Brian Petersen

Provo Site

Fossom

Humanities 1010

15 April 2013

Response Paper 2 – *The Godfather*

For the second response paper, I chose to watch a highly rated film. The movie I chose to see is called *The Godfather*. I chose to see this movie primarily because I had heard a lot about it from friends and family and saw that it was in the textbook as films that are highly rated. I watched the movie on April 13th, so this meets the one week deadline set by the professor.

To begin, I will write a quick synopsis of the movie so that a common ground will exists for the later analysis of the movie. The movie begins by showing a wedding for Vito Corleone’s only daughter, who is also the Don of a New York crime family. As well, Vito’s son, Michael, introduces his girlfriend, Kay Adams, at the wedding. Vito’s godson, Johnny Fortane, is a popular singer and pleads for Vito to help him secure a movie role that if desires. Vito, not wanting to let his Godson down, sends his consigliore to the person in charge of the movie and convinces him to give the role to Johnny by severing the head of one of his most prized horses.

Next, a man nick named “The Turk” Sollozzo offers the Corleone’s an opportunity to invest in his drug dealing business. Vito, personally against drug dealers, declines the offer. Sollozzo, in rage, attempts to assassinate Vito and ends up putting him in the hospital. Vito’s son, Sonny, now takes command of the crime family. Later though, Michael prevents a second assassination attempt of Vito’s life. Michael has become involved with the family business, something that Vito did not want to ever happen.

Next, Michael fell in love with a girl and ended up marrying her; but a car bomb intended for Michael took the life of his new wife. In an attempt to end the feuds, Vito meets with the other crime families. In the end, Vito dies in his garden while playing with Michael’s son. Michael, after sometime, is named as the new Don Corleone. Now that a common ground has been established, the analysis can begin.

The first of Goethe’s questions is, “what is the artist trying to do?” To answer this question, the artist must first be identified. In this case, the artist would be the director of this movie and screen play writer, Francis Ford Coppola. The main aim of this movie seems to be a revealing of Italian mobs and how they function. In this sense, it seems to have a pragmatic aim as a piece of art. As well, the movie is entitled The Godfather, this seems to suggest that another aim of the artist is to emphasize the role of a godfather in Italian culture along with its relations to family crime organizations. In other words, Coppola seemed to be attempting to give people an insight into the minds of Italian crime families.

The second of Goethe’s questions is, “how well does he do it?” This question aims to help one critically analyze one’s reactions to a movie. The first aim, revealing the Italian crime families, was done incredibly well. This was one of the first movies of its kind, and it seemed to set the bar very high for all the other productions coming out about the same time. This first aim was done so well because of the very accurate portrayal of its aim. In other words, the principles and concepts that it shows are present in crime families were quite accurate. Some specific principles and were accurately emphasized was the idea of “it’s business, not personal.” This was a dominating idea in any crime family and was well portrayed in the film. This was portrayed in the film in that when Michael was beginning to become involved with the family business, Vito was devastated; Vito was saddened because he never wanted Michael to get involved, thus keeping business and personal matters separate. The second aim, showing the importance of the godfather in Italian culture, was also well done. A godfather in Italian culture was very respected and a prestigious social position. This idea was shown everywhere in the movie and is even in the title of the movie; thus it was done very well.

The third and final of Goethe’s questions is, “was it worth doing?” In all, I think that this movie was worth being produced. Many others seem to agree with this because of the high ratings that the movie has received since its initial release in 1972. Another reason that it was worth doing is because the contents that is explains was an important part of American history following WWII. Overall, this film is a classic and I think that everyone should watch it because of its high rating and explanation of an important aspect of Italian culture.

In the end, I thoroughly enjoyed the movie *The Godfather.* I hope that I am able to watch some more classic films that are highly rated.