

Mafia's Violence and Assassination in The Godfather

Mo-Xi Ren¹, Zi-Yu Zhang²

¹Education and Science Academy, Harbin Normal University, Harbin, Heilongjiang, China

²Foreign Language College, Suihua University, Suihua, Heilongjiang, China

*Corresponding author's e-mail:

renmoxi000811@sina.com

Abstract

As a criminal organization born in Italy and founded in the United States, the mafia has a terrible reputation in history. However, in the fields of literature, drama, film, animation, and games it has repeatedly become a popular theme for artistic expression. As a representative work of new Hollywood film, The Godfather has long been hailed as a model of mafia movies. Since its release, there has been relatively little research on The Godfather films in China. This paper focuses on observing the mafia culture of the Corleone family in The Godfather, studying the black themes and characteristics embodied in The Godfather. Through the analysis of this movie, this research aims to promote cross-cultural communication and provide readers with a different perspective for understanding the movie The Godfather.

Keywords

Godfather; Corleone; American Mafia

Cite This Article

Ren M. X, Zhang Z. Y. Mafia's Violence and Assassination in The Godfather. Journal of History, Culture and Humanities. 2023, 2(2):9-16. <https://doi.org/10.55571/jhch.202305014>

Copyright

© 2023 by The Authors. Published by Four Dimensions Publishing Group INC. This work is open access and distributed under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



Received: May 04, 2023 / Accepted: May 07, 2023 / Published: May 08, 2023

Introduction

In recent years, the orientation of cross-cultural research has been varied, and a big reason lies in cultural differences. If you do not understand cultural differences, you will miss by a mile in communication practice. Some relevant discussions in this paper can be of some help to cultural exchanges through English films. From a certain point of view, the triad force is the embodiment of traditional morality. The Water Band, the Gang and Robin Hood all have rationality and hero color in this sense. By analyzing the events in the Godfather movie, this paper reflected the main characters and gangster family culture, so as to achieve the purpose of analyzing the Godfather film. This paper adopts the research method of social investigation and it will have a certain progressive significance on English movie appreciation.

Mafia's Violence and Assassination in The Godfather

In order to survive, the Mafia takes all violent means to solve problems when necessary, and they are brutal with their opponents. In some of the more violent scenes in *The Godfather*, The old Godfather Corleone has Wultz's favorite horse killed and its head dumped in his quilt. The next morning, Wultz woke up screaming hysterically at the sight of the mangled horse's head. The happy wedding scene at the start of the film is suddenly transformed into the bloody scene in an unexpected and terrified.

In the movie "The Godfather", there are several more bloody and violent scenes, where the old godfather sends someone to kill Uelz's favorite horse and throws the horse's head in the quilt of Uelz. The next morning, Uelz woke up from his sleep and saw the flesh and blood of the horse's head, his hysterical screams, and the sudden transformation from the joyful wedding atmosphere at the beginning of the movie to the current bloody scenes, such a way of presentation was unexpected, but it made people feel frightened.

The black theme is always inseparable from assassination and violence and thus the author in the film. Scenes of assassination and violence have been shown more than once. From the assassination of the godfather to the assassination of the sheriff and the Turkish drug lord, from the assassination of the Godfather's eldest son, Sonny, to the beheading of the new Godfather Mike. This series of violent pursuits unfolds a large black web for the reader, rendering the main colors of society black.

The assassination of the godfather

What exactly is the Corleone family worth? Why can it be number one? What on earth is the reason that makes the Turkish drug dealers so eager to get their family involved? The answer is politics [1].

The Corleone family has political connections that none of the other four families can match. The core resource is to know a group of congressmen, and then to know government employees, and then to know judges, prosecutors and lawyers, and then to know journalists and friends in the media.

The family's real core asset is in this political network. The councillors, the judges, the prosecutors, and so on, who believed that the old man was a good man, were willing to deal with him and make a

deal.

And the Turks and the four families, do they think the Corleone family can colluded with political sources by giving them more money than they do? So he worked hard to make money, thinking that the speed of making money is the way to narrow the gap with the Corleone family. So, in order to take this route, the Turk went to ask Don Corleone for permission.

The Godfather, of course, wouldn't give any other family the chance to outdo the Kryons, so he refused, and sonny almost killed his father for saying a word in the meeting. The Turks and the four families naively assumed that political connections were inherited from the family, and that when fathers died, their sons could be used. He planned to kill the old man.

In order to find out more about Sollozzo, the Godfather sent Luca to investigate. Let him pretend to be at odds with his own family, then go undercover with sollozzo's Tattaglia family. Did not expect Sollozzo know Luca is a very loyal person, will not easily betray the Godfather, suspected that he is to do undercover, so Sollozzo together with Tattaglia's son Bruno to kill Luca. And arranged a killer, ready to kill the Godfather when the godfather to buy fruit. The second son, Fredo, was so scared that he couldn't hold his gun. Consigliere Tom was also taken. Sollozzo let Tom go back to persuade Sonny to agree to cooperate in the drug business, Tom under pressure said he would do his best, Sollozzo let him go.

The Godfather was assassinated for four main reasons:

First of all, behind the Turk is the shadow of the Tattaglia family and Barzini, the former has an old grudge with the Godfather, and Barzini also wants to replace the godfather.

Secondly, the Turk senses that Lubracki is trying to kill him and learns what the Godfather really thinks. Lubracki goes to Bruno's strip club too often.

What's more, the Turks thought the Godfather was weak and getting old Sonny, the godfather's son, did not have his father's talent and did not agree with his father. Sollozzo himself was adventurous, so he decided to kill the Godfather.

But the attempt failed, and the Godfather of Kryon, who had been shot several times, survived and was badly wounded [2].

Corleone family's response to the assassination

Mike, worried about his godfather's health, visits him after a date with his girlfriend Kay, but arrives at the hospital to find no one but a nurse and his godfather. The guards and policemen at the gate, along with the journalists, had disappeared. It was the silence before the battle. Sensing danger, Mike called home for help and hid the Godfather in another house [3].

Anso, the confectioner, came with flowers to see his godfather, who helped him with his deportation. Mike told him to leave quickly or there might be trouble. Anso insisted on staying and helping. As they stood on either side of the hospital door, Mike told Anso to turn up his collar and put his hands in his pockets so that people would think they were bodyguards.

A car pulls up in front of the hospital, apparently to assassinate the Godfather. Mike pulls off his windbreaker and pretends to pull out a gun. The sheriff brought men to evict Mike, who insisted on staying behind to protect godfather. Even though Mike is a returning hero who has never been involved

with the Mafia, the sheriff tries to take him away by force when the Godfather's lawyer arrives with a private investigator with a gun permit, which steadies the situation. Sonny was so angry about the hospital that the next day he had Tattaglia's son, Bruno, killed.

Execution of Poly

Clemenza is used to dealing with such problems. The main question is who will be chosen to execute, and who will succeed Poly. This person has to be able and reliable. In addition, as gangsters, we should know: threats should not be used recklessly, only appropriate, low-key is the best way to survive.

In the end, Clemenza chose Rocco Lapone, who would be Mike's right-hand man in the future. Clemenza, of course, was going to do it himself. On the one hand, it's to help Rocco get through his ordeal. On the other hand, as the master who brought Poly into the house, he cleaned the house himself.

While Clemenza was still listening to his wife's orders to take lunch to go, Rocco Lapone got into the car. He sat directly behind Poly, as if it were the most natural thing to do. Poly is like a mouse. He can smell danger by his nose. He is suspicious. Clemenza opened the door and threw himself into the front seat.

Even the most cunning fox can't escape a good hunter, and Clemenza was prepared. The first was attitude, and a pretense of politeness might have made Poly wary. So Clemenza maintained his usual unkind attitude toward Poly, dispelled his sensitive and suspicious. Clemenza concocted a plausible task: to find an apartment for "soldiers to sleep on mattresses" if Sonny decided to mobilize. At the height of a war between families, the opposing sides set up headquarters in secret apartments filled with mattresses on which "soldiers" could sleep.

As commander of the corps, it made sense to rent a secret apartment to use as a base for the city in the event of an offensive. It would make sense for him to take Rocco and Poly and work out the details, including the furnishings.

Sure enough, As Clemenza had predicted, Poly took the bait. He was relieved of suspicion, and instead his eyes showed eager interest.

On the way back to Long Beach, Clemenza said to stop and relieve himself. As a result of working together for a long time, Poly knows that the big fat commander wants to pee when he has urine. He often makes such demands. So he veered off the road into a reed bank. Clemenza got out of the car, leaving Rocco and Poly behind.

Beyond was a clean blue sky. A second later, shots rang out from inside the car.

Why don't get rid of the body? Because they're dealing with a family traitor, and it has to be public. First, potential traitors are deterred. Second, Sollozzo would have been warned that the Corleone family was not insane or weak. Your paid mole was discovered so quickly, you'd think twice about making a move. Finally, the Corleone family will recover its lost prestige. After all, the shooting of the don had made the family look a bit mediocre and unproductive.

Assassination of sheriff and Turkish drug Lord

In the climax of the dark theme, Michael Corleone assassinates his enemy in a tavern. This assassination is arguably the turning point of Michael Corleone's life, and it is a pivotal scene in the film.

In Sollozzo's eyes, the old godfather must die, or else the white powder business will not be done if the old man does not let go. Besides, if the assassination fails, Don Corleone will surely take revenge when he is well.

Drug Lord Sollozzo, worried that he, too, will be killed by Sonny, offers to negotiate with Mike. Made a very tempting offer, but Sonny insisted on killing Sollozzo. Consiliere Tom says that now that Sollozzo has paid the sheriff to be his bodyguard, we should hold off. Then Mike said, "The sheriff is in with a drug Lord, we have a legitimate reason to kill him, let me do god's work." Only when Sollozzo and the sheriff are removed will the matter truly be settled and the old Godfather truly live.

Mike negotiates with Sollozzo. With the sheriff as his bodyguard, Mike takes the opportunity to go to the bathroom, where he gets the gun that was placed in the bathroom. He avenged his father by killing them both. The sheriff's collusion with the drug lords made it into the newspapers, and the godfather moved out of the hospital into his own home. Mike, on the other hand, is heading to His Godfather's hometown of Sicily to escape the limelight.

The assassination of the godfather's eldest son

In order to reflect the climax of the black theme, the author describes the scene of The assassination of sonny, the eldest son of the godfather, by Barzini as more violent and bloody. In the background of the continuous crying of the child, the phone suddenly rings, Sonny receives a call from his sister Connie, in order to save her husband Carlo was beaten up again, he drove out of the house. It's almost like a trap that has been set up, whether it's the sudden ringing of a phone, the constant crying of a child, or even Sonny's angry swearing that sets the stage for the story. The final shot shows the audience sonny being shot at a tollbooth, his body riddled with bullet holes showing the black theme of blood. At the same time, in order to play up the Mafia's brutality, after The death of Sunny also arranged a scene of a heavy kick in the head, in addition to sunny's body was brutally repaired several times, no doubt the bloody scene is shown.

Corleone family's decapitation plan

The decapitation plan, Michael's plan to assassinate the corleone family's enemies, mainly targets the following:

Baccini: The man behind the Sollozzo and Tattaglia family who seeks to destroy the Corleone family.
Philip Tattaglia: Patriarch of the Tattaglia family who conspired with Sollozzo to assassinate the Godfather.

Tessio: The patriarch of the Corleone family, who betrayed the Corleone family after his death and allied himself with Baccini.

Fabrizio: Mike's bodyguard in Sicily, paid by Baccini, blows up Mike's wife.

Carlo Ricci: Connie Corleone's husband, who was paid by Baccini, deliberately quarreled with Connie and attracted Sonny, who was killed.

Mo Green: The owner of the Las Vegas hotel business who took Freddie in, but also slaps Freddie, rejects Mike's takeover offer, and insults the Corleone family to his face.

The decapitation plan is the climax of the Godfather. With the execution of the decapitation plan, Michael settles old scores in one day. All the people who have fought against the Corleone family have paid the price, and the Corleone family has become the most powerful family in New York again.

Here comes to a question, why was the decapitation plan completed after the death of the Godfather?

Who planned the decapitation?

The Godfather masterminded it, and Mike was responsible for the execution of the plan. In the movie, after learning that Sonny had been killed, the Godfather immediately called a national conference to create a peaceful situation. It seems that the Godfather really does not want to pursue hatred.

After the meeting, Tom asked the Godfather privately, and he couldn't fully understand the godfather's motivation. The Godfather only praised Tom for knowing him well, but didn't tell Tom what he had in mind, leaving Tom to try his best to arrange for Mike's return.

So it turns out that the plan was hatched very soon after The Godfather learned that Sonny had been killed, and there was only one reason for not going ahead with it: Mike would die by his hand.

The Godfather had no choice but to negotiate and buy Time for Mike. Upon his return, Mike began to do two things, one was to transfer the godfather's political connections, and the other was to plan the execution of the decapitation plan. After the godfather's death, Mike had gained most of the upper echelons before he was strong enough to carry out the decapitation plan.

Why Mike's plan to decapitate was successfully completed?

The most important reason is that Mike perfectly implemented his godfather's teaching: Let your friends underestimate your good points and let your enemies overestimate your bad points.

Let's start with Mike's profile. Ivy League educated, never involved in the family business, and handsome, and comely, Mike was considered by most family members and outsiders to be uninspiring and soft, not as strong as his brother Sonny.

The only two people who really knew Mike were godfather and Sonny. Tom counts half. Besides, when Mike came to power, his foreign policy was to be a coward. After the godfather's death, Baccini and Tattaglia continue to invade the Corleone family bookkeeping and assassinate mid-level members of the family. The family members want to resist, but Mike's instructions are: Don't resist.

The five families already looked down on Mike, and when Mike took office, he pretended to be a grandson, which made them even bolder, thinking that after the death of the Godfather, the Corleone family was over. This caused Mike's enemies to greatly underestimate Mike and never expected him to strike back.

At the same time, Mike's plan is very secret, handed over to the newly promoted henchmen Rampo and Nelly to execute, the original head of the family, Clemenza, Tessie do not know, even Tom finally said to Mike: "I believe you can succeed, even I did not fully see through."

It's a perfect pig eating a tiger [4].

Two of Mike's key moves in *The Godfather*, the assassination of Sollozzo and the decapitate plan, are based on the fact that his enemies greatly underestimate him, allowing Mike to kill far more powerful enemies.

Michael's response to the betrayal

The Corleone family has experienced four times of betrayal, one is the godfather was the driver and bodyguard Poly betrayal, nearly died in Sollozzo's assassination; Second, Carlo, the godfather's son-in-law, deliberately beat Connie, leading Sonny out of Long Beach, and then assassinated in a tollbooth; Mike was betrayed by a bodyguard in Sicily, and his new wife Apolloni died in a car explosion. Fourth, after the godfather died, Tessio fell to Barzini.

Two bodyguards were killed, and two other important figures were executed. The Mafia is very firm on the execution of traitors, not even those closest to them. As Tessio was about to be taken away, he hesitated and asked the consigliere if he could spare me, for the sake of the past. Killing Tessio means losing a great member of the family, and killing Carlo means earning his sister's hatred, but Mike deals with it anyway, and it takes a lot of courage. In the last chapter of the book, the author explains, through Hagen's mouth, why betrayal cannot be forgiven:

Betrayal is an unpardonable sin [5], and Mike can forgive them, but they can never forgive themselves, so it's all the more dangerous. If they are not dealt with, they are failing their children, their families and their entire family, and they pose a threat to everyone's life.

The point of this passage is to forgive the person who has committed the act of betrayal, even if others do not pursue it, but the shadow of betrayal will always be with him. If he remained faithful, that shadow would hang over him for the rest of his life; If he does not follow through, there may be a second or third betrayal, which is a great threat to the others. This is why execution is the best way to deal with betrayal [6].

Conclusion

The Godfather tells us that if you want to wear a crown, you must bear its weight. If you choose this path, you will assume more responsibility and gain more power. And to be a real man is to realize that everything in this world is business, because you are valuable, more and more friends come to you, more and more women approach you, treat you carefully, and try to act emotionally generous.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped me during the writing of this thesis. And I wish to extend my thanks to the library assistants who supplied me with reference materials of great value.

References

1. Anonymous. Godfather at Goldcrest. *Residential Systems*, 2020, 42(1), 27-33.
2. Clotilde, C. A Commonsian approach to crime: the Mafia and the economic power to withhold. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 2021, 45(3), 411-425. DOI:10.1093/CJE/BEAB006
3. Guido, A. *Fathers and Godfathers*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2016, 15-35.
4. Luccio, G. The Godfather Doctrine. *Marine Corps Gazette*, 2017, 11, 61-67.
5. Latimer, Jonathan P. Review Essay The Godfather Metaphor And Microcosm. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 2013, 26(3), 204-208.
6. Rusnak, P. 'Godfather' of the Citrus Box Tax Passes Away. *Florida Grower*, 2021, 14, 4-5.