and no personal related questions will be asked. Between five and 10 participants will be interviewed and the interviews shall be analysed through coding and grouping of themes which is discussed in the following section.

#### **4.2.5 Data analysis and interpretation methods**

In order to interpret the data collected from the qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews, Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014:235) describe an eight-step process that is explained below:

##### ***4.2.5.1 Step 1: Preparing the data***

After the data has been collected, the data needs to be transcribed into written text, this is so that the material is familiarised, thus making the analysis and interpretation easier (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:236; Henning et al, 2004:105; Willig, 2012:84). For the qualitative content analysis, the data would have already been transcribed during the collection process. This is because the *priori* codes would have already been identified, based on the literature review and theoretical framework, and used to identify content of the series in relation to the codes and transcribed onto a separate document. The interviews will be recorded using an audio device and then transcribed into written form. Data in written and audio form will be stored and kept for five years and then destroyed. New codes, or *in vivo* codes, may be found when analysing the transcribed interviews as the words or phrases used by the participants, to explain concepts from the conceptual map, is unpredictable.

##### ***4.2.5.2 Step 2: Defining the codes***

Once the data has been transcribed, it is important to group the data into categories and then be labelled using a code (Belk et al, 2013:139; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:236; Henning et al, 2004:105). The types of codes chosen could be in the form of words, phrases, symbols and sentences (Belk et al, 2013:139-140; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:236-237).

#### ***4.2.5.3 Step 3: Developing a conceptual framework***

During this stage, the codes from the previous step are grouped into larger categories which form a conceptual framework; this framework can be represented in a hierarchical structure (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:238-239). The framework will be constructed deductively as codes from the literature review and theoretical framework will be used to construe specific codes (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:238-239).

#### ***4.2.5.4 Step 4: Testing coding scheme***

The next step is to test the different codes using a sample text to check the level of consistency and clarity of coding (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:240; Henning et al, 2004:105). The codes will be tested on a selected scene in *Vikings* and a transcribed section of the qualitative interviews.

#### ***4.2.5.5 Step 5: Coding all text***

Once the codes have been established and tested, the rest of the data needs to be coded (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:240-241; Henning et al, 2004:105). To do this, four different forms of coding will be used including line by line, open coding, axial coding, selective coding and thematic coding.

##### ***4.2.5.5.1 Line by line coding***

Line by line coding is where the researcher literally reads the text line by line and highlights words and phrases (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:240-24). The keywords and phrases are then grouped into categories and later grouped into themes (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:240-241, Saldanã, 2009:42). This technique can be used inductively and deductively, using the theoretical framework and literature review as a guideline but also being open to new phrases that the researcher did not anticipate (Birks, Chapman & Francis, 2009:69; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:240-241; Saldanã, 2009:42).

##### ***4.2.5.5.2 Open coding***

Open coding is where the entire text is read to gain an overall understanding (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning et al, 2004:104; Willig, 2012:85). Through the reading or viewing

process, parts of the text are identified that relate to codes and the conceptual framework that have already been identified in step two and three. In addition, the codes are grouped together into larger categories and they may be compared with any new codes or categories that may emerge (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning et al, 2004:104). Considering that this is a qualitative study, numerous other codes that are not *priori* codes may be derive from the content analysis and qualitative interviews. This is firstly because the more the series is analysed, the more the researcher could understand the text and unexpected codes could be identified (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234-235). In addition, during the qualitative interviews, participant's views and interpretations on evil may differ from the researcher's point of view, thus can also be included. This will facilitate an inductive approach - from the specific to the general - where codes are discovered during the data interpretation process and applied to the theoretical framework and literature review (Willig, 2012:85).

#### **4.2.5.5.3 Axial coding**

This next step follows from the open coding, once all codes have been identified and categorised, the codes will be analysed to see if any relationships can form between codes and categories (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning et al, 2004:106-107). This step may form an interesting connection between the *priori* codes and any *in vivo* codes that will be derived from the qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews. For instance, participants may have a completely different view regarding evil in *Vikings* from the researcher's perspective, hence the data could show complex relationship between themes and codes.

#### **4.2.5.5.4 Selected coding**

This part of the interpretation process is where the essential or core codes are identified that described an overall theme (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241). This is where core codes become umbrella terms for selective categories identified in open and axial coding (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241).

#### **4.2.5.5.5 Thematic coding**

The thematic coding approach is used mostly to analyse texts or when conducting a qualitative content analysis (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241-242; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:4). The aim is

to identify a list of themes that is anticipated to be found whilst analysing the text (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241-242; Marshall & Rossman 2006:158). In addition, the themes are based on the literature review and the theoretical framework, therefore working in conjunction with the *priori* codes that will be identified and formed into a conceptual framework before conducting the actual analysis on *Vikings*.

#### ***4.2.5.6 Step 6: Assessing coding consistency***

Similar to step 4, the codes are checked to make sure that there is consistency between the codes (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:242); with the aim to check the meaning of the codes, and the type of contents that is placed under those codes and categories.

#### ***4.2.5.7 Step 7: Interpreting the data***

During this stage the aim is to interpret the meanings associated with the codes, categories and themes (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning et al, 2004:107). The meanings of these elements are based on the interpretations of the researcher and justified using the theoretical framework and the literature review (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning 2004:107; Henning et al, 2004:107-110; Willig, 2012:83). Themes and categories will be analysed and compared with theories and literature that have been derived from data collected from the qualitative content analysis and interviews

#### ***4.2.5.8 Step 8: Reporting methods and findings***

The final section is to present the findings and report the processes used to interpret the findings (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241; Henning et al, 2004:107-110). Tables and diagrams will show a graphical representation of the relationships between the codes and categories for the data collected from the qualitative content analysis and qualitative interviews. In addition, there will be a written explanation describing and explaining the relationships using elements of the theoretical framework and literature review. Furthermore, snap shots of the series *Vikings*, taken from Netflix, and quotes taken from the interviews will be included to give further justification for the interpretations of data.

#### 4.2.6 Feasibility of the study

Feasibility includes the extent to which the study is achievable within a specific timeframe and with what resources (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:291; Koonin, 2014:252-253). It also looks at the credibility of the research collection and interpretation methods and ethical considerations (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014b:291; Koonin, 2014:252-253). Feasibility is determined by trustworthiness including, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability which will also be discussed in more details in Chapter Five. Ethical consideration will also be discussed in Chapter Five.

### 4.3 CONCLUSION

Within this chapter, the methodology of the study was discussed. The units of analysis and population includes social artefacts, namely the *Vikings* television series, and South Africans who have watched at least three seasons of *Vikings*. Sampling methods used include non-probability sampling methods such as convenience, purposive and volunteer sampling. The data collection consisted of collecting qualitative data by analysing the *Vikings* series using a qualitative content analysis method and conducting qualitative interviews using open-ended questions. The data analysis was also discussed using coding and grouping of themes. Feasibility of the study and ethical consideration will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

The method of data collection is aimed at gaining rich, detailed quality data and examining it to gain an in-depth, further understanding of archetypal evil and the shadow. Using *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* as a conceptual framework, theory from the theoretical framework to analyse evil in *Vikings*, although a deductive process is only the beginning. More data may be collected as the knowledge of the series could evolve for the researcher during the analysis of the series and interviews. The following chapter consists of the presentation of the data collection, analysis and interpretation processes.



## **CHAPTER 5: DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Qualitative research aims not to generalise findings, but rather involves gaining in-depth understanding of idiosyncratic phenomena within a specific context (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7). It involves rich, intensely detailed findings achieved by gaining intimate details of participants' experiences and interpretations within a specific social setting (Henning et al, 2004:16, 102; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017:2; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:173). Moreover, the researcher becomes the research instrument, analysing the data repeatedly while being both intuitively and deliberately guided by the theoretical framework and literature review (Belk, Fisher & Kozinets, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Drisko & Maschi, 2015:31). Since language is a conduit of knowledge and may potentially foster understanding (Bennet et al, 2006:74; Berger, 2012:32; du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:22; Hall, 2013:183), the aim of this chapter is to present the themes that emerged from the verbal and nonverbal text of *Vikings*, and the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants of the representation of evil in *Vikings*.

In the previous chapter, the research design and methodology employed in this study were discussed. In this chapter, the data collection methods that were utilised are explained and the conceptual map -constructed by using the theoretical framework and literature review- is illustrated. The specific coding methods that were used to analyse scribed interviews and the *Vikings* series respectively, are also presented.

## **5.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF VIKINGS AND DANTE'S SEVEN DEADLY SINS**

*Vikings* is a historical drama television series set in the town of Kattegat medieval Scandinavia. It was inspired by the saga of Ragnar Lothbrok, a Viking leader, who led his people to explore, fight and destroy lands from 'the West' such as England and Paris, in order to find treasure that will bring them power and wealth (Puchalska, 2015:89-93; Sigurdson, 2014:252). *Vikings* is a contemporary series that was broadcast in 2013 and will run until the 6th and final season in 2021 (IMBD, 2020b).

*Dante's Seven Deadly sins* was described in Alighieri's poems *Inferno* and *Purgatory*. The sins include lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride. These sins have been used in popular television shows to represent evil (Hawkins, 2012:223; Jeukes, 2014:44-45). Thus, using the seven deadly sins as a conceptual framework, the researcher has explored archetypal evil in *Vikings*.

## **5.3 DATA COLLECTION**

Within this section, the data collection process is explained. Data was collected by means of individual qualitative interviews and from a selection of episodes from *Vikings*.

### **5.3.1 Interviews**

Notwithstanding it was originally envisaged to interview 15 participants, data saturation was reached after nine participants were interviewed. Nascimento, Souza, Oliveira, Moraes, Aguiar and Silva (2018:228) indicate that "in qualitative research, finding theoretical saturation is a determinant criterion to cease data collection and to define sample size" (Nascimento, et al, 2018:232). Data saturation point was used to establish the validity of the data set since no new and additional components were identified after nine interviews (Nascimento, et al, 2018:232).

Each participant was interviewed individually for a period of 45 minutes to an hour. The participants contacted the researcher first and an appointment was scheduled that was convenient for the participant. Participants were asked open-ended questions that lead to a discussion regarding their perceptions of evil in *Vikings*. A recording device was used during the interviews so that the researcher could focus fully on the interpretations and opinions of the participants.

### 5.3.2 *Vikings* episodes

Episodes from Season One to Three from the *Vikings* series were selected purposively as thick examples of the symbolic and archetypal representations of evil, hence the shadow. Specifically, episodes chosen included episodes one, two, four and nine from Season One; episodes one, three, four, six, seven and 10 from Season Two; and episodes one, two, four, five, six, seven and eight from Season Three. Snap shots of episodes were taken from Netflix, a streaming service, which the researcher is a member of.

## 5.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

*Dante's Seven Deadly Sins* described in *Inferno* and *Purgatory* were used to compile the main categories of the conceptual framework to explore how archetypal evil is represented in the series. The seven deadly sins are well-known representations of evil (Hawkins, 2012:223; Jeukes, 2014:44-45), and have been used in popular television shows such as *Mad Men* (2007-2015) (Annunziato, 2016:8-11), *Supernatural* (2005-current) (Brown, 2011:117; IMBDa, 2020) and *Lost* (2004-2010) (Sepinwall, 2015:191).

The codes that corresponded with each category were deductively selected from the theoretical framework and literature review and were used to analyse both the interviews and episodes from the *Vikings* series. The pivotal concept was evil / the shadow as its exploration enabled a deeper understanding of archetypal evil. In Fig 5.1, the seven sins of lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride were categorised according to forms of deviant love as proposed by Alighieri (2008b:120). Lust, gluttony, and greed were considered as forms of disordered love or an excessive desire for material possession, food and sex (Alighieri, 2008b:63). Sloth was categorised as deficient love or uncaring love, and wrath, envy, and pride were identified as forms of perverted love, or where the sinners harm others (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235).

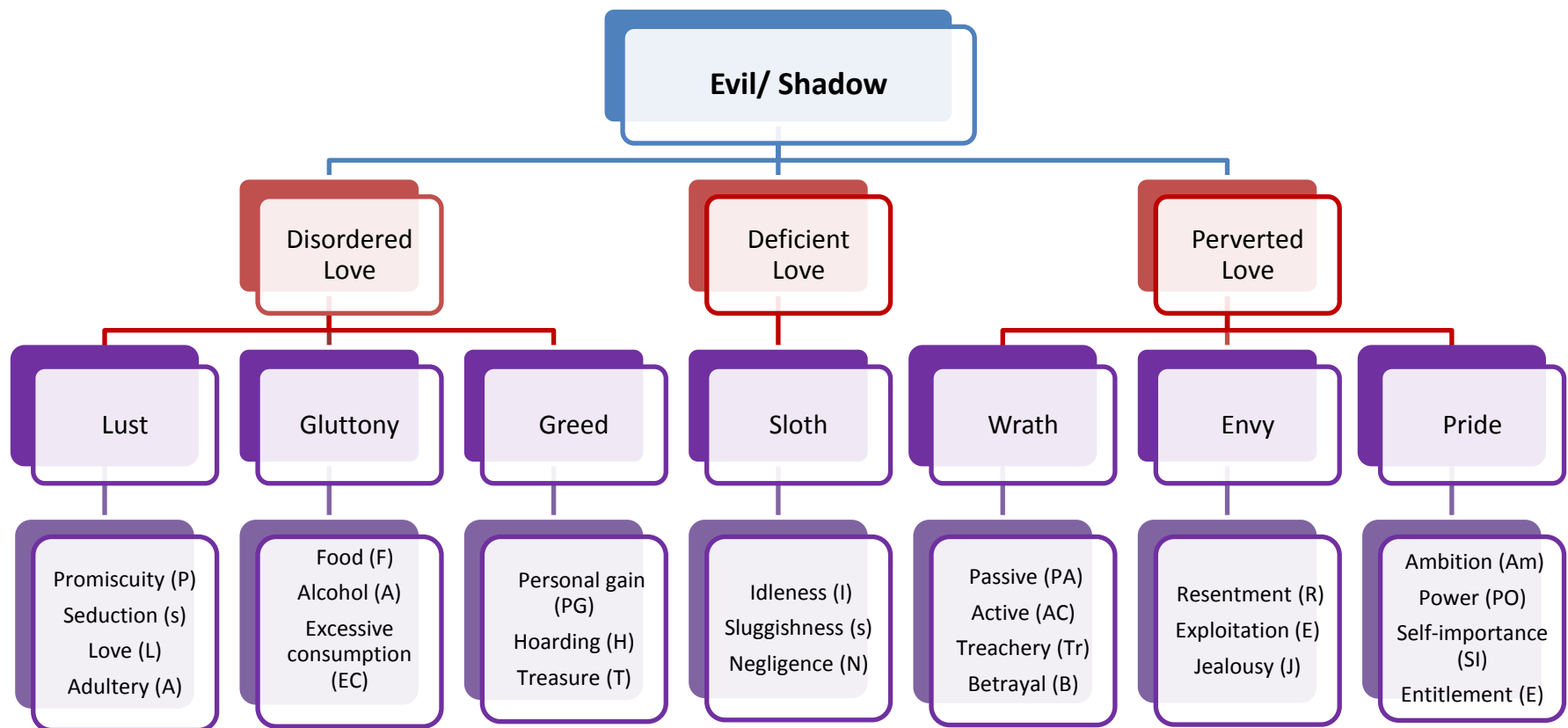


Fig 5.1: Conceptual map of theoretical, *a priori* codes and categories

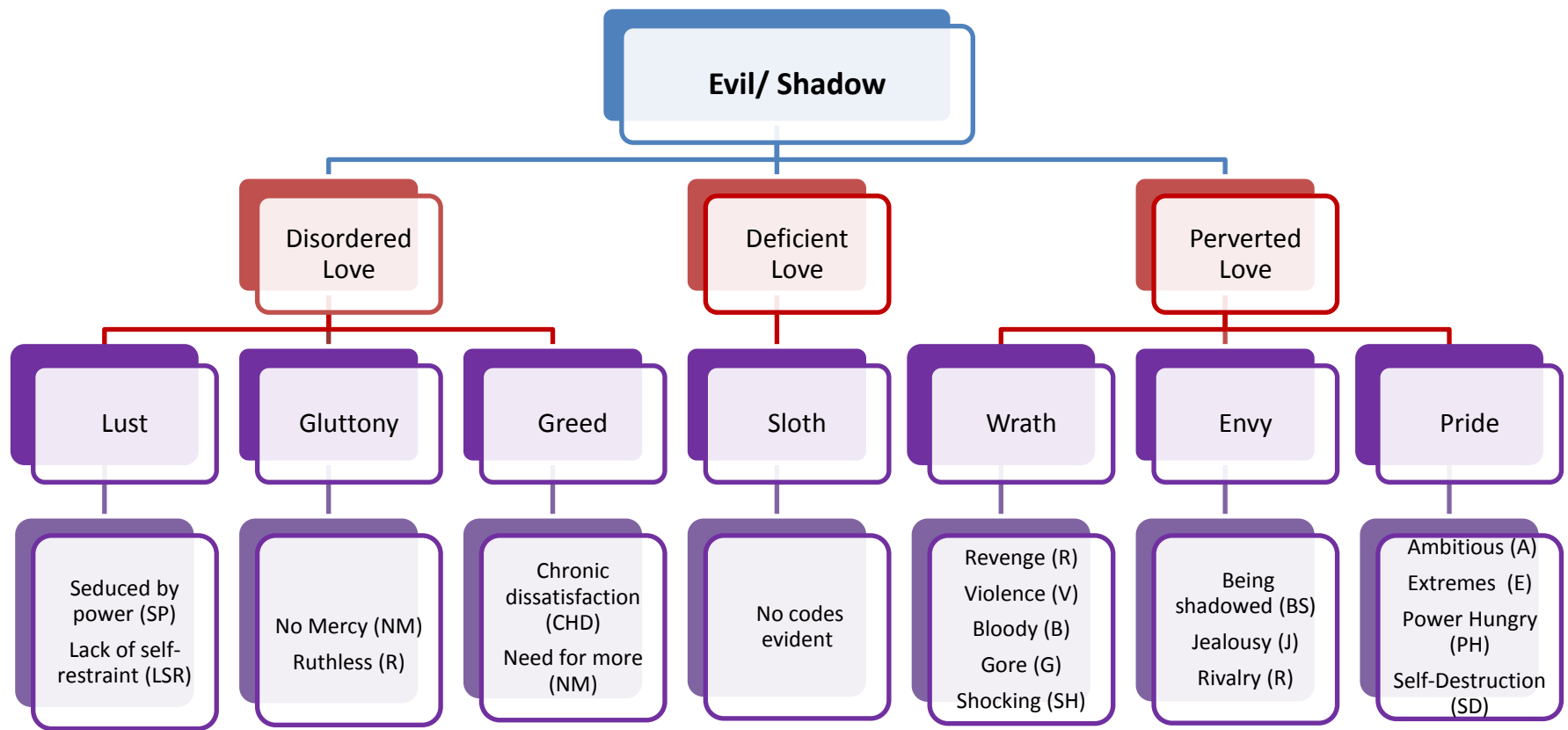


Fig 5.2: Map of *in vivo* or emergent codes and categories of interviews

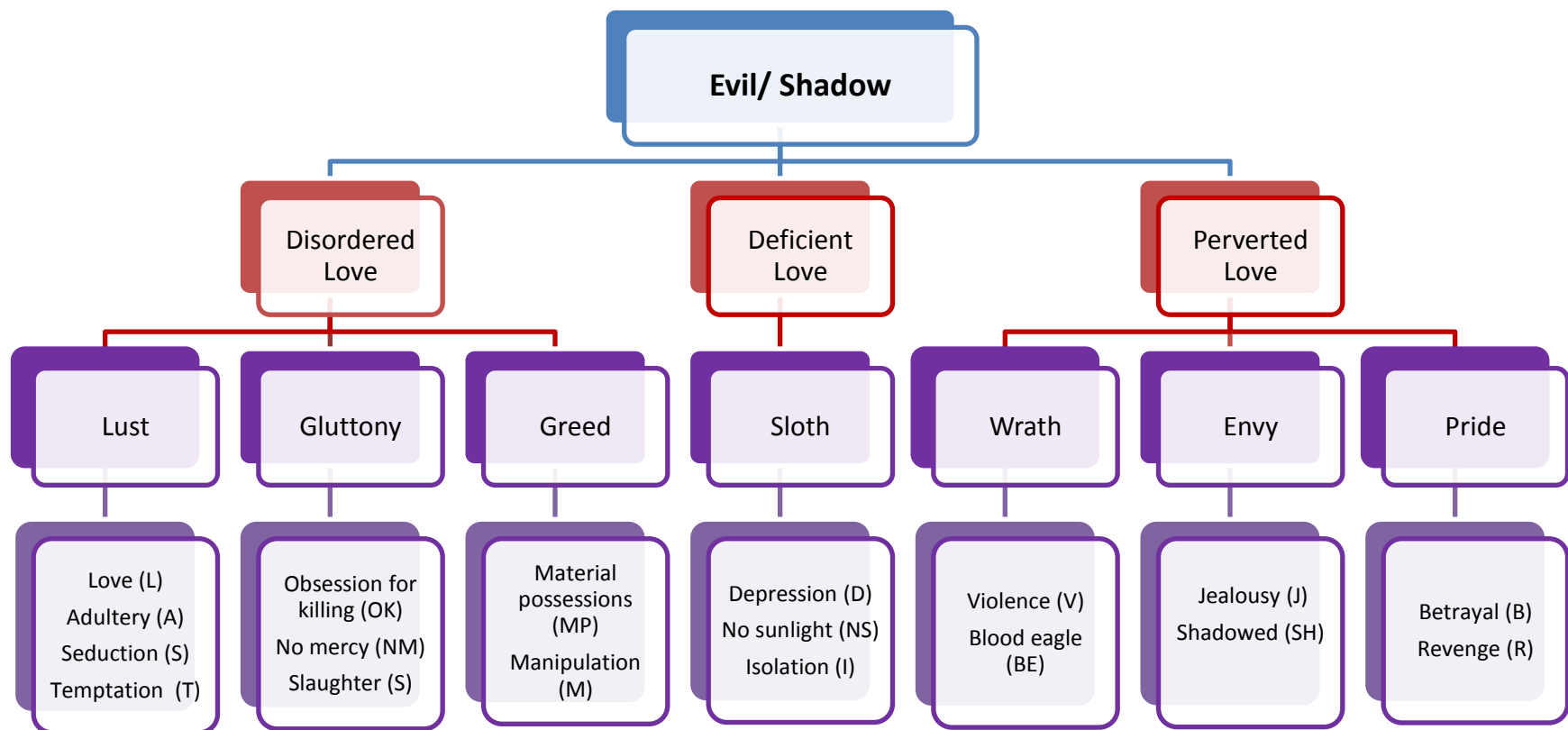


Fig 5.3: Map of *in vivo* or emergent codes and categories for qualitative content analysis

### 5.4.1 Coding

Coding was conducted both inductively and deductively. Elliot (2018:2855) refers to inductive and deductive coding “as emergent and *a priori* respectively”. Deductive coding was done using the conceptual map, but repetitive words, phrases and images emerging from the data and forming patterns of meaning were also noted. Several coding methods were used, including line-by-line coding, open coding, axial coding, selective coding and thematic coding.

Using a deductive approach, a conceptual framework was constructed by grouping theoretical categories and codes based on the theoretical framework, thus codes are formed before the analysis and interpretation (Bezuidenhout, 2014:238; Saldanã, 2009:16). Fig 5.1, depicted above, is the conceptual framework that consists of theoretical codes and categories that are based on the theory and the literature review, hence *a priori* codes.

Codes that emerged from the data collected from the interviews and qualitative content analysis, hence *in vivo* codes or emergent codes (Bezuidenhout, 2014:238; Saldanã, 2009:4), are represented in Fig 5.2 and Fig 5.3. Several forms of coding were utilised including:

#### 5.4.1.1 Line by line

Each transcribed interview was carefully examined by reading the text line-by-line and any words and phrases corresponding to the codes identified in the conceptual map were highlighted.

#### 5.4.1.2 Open coding

In addition to line-by-line coding, the entire text of every transcribed interview was read, and the technique of memoing was used where notes were written in the margins of the text as well as in a separate notebook.

Since the researcher was the research instrument, the aim of memoing was to become personally immersed in the data and identify recurring patterns of codes (Birks et al, 2008:68; Gardner, 2008:76). Memoing is a flexible process of jotting down notes that reflect personal annotations made when repeatedly engaging with the text and comparing those notes to the theory (Birks et al, 2008:68; Gardner, 2008:76; Patel, Auton, Carter, Watkins, Hackett, Leathley, Thorton &



Lightbody, 2016:1746). The process is ambiguous, as there is no structure, and sense-making occurs mostly intuitively (Birks et al, 2008:68; Gardner, 2008:76). Therefore, the scribed interviews were read, notes were written and any words or phrases that were deductively and inductively identified were grouped together into larger categories of concepts.

A similar process was used when the *Vikings* series, Season One, Two and Three were carefully viewed and any images, representations or phrases in accordance to, and outside of, the conceptual framework was noted in a notebook, again enabling the researcher to memo and become immersed in the data. The codes identified were then grouped into larger categories.

#### ***5.4.1.3 Axial coding***

Codes and categories that overlapped were merged and sometimes reconfigured to form umbrella sub-categories that would reflect the quintessence of a group of codes or categories. In this way, each category and subcategories were mutually exclusive to provide clarity in the analysis of the text.

#### ***5.4.1.4 Selective coding***

Core codes become umbrella terms for selective categories identified in open and axial coding (Belk et al, 2013:141; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:241). The categories and sub-categories were then grouped into distinctive themes.

#### ***5.4.1.5 Thematic coding***

Themes were identified by the researcher after contextualising and scrutinising the data derived from the interviews and *Vikings* episodes. The themes are explained in more detail in the data analysis and interpretation section below.

### **5.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Data analysis and interpretation were conducted iteratively to make sense and derive meaning from the data. This refers to repetitively moving between analysis and interpretation, reminiscent of a Hermeneutic circle or moving from specific to the general and *vice versa* (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:230; Ravindran, 2019).

### **5.5.1 Interviews**

Transcripts were colour-coded and, in a notebook, grouped together to form categories. Categories were then grouped to form themes that could answer the research question of how participants perceived evil in *Vikings*. The codes of all the seven deadly sins were identified within the scribed texts except for 'sloth'. This is because the participants did not discuss or elaborate on sloth, thus it was not evident in the data.

The following headings are the main themes that were formed based on the categories and sub-categories of codes. The sub-themes are included under each main theme and were identified based on the symbolic representation of unconscious processes that Jung (1875 – 1961) identified as being inherently part of the unconscious psyche and its confrontation with the shadow, and consequently, evil.

#### ***5.5.1.1 The fall of the hero***

The narrative of a simple individual who achieves supernatural powers or reaches full self-actualisation or individuation through trials and tribulations is congruous with the mythic expression of the hero archetype (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). However, the hero could also be seduced by evil symbolised as the devil archetype (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36; Campbell, 2004:85) leading to doom and the end of the hero's journey. The devil, and thus evil, is disguised as pride developed through the perverted love of power.

##### ***5.5.1.1.1 Perverted love: Pride***

Pride was defined as overarching self-importance or superiority and specifically, entitlement and the need for power over others (Alighieri, 2008b:63, 116, 174; Fairlie, 2015:37). Pride seemed to be a recurring theme in terms to how the participants perceived the main characters. Many of the main protagonists' characters were described as "*ambitious*" or that they would go to "*extremes to achieve*" (Participant 7) by destabilising others to gain power and status. In terms of perverted love, others are harmed for the sake of power (Alighieri, 2008b:63). The evil manifestation of pride

was identified when participants indicated how power leads to negative consequences for the character.

### ***i) Evil manifested***

Participant Two indicated that "*people of lesser power, they are taken advantage of*". However, the irony of leadership, a form of power and status, would result in the characters' self-destruction, "*But, um, I think as well, um... I think leadership is depicted as quite, uh, flawed, in, you know, each leader is almost corrupted by it and, um, you know, they do catastrophic things or THEY die in the end*" (Participant 5). Participant Five saw evil manifested in the corruption of power, making it an archetypal evil that would end the hero's journey or engulf the hero like an abyss. This demonstrates that by having too much power and status, as a result of pride, can doom the character and end the hero's journey which relate to the individuation process.

### ***ii) Individuation process***

Ragnar Lothbrok, the main character in the series, begins his journey as a simple farmer who then becomes more influential as the series progresses, but is then seduced by pride.

*... just being a simple man that people look down upon, he became the king and he, you know, he conquers the world... I feel like if Ragnar had maybe raided twice and came back home, he wouldn't have died or, but, the more he wanted, the more he got in to danger* (Participant 9).

Participant Nine explained that Ragnar was never content with the power and status that he had and was on a continuous search for more which ultimately led to his self-destruction. This reflects the failure of the hero on his journey of self-discovery and self-actualisation.

Participants perceived power as something that could be gained, but it never seemed to be enough as characters constantly strived for more: "*I mean they're very power hungry, which is, not a lot of people also think that's such a bad thing, but I feel like there's..., I don't know, psychological, wanting or self-esteem behind that*" (Participant 3). Since the Self is a result of the individuation process (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1988:96-98; Walker, 2013:92), the "*psychological, wanting or self-esteem*" could be interpreted as the need for the characters to develop the Self and having

power could be a way of initiating the individuation process. However, participants described that having too much power leads to negative consequences, “... *power brings a lot of confusion if it's not handled well*” (Participant 9). Participant Nine emphasised that Ragnar would lose touch with his family the more powerful he became, “*he's a family man, he loves his family, but eventually, with power, the more power he has, the more disconnected, even his sons, on some point, they really hate him, they want to kill him*”.

#### **5.5.1.1.2 Disordered love: Greed, lust**

Greed relates to disordered love or the excessive need for material possessions (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235). Participants associated greed with power since the more material goods a character had, the more powerful they became, but would again lead to the characters’ self-destruction. Participant Two described the characters as having this continuous urge or obsession with gaining material goods, but were never satisfied, “*like when I said my perception of evil is also like this wonderful possession of chronic dissatisfaction in everything, it's even like Ragnar, he can't be pleased with what he has already been given*”. Participants indicated that the evil manifestation of greed may cause a lack of purpose.

#### **i) Evil manifested**

Greed can be so consuming to the point where characters lost their sense of purpose and their sense of self with the shadow seemingly becoming all-powerful “*all becomes when you potentially want more but you don't know why you want more*” (Participant 2). Thus, greed is seemingly a manifestation of evil when the characters were seduced by greed, which ultimately leads to the end of the hero’s journey. Interestingly, the participants seemed to resonate with seduction through pride and power depending on how a character was represented.

Participants did not refer to Alighieri’s lust as the need for sexual gratification, but rather as a lack of self-restraint or control by the Viking’s as they were seduced by power and greed. Lust, like greed, relates to disordered love, and the lack of self-restraint that could be the archetypal evil that is inherently part of the shadow.

In terms of the hero's journey, there are cycles of myths that are repeated such as comedy, romance, tragedy and satire, or that the four seasons are repeated starting from spring and leading into winter (Cureton, 2019:239; Frey, 1951:104-105; Norman, 2011:8-10). The hero would begin the journey positively in spring but would succumb to tragedy or satire in winter (Norman, 2011:8-10; Tofler, 2011:19). Perhaps the characters, most notably Ragnar, are also caught in this recurring cycle which ultimately leads into tragedy or satire for the hero, beginning with the notion of establishing the Self, but ultimately leads towards isolation or self-destruction due to being seduced by pride, power and greed. Interestingly, the participants also seemed to resonate with seduction through pride and power depending on how a character was represented.

#### ***5.5.1.2 Evil is found in those who have power***

Participant One claimed that "*evil is based on who is in power*", meaning that characters represent evil in different ways, such as through violence, adultery or vengeance, however, the discernment of that evil depends on the character. The codes identified here was Pride as a component of perverted love.

##### ***5.5.1.2.1 Perverted love: Pride***

At the beginning of Season One, Earl Haraldson, the first Earl or 'Lord' of Kattegat, was killed by Ragnar initiating Ragnar's first claim to power of the Scandinavians. Many participants viewed Earl Haraldson as evil or the villain that was against Ragnar who was perceived as the hero. *So, the, the original Earl, um, can be interpreted as evil, in the first few episodes because he does not want the main character, Ragnar...to... follow his own path* (Participant 1).

*He banished Ragnar, I think he banished him or something, but I know he publicly, like, he publicly hu, humiliated him...He now, also now brought his men to come to Ragnar's um, farm, to kill, to kill him and his family and it was just, I think he, the fact that he also has no mercy... (Participant 3).*

However, Ragnar was also a character perceived as evil, *Ragnar has to be the most evil person to have ever lived because he led all the parties and he did all the bad things*"(Participant 9), but because he was viewed as a heroic character, *he's a regular human being but, people say he's a*

*descendent of the god and the, of, uh, Odin specifically"* (Participant 9), the participants did not perceive him to be truly evil. In addition, there seemed to be an element of pride when participants spoke of Ragnar because of their personal association with him. This notion could be associated with the sub-theme 'unconscious projection' as it seemed that participants were unconsciously projecting their personal feelings onto Ragnar and if any character was against him, they were immediately associated with evil.

### ***i) Unconscious projection***

According to Jung (2006:71-73), people are unconsciously projecting their shadow onto others, their surroundings and symbolic representations to avoid judgement. Thus, it may be a form of participation mystique since participants are projecting unconscious material onto a character outside of themselves (Falconer, 2007:9; Winborn, 2014:2). Moreover, these projections can take place through characters in the media (Chang, et al, 2015:157; Faber & Mayer, 2009:307; Smith, 2011:391). Participants are seemingly projecting onto Ragnar, and if he was judged as evil, it is as if the participants were also being confronted with their inner evil characteristics.

*... like the first Earl was very...he was just, he was selfish in terms of like how, like I said, he would send some of the Vikings to go find jewellery for him and he'll like literally keep it to himself, whereas Ragnar he's, it's not like, he's tryna do all, rad for himself, he's tryna, also has his crew and his family to benefit, yea* (Participant 3).

*But isn't Ragnar very violent?* (Interviewer).

*Yea....he is. He is...well I feel like, okay ja, um, he is violent, but isn't that how he was conditioned or raised to be? I don't think he really chose to be violent, that's how he grew up, his whole life that's what he's known, his whole life. Also, it's, it, it's also a thing of survival, like survival of the fittest, sur-vi-val of the fit-test, yea* (Participant 3).

It seems as if Participant Three is making excuses for Ragnar's violence, saying that he was "raised that way" and that it was a "thing of survival". By being portrayed as the hero or the one that audiences could mostly relate to, "the blue-eyed man who looked through your soul" (Participant 8), Ragnar was interpreted as a character that could do no wrong. Moreover, he was the character

that participants were most interested in, “so, you were like um, this is going to be the guy that carries the show and this is going to be the guy that, um, you want to know more about right” (Participant 8). Thus, there was a biased interpretation of the character most notably because of how participants have unconsciously projected onto Ragnar especially since they could relate to him. In addition, the manifestation of evil in myth also plays a role in terms of how participants view a character.

## ***ii) Evil manifested***

Since Ragnar was perceived as the supernatural being, ‘Odin’, it could indicate that Ragnar was associated with the well-known hero myth. As discussed in Chapter Two, mythologies are repeated themes of myths or mythologems (Zadorina, 2014:779) that reinforce certain structures within a society (Rollins, 2011:305-306). Ragnar can be classified as the hero in the hero’s journey myth as he begins his journey as a farmer and is then compared to the god Odin. Arguably, the hero archetype is so well-known, being passed down from generation to generation (Chang et al, 2015:159, Henderson, 1988:110) and reinforced through stories and film (Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:2-3) that it is embedded in societal structures and norms. According to Jung (1988:79), it is due to the recognition of the hero archetype that representations of it can be manipulative. The hero is traditionally associated with the virtuous, the one who saves the world from evil, however, it was also Hitler who was perceived as the hero archetype that encouraged the Germans to go to war in WW2 (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1988:79), seeing their actions as righteous instead of evil. Participant Two states:

*I think Ragnar, he's supposed to be this like protagonist hero person, but I think, especially in terms of Jung, he could actually be the trickster, because, in a way he leads everybody to the West, you know, under a mask of greatness (Participant 2).*

Participant Two describes Ragnar not as the hero, but as the trickster, the archetype that is known to manipulate the hero (LaLlave & Gutheil, 2012:465). Jung (2012a:135) also described the trickster as a shapeshifter, a being that can mask their identity to manipulate others. The idea that Participant Two explains that Ragnar is “under a mask of greatness” could demonstrate that the character is captivating the audiences by manifesting conventional representations of the hero

archetype and swaying them to see evil as good. Additionally, the archetype of the hero and trickster are typically represented in films representing the hero's journey to individuation (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:33). Thus, how a character is portrayed can influence an audience, or perhaps the series is only reflecting what are already present in contemporary society such as revenge.

### ***5.5.1.3 The echo of revenge***

Participants associated revenge with wrath as it resulted in physical harm or the killing of the betrayer. In addition, some of the participants interpreted the series as a reflection of what is happening in current society especially in terms of wrath.

#### ***5.5.1.3.1 Perverted love: Wrath***

Wrath, associated with perverted love (Alighieri, 2008b:63), includes active or passive harm perpetrated against others (Alighieri, 2008a:51). As shown in *Purgatory* (Alighieri, 2008b), souls are given examples to forgive those who have sinned against them and not to act aggressively, be it passively or actively, thus wrath seems to be the result of revenge. Participants asserted that representations of revenge in the Viking culture was a manifestation of evil.

#### ***i) Evil Manifested***

Participants collectively referred to revenge as being a customary part of the Viking culture.

*...revenge for the Vikings becomes more part of a way of life...it's not a bad thing for the Vikings necessarily to take revenge (Participant 2); Um, that is like they will always follow through, they always, they always avenge themselves somewhere I think, ja (Participant 5).*

Similarly, participants referred to revenge mirrored in certain characters or cultures:

*Like how they compare, or how the priest, when they get to Wessex, how he compares Ecbert to, to Ragnar. I think that's, that's kind of an interesting way to, to put the two together because then revenge is kind of reflected. So whatever Ragnar does you can almost expect Ecbert to have done but on, on the other side... (Participant 2).*



Even though Ragnar was a Viking from Scandinavia and King Ecbert was from England/Wessex, they are alike in terms of revenge. Participant Two emphasised that the *Vikings* series may reflect how revenge is still the same today as it was between 800AD and 1066,

*But I think we enjoy watching it because it reflects so much of what hasn't actually changed. The idea for revenge, the idea for want and power, possession of land, think about South Africa at the moment, I mean to what, to what degree are you willing to go for the revenge that you feel to expropriate the land without compensation, just to maybe bring it to a more contemporary feeling, there's revenge there, there's the want for land there, but it's not an unnecessary one for land* (Participant 2).

Participant Two interpreted the series as reflecting contemporary society by applying the concept of revenge in the series to the politics in his/her country. Seemingly, the series is reinforcing ideologies though myth by reflecting similarities of revenge in characters from two separate countries and, according to Participant Two, representing what is happening in society currently. This evidently supports the notion of the universality of myths and mythologems mirroring ideologies as purported by Jung (Chang et al, 2015:157; Jung, 1965:313; Jung, 2012a:15; Mackery-Kallis, 2009:699; Zadorina, 2014:779).

## ***ii) Unconscious projection***

The fact that Participant Two says, “*I think we enjoy watching it because it reflects so much of what hasn't actually changed*” could mean that there is joy in watching something that can be related to on an unconscious level, hence imagery relates to the primordial images in the collective unconscious (Chang et al, 2015:161; Faber & Mayer, 2009: 308-309; Stein, 1995:15). Thus, this could be an indication of an unconscious confrontation with the shadow where participants are unconsciously projecting their feelings of revenge onto characters in the series, or onto the Viking culture.

#### **5.5.1.4 The ugly dark side of humanity**

Despite viewing scenes which repeatedly represented the Vikings' love of violence, blood and gore as evil, participants admitted that they enjoyed these bloody scenes, even rejoicing and revelling in them.

##### **5.5.1.4.1 Disordered love: Gluttony**

Gluttony as disordered love is defined as an over-consumption of bodily comforts such as food and alcohol (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235). None of the participants spoke about gluttony in this context, however, it was noted that they referred to the excessive use of physical violence by the Vikings almost to the extent where violence could be interpreted as a form of gluttony, “... *just going back to my definition of evil, is also just being ruthless and having no mercy and like, even, in, in, even in Season One, I mean the first few seconds into the first episode, you see how they're already getting into a fight and there's so much violence...*” (Participant 3).

##### **5.5.1.4.2 Perverted love: Wrath**

Participant Three indicates that there is “*so much violence*” in *Vikings*, that it could be perceived as a thrill obtained through wrathful killing. Participants perceived excessive violence, gluttony and wrath as forms of evil overindulgence.

#### **i) Evil manifested**

Violence was described as an evil act of harming another without empathy, “*I would define evil as, ah, something that harms people and, uh, mostly ends up in a violent scenario...*” (Participant 7), “*Evil is having no mercy, no kindness, being ruthless, bloody, having no conscious*” (Participant 3). Furthermore, the blood and gore as a result of violence was perceived as evil, “*I think the blood and the guts and the gore in the show, is just, it's DISGUSTINGLY evil*” (Participant 1).

On a deeper note, Participant Five saw the series as “*shocking*” not because of the blood and gore, but because it portrayed the “*reality of the times back then*”, because it came across as “*historically accurate*” and that it was shocking to see the “*ugly side of humanity*”. This reinforces the idea that myth is reinforcing structures within society (Rollins, 2011:305-306). Participants were

condemning the series for depicting representations of violence and the way the Vikings acted historically, however, they also explained that they found the violence entertaining which could be a form of unconscious projection.

## ***ii) Unconscious projection***

The manifestations of evil represented in *Vikings* added to the chaos, drama and shocking aspects of the series which participants found exciting and entertaining to watch, “*So things like gore, I think, it's for us, the kind of gore that's in Vikings where it's just like axes and blood, it's nothing too hectic, for us we can handle that and it's almost normal and it's entertaining in a way*” (Participant 4). Participants also emphasised that there was something wrong with wanting to watch the chaos and drama, “*you know, why even fill ourselves with that, that, knowledge of historical, you know drama or representations of evil, don't we have enough at hand?* (Participant 2).

The shadow consists of the immoral behaviours and tendencies of a person that can manifest through archetypal evil such as violence (Jung 1995c:175; Rollins, 2011:306-307). Individuals project their shadow onto others so that they do not have any association with their inner immoral behaviours (Jung, 1995d:95-96; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33). Thus, participants are seemingly projecting their shadow onto the series by stating that the guts and gore is “*DISGUSTINGLY evil*”, or that it is “*Shocking*”. Participants are possibly separating themselves from the violence so that they do not have to accept the evil within themselves. This is especially relevant because some have admitted that even though they find it disturbing and evil, they still find it entertaining which could perhaps show that there is an inner desire to be violent.

Interestingly, this could relate to what was previously discussed about participants’ biased interpretation of Ragnar. In one of the scenes, Ragnar performed a pagan ritual where the victim's back is split open with an axe, the lungs pulled out and placed on the shoulders and moulded in the form of wings, referred to as the blood eagle (Puchalska, 2015:101). Participants saw this act as evil, but because it was Ragnar who did it, he was forgiven, “*The blood eagle yes. For me that was definitely evil, but because I like Ragnar, and because I don't like that guy, it was, it was okay. But it was definitely an evil act*” (Participant 5). Bassil-Morozow (2016:35-36) explains that

audiences project their want of becoming the hero and it is through this projection that a deeper understanding of the individual is obtained (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36). Thus, participants may have unconsciously projected their yearning to become Ragnar, and consequently, any evil act that he committed was diminished as insignificant.

Therefore, seemingly participants have unconsciously projected their dark shadowy inner demons as symbolic representations of the shadow since it is deemed entertainment and free from personal risk.

#### ***5.5.1.5 Cain and Abel***

The myth of Cain who killed his brother Abel out of jealousy or envy has been repeated in many ancient mythologies (van Wolde, 1991:36). It is described both in the book of Genesis and in *Inferno* where level nine round one was named 'Caina' or Cain, where souls who have betrayed or murdered their family due to envy are punished (Alighieri, 2008b). It seems that even though the myth is centuries old, participants identified the duality of good and evil, or Cain and Abel as representing envy in the series.

##### ***5.5.1.5.1 Perverted love: Envy***

Envy or jealousy as a form of perverted love (Alighieri, 2008b:63), is defined as a longing for another's possessions which can result in resentment and the exploitation of others (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Veselka et al, 2014:82). Based on participants' responses, envy was identified when comparing the relationship between Ragnar and his brother Rollo, "*Ragnar really loved his brother so you did not see that coming, but you see, being shadowed, you get tired of it to the point of jealousy, to the point of not even respecting your family to the point of wanting to kill them*" (Participant 1). Rollo was envious of Ragnar's success and fame as a Viking because he became an earl and then king after many successful battles leaving Rollo in Ragnar's shadow. Rollo's envy of Ragnar resulted in him wanting to kill Ragnar which, according to participants, is analogous to the relationship between Cain and Abel.

### ***i) Evil Manifested***

The reference to Cain and Abel could also be relevant to the sub-theme ‘evil manifested’ since Participant One remarked:

*Cain and, Cain and Abel, the way, I don't know how close, but close brothers, but then eventually, one has to choose themselves, you find that Ragnar and Rollo, it's the same situation. They're borne in a loving family, they very close, but eventually because of power you need to, you choose yourself or the other.*

According to Jung (2012a:15), primordial images from the collective unconscious have been passed down from generation to generation which is why ancient notions of myth are universally understood. Thus, it seems that Ragnar and Rollo are symbolising the archetypal Cain and Abel myth which represents the primordial images from the collective unconscious. In addition, according to Hall (2013:183), people have similar or shared mental structures where there is a collective understanding for symbols and imagery, hence the myth of Cain and Abel is still relevant in a contemporary series. In addition, the myth of Cain and Abel may refer to the archetype of good versus evil which is discussed in more detail in a subsequent section. Interestingly, one participant compared the relationship of Ragnar and Rollo with their own relationship with a sibling.

### ***ii) Unconscious projection***

Participant Four shared a personal interpretation of the relationship between Ragnar and Rollo as: *"I can't exactly describe the influence, but I think for me, it was kind of a..., almost a scared moment, because, so like I'm very close with my sister, so I can never imagine having to have this massive rivalry with my sibling..."* (Participant 4). Participant Four compared the rivalry between Ragnar and Rollo with their own sibling which could mean that the participant is unconsciously identifying with the myth and projecting his/her shadow onto the characters. In addition, the “scared moment” that the participant describes may be an emotional response.

Envy can be classified as one of the most severe sins because it is placed second closest to hell in *Purgatory* as a form of perverted love (Alighieri, 2008b:63), meaning it could be a wanting to

harm and murder others as described in *Inferno*. The participant could have identified with this relationship between Ragnar and Rollo since there is an unconscious understanding of the severity of envy reflected in images related to the shadow, or darker parts of the personality of the participant. The emotional response, “*a scared moment*” could be where the shadow is challenging the ego causing discomfort in the conscious (Chang et al, 2015:161; Faber & Mayer, 2009:308-309; Stein, 1995:15).

The myth of Cain and Abel seems to be deeply embedded within the unconscious psyche as participants referred to an ancient myth when interpreting the relationship between Ragnar and Rollo. Participants were unconsciously projecting their shadow onto the series so as not associate with what they describe as evil, but without evil, can there be good?

#### ***5.5.1.6 For there to be good there must be evil***

According to Jung (1995d:95-96), the shadow needs to be accepted to complete the individuation process and develop the Self. It is argued that individuals need to accept their good characteristics and embrace what might be considered as evil “*sometimes, um, something can be profoundly evil even though it is in line with good, and vice versa*” (Participant 1).

##### ***5.5.1.6.1 Perverted love: Wrath***

In addition, some participants explained that evil was a necessity for the Vikings to progress,

*Okay, um, evil in Vikings is, is, uh, is, is, sort of represented as a necessity....And they look at it, um, as a form of necessity that needs to happen so that they can progress, for example, I'll give an example of Season One, um, when they had to sacrifice 9 people, uh, every 9 years, how they voluntarily went up there, you know, and to ask outwardly it would look like an evil, but to them they see as necessity because it's a sacrifice to the gods, you know, that they need to make after every 9 years* (Participant 7).

Participant Seven uses the example of the Viking ritual of sacrificing nine people every nine years to please their gods, so that they can live in peace, illustrating that for there to be good there needs to be evil.

The archetype of good and evil is well-known as it has been represented in ancient texts such as the Bible including Christ and the devil, angels and demons (Carroll, 2015:421; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2) and in films, most notably *Star Wars* (1977-1983) in the Jedi versus the Sith (Bancks, 2003:32). Jung (2009:120,134) argues that the shadow cannot be interpreted as absolute evil as evil depends on cultural interpretation and what is deemed as evil in one culture, is not necessarily so in another culture. Therefore, the difference between what is good and evil is ambiguous (Bacon, 2015:78-79; 2009:120,134; Jung, 1960b:91-92) and uncertain in terms of how it is represented in the media (Harold, 2011:4, 219; Stein, 1995:14-15). This could explain why participants indicated both the ambiguity of evil and the necessity of extremes between good and evil as portrayed in Vikings.

### ***i) Evil manifested***

The fact that the Vikings volunteered to be sacrificed, illustrates that for there to be life, there must be death, *“to save a life you have to give a life”* (Participant 4) and for Ragnar to keep his people alive, he had to do what was necessary. *“A lot of situations where you'd be like, okay he HAS a perspective to him that is generally good, because he didn't necessarily want people to die but he DID have to do what it takes to keep his people alive”* (Participant 8). The recurring pattern of good and evil is also evident in Christian scriptures where Christ became the sacrificial lamb in order to save his people from sin (John 1:29; Roman 8:3; Revelation 12:11).

As mentioned before, good and evil is well-known in myth (Rollins, 2011:305-306; Wright, 1957:2) and understood by many different cultures (Iurato, 2015:19-20, 21-22; Lévi-Strauss, 1963:33). Frye (1951:108-109) categorised myth according to good and evil in two different genres including comedy being good, and the tragic being evil (Ferrando, 2013:28; Lovejoy, 2010:67; Norman, 2011:8-9). In addition, for something to appear interesting and relevant, the dichotomous good and evil, love and hate, war and peace, need to be included (Norman, 2011:19; Tofler, 2011:19). Since this myth and its archetypal representation are universal, participants could possibly relate to it and understand it unconsciously (Apologia, 2015:21; Danesi, 2015:492; Hall, 2013:173). Moreover, these representations of archetypal evil could be hinting at the notion that there needs to be an acceptance of evil or the shadow to form a whole or the Self.

Accepting the shadow means that there is an understanding of what evil is (Jung 1995d:95-96), however, the participants' notion of evil was ambiguous.

*Vikings religion was also weird, so like sometimes I would think something is weird but for them it would be normal, so for me it would be evil and torture, but for them it's just part of their religion. (Participant 4)*

*What do you mean by weird? (Interviewer)*

*Weird as in I don't understand. (Participant 4)*

According to Jung (1960b:92) and Bacon (2015:78-79), evil depends on culture and Participant Four explains that what is deemed as evil in one culture, may not necessarily be so in the Viking culture. For example, Participant Four found it difficult to explain evil and referred to it as “weird” because there is a lack of understanding of the inherent nature of evil.

Participant Two explained that there is evil in knowing.

*I think it has an influence on my way of thinking? In terms of, like coming from a Christian background, it's interesting to, to find the other side, but again maybe that's the deception of evil in knowing, you know you begin to feel more, familiar with it? Or you begin to recognise certain similarities which, or maybe pushed aside by the cultures, or not as seen, they prefer to be hidden kind of that spiral aside, better not to know, because that, you know, the knowledge that is evil isn't right?*

Interestingly, Participant Two explained that it is better not to understand how another culture view evil since, by knowing, an individual may be seduced and be drawn into evil. However, by stating that the more you know, the more “you begin to feel more familiar with it” or that there are “certain similarities”, could mean that there are some shared notions of evil even by a different culture. By stating that similarities are “pushed aside by other cultures” or that “they prefer to be hidden” could be an indication of the Shadow being unconsciously projected for the sake of avoiding judgement.

To conclude this section, the following themes were discussed including ‘the fall of the hero’, ‘Evil is found in those who have power’, ‘the echo of revenge’, ‘the ugly dark side of humanity’,



‘Cain and Abel’ and ‘for there to be good, there must be evil’. Each theme was described by explaining the codes found in the text in accordance to the conceptual map. Quotes from the participants and theory from the theoretical framework and literature review were used as evidence for the identified codes and themes.

The next section includes the qualitative content analysis of the *Vikings* series to explore how evil is represented.

### **5.5.2 Content analysis of Vikings series**

Season One, Two and Three were watched several times and notes were written in a separate book scribing personal observations of the series. The codes from the conceptual map were compared to the series and noted. The codes were then grouped into categories and reworked or collated to form themes. This was a lengthy process as the categories were re-categorised several times as many of the observations made did not always answer the research questions and it seemed that many of the categories seemed to interlink, thus finding separate themes was a challenge. Below is a discussion of the five themes identified.

#### ***5.5.2.1 The ambiguity of evil***

According to Jung (2009:120,134), there is no notion of absolute evil as its nature depends on society and culture (Bacon, 2015:78-79; Harold, 2011:4, 219; Jung, 1960b:91-92; Stein, 1995:14-15), thus the Shadow is ambiguous (2009:120,134). In *Vikings*, lust, specifically, has been represented in various ways which can lead to its misconstruction.

##### ***5.5.2.1.1 Disordered love: Lust***

Lust, as an aspect of disordered love, is an excessive desire for love, sex or seduction (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235). Lust in this study has been defined in two ways: the temptation for love and sexual relations that result in adultery; and, the seduction for personal interests and gain. In Season Two, there are two different scenarios that represent lust according to each definition.

Judith, princess of Wessex, has a dream that her and Athelstan, a former monk and now pagan, are making love. Judith confesses her dream to Athelstan in a church adding that the dream made her happy. He reciprocates her feelings by kissing her even though she is married to the future King of Wessex and is well-versed in the Christen rules of adultery. They make love before Athelstan goes back to Kattegat and Judith falls pregnant with his child. After the child is born, Judith is punished by having her ear cut off in front of a mob of people until King Ecbert of Wessex persuades the kingdom to accept Judith and her child, as she slept with a holy man and, thus produced a holy child.



Fig 5.4: Athelstan and Judith make love and profess their love for each other.



Fig 5.5: Judith has her ear cut off for committing adultery.

Figure 5.4 shows the characters to be sensual and loving towards one another. There seems to be a warm light that is reflecting on their skin possibly symbolising love and happiness. However, the act of adultery is evil according to Alighieri's (2008a:63) depiction of lust, which is the temptation

for love and sexual relations. Symbolically, the image represented seemingly shows this act of adultery as almost beautiful and sensual.

The punishment that Judith receives after committing adultery indicates that what she did is wrong and ‘evil’ according to her culture. Judith was punished in front of a mob of people and the only person to save her was King Ecbert who was able to manipulate the crowd of people to let her go. This is interesting because Jung (1995a:181-182; 1995c:175) explains that evil, and thus the shadow, needs to be understood because people can easily be drawn together collectively as a mob and manipulated by a driving force and it seems that Ecbert was the driving force. There is another scenario representing lust as seduction for personal interest and gain.

In the second scenario, the marriage between Ragnar and his second wife, Aslaug, suffers seemingly due to the stress of having a handicapped child. When Ragnar is away in Wessex, a wanderer named Harbard comes to Kattegat and seduces Aslaug by saying, “*your husband is a long way away, you fear he no longer loves or desires you*”. Harbard lures Aslaug away from her children amidst the tragedy of two of her children running off, walking on a frozen river and falling into the icy water. Siggy, a servant and friend of Aslaug, saves them, but drowns. When Ragnar finds out, he is angry with Aslaug, but Floki, like Ecbert, tells him to forgive Aslaug as she slept with a god as Harbard is another name for Odin or the god of all Pagan gods.



Fig 5.6: Harbard and Aslaug being intimate but not through love.



Fig 5.7: Siggy drowning in the water.

In this scenario, the punishment for adultery is represented as more serious as in the previous scene, as it causes death instead of pain. Alighieri (2008a) describes that the more severe the sin, the closer the souls are to hell and the crueller the punishment.

#### *i) Evil manifested*

In *Inferno*, those who are lustful are swayed back and forth by strong winds, indicating a loss of control of feelings (Alighieri, 2008a:30). It seems that both Judith and Aslaug were forced into situations where they could not control their feelings after being tempted. Moreover, lust is described as one of the less severe sins since love cannot be controlled (Alighieri, 2008a:35). Judith and Athelstan did profess their love, thus the punishment was not as severe as in the case of Aslaug. Aslaug lost a friend instead of having her ear cut off because her affair was seemingly purely seductive.

Figure 5.6 is different to Figure 5.7 since evil, or the shadow, is portrayed as dark and hidden or symbolising an abyss (Bacon, 2015:52; Jung, 2012a:16). In Figure 5.5, the imagery is also dark portraying an abyss that is consuming Siggy.

Scholars such as Foucault (1994:17) and Deely (20015:70-71) have argued that meaning can differ depending on the representations of artefacts. Therefore, even though both scenarios depict lust, the meaning differs due to difference in representation which can make understanding evil more complex and not as straightforward as good versus evil. However, it is argued that, even though

one scenario portrayed a more severe form of evil than the other, both were in fact evil as adultery was committed.

Both women were seduced by 'holy' men and gods, but the meaning behind Athelstan's and Harbard's transgressions is very different as Athelstan represents love and Harbard seduction. Interestingly, the women's adultery is vindicated because it was committed with a holy man and the god of all gods. Stein (2006) indicates that in terms of Jungian interpretations, numinous experiences are associated with the individuation process, paralleled with a confrontation with the sacred or holy. Specifically, "...for Jung the object of numinous experience was a content of the unconscious psyche that needed to be made conscious" (Stein, 2006:45). Hence, it could be interpreted that both women had to confront their evil acts, albeit coming at the price of loss.

Additionally, the holy man and god may be perceived as Jung's (2012a:135) trickster, the archetype that causes chaos and uncertainty since the two boys fell through the ice and Siggy drowned. Notwithstanding the depiction and interpretation of evil, and thus the shadow, is ambiguous and complicated by cultural differences, it has an archetypal association shared in myth and mythologems (Jung, 1965:313; Zadorina, 2014:779).

The dichotomous representations of water and the abyss, and the seduction by a holy man and a god, are evocative of Frye's (1951:108-109) categories of good and evil and comic versus tragic, as well as the positive and negative connotations of a leader versus the betrayer which can represent evil (Frye, 1951:108-109).

#### ***5.5.2.2 Cain's sentence as a catalyst for individuation***

The mythical hero archetype traditionally goes through an individuation process in order to develop the Self, achieved by overcoming trials and tribulations (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). In the series, character development presumably formed once punishment had been sentenced for acts such as betrayal and murder due to envy and pride.

#### 5.5.2.2.1 *Perverted love: Envy and Pride*

Envy and pride, as forms of perverted love, seem to play similar roles since, as per their definition, they both result in the exploitation of others. Rollo is portrayed as being envious of his brother Ragnar due to his successes such as becoming the earl of Kattegat, gaining fame for traveling to “the West” and he married Lagertha whom Rollo loved as well. Due to Ragnar’s fortunes, Rollo is envious, and his self-importance overrides loyalty, thus is easily persuaded by Jarl Borg to join him in battle against Ragnar.

*Jarl Borg: Your brother is a great man.*

*Rollo: As am I.*

*Jarl Borg: I’m sure you are...and yet, I have never heard of you.*



Fig 5.8: Rollo and Jarl Borg discussing a civil war against Ragnar and his allies.

### ***i) Evil manifested***

The relationship between Ragnar and Rollo seemingly reflects Cain and Abel in the book of Genesis. Cain and Abel both made sacrifices to God, but God favoured the sacrifice from Abel (Gen. 4:1-16). Out of jealousy, Cain then murdered his brother Abel and was then banished to live a life of wandering the earth until he settled in the land of Nod (Gen. 4:1-16). Interestingly, after Rollo betrayed Ragnar, he lost the civil war against him and though he was not killed, he lived withdrawn and isolated from society for four years. Rollo told Ragnar that, *“I wanted to step out of your shadow... but when I stepped out of it there was, there was no sunlight”*. Like Cain, Rollo was also banished, but only from a societal and not physical perspective. His life as he knew it before, had no more *“sunlight”* which presumably means a life worth living. This again links to Jung’s (1965:313) notion of Mythologems where the essence of myth is repeated even though the myth in which it is told varies. The essence here is brother betraying brother and being punished through isolation. In addition, the full story of Rollo could also link to the mythologem of the hero’s journey, where the hero must overcome trials and tribulation before reaching full self-actualisation (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960a:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222).

#### ***5.5.2.2.2 Deficient love: Sloth***

Sloth, idleness or sluggishness, where work and talents are neglected, are forms of deficient love or uncaring love. This is shown where Rollo stopped caring about himself and may have entered a deep depression after losing the battle with Ragnar.

### ***i) Evil manifested***

Siggy encouraged Rollo to go raiding with his brother to Wessex and when he gave her what seemed like a pitiful response, *“look at me”* she then gave him an ultimatum, *“I am giving you a choice Rollo, go and speak with your brother or take this blade, push it into your ribs right now”*. The Vikings are represented as fighters and they are not very tolerant of idle or sluggish behaviour.



Fig 5.9: Rollo feeling a loss of “sunlight” after he lost the civil war against Ragnar.

Evil or the shadow can be represented as consuming darkness that can devour a soul (Jung, 1960b:16; Walker, 2013:76-77), the imagery in Figure 5.9 is dark to the extent where, symbolically, Rollo is being consumed by it. In the hero’s journey, the hero needs to overcome evil or otherwise be seduced by it and fall back (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960b:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). However, in the scenes that follow, Rollo seemingly does accept his shadow communicating the symbolic representation of individuation.

## ***ii) Individuation process***

The Self is the wholeness of being (McGlashan, 2010:270; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2) and is initiated through the individuation process (Jung, 1960b:109) when the conscious and the unconscious are united. For the unification of the conscious to take place, the individual needs to be open to what is illogical or understand the meaning of archetypes that are of personal relevance (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331-332; Jung, 1960b:109).

In the beginning of the series, Rollo was not depicted as the hero, but as a ruffian who rapes a servant girl, tries to seduce Largertha, and finally betrays Ragnar. However, once Rollo is punished for his betrayal, he seemingly goes through a symbolic process of individuation starting with his isolation from society. Once Siggy gives Rollo an ultimatum, he progresses by proving his loyalty to Ragnar in saving his children and wife from Jarl Borg. He then fought with Ragnar against Jarl Borg, the earl who initially persuaded Rollo to betray his brother.



### 5.5.2.2.3 *Perverted love: Envy and Pride part 2*

The representation of the categories of envy and pride are evident in Flokie's and Athelstan's relationship and the myth of Cain and Abel. Even though Flokie and Athelstan are not brothers, there is still an element of jealousy or envy when Athelstan is viewed to be more loved by Ragnar.

#### *i) Evil manifested*

The mythologem of Cain and Abel is mimicked in Flokie and Athelstan's relationship. Both Flokie and Athelstan love Ragnar, a figure that is seemingly represented as a god like figure especially since he is compared to Odin, the Pagan god. Just like Cain, Floki becomes jealous of Athelstan as he seems to gain more favour with Ragnar as the series progresses. This is evident when Floki says to Rollo, "*look at them, huddled together; it sickens me*". He then kills Athelstan when he is at his most vulnerable, unarmed and wearing only a loincloth while praising the Christin God. This shows that the mythologem is repeated in cultures (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960b:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222).



Fig 5.10: The moment before Floki kills Athelstan.

Interestingly, Flokie seems to justify this act of murder through unconscious projection.

## *ii) Unconscious projection*

Cain killed Abel because he feared God loved him more, likewise, Floki killed Athelstan as it seemed that he feared that Ragnar, a symbolic representation of the god Odin, loved Athelstan more. Floki sees an idol that he carved bleeding from the forehead and believes that it is a sign from the gods to kill Athelstan. Possibly Floki is projecting his inner desire to kill Athelstan and will use any excuse from the gods to do it. Thus, the shadow is projected with the aim of avoiding judgement (McGlash, 2010:256-257; Neumann, 1990:3; Walker, 2013:41; 107), if Floki was told by the gods to kill Athelstan, then he may be doing something heroic as the gods are portrayed as being highly respected in the Viking culture.



Fig 5.11: An idol bleeding from the forehead.

After Athelstan is killed, Floki is not banished or isolated, as in the myth of Cain and Abel, Ragnar instead gives him permission to be in charge of the invasion to Paris knowing that Floki would fail, *“he actually believed that he thought I would let him lead without my having an agenda”*. The invasion was a tragic failure and Floki found himself trapped inside a wooden tower surrounded by fire where he questioned himself and his gods. Being trapped in the tower could symbolically represent his isolation and banishment from the outside world.



Fig 5.12: Floki questioning himself and his gods.

In addition to the punishment that Floki endures, this may also be where his representation of individuation commences.

### ***iii) Individuation process***

It is argued that Floki's tragic failure figuratively illustrates the individuation as he realised that he may be wrong in what he did or that he misinterpreted the will of the gods. For the individuation process to take place, the individual needs to become consciously aware of what may be illogical (Abu-Raiya, 2014:331-332; Jung, 1960b:109). It is through this moment of self-reflection that Floki presumably accepted his shadow initiating a symbolic representation of individuation.

#### ***5.5.2.3 Power gained as a means of becoming mythical***

Myth can reinforce certain ideologies and structures within a society especially if they have been passed down from generation to generation (Wright, 1957:2; Rollins, 2011:305-306). Myth can be very powerful as it can manipulate and persuade a society or culture to think in a certain way (Chang et al, 2015:158; Kelsey, 2017:1, 110; Willis, 2017:107-108).

Ragnar seemingly established himself as a mythical monster by performing public, violent acts of revenge against his enemies. These acts were so violent, that the people of Scandinavia feared

Ragnar and perceiving him as something beyond human. Therefore, it is argued that Ragnar gained power over an entire nation of people by means of wrath due to excessive pride.

#### ***5.5.2.3.1 Perverted love: Wrath and pride***

Wrath and pride are represented as perverted love, where sinners harm others either physically or in a quest to become superior and powerful. Ragnar gained power over Scandinavia by reinforcing the idea that he was superior through his displays of violent revenge. Evil is manifested through two scenes of revenge against Jarl Borg and King Horric.

##### ***i) Evil manifested***

Revenge is a recurring theme in Season Two. Northmen Jarl Borg and King Horric were Ragnar's allies, but tried to attack his home and kill his family resulting in their violent, gruesome deaths. As punishment for Jarl Borg, Ragnar performed the ritualistic Odinic rite of the blood-eagle as described previously. Before the ritual, Jarl Borg awaits in the dark surrounded by dark imagery of the eagle and the Seer, the old oracle that predicted his death.



Fig 5.13: Jarl Borg lying in his bed.



Fig 5.14: The Seer that Yarl Borg visions from his unconscious.

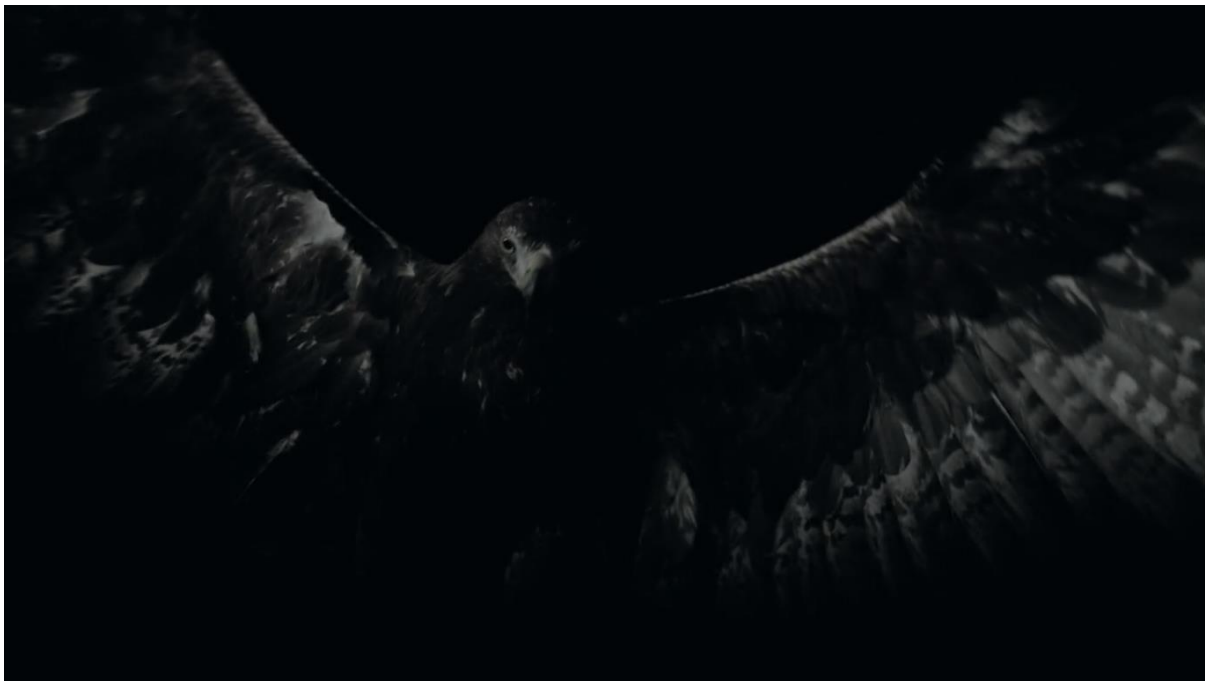


Fig 5.15: The eagle with wings spread open.

In addition, these dark images can represent the unconscious projection of the shadow.

### ***ii) Unconscious projection***

According to Jung (2012a:16), evil images can be represented as secret, hidden, dark or the abyss that can lead to human suffering (Bacon, 2015:52). These dark images of the Seer and the eagle could represent fear, suffering and death for Jarl Borg as he awaits his blood eagle. The representation could also portray Jarl Borg's shadow manifested in these dark images. This may explain why it is difficult to accept the shadow as it disturbs the conscious leading to negative emotions (Chang et al, 2015:161; Faber & Mayer, 2009:308-309; Stein, 1995:15) such as fear. Moreover, by accepting the shadow, Jarl Borg must endure his punishment which is a physical act of torturous display. Furthermore, the dark imagery could possibly reflect Ragnar's shadow as dark and evil. This is further explained below.

### ***ii) Evil manifested***

Ragnar performs the blood eagle surrounded by torches of fire. In *Inferno*, level seven ring one, those that performed violence against neighbours are punished in a river of boiling blood and fire (Alighieri, 2008a). Jarl Borg attacked a former ally's home and family, thus the imagery of fire shows that a mythology as old as inferno, is still being used in a contemporary series. Moreover, this may be another confirmation of Jung's (1965:313) notion of mythologems that are passed down from generation to generation.



Fig 5.16: Ragnar having just completed performing the blood eagle.

As punishment to King Horric, Ragnar stabbed and bludgeoned him to death with his own head while King Horric was kneeling in front of Ragnar, and the only source of light is from a fire peering from the top of the room. The fire may not be as prominent as with Jarl Borg's blood eagle, but it could similarly show the same notion of the fire reflecting from *Inferno* level seven ring one (Alighieri, 2008a). Symbolically, Jarl Borg and King Horric were on their knees before they were brutally killed possibly representing submission or the act of giving in to their persecutor.





Fig 5.17: Jarl Borg falling on his knees before he gets blood eagled.



Fig 5.18: King Horric kneeling in front of Ragnar before he gets killed.

Mythologies can reinforce ideologies or structures in a society (Kelsey, 2017:158; Mackery-Kallis, 2009:699) especially if they are repeated or passed down from generation to generation (Abu-



Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1956:408; Walker, 2013:3). The death of Jarl Borg and King Horric consist of similar imagery including the fire and the way they both kneeled before their death. These two acts of punishment reinforced to the Scandinavian people that Ragnar does not tolerate betrayal and, therefore adds to his power of authority.

Later, Kalf, a near Earl in Hedeby, has a dream about Ragnar, “*Ragnar tore the liver from my body and began to eat it. I begged him to stop by saying that the liver is a seater of life. But he just smiled and went on eating with blood streaming down his chin*”. It seems that Kalf views Ragnar as a monster eating human flesh due to his reputation within Scandinavia. According to Jung (1995b:95-96), an archetypal evil in myth can be represented as monsters or demons, thus Ragnar could be viewed as an archetypal evil monster that people feared. Therefore, by these displays of violent acts, Ragnar established the myth of his superiority over others. Ragnar could arguably also be referred to as the trickster archetype, as it is known to gain power and superiority using myth as a source of manipulation.

#### ***5.5.2.4 Trickster gains power using the hero myth***

The trickster or shapeshifter (Jung, 2012a:135; LaLlave & Guthel, 2012:457) has been known to manipulate the hero, potentially being the cause for ending the hero’s journey (LaLlave & Gutheil, 2012:465). In addition, it is argued that the trickster manipulates using myth for the sake of pride or as a way of gaining power.

##### ***5.5.2.4.1 Perverted love: Pride***

King Ecbert of Wessex was an interesting character to watch because of how he gained power by using myth to manipulate his own countrymen as described below.

##### ***i) Evil manifested***

King Ecbert tells a story of an Emperor called Charlemagne, a well-respected and heroic leader. King Ecbert served the Emperor in court and witnessed how Charlemagne endured the raids of the Northmen. In Ecbert’s monologue, he paraphrases what the emperor said in response to the Northmen.

*Do you know why I weep so bitterly? It's not because I am afraid these ruffians will do me any harm, but I am sick at heart to think that even in my life time they have dared to attack this coast and I am horror stricken when I foresee what evil they will do to my descendants and their subjects.*

Near the end of the monologue Ecbert turns to his subjects and says, “*and now it is our turn to deal with these ruffians, these pagans. But deal with them we shall.*” Ecbert is filled with emotion and tears stream from his eyes. Ecbert is not a soldier but convinces his countrymen to see the Northmen as the enemy. According to Mackery-Kalis (2009:699), myth is told to suit a specific culture and Ecbert told the story to gain the attention of his subjects, so that they would agree with him that the Vikings needed to be dealt with. Charlemagne is the well-known hero archetype amongst Ecbert’s people, as they look up to and accept whatever is evil according to Charlemagne.

By contrast, later Ecbert tries to form a peace treaty with the Northmen, that they can settle and farm on English soil. This is arguably confusing at first, as he makes them feel welcome in his Kingdom and even woos Lagertha, a Viking shield maiden. However, after the Vikings have established a settlement in England, Ecbert sends his son, Aethelwolf, to “*end*” arguments between the Northmen farmers and the locals and he ends up slaughtering all the men, women and children settlers. After the slaughter, he explains to his son that his plan “*worked beautifully*” and that “*even Charlemagne would have been proud*”.

By using the hero myth, Charlemagne, it could be argued that Aethelwolf was manipulated to see the Vikings as evil, thus did not hesitate to kill the women and children. This is similar to Jung’s (1988:79) notion of the hero archetype in the media that was used to manipulate the German soldiers to murder people in the Jewish communities in World War II (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1988:79). Moreover, Ecbert could be interpreted as Jung’s (2012a:135) trickster archetype who causes chaos and uncertainty with his trickery.

From Season One to Season Three, Ragnar is first viewed as a farmer who then becomes an earl and then a king. The hero in myth is predominantly the archetype that rises in strength, honour and power (Bishop, 1996:152; Liang, 2016a:324) and has gone through an individuation process to develop the Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960b:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222), this is

possibly how the series portrayed Ragnar. Thus, it is plausible that by representing the hero, Ragnar is represented as Frey's (1951:108-109) leader, hero and a good man. However, it is argued that Ragnar is a deceptive hero due to his pride and greed.

#### ***5.5.2.4.2 Disordered love: Greed and Perverted love: Pride***

Pride, or a sense of entitlement and authority over others (Fairlie 2015:37), and greed, the overarching need for personal gain by means of manipulation and betrayal, lead to corruption (Veselka et al, 2015:76) and are typical of Ragnar's relationship with Ecbert.

##### ***i) Evil manifested***

Ecbert reveals Ragnar not as the hero, but as the devil or trickster archetype when they both admit to being corrupt.

*Ebert: You and I, we understand each other. That is why we are allies and will remain so.*

*Ragnar: Do you think you're a good man?*

*Ebert: Yes, I think so. Are you a good man?*

*Ragnar: Yes, I think so. Are you corrupt?*

*Ebert: Oh yes. Are you?*

*Ragnar: Hmmm*

Figure 5.19 shows Ragnar and Ecbert sitting together in the same chair, with the same pose and a cup in their hand which may symbolise a reflection of likeness.



Fig 5.19: You and I, we understand each other. That is why we are allies and will remain so.

## ***ii) Unconscious projection***

Ecbert could represent Ragnar's shadow, thus his unconscious evil characteristics or desires as he states to Ragnar, "*You and I, we understand each other. That is why we are allies and will remain so*". However, Ecbert slaughters the Northmen farmers therefore, breaking the treaty. Both are corrupt and reflect each other's shadows, in terms of pride and greed.

## ***ii) Evil manifested***

In Seasons One and Two, Ragnar did many things that were arguably evil. For instance, he performed the blood eagle on Jarl Borg, he bludgeoned King Horrik and had his sons slaughtered. In the final scene, in Season Two, Ragnar is sitting on the highest mountain, symbolising a throne, with his sword by his side like a hero, which Chang et al (2015:159) and Henderson (1988:110) described as godlike. Consequently, Ragnar is portrayed as the hero archetype, but really, underneath it all, he is just as corrupt as King Ecbert thereby a manifestation of the trickster archetype.



Fig 5.20: Last scene of Ragnar in Season Two.

Interestingly, as Ragnar and Ecbert are shown to reflect one another's shadow, the two different cultures do as well.

#### ***5.5.2.5 An enemy's reflection***

The Vikings or Northmen and the English both had a euphoric desire for violence as well as other similarities which could represent an innate evil, thus being rooted within a cultural covenant. The excessive violence portrayed in the series could relate to gluttony and wrath.

##### ***5.5.2.5.1 Disordered love: Gluttony and perverted love: Wrath***

Gluttony is the indulgence in bodily comforts categorised as disordered love as it includes the obsession of gain such as food (Alighieri, 2008b:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235). The Vikings are shown to over-consume alcohol, drugs and food, but it is argued that they do not have an excessive desire in terms of Alighieri's (2008b:63) definition of disordered love. Rather it is that the Vikings seem to have an excessive desire for violence after killing.

*i) Evil manifested*

Ragnar and his subjects go to Northumbria where they raid a monastery and slaughter the monks. Even though the monks have no weapons and strength to defend themselves, they are brutally beaten and killed, thus depicting no mercy.



Fig 5.21: Rollo killing a monk with an axe.

In another episode, Ragnar and his crew battle the soldiers in Northumbria. They kill the soldiers with spears and axes, a few scenes are shown with their faces covered in blood showing how they embrace the killing of their enemies, giving them the appearance that is feared by the Northumbrians, *“believe me there is something devilish in the way they look, their lack of fear in the face of death”*.



Fig 5.22: Rollo during the battle of the Northumbrians.



Fig 5.23: Ragnar during the battle of the Northumbrians.

It is evident that the Vikings are violent and vengeful with their excessive desire or even obsession with killing. However, it seems that the English are equally violent.

## *ii) Unconscious projection*

Later in the series, the focus deviates from the Vikings and focuses more on the English that claim to be Christians, meaning that they associate themselves as good because they follow Christ. When



the Northmen invade England, they are termed by the English as “heathens” or “pagans”, thus associating them with an evil enemy distinct from themselves. Aethelwolf, prince of Wessex, states to a soldier from Mercia, an adversary kingdom to Wessex, that “*we are not all like the Northmen*” implying that even though they are enemies, they are dissimilar from the Northmen.

However, the English are also portrayed to be just as blood-thirsty and vengeful as the Vikings. During the slaughter of the Northmen farmers, men, women and children are killed. There is also a scene where a group of soldiers try to rape a woman before she is killed.



Fig 5.24: Northman woman slashed by a Wessex soldier.





Fig 5.25: Child shot with an arrow during the slaughter of Northmen farmers.

After the slaughter, the English soldiers put up a large cross and light it on fire before worshipping it. The image of the fire is similar to the previous scenes where Ragnar has his revenge on Jarl Borg and King Horric. The fire seems to be a constant symbol of revenge as it is again reflecting *Inferno*, level seven ring one, those that perpetrated violence against neighbours are punished in a river of boiling blood and fire.



Fig 5.26: Post slaughter of the Viking farmers.

According to Jung (1965:313), the meaning of evil depends on culture, but it seems that evil, in the context of the Vikings and the English, is similarly reflected. For example, vengeance, for both cultures, is depicted in the imagery of fire that blazes after an act of revenge. As leaders, Ragnar and Ecbert both reflect corruption, violence and revenge. Also, adultery, as a symbolic representation of lust, has been shown. Thus, it is argued that the cultures are contained within the same cultural covenant, meaning that people share the same understanding for archetypes such as life, death, adultery, vengeance, due to mental structures or conceptual maps within the psyche (Trifonas, 2015:21; Danesi, 2015:492; Hall, 2013:173). Thus, the people of Kattegat and Wessex are connected in a system of structures.

The shadow is symbolically reflected in a large part of the series especially since there seems to be a constant projection or reflection of evil between the two cultures. What is also interesting is that evil, hence the shadow, is depicted as ambiguous.

## **5.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Considering the researcher was fully immersed in the data, it is important to take note of reflexivity where the findings may be subjective due to the researcher's background, views and ethics (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121; Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas & Caricativo, 2017:427). The researcher's beliefs and biases may affect how the data was interpreted. Therefore, although rich and deep interpretations may emerge, it is essential to establish the trustworthiness of the research process (Koonin, 2014:258; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). Trustworthiness in qualitative studies focuses on four aspects including credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Koonin, 2014:258-259; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121).

### **5.6.1 Credibility**

It is important to note the level of accuracy with which the researcher interpreted the data and interpreted the participants' responses correctly (Koonin, 2014:258; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121) and the interpretation of imagery found in a text (Henning et al, 2004:71; Kothari, 2004:39; Pascoe, 2014:142-143).

The credibility of this study was assured as data was interpreted in consideration of participants' context as lengthy interviews allowed the researcher to understand the participant's background, hence reason for interpretations (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). A co-coder confirmed the conceptual framework and coding of data and read through the analysis and interpretation section of this chapter. Moreover, credibility can be enhanced through triangulation (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2009:152; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013:24,27; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121), thus two research methods were used including qualitative interviews and qualitative content analysis.

### **5.6.2 Transferability**

Transferability is the extent in which the findings can be applied to similar research projects and gaining similar results (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2007:190; Koonin, 2014:258; Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121; Merrigan & Huston, 2004:72). Transferability was assured by having provided enough detail to allow for methodology, analysis and findings to be applied to similar research projects where relevant. The responses of the participants were recorded and then scribed noting any pauses, fillers such as 'um, uh' and any emphasis on words or phrases to enable a 'thick' description of participant's interpretations. This assists the reader to make a transferability judgement, understanding the context of participant interpretations (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122).

### **5.6.3 Dependability**

Dependability involves the unification of data collection, analysis and interpretation and theory. The research methods should be able to substantiate the research findings and *vice versa* (Collins & Hussey, 2003:278; Koonin, 2014:259). Dependability can be achieved by keeping an audit trail (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121), thus the researcher described, in detail, the methodology and substantiated the analysis of data using theory from the theoretical framework and literature review.

### **5.6.4 Confirmability**

Data collection needs to support the interpretation and findings (Collins & Hussey, 2003:278; Koonin, 2014:259; Merrigan & Huston, 2004:7). Confirmability was assured by drawing findings

from the raw data and existing research and theories that were not entirely from the researcher's preconceptions.

## **5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Considering that this study involved human participants for the interviews, ethical clearance is mandatory (du Plooy, 2005:90-91; Hart, 2005:282; Louw, 2014:264). This is to avoid participants from being mentally harmed, such as having them speak about hurtful situations that bring up personal issues, or that their identity or confidentiality is breached (du Plooy, 2005:90-91; Hart, 2005:282; Louw, 2014:264). For this study, participants chosen were 18 years or older as they have the mental capacity to decide whether they want to take part in the interview or not (Louw, 2014:264; Oliver, 2003:30). They were briefed on the study and how they would take part and assured that their information would remain confidential. Furthermore, participants were not led to answer in a certain way; open-ended questions allowed the participants the freedom to respond in any way that they chose (du Plooy, 2005:178; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:183-184). Participants asked to take part in the study included students - third years and staff at IEMSA- and students from AFDA. All data collected from the interviews, in audio and written form, will be archived for five years and then destroyed.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC). In terms of Plagiarism, the dissertation was submitted to *TurnItIn* which is an online system that checks for plagiarism (<https://turnitin.com>).

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

As previously mentioned, the aim of qualitative research is to gain rich quality data that can enhance a deeper understanding of a phenomenon within a specific context (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014a:27-30; Gómez, 2013:242; Krysik, 2013:17-17; Schaffer, 2016:6-7). This involves collecting data through detailed observations from a text or interpretations from participants. Since the researcher is the research instrument, the analysis process can be very intuitive, thus needs to be guided by the purpose, research questions and theoretical framework and literature review (Drisko & Maschi, 2015:31; Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:234; Belk, Fisher & Kozinets, 2013:141).

Jung (1995a:181-182) stated that it is imperative to understand evil so as not to be misled by the collective unconscious or majority rule. Therefore, since this is a qualitative study, the purpose of this was to gain a deeper understanding of evil by using thick descriptions of the analysis and interpretation. Specifically, the aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the representation of archetypal evil and the shadow in *Vikings*.

In conclusion, the way data was collected, analysed and interpreted was explained in this chapter. Data was collected by conducting and scribing nine qualitative interviews and conducting a qualitative content analysis on Season One, Two and Three of the television series *Vikings*. Data was analysed using a conceptual framework which was constructed using theory from the theoretical framework and *Dante's Seven Deadly Sins*. The conceptual framework consisted of two dimensions including theoretical and behavioural. The types of coding methods that were used included line by line, open, axial, selective and finally thematic coding. Themes found when analysing and interpreting the interviews include 'the fall of the hero', 'evil is found in those who have power', 'the echo of revenge', 'the ugly side of humanity', 'Cain and Abel', and 'for there to be good, there must be evil'. Themes found when conducting the qualitative content analysis are 'the ambiguity of evil', 'Cain's sentence is a catalyst of individuation', 'power gained as a means of becoming myth', 'trickster gains power using the hero myth', and 'an enemy's reflection'. In the final chapter, Chapter Six, the findings are discussed and concluded.

## **CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained previously, Jung (1995c:175) emphasised the importance of understanding evil and the shadow. After WWI, he encountered some of the German soldiers as patients and suspected that the symbols that they described in their dreams were the “hidden powers of darkness” (Jung, 1995c:175) or the shadow. The shadow, being the evil characteristics of a person, can be misinterpreted and projected if there is no clear understanding of evil (Jung, 2006:71-73; McGlashan, 2010:256-257; Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:124). Jung alleged that WWII began because the Germans were manipulated by what was represented as evil in propaganda posters (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1995a:181-182). They were deceived into believing that they were the superior race and others were evil (Jung, 1995a:181-182), thus seemingly projecting their shadow.

According to Jung (1965:313), mythologems, or the essence of myth, have been passed down through generations. For example, stories, film and television have repeated notions of archetypes such as the hero, devil and trickster (Bishop, 1996:152; Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Liang, 2016a:324). However, how these archetypes have been represented in myth can vary (Chang et al, 2015:158; Kelsey, 2017:1, 110; Willis, 2017:107-108), therefore how evil is represented depends on the myth or story. Myth can reinforce structures within society (Kelsey, 2017:1, 110, 108) and influence how people understand evil. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore how archetypal evil is represented in the contemporary television series *Vikings*, with the purpose of contributing to the body of knowledge.

The aim of this chapter was to conclude the findings found in Chapter Five, which was the analysis and interpretation of data, and explain how the findings answer the research questions. Specifically, the findings of the interviews and qualitative content analysis, in relation to the research questions, are discussed and the contribution of the study, its limitations and recommendations are explained.

## 6.2 FINDINGS

The findings presented below are based on the analysis and interpretation of data collected from nine interviews and the *Vikings* episodes. The research questions discussed below contributed to the purpose of the study.

### **6.2.1 The perception of evil in the action, historical drama series Vikings**

Below is a summary of the six themes found during the interpretation of interviews including ‘the fall of the hero’, ‘evil is found in those who have power’, ‘the echo of revenge’, ‘the ugly dark side of humanity’ ‘Cain and Abel’ and ‘for there to be good there must be evil’. Each summary explains how the themes answered the second sub-research question,

*How do participants perceive evil in the action, historical drama series Vikings?*

#### **6.2.1.1 The fall of the hero**

In ‘the fall of the hero’, participants indicated that evil could be paralleled with being seduced by power. The more powerful the hero, Ragnar, became, the more seduced he was by pride and greed which ultimately led to the hero’s doom. In addition, the participants’ views of Ragnar reflect Frey’s (1951:104-105) seasons of myth, where the hero would initiate growth in spring and lavish in summer, but succumb to tragedy in winter (Norman, 2011:8-10). The perception also relates to the hero’s journey that would end if the hero is seduced by evil or the devil (Bassil-Morozow, 2016:35-36; Campbell, 2004:85), which, in this case, was symbolically represented as pride and greed. Moreover, the end of the hero’s journey is congruous with the individuation process as the journey is part of finding the Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1960b:109; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). Thus, if the hero does not complete the journey, it refers to the hero’s end or not being able to find the Self.

Participants also spoke about greed as a “*chronic dissatisfaction in everything*”; the need to have more, but not knowing why they should have more. Seemingly, this lack of knowing indicates a lack of understanding of the shadow. As explained by Jung (1995d:95), the shadow is the evil characteristics of a person and, in this case, the character’s shadow is greed. Moreover, the shadow needs to be understood and accepted in order to develop the Self (Abu-Raiya, 2014:332; Jung, 1995d:95-96; Paraschivescu, 2011:222). Since Ragnar is unable to understand his greed, it is an indication that he is unable to accept his shadow and find the Self.

In addition, the mythologem of the hero being seduced by the devil is repeated in myth as a contemporary series is seemingly reflecting Frey’s 1951 (1951:104-105) seasons of myth and



Campbell's 1949 (2004:85) notion of the hero's journey. Moreover, the repetition of myth may be reinforcing ideologies of evil, thus becoming a factor in how participants perceive evil.

#### ***6.2.1.2 Evil is found in those who have power***

It seems as if participants were influenced by what they themselves interpreted as evil, such as pride, violence and greed in terms of Ragnar. This may be because there is a strong association with the hero being virtuous instead of evil due to the mythologem being ingrained in the unconscious psyche and passed down from generation to generation (Chang et al, 2015:159, Henderson, 1988:110). Furthermore, the hero archetype is well-known (Chang et al, 2015:159, Henderson, 1988:110) and has been reinforced through film (Ellerhoff, 2015:46; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:2-3), therefore it is probable that participants were manipulated to see evil as good due to a character that portrays conventional characteristics of the hero archetype. It can also be interpreted that participants were potentially influenced by the trickster archetype (LaLlave & Gutheil, 2012:465) that posed as the hero to influence the participants.

Consequently, how participants perceive evil could be very limited as their interpretations seem to be bounded by ideologies that have been reinforced through myth. This may be discouraging participants from seeking a deeper understanding of evil, hence the shadow. However, participants may have been in favour of a character that they were unconsciously projecting onto.

As audiences are known to project onto characters in the media (Chang, Ivonin, Diaz, Catala, Chen & Rauterberg, 2015:157; Faber & Mayer, 2009:307; Smith, 2011:391), it is argued that participants were in support of Ragnar because of their own shadow that they were projecting. Thus, instead of participants being influenced by myth, perhaps they were being led by their own shadow. This projection was further explored when participants spoke about how the series mirrors their culture.

#### ***6.2.1.3 The echo of revenge***

Participants discussed that wrath takes the form of revenge and it is a customary part of the Viking culture. Moreover, participants explained that revenge is reflected in different cultures portrayed in the series including the English and the Vikings. As noted previously, mythologemes are repeated in myth (Jung, 1965:313; Zadorina, 2014:779), thus the essence of revenge is recurring

by being portrayed in varying contexts, thus reinforcing the ideology of revenge. Likewise, myth reinforces ideologies as mythologems have been recurrent in stories and film for generations (Jung, 1965:313; Zadorina, 2014:779). Thus, arguably, it is through this reinforcement that participants were able to compare the representation of revenge with their own culture. For example, Participant Two explained how the representation of revenge is reflected in South Africa, therefore further enhancing the notion that myth accentuates ideologies or structures within a society (Jung, 1965:313; Rollins, 2011:305-306; Zadorina, 2014:779). Thus, the series is reflecting a cultural covenant or a universal understanding of revenge as it is reflected in varying contexts and in real life scenarios. However, the shadow may be reinforcing a different view.

As Jung (2006:71-73) explained, the shadow is projected to isolate the individual from his or her inner evil. Arguably, it seems that the participants could compare the representation of revenge to that of their own culture because they were projecting their shadow. Thus, participants may have an inner want for revenge, but can only express it via a television series. The projection of the shadow is further illustrated in ‘the ugly dark side of humanity’.

#### ***6.2.1.4 The ugly dark side of humanity***

Participants perceived the excessive representations of violence, including the blood and gore, and the portrayal of no mercy, where people were slaughtered without hesitation, as evil. Thus, wrath and gluttony were codes used in conjunction to explore the participant’s perceptions. Instead of gluttony being defined as excessive consumption of food and alcohol (Alighieri, 2008:63; Hawkins, 2012:232; 234-235), it was used to describe the Vikings unwarranted need for violence. Interestingly, participants also found the representation of violence entertaining which could relate to the shadow.

To reiterate, the shadow is projected to avoid judgement (Jung, 1995d:95-96) and can be projected onto a character(s) in the media (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1988:79). Interestingly, participants, even though they have openly acknowledged that it is evil, admit that they are drawn to the representation of violence, blood and gore and even found it entertaining to watch. Thus, it is probable that the participants were projecting their shadow onto the series without even realising it. The shadow was further projected in the myth, Cain and Abel.

#### **6.2.1.5 *Cain and Abel***

Jung's (2012a:15) notion that primordial images in the unconscious psyche are passed down from generation to generation and manifested in myth, is illustrated in the myth of Cain and Abel. Cain and Abel, and the rivalry and jealousy of two brothers, is well-known as it has been depicted in ancient texts (van Wolde, 1991:36), including Genesis and *Inferno* (Alighieri, 2008), and participants have associated the myth with a contemporary series. Specifically, participants compared the relationship of Ragnar and Rollo to that of Cain and Abel when discussing envy.

Participants saw envy as evil as it ultimately leads to betrayal or murder of a family member. In addition, how participants saw envy as evil, could have been influenced by ancient myth. As illustrated in *Purgatory*, envy is second closest to hell, categorising it as one of the most severe sins (Alighieri, 2008b:63) which may illustrate why participants saw this as evil.

Participants spoke about how they could relate to the relationship between the two brothers, indicating that they would feel distressed should one brother betray the other. The disturbance could be an indication that the conscious was disturbed, causing negative emotions, thus projecting the shadow (Chang et al, 2015:161; Faber & Mayer, 2009: 308-309; Stein, 1995:15).

#### **6.2.1.6 *For there to be good, there must be evil***

As noted by Jung (1995d:95-96), the shadow needs to be accepted in order to initiate the individuation process and develop the Self. This is arguably revealed through the archetype of good and evil, as evil works in conjunction with good to establish peace and stability (Bancks, 2003:32; Carroll, 2015:421; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2). Thus, good and evil emphasised the acceptance of the shadow.

Good and evil was reflected when participants spoke about how evil is a necessity in the Viking culture in order to progress or to maintain life. This is evident in the voluntary sacrifices of nine Vikings every nine years to uphold continued blessings from their gods. Good and evil is a popular archetype that has been represented in ancient texts (Carroll, 2015:421; Varghese & Balasubramanian, 2017:1-2) and in films (Bancks, 2003:32), indicating that it has been passed down through generations via myth. Thus, it is probable that good and evil is understood on an

unconscious level as it is arguably part of the primordial structures in the unconscious psyche that manifests through myth.

In addition, the archetype of good and evil could illustrate that evil is ambiguous and that there is no absolute notion of good and evil (Bacon, 2015:78-79; 2009:120, 134; Jung, 1960b:91-92). Jung (1995d:95-96) notes the ambiguity of evil as it depends on culture. Interestingly, a participant viewed an image as evil because they did not understand the context from which it came due to the representation being from a foreign culture. Thus, the logical approach would be to try and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural representation. However, another participant explained that there is evil in knowing, as there is a possibility of being drawn to that evil or realising that it is relatable. The fact that an evil representation may be evil, and potentially applicable, is an indication of the shadow being projected.

The notion of good and evil discussed by participants can point towards the importance of accepting the shadow. Jung (1995d:95-96) argued that by knowing and understanding more about evil, it can lighten internal conflict, hence participants could be experiencing a lessening of internal conflict when confronting their shadow reflected in the series.

### **6.2.2 How is archetypal evil represented in the action, historical drama series *Vikings*?**

Below is a summary of the findings ‘The ambiguity of evil’, ‘Cain’s sentence as a catalyst of individuation’, ‘power gained as a means of becoming mythical’, ‘trickster gains power through myth’, and ‘an enemy’s reflection’. Each finding is explained based on how they answered the main research question:

*How is archetypal evil represented in the action, historical, drama series Vikings?*

The sub-question below is also discussed under each finding.

*How is the shadow represented in the action, historical, drama series Vikings?*

#### **6.2.2.1 The ambiguity of evil**

Evil was represented as ambiguous, especially in terms of lust. The series portrays lust according to two separate cultures, one between Athelstan and Judith according to the Christians, and the

other between Aslaug and Hobart of the *Vikings*. The difference between the two is the punishment, for example, Judith has her ear cut off in front of a mob and Aslaug's friend, Siggy, falls through ice and is surrounded by darkness. In *Inferno*, the souls are sentenced to a more punitive punishment depending on the severity of the sin (Alighieri, 2008a; Hawkins, 2012:232). Thus, it seems that the lust between Aslaug and Harbard was more unforgivable than that of Judith and Athelstan as it resulted in death. Also, the imagery is symbolically more severe, as evil is represented as darkness or the abyss (Bacon, 2015:52; Jung, 2012a:16), and Siggy seemed to be engulfed by this darkness.

Alighieri (2008a:30) in *Inferno* explains that lust is one of the least severe sins as it is placed on the top level of hell as love cannot always be controlled. When comparing the two scenarios, it seems that the love between Athelstan and Judith was forgivable as opposed to Aslaug and Harbard's love as their intimacy was seemingly purely based on seduction and not love.

However, lust is still evil as it results in punishment (Alighieri, 2008a:30). Thus, evil is represented as ambiguous because the severity of evil depends on the context in which it is represented. There is no clear line between what is good and what is evil. Moreover, Jung (1965:313) spoke about mythologems which is the essence of myth, thus myth can vary, but its essence remains the same (Zadorina, 2014:779).

There is no notion of absolute evil as evil varies according to culture (Bacon, 2015:78-79; Harold, 2011:4,219; Jung, 2009:120,134; Jung, 1960b:91-92; Stein, 1995:14-15). Interestingly, understanding depends on how it is represented. How the shadow is understood could also be dependent on context, but the very essence of it is evil. However, just because it is evil does not mean it should be feared, in fact, acceptance of the shadow has been represented as a form of growth and development in characters that symbolically represents the individuation process.

#### ***6.2.2.2 Cain's sentence as a catalyst for individuation***

Evil is represented as envy and pride that results in betrayal. Rollo, Ragnar's brother, is a character that is portrayed to be envious of his brother due to his success which results in Rollo betraying him in battle. Rollo is then defeated and reprimanded or shunned in his hometown. This is seemingly similar to the ancient myth of Cain and Abel where Cain murders his brother Abel out

of jealousy and is then banished to the land of Nod (Gen 4). However, Rollo does not kill his brother, so he is instead not banished physically, but from a societal perspective. This reflects Jung's, (1965:313) notion of mythologems as the essence of myth. It is argued that, due to envy and pride, the essence of evil is betrayal, but the severity depends on the context, murder seems to be represented as an extreme form of evil based on the severity of its punishment.

Another example of the representation of Cain and Abel is shown where Floki murders Athelstan due to jealousy, he feared that Ragnar loved him more. His punishment was not banishment, but he was manipulated, by Ragnar, into a situation that caused Floki to reach a tragic fail in battle. This seemingly shows that this was a more drastic sin than that of Rollo's as his envy and pride did not result in murder. This again links back to *Inferno*, where the more severe the sin, the closer the souls are to hell (Alighieri, 2008b; Hawkins, 2012:232; Jeukes, 2014:44), thus murder seems to be represented as a grave sin as it results in a harsh punishment, however, this is a bit more complicated than what it seems, as it depends on the context in which it is received.

For instance, in *Inferno*, the severity of violence and treachery is dependent on the context (Alighieri, 2008a:203; Jeukes, 2014:44) as there are seven levels for violence and nine for treachery (Alighieri, 2008a:232; Brooker, 2014:23-24). It is argued that Floki was violent towards neighbours and would, therefore fall in level seven ring one, and Rollo in level nine round one as he betrayed family. Here it shows that Rollo's act of betrayal was worse than that of Floki as his sin is categorised closer to hell, although since he did not murder Ragnar, his sin was not as dissolute. Therefore, murder is arguably represented in *Vikings* as one of the most serious sins, however, even the most severe sins can be seemingly forgiven if the shadow is accepted.

Arguably, the punishment that Rollo endorsed symbolically contributed to his individuation process. During his punishment, he appeared to be in a deep depression, being hopeless of ever being forgiven. When Siggy gave him an ultimatum, to either move on or kill himself, he slowly started to revive himself, seemingly symbolising his acceptance of the shadow and, therefore initiating his individuation process. Floki thought that he was given a sign from the gods to kill Athelstan, however, once trapped in the tower, he started to understand that his actions were due to his own selfish needs and not that of the gods. This image symbolised his acceptance of the shadow which resulted in his character development.

Therefore, it is argued that the acceptance of the shadow works in relation to the hero myth or the hero's journey. The hero needs to confront trials and tribulations, including being seduced by the devil, or evil, to fully develop into the hero (Berger, 2012:99; Campbell, 2004:28; Radley, 2003:20; Zehnder & Calvert:124). The hero must accept the shadow to initiate the individuation process and develop the Self (Berger, 2012:99; Campbell, 2004:28; Radley, 2003:20; Zehnder & Calvert, 2004:124) which is represented in both Rollo's and Floki's case. Thus, regardless of the context, whether envy and pride resulted in betrayal or murder, both characters had to accept their shadow to move forward. In a sense this symbolises hope that no matter the severity of the sin, it is possible to still move on and develop the Self. Nonetheless, some representations of evil possibly do not redeem a character.

#### ***6.2.2.3 Power gained as a means of becoming mythical***

Ragnar was able to establish himself as a mythical monster by displaying violent acts of revenge against his enemies, enemies who tried to kill his family. While performing the blood eagle, Jarl Borg is kneeling in front of Ragnar and the scene is flooded by lights of fire. Similarly, Ragnar kills King Horric with him kneeling in front of Ragnar and the light of a fire is visible through a window. These two scenes are repeated representations of *Inferno*, in level seven ring one, where souls that performed violence against neighbours are punished in a river with fire (Alighieri, 2008). This indicates that the mythologem of the fire is repeated, thus the fire is seemingly an archetypal symbol. Moreover, since mythologies or myth can reinforce structures within a society, as they are recurring and eventually passed down from generation to generation (Kelsey, 2017:158; Mackery-Kallis, 2009:699), the notion of fire reinforces the idea of a punishment for violent acts against others. In addition, the image of Jarl Borg and King Horric kneeling in front of Ragnar seemingly represents submission, giving Ragnar full power to punish them.

As a result of the two representations of violent acts of revenge, Ragnar became notorious and gained power by means of becoming mythical. This is evident when Kalf compares Ragnar to a monster or something that is mythical, dark and feared (Jung, 1995d:95-96; McGlash, 2010:256-257; Walker, 2013:32-33). In a sense, Ragnar portrayed himself as the shadow that disturbs the conscious and causes human suffering (Bacon, 2015:52; Jung, 2012a:16).

The shadow is represented when Jarl Borg is haunted by the blood eagle. Dark imagery is shown when Jarl Borg is lying in a dark room and he sees visions of the Seer and eagle. As explained by Jung (2012a:16), the shadow is represented in imagery that is hidden, dark or the abyss that can cause fear or pain. Therefore, it seems that the dark imagery is symbolically representing Jarl Borg's shadow, and he is finding it difficult to accept as what he is seeing as the imagery is disturbing the conscious. Moreover, Jarl Borg's punishment is tragic, as his punishment ultimately leads to a gruesome death. Here there was no option for Jarl Borg to accept his shadow or what he had done to Ragnar as a symbolic representation of the individuation process. Perhaps this is an indication as to why people would rather project their shadow than accept it (McGlash, 2010:256-257; Neumann, 1990:3; Walker, 2013:41; 107) as it could result in serious consequences.

Arguably, Ragnar is represented as an archetypal evil, as he performs the blood eagle with no mercy and repentance, and it is here that Ragnar's shadow is represented as dark and evil.

#### ***6.2.2.4 Trickster gains power through myth***

There seems to be two types of tricksters in this series, including King Ecbert and Ragnar Lothbrok. King Ecbert used the myth of a hero archetype, Emperor Charlemagne, to manipulate his subjects and especially his son to gain power over the Vikings that were raiding his country. Charlemagne is presumably a meaningful hero archetype to the English; he is respected as a great man as Ecbert's subjects listen intensely as he talks about how Charlemagne dealt with the Vikings.

Even though the same mythologems are present (Jung, 1965:313; Zadorina, 2014:779), myth still varies according to culture (Mackery-Kalis, 2009:699). Thus, since Charlemagne was a meaningful hero archetype to the English, they were easily persuaded to view the Vikings as evil. Therefore, King Ecbert was able to manipulate his countrymen using myth. This is seemingly similar to Jung's (1988:79) interpretation of how Hitler manipulated the German soldiers to go to war. By using propaganda posters, the Germans were portrayed as the superior race, or hero, and the opposition as evil (Bacon, 2015:57; Dohe, 2011:352; Jung, 1988:79).

Ragnar used the notion of the hero archetype to gain power differently. He was represented as the hero as he went through the typical hero's journey of facing trials and tribulations (Bishop, 1996:152; Liang, 2016a:324) before establishing himself as a powerful ruler of Scandinavia. The



images of Ragnar, at the end of Season Two, symbolise him as a king or god-like figure, thus portraying him as a typical hero archetype (Chang et al, 2015:159; Henderson, 1988:110). However, as noted previously, Ragnar acted violently and cruelly against his enemies representing him as evil. Moreover, it is argued that Ragnar's acts of violence, against Jarl Borg and King Horik, were seemingly glorified, as images represented him as a great king or conqueror and almost as a reward for his violent acts.

Moreover, the imagery symbolises him as a corrupt ruler when he is sitting in the same position and pose as King Ecbert, a man who deceived his own countrymen to gain power over the Vikings. The shadow is represented with the two tricksters. Ecbert seemingly projects his shadow onto emperor Charlemagne, by projecting his intentions and emotions onto a hero myth manipulating his subjects to see the Vikings as evil. Ragnar's shadow is represented with more symbolism and imagery as he is posed in the same position as King Ecbert, a ruler that has already been represented as corrupt which is now also reflected onto Ragnar. The shadow is further represented and reflected between the two cultures in *Vikings*, most notably the English and the Vikings.

#### **6.2.2.5 *An enemy's reflection***

In the series, the Vikings and the English are portrayed as being two very different cultures, but arguably also the same in relation to the mythologem of evil. In connection with gluttony and wrath, the Vikings are first represented as blood-thirsty as they are portrayed as having an excessive desire for violence because they slaughter monks in a monastery who have no way to defend themselves. However, ironically, the English are also portrayed as violent, even though, for the most part of the series, they see themselves as distinct from the Vikings as "pagans" and "heathens", but they still slaughter an entire Northmen settlement only consisting of farmers, women and children.

Therefore, it is argued that, although different, the cultures are embedded in the same cultural covenant where ideologies are universally understood as individuals all share the same mental structures (Trifonas, 2015:21; Danesi, 2015:492; Hall, 2013:173). As shown in the series, the essence of evil is the same, but the representation differs. This is interesting because evil, as previously noted, is ambiguous as it varies depending on the context in which it is represented,

however, the essence of evil is seemingly the same. Thus, Jung's (1965:313) notion of mythologems is pertinent in understanding the very core of evil. It is argued that the importance is not in finding an absolute notion of evil, but accepting what could potentially be evil and learning about what it means from a personal standpoint.

### **6.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

The study contributed to the discipline of communication by providing a deeper understanding of how evil and the shadow are represented in a contemporary television series, thus their portrayal in contemporary media. The study also looked at how audience members interpreted how evil was represented in *Vikings*. As stated previously, there is a lack of understanding for evil and as a result, people can be easily misguided as to what is evil.

### **6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations of the study are that there was seemingly not enough variety in participants. Most participants that volunteered in the study were between the ages of 18 and 25, although finding participants was also difficult as many did not want to take part in the study due to the interview taking at least an hour. Finding participants from AFDA was problematic, mostly because the researcher was not given permission to advertise on the campus by displaying posters in the student cafeteria, and the researcher had to rely on global e-mails sent by an administrator to students and this resulted in only two volunteers. Most volunteers came from IEMSA because the researcher was able to display advertisements/ posters and the work on the campus. The length of the interviews was a problem for some participants, however, if the researcher looked beyond IEMSA and AFDA, there might have been more volunteers available to take part on an hour-long interview.

Another limitation is that only one television series was analysed which limits exploring evil represented in contemporary media.

### **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that instead of using a convenience sampling method, it will be beneficial for a future study to use only a purposive sampling method and look for participants of varying age

groups. The responses from different generations may have been interesting to compare, enabling more variations in the data, thus providing deeper interpretations of evil.

Future studies could also focus on the exploration of evil and the shadow by analysing another series such as *The Originals* (2013-2018) or *Supernatural* (2005- current) and use a mixed method approach, combining the advantages of both a quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

## 6.6 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings it can be concluded that the essence of myth or mythologem has been passed down from generation to generation, but the understanding varies depending on representation. Thus, it is argued that there is a core notion of evil, however, meaning differs depending on the context evil has been depicted in. This explains Jung's notion that evil varies according to culture and that there is no absolute understanding of evil, hence evil is ambiguous.

In addition, it is due to the ambiguity of evil that the series influences notions of evil by using the hero myth. The hero myth is a well-known archetype that is typically known for being virtuous in fighting against evil. Ironically, Ragnar was represented as the typical hero archetype that perpetrated gruesome acts of violence against his enemies which participants accepted even though they stated that the acts were evil. This could be because they were influenced by the traditional notion that the hero cannot be evil. Imagery further glorifies Ragnar as a king or god after his notorious acts of violence against his enemies.

The shadow was represented as being reflected between two different cultures in *Vikings* and participants could relate, and even be entertained, by some of the representation of evil, thus they were seemingly projecting their shadow. Therefore, it is argued that there is a universal understanding of evil, pertaining to the idea that society is structured within a cultural covenant. This further adds to the notion that there is a core understanding of evil, but the meaning may vary depending on the context and interpretation.

The series also symbolically represents the importance of accepting the shadow using the archetype of good and evil. Evil is a necessity in order to enable good, for instance, the shadow

needs to be accepted in order to initiate the individuation process and develop the Self. However, the understanding of evil determines whether the shadow is accepted.

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## **ADDENDUM 1: ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE**



**Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee**

**Approval Certificate**

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

**Project ID:** 13771  
**Project Title:** The representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical, drama series Vikings  
**Chief Investigator:** Dr Rose-Marie Bezuidenhout  
**Approval Date:** 08/08/2018  
**Expiry Date:** 08/08/2023

**Terms of approval - failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.**

1. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. Amendments to approved projects including changes to personnel must not commence without written approval from MUHREC.
7. Annual Report - continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report.
8. Final Report - should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected completion date.
9. Monitoring - project may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
10. Retention and storage of data - The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of the original data pertaining to the project for a minimum period of five years.

Kind Regards,

Professor Nip Thomson

Chair, MUHREC

CC: Ms Kelly Olls

**List of approved documents:**

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Consent Form	AFDA AND MSA CONSENT FORM K Olls (1) (1)	05/04/2018	1.2
Supporting Documentation	AFDA Permission letter	11/06/2018	1
Explanatory Statement	AFDA EXPLANATORY STATEMENT K Olls (1)	09/07/2018	1.2
Explanatory Statement	MSA EXPLANATORY STATEMENT K Olls (1)	09/07/2018	1.2
Supporting Documentation	Interview Questions Kelly Olls (1)	09/07/2018	1.2
Supporting Documentation	Kelly Olls Poster Invite	09/07/2018	1.2
Supporting Documentation	Ethics Letter Olls	16/07/2018	1
Explanatory Statement	Explanatory statement ammended with track changes.	21/07/2018	1

## **ADDENDUM 2: CONSENT FORM**

## CONSENT FORM

(Participants who are 18 years and older who have watched at least 3 seasons of the *Vikings* television series)

The representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical drama series *Vikings* (13771)

Chief Investigator: Dr Rose-Marié Bezuidenhout

I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project

I consent to the following:	Yes	No
Participation in an in-depth interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio recording during the interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transcription of recordings of the interview in de-identified form by a transcription service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The data that I provide during this research may be used by Kelly Olls in future research projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **ADDENDUM 3: EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

(Participants who are 18 years and older who have watched at least 3 seasons of the *Vikings* television series)

The representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical drama series *Vikings* (13771)

<b>Chief Investigator's name:</b> Dr Rose-Marié Bezuidenhout <b>Faculty of Social and Health Sciences</b> <b>Phone:</b> +27 (11) 950 4182; +27 (81) 043-2926 <b>email:</b> rosemarie.bezuidenhout@monash.edu	<b>Student's name:</b> Kelly Olls <b>Student number:</b> 20506988 <b>Phone:</b> +27 (76) 737 9865 <b>email:</b> kelly.olls1@monash.edu
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You are invited to take part in this study entitled: The representation of the archetypal evil in the action, historical drama series *Vikings*, which is an MPhil research project at Monash University South Africa. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

### What is the purpose of the study and what does the research involve?

The aim of this research is to explore how archetypal evil is represented within the series *Vikings*. The research involves gaining an in-depth understanding of how audience members perceive evil in *Vikings*.

### Researchers conducting this research

The interviews will be conducted by the student researcher.

### Description of participation

After reading this statement and signing the consent form, you will be asked a few short questions about how you view evil in *Vikings*. I will use an audio recorder to assist me in capturing what you say and will actively take notes while you are talking. The interview will take place in an office on the AFDA campus on a date and at a time convenient to you and will be conducted in English.

### Why were you chosen for this research?

You were chosen for this research as you have watched at least two seasons of the *Vikings* series. Your participation will assist the researcher to understand how you perceive evil as represented in the series.

### Duration of participation

The interview should take approximately one hour.

### Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you do agree to participate, you may still choose to withdraw from further participation at any time and your data will not be included in any future publications about the study.

**Possible benefits and risks to participants**

This research is beneficial to the communication discipline as it will provide a rich description of a phenomenon. Participants will assist in exploring an under-researched phenomenon which may lead to a greater understanding of how evil is represented in contemporary television. Participants will not face physical or psychological stress and discomfort or inconvenience aside from the time committed to the interview. There is no risk to participants as responses will be de-identified in the research report.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is assured as all data will be de-identified and codes will be used in place of participant names in the final research report. Data from the interviews will be recorded on an audio device and notes will be taken. A transcribing service may be used, but all data will be de-identified. Every effort will be made to protect your identity.

**Storage of data**

The data collected during this research project will be stored on a password protected computer and hard copy data will be stored in a storeroom at Monash South Africa for a period of five (5) years. After this time, hard copy data will be shredded, electronic data will be deleted, and recordings will be erased.

**Results**

Upon the completion of this research project, it will be submitted to Monash South Africa in fulfilment of an MPhil dissertation. Results from the project can be requested from the researchers and will be shared in de-identified format.

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact:

Ms Hester Stols  
Research Coordinator  
Research and Development Office Monash South Africa,  
Office of the Academic President,  
144 Peter Road, Ruimsig. 1725.  
Tel : +27 11 950 4143      E-mail (hester.stols@monash.edu )

Thank you,



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Chief Investigator's name  
Dr Rose-Marié Bezuidenhout

## **ADDENDUM 4: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **Qualitative interview questions**

#### **Purpose: To explore the archetypal evil in the action, historical, drama series *Vikings***

1. How would you define evil?
2. Do you think certain symbolic representations of evil are universally perceived as such?
3. How do you think evil is represented in Vikings?
4. Do you think most people have an understanding of imagery/symbols that represent/s evil?
5. How does the series make you feel?
6. Does the series have an influence on you, and if it does, in what way?
7. Do you think audiences may be influenced in similar ways?
8. What do you think makes the series exciting to watch?
9. Which scenes of the series do you perceive to represent evil?
10. How do you perceive the characters?
11. How do you think certain characters personify evil?
12. Do you think audience members project their own hidden and dark secrets onto the characters?
13. How do you think some of the scenes symbolically reflect audience members' own feelings of, for example, revenge and hatred?



## **ADDENDUM 5: EXAMPLE OF CODING**

- were so like ~~obsessed~~ to things. } So "numb" to things.
- gore and sex
- Alfred Hitchcock and his slashes
- we can't actually watch stuff without that
- sex. shocking
- we want to see more shocking things.
- axes and blood
- sex in Vikings
- animal instincts
- the gore
- exciting.
- it's almost normal - blood, gore, fighting.

**Note:** - People find gore, blood, fighting entertaining and "normal" to watch.

### Participant 5

- drama
  - mess
  - chaos
  - it just gets worse and worse
  - exciting
  - they always end it at the perfect worse time
  - like a lot of twists and turns
  - hoping
  - distraught
  - I didn't want him to die (twists)
- } emotional bond with the character

**Ragnar** - very conflicted in the end  
 - keep conquering  
 - keep making in the end.  
 End of him

## Season 2: Ep 3. Treachery.

earl sigvard,

- Court of the emperor shall remain.
- bto. wine representing blood
- "Do you know why I keep so bitterly? It's not because I'm afraid these rubans will do me any harm but I am sick at heart to think that even in my life time they have dared to attack this coast and I am here stricken when I see what evil they will do to my dependants and their sublells. And now it's our turn to deal with these rubans, these pagans. But deal with them we shall and must."

- watchful and decisive as the emperor was.

pride  $\Rightarrow$  Lagertha's husband demands respect from her by hitting her. Sigvard

### Church scene.

- Saint Branas  $\Rightarrow$  person who lived a holy life.
- Christians believed the bones give miracles.
- Vikings kill the people.

Athulstern kills a monk and the look on his face shows he has remorse. He looks at the hilt in one dead monk's arms.

$\hookrightarrow$  Athul's individuation — Torture of a holy person is evil. order.

$\hookrightarrow$  Athulstern stops the beating of the pope  $\Rightarrow$  symbol of christianity.

Ragnar  $\Rightarrow$  finding a child

$\hookrightarrow$  symbol of innocence

$\hookrightarrow$  death of innocence is evil

Ragnar's individuation

## **ADDENDUM 6: TURN IT IN REPORT**

## Kelly Olls 20506988 Mphil Dissertation April 17 2020

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